



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE
(WOKING)**

A245 PARVIS ROAD, BYFLEET - SPEED LIMIT REDUCTION

30 NOVEMBER 2010

KEY ISSUE:

To consider the reduction of the speed limit on Parvis Road, Byfleet.

SUMMARY:

There have been concerns about the speed of traffic on A245 Parvis Road, Byfleet, which is currently subject to a 40mph speed limit. These concerns have been heightened by a series of collisions that recently took place in a short period of time and over a short length of road, the first of which resulted in the death of a young cyclist.

In response to these concerns and calls for a reduction in the speed limit, the proposal is to lower the limit to 30mph, which will also bring it into line with the speed limit that exists at the extreme east of the borough and on the roads in the adjoining area of Elmbridge Borough.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to:

- i. Agree the reduction of the existing 40mph speed limit on A245 Parvis Road, Byfleet to 30mph, between the existing 30/40mph change point near Green Lane to a point approximately mid-way between Queens Avenue and the M25 motorway bridge;
- ii. Approve the advertising of the necessary Traffic Regulation Order
- iii. Agree that any objections should be considered and resolved by the Area Team Manager for the North West area in consultation with the Divisional Member and Chairman in accordance with the Council's constitution.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Parvis Road forms part of the A245, which is a Strategic Route within the Surrey Distributor Network. It carries a significant volume of traffic, including a high proportion of heavy goods vehicles. The A245 is sometimes used as an alternative route if there are problems on the A3 and / or M25.
- 1.2 Throughout its length, the A245 is subject to different speed limits. In the extreme west of Elmbridge Borough and for a short distance after it enters Woking Borough at Plough Bridge, Byfleet, it is subject to a 30mph limit. At a point approximately 80m west of Green Lane, the limit increases to 40mph and remains so until just outside the centre of West Byfleet, east of Highfield Road, when it reduces to 30mph again.
- 1.3 Vehicle speeds and collisions along the Byfleet section of road, that is between the borough boundary and the M25 bridge, have been a concern of residents and Divisional and Ward Members for some time.
- 1.4 An item to consider the speed limit on this section of Parvis Road was included in the Local Transport Plan work programme in 2009 and was due to be implemented during the 2009/10 financial year. Subsequent budget constraints meant that this did not happen. Consequently, it was included in the 2010/11 work programme that was approved by Local Committee in February 2010.
- 1.5 Although another subsequent lack of budget initially meant that the scheme would not be progressed, some additional funding was identified and the Local Committee (Woking) approved the allocation of £10,000 for the scheme on 2 September 2010. However, a reduction of the speed limit had never been assessed or formally reported, with recommendations, to Local Committee.

2 ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

- 2.1 A number of collisions have taken place recently over a relatively short length of Parvis Road, one of which resulted in the tragic death of a 17 year old cyclist. These incidents do not yet appear on our personal injury collision database, which is complete up to the end of July 2010.
- 2.2 In the 3 years up to the end of July 2010, between the start of the 40mph limit near Green Lane and the M25 bridge, there have been 21 collisions resulting in 1 serious and 27 slight injuries. However, it should be pointed out that not all of these involved excessive speed and a number of them resulted from turning manoeuvres on the 3 roundabouts.
- 2.3 Surveys of existing vehicle speeds were undertaken at two locations on Parvis Road between 10 and 16 November 2010. A permanent automatic traffic counter serves a third location. We have not yet been able to obtain data from this counter for the same period, although we do have some data from it for the period between 4 and 17 October, which is unlikely to be significantly different.

- 2.4 At one survey location, between the M25 bridge and Queen's Avenue, mean speeds, calculated between 7am and 7pm, were 35.2mph westbound and 36.5mph eastbound. Some recorded, individual speeds were significantly higher than this figure.
- 2.5 At the other survey location, between the Chertsey Road roundabout and the Oyster Lane roundabout, mean speeds, calculated between 7am and 7pm, were 32.2mph westbound and 33.9mph eastbound. Some recorded, individual speeds were significantly higher than this figure.
- 2.6 The permanent traffic counter is located between Green Lane and the Sopwith Drive roundabout and mean speeds, calculated between 7am and 7pm, were 34.2mph westbound and 32.6mph eastbound.
- 2.7 The Department for Transport (DfT) Circular 01/2006 "Setting Local Speed Limits" is the current guidance available for determining speed limits and suggests that speeds of free flowing traffic should be recorded. It should be noted that the mean speeds given above are calculated from all of the speeds that were recorded on a continuous basis and periods are included when the traffic was not free flowing; free flowing speeds are higher than those stated.
- 2.8 Furthermore, and crucially, paragraph 37 of the DfT circular states that, "The aim should be to align the local speed limit so that the original mean speed driven on a road is at or below the new posted speed limit for that road."
- 2.9 The recorded mean speeds on Parvis Road are higher than the desired limit of 30mph. Based purely on this, the Officer recommendation would have to be that a 30mph limit is not appropriate for the road. It must be stressed that simply reducing a speed limit is unlikely to result in any significant reduction in vehicle speeds, although it is generally accepted that a 1 or 2mph reduction could be expected.
- 2.10 Given that the recorded mean speeds are only marginally above what would be the new posted speed limit and that a very slight reduction in speeds could be expected, a 30mph could be permitted on this section of Parvis Road. Please note that significantly lower vehicle speeds should not be expected.
- 2.11 It is intended that the new 30mph limit will commence between the M25 bridge and Queen's Avenue (at the eastern end, it will link in with the existing 30mph). It is not proposed that it should start to the west of the motorway bridge, near to the junction with Dartnell Park Road. In addition to the argument that if it started on that side of the bridge, the limit should include the junction with Dartnell Park Road, the existing Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) would need to be relocated, for which there are insufficient funds.
- 2.12 It is not simply a case of re-programming the VAS, even if this was possible. If the sign remains where it currently is and was still outside the 30mph limit, it would be misleading whether it flashed '30' or '40'. If the

sign was within the 30mph limit, not only would it need to be replaced with a '30' sign, it would need to be within the limit by 150 - 200m or so, otherwise, it would be triggered by vehicles that are still in the higher limit. Moving the speed limit that far along the road is inappropriate and Surrey Police are likely to object to it.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Local Committee (Woking) allocated £10,000 to this scheme on 2 September 2010. This may seem to be an excessive amount. However, as well as the cost of the Traffic Regulation Order that has to be made, there are a number of electrical disconnections that will be required to allow some of the old sign posts to be removed. Similarly, the signs at the new 30mph start point will need to be illuminated and will require electrical connections to be made.

4 CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 We have discussed the speed data and suitability of a 30mph limit with Surrey Police who have indicated that they would not object to the lower limit.

5 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no sustainable development implications.

6 CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no specific crime and disorder implications.

7 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no equality implications.

8 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The recorded speeds along the Byfleet section of Parvis Road are very close to the threshold that would make a 30mph limit inappropriate. However, based on the assumption that a very slight reduction in vehicle speeds, in the order of 1mph or 2mph, could be expected just from changing the speed limit signs and after consultation with Surrey Police, it is recommended that the speed limit should be reduced from 40mph to 30mph.
- 8.2 It is recommended that the speed limit should be reduced between the existing 30/40mph change point, near Green Lane to a point approximately mid-way between Queens Avenue and the M25 motorway bridge.

9 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 To be able to change the speed limits in Parvis Road, a Traffic Regulation Order must be advertised and made. Committee must give authorisation

for this legal process to go ahead.

10 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 10.1 The Traffic Regulation Order would be advertised before Christmas and any objections that are received will be resolved in accordance with the Council's constitution. The Traffic Order can then be made and the signs should be changed before the end of the financial year.

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