



**ST JOHNS ROAD, ST JOHNS –
PROPOSED SPEED REDUCING
MEASURES**

**LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR WOKING
28 JANUARY 2004**

KEY ISSUE:

To consider proposals to encourage lower vehicle speeds throughout the length of St Johns Road, Woking, following receipt of a petition from local residents.

SUMMARY:

Following receipt of a petition from residents of St Johns Road and adjoining roads, a number of surveys have been carried out which show that there is a speeding problem on St Johns Road. Measures involving vehicle actuated signs and road safety posters are proposed to tackle the problem.

CONSULTATIONS:

The Police have been consulted and support the proposals.

The proposals have been formulated as a direct response to the wishes and concerns of the residents.

It is proposed to carry out further consultations with residents following the introduction of the proposals.

The appropriate Committee Members have been consulted on the proposals.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to agree

- (i) that mobile Vehicle Actuated Signs and road safety posters be introduced in St Johns Road, and their effect on vehicle speeds monitored, and**
- (ii) that residents' views are sought on the effectiveness of the measures.**

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

- 1 St Johns Road is an unclassified road, some 1400 metres in length, linking Goldsworth Road with the centre of St Johns village. It is used as an east/west route between St Johns and Woking town centre.
- 2 At its meeting on 22 October 2003, the Committee received a petition, containing some 158 signatures, from residents of St Johns Road and adjoining roads, asking for measures to reduce the speed of vehicles travelling along St Johns Road and to enforce the existing 7.5 tonne lorry ban. The covering letter with the petition also mentioned a brick wall along the frontage of No. 118a St Johns Road which obscures the view of oncoming traffic for some residents as they emerge from their driveways. A copy of the petition and covering letter are attached at Annex A.
- 3 At the meeting, the presenter of the petition stated that the petitioners did not want physical traffic calming measures to be introduced on St Johns Road.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

- 4 With regard to the 7.5 tonne lorry ban, the necessary signs are in place and are in good condition. Enforcement of the ban is the responsibility of the Police, who have been made aware of the petitioners' concerns. However, the Police, who have already spent a considerable amount of time on site enforcing the speed limit, have not identified a problem with the ban being flouted. Many large box lorries are in fact just under 7.5 tonnes in weight, and any lorries above this weight, if delivering to premises within St Johns Road, may do so without committing an offence.
- 5 The brick wall has been in position for many years, and therefore planning permission is deemed to have been given. (Enforcement action would have had to be taken within four years of the date of the wall's construction, which is unknown). The wall does not encroach onto the public highway, and therefore Surrey County Council does not have powers to take direct action. However, the householder has been written to, asking whether, in principle, he would agree to the height of the wall being reduced. Any response will be reported orally at the meeting. Unfortunately there are many private accesses within the area where sightlines are deficient, and it is not always possible for the highway authority to address these problems.
- 6 With regard to speed reduction, physical traffic calming measures have not been considered; the road is on a bus route, and the residents themselves have expressed a wish not to have physical calming measures.
- 7 A traffic speed and volume survey was carried out in St Johns Road, between Triggs Lane roundabout and the eastern most junction with Winnington Way, in Summer 2002. The survey showed that 85th percentile speeds were 39mph. (As reported to Committee at its meeting on 22 January 2003).

- 8 Following the receipt of the petition, further surveys were carried out on 6 January 2004, using a radar speed meter. These showed speeds in St Johns Road as detailed in the tables below. The locations were chosen as being likely to produce the highest speeds in St Johns Road. While these surveys were being carried out, over a period of approximately two hours, only one lorry over 7.5 tonnes was seen. However, this was delivering to premises within St Johns Road and was therefore not committing an offence.

St Johns Road – 85th Percentile Speeds

| Location | 85 th Percentile Speeds | |
|---|------------------------------------|-----------|
| | Westbound | Eastbound |
| At westernmost junction of Winnington Way | 37.7 | 38 |
| East of Martin Way | 41.7 | 43.7 |

St Johns Road – Average Speeds

| Location | Average Speeds | |
|---|----------------|-----------|
| | Westbound | Eastbound |
| At westernmost junction of Winnington Way | 33.9 | 34.4 |
| East of Martin Way | 36.3 | 37.8 |

- 9 In the three year period ending 31 August 2003 (the latest date for which figures are available), there have been six recorded personal injury collisions in St Johns Road, all occurring between its western end and its westernmost junction with Winnington Way. The collisions were scattered throughout this length of road, with no overall collision pattern. Although none were directly attributable to speeding or driving too fast for prevailing conditions, speed would have been a factor in these collisions, and the figures in the tables above show that there is a problem with speeding traffic in St Johns Road.
- 10 It is therefore proposed that a regular programme of erecting Vehicle Actuated Signs and road safety posters, together with police enforcement, is introduced. The Vehicle Actuated Signs, two of which have already been purchased, are portable and can be set to display drivers' speeds using flashing, brightly illuminated LED's. The signs record the speed of every approaching vehicle, and can therefore be used to determine how vehicle speeds and volumes vary throughout the day. The sign display can also be turned off; vehicle speeds are still recorded, and therefore a comparison can be made of vehicle speeds with and without the display, thus giving a measure of the signs' effectiveness in reducing

speed. The newly-purchased Vehicle Actuated Signs were used in St Johns Road in November 2003 in order to give officers experience in their erection and use, and site observations indicated that the signs were effective in reducing drivers' speed – drivers exceeding the speed limit were seen to slow down as the signs lit up and displayed their speed..

- 11 Two additional Vehicle Actuated Signs are to be purchased at the beginning of the next financial year, and this will enable them to be deployed simultaneously at two separate sites within St Johns Road. (Two signs per site, one for each direction of traffic flow).
- 12 The Police are currently carrying out regular speed enforcement in St Johns Road, and will continue to do so. It is also proposed to erect a number of safety posters throughout the length of St Johns Road to reinforce awareness of the 30mph speed limit.
- 13 It is intended to erect the signs and posters in St Johns Road in April 2004. The signs and posters will not be permanent, but will be utilised at various sites throughout the Woking local area. It is intended to keep the signs and posters in place at any one site for a period of four weeks. However, the signs and posters will be returned to each site on a regular basis, in accordance with a programme agreed with the Police.
- 14 It is intended to report back to a future meeting of the Committee on the effectiveness of the Vehicle Actuated Signs in St Johns Road and at other sites. Current research indicates that such signs are effective in reducing speeds, particularly those of the faster drivers who contribute disproportionately to the accident risk.
- 15 It is also intended, once the signs are in place, to consult residents on their perception of the effectiveness of the signs.
- 16 Physical traffic calming measures could be considered at a future date, but this would depend on the effectiveness of the measures described above.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 17 £10,000 has been set aside for the purchase of two additional Vehicle Actuated Signs in the Local Transport Programme for Woking 2004/5. There will also be some additional costs associated with erecting safety posters and officer time in erecting, monitoring and taking down the signs.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 18 The proposals are expected to bring road safety benefits in terms of reduced speeds and collisions, in line with the LTP and central government targets.

CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 19 Use of the vehicle actuated signs and posters are expected to reduce the number of drivers exceeding the speed limit.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

20 There are no equalities implications.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

21 Residents living in St Johns Road and adjoining roads are concerned about vehicle speeds on St Johns Road. Surveys indicate that the residents' concerns are justified, and therefore the measures described above are proposed to tackle the problem.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: Petition and covering letter from local residents dated 28 August 2003.

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