



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

**BLACKHORSE ROAD – SPEED LIMIT ASSESSMENT
26 SEPTEMBER 2012**

KEY ISSUES

To report on the outcome of the speed limit assessment recently undertaken along the D3680 Blackhorse Road, Woking.

SUMMARY

A speed limit assessment has recently been undertaken the D3680 Blackhorse Road.

This road is currently subject to a 40 mph speed limit. The road character has been assessed as rural due to the lack of a system of street lighting. Blackhorse Road has a preferred limit of 40 mph.

The 'preferred limit' has been determined using appropriate hierarchy from Surrey's speed management policy document, 'Determining and Applying Speed Limits'.

Following consultation with Surrey Police, it is recommended that the speed limit remains at 40mph on Blackhorse Road.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee is asked to:

- (i) Note the results of the speed limit assessments undertaken.
- (ii) No further action is taken with regard to the speed limit on Blackhorse Road.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Blackhorse Road has been assessed as a rural single carriageway road with partial frontage development within Surrey's highway network.

1.2 Surrey's policy for determining speed limits was updated in November 2010. This is a 4 step approach consisting of:

Step 1 – Determining the length of road or roads to be assessed; giving consideration to start and end points, and road features.

Step 2 – Determining the preferred speed limit. Each road is considered under its respective location category: urban or rural. The road is then assessed against a number of pre-determined factors and definitions – a formulaic hierarchy – to determine the preferred speed limit.

Step 3 – Comparison of the preferred limit to existing speeds. This determines whether drivers are likely to comply with the 'preferred limit'. Where existing speeds are at, close to, or below, the preferred limit then changes would be considered appropriate. Where existing speeds are significantly above the 'preferred limit' then either an appropriate higher limit is recommended, the existing limit retained, or speed management measures are introduced to achieve speeds closer to the preferred limit. It is essential therefore, that Step 3 of this process is conducted in close discussion with the Police so that collective agreement can be reached on the implications of the 'preferred limit'.

Step 4 – Monitoring of a change in speed limit. Monitoring of any introduced speed limit to ensure level of compliance is satisfactory. A review of this information will then take place including the possibility of introducing speed management measures to ensure compliance.

1.3 Speeding is essentially anti-social behaviour and a Police enforcement issue, as driving in excess of the posted speed limit is a criminal offence. The Police, as the sole highway enforcement agency, have the necessary powers to deal with offenders.

2.0 ANALYSIS

2.1 Speed data for the sites have been assessed.

2.2 The results are shown in the following table:

Road	Average daily flow	Average 85%ile speed (mph)	Average mean speed (mph)
Blackhorse Road (S of crossroads – N bound)	N/A	44 mph	38.87 mph
Blackhorse Road (S of crossroads – S bound)	N/A	46 mph	40.57 mph
Blackhorse Road (N of crossroads – N bound)	N/A	44 mph	38.52 mph
Blackhorse Road (N of crossroads – S bound)			

	N/A	44 mph	38.31 mph
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- 2.3 There have been a number of personal injury collisions along Blackhorse Road. Below is a table indicating the collisions between January 2007 and April 2012 (not including any collisions at the Hermitage Road or Berry Lane junctions):

Location	Collisions	Date	Nature
Blackhorse Road	12	05/11/2007	Slight
		14/07/2008	Slight
		22/11/2008	Serious
		12/02/2009	Slight
		06/04/2009	Slight
		23/06/2009	Slight
		14/09/2009	Fatal
		25/12/2009	Serious
		01/03/2010	Slight
		10/08/2011	Slight
		30/09/2011	Slight
		09/04/2012	Serious

- 2.4 Using the information from 2.3, the table below shows the number of personal injury collisions in the last 5 years:

Year	Number of collisions
2007	1
2008	2
2009	5
2010	1
2011	2
2012 (Up to April)	1

- 2.5 Using the information from 2.3, the table below shows the severity of the personal injury collisions over the investigation period.

Severity	Number of collisions
Slight	8
Serious	3
Fatal	1

- 2.6 Under Step 2 of the policy, the table below indicates the 'preferred limits' following assessment.

Road	Current limit	Committee requested limit	'Preferred limit'
Blackhorse Road	40mph	30mph	40mph

2.7 As a general point, mean speeds are now being used as the basis for determining local speed limits, whereas in the past, 85th percentile speeds were used. These are underpinned by extensive research demonstrating the well-proven relationship between speed and collision frequency and severity. Mean speeds also reflect that the majority of drivers perceive that speed to be appropriate for the said road. It is therefore the aim that the local speed limit is aligned so that the original mean speed driven on the road is at or below the new posted speed limit.

2.8 Under Step 3 of the policy, the table below indicates the mean speeds against the preferred limits.

Road	Mean speed	'Preferred limit'
Blackhorse Road	39.06 mph	40mph

2.9 It is recognised that changing the speed limit will not necessarily change driver behaviour, as motorists determine their speed based on the character of the road and the prevailing conditions. In the case of Blackhorse Road, speed survey data shows that the majority of drivers feel it is appropriate to travel at speeds in excess of 30mph. As such, without continual Police enforcement, evidence suggests that if a 30mph speed limit was introduced it is likely to be widely disregarded. As such, it would have little value in improving road safety. Furthermore, the introduction of unrealistic speed limits could also undermine the effectiveness of, and respect for, speed limits more generally.

2.10 The analysis of the 12 personal injury accidents occurring between 5th November 2007 and 9th April 2012 shown in the table below highlights that none of accidents occurring on Blackhorse Road are not recorded as being speed related:

Contributing factor	No. of accidents
Speeding	0
Failed to look properly/Failed to judge other person's path	6
Slippery road due to weather	3
Disobeyed Give Way or STOP signs	1
Other causes	2

3.0 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 Consultation has been carried out with Surrey Police, who are in agreement that no further action should be taken with regard to the speed limit, which should remain at 40mph.

4.0 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications associated with not progressing a reduction in the speed limit.

5.0 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Highway Service is mindful of its needs within this area and attempts to treat all users of the public highway with equality and understanding.

6.0 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 A well-managed highway network can reduce fear of crime and allow the Police greater opportunity to enforce speed controls.

7.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 This report details the speed limit assessment conducted, and how the 'preferred limits' have been obtained. It is recommended that the speed limit on Blackhorse Road should remain unchanged.
- 7.2 However, Members are reminded about the changes to the Speed Limit Policy that now apply. The changes state that in exceptional circumstances the local committee may like to proceed with a change to a speed limit, against officer advice, in this instance the final decision would be taken by the Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Transport. Members may also be invited to undertake a site visit to inform their decision. Speeds, the casualty record and safety concerns would have to be reviewed after 12 months and in the event of the new speed limit being ineffective, the policy recommends that remedial action be considered. This review may be needed earlier if there are extenuating circumstances that warrant prompt action.

8.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 Recommendations have been made based upon existing policy, in consultation with Surrey Police.

9.0 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 9.1 The Local Committee is requested to note the contents of this report and as a consequence no further action is required.

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**BACKGROUND
PAPERS:** None

Version No. 1 Date: 03/09/2012 Time: 12.00 Initials: KP No of
annexes: 0