



## SCC LOCAL COMMITTEE IN ELMBRIDGE – 16 June 2014

### AGENDA ITEM 9

#### MEMBER QUESTION

#### Question 1: Margaret Hicks

Heavy goods vehicles are using the network to access the Weylands estate on Molesey Road by way of various roads in the local area. Does an appropriate route exist for these vehicles and what, if any, limitations/restrictions exist on times and access, that can mitigate this?

**Highways officer will give the following response:**

#### **MOLESEY ROAD / RYDENS ROAD / HGV USAGE.**

Surrey's road network has been developed over many years to suit the prevailing movement demands. The strategic road network is centered largely on London, with one orbital route, the M25, and several radial routes. The non-strategic road network is much denser in the larger urban areas than it is in rural areas.

The roads which form the highway network can be categorised in various ways: motorways, trunk roads (A Roads), principal roads (A Roads), other classified roads (B and C Roads), and, unclassified roads (D Roads).

Road Type	Category		Responsibility
Motorway	Motorway	Strategic Road Network	Highways Agency
A Trunk	Primary		
A Principal	Route Network		
B	Distributor	Non-Strategic Road Network	County Roads
C	Road Network		
Unclassified	Access Roads		

#### **The Strategic Road Network:**

- This includes motorways, A Trunk Roads and some A Principal Roads.
- Its function is to provide access to major centres of population and industrial areas (including ports and airports) and cater for longer-

distance movements that occur between those areas, including through traffic.

- Strategic roads have their own distinctive signs, which have blue backgrounds on motorways and green backgrounds on Primary Routes.

#### **The Distributor Road Network:**

- This network includes all A Roads not part of the Primary Road Network, and all B and C Roads.
- It caters for the distribution of traffic in and around local towns and settlements, and for the movement of traffic between these places and the Primary Route Network.
- The Council has adopted a hierarchy of distributor roads comprising Surrey County Distributors, Surrey District Distributors and Surrey Local Distributors
- All Distributor roads are the responsibility of the County Council.

As Surrey does have twice the national average of vehicles travelling on its roads, the burden placed on the network is very high, which ultimately leads to congestion during peak and busy periods.

The A244 Hersham Road and the C153 Molesey Road are the main classified routes through the area together with the D3830 Rydens Road, which is the main route running east to west, linking the A244 Hersham Road to the C153 Molesey Road.

The railway line runs to the south of Rydens Road and there are only two location where vehicular traffic can cross this railway line, one being under the railway bridge on the A244 Hersham Road and the other under the smaller arched railway bridge on C153 Molesey Road, adjacent to Hersham railway station.

Height restrictions are imposed on both bridges and whilst the higher at the A244 is 12'6" the lower on the Molesey Road is merely 10'6", and severely limits access from either side. Both bridges have been subject to bridge beam works by Railtrack as they are both prone to strikes by over height vehicles.

Due to the environmental conditions of the surrounding area, with the rivers Mole/Ember bounding the East, railway line to the South, and reservoirs to the North and East, together with height restrictions imposed upon the two bridges, it does mean that vehicular traffic is very limited in its ability to access the area without utilising these limited routes.

The Molesey industrial estate resides on the Molesey Road, to the north of the Hersham railway station and a signed HGV route has been in existence for many years, which directs vehicles to this estate from the A244, due to

these limitations explained above, via the B365 Ashley Road, C155 Station Avenue, and the D3830 Rydens Road.

The roads are all subject to a 30mph speed limit and are well lit by a continuous system of street lighting. The Molesey road does change to a 40mph as it proceeds north, but then returns to 30mph. Pedestrian footways are provided on both sides of all the roads.

Whilst many of the side roads to the north of Rydens Road, together with Walton Park to the south, have been traffic calmed over recent years, this has been carried out primarily to reduce personal injury accidents occurring. An important aim of the scheme was to remove vehicular rat running from those roads lower on the hierarchy, and return them to the primary route network.

Rydens Road was not treated in order that the existing rat running traffic travelling through the areas lower hierarchy roads, generating accidents at inappropriate speeds, were returned to the more appropriate primary route network.

It was for this reason that Rydens Road was not treated for traffic calming as it is the primary route through the area and directs vehicles to the Industrial estates. Any traffic calming would be very intrusive and intensely noisy due to the types of vehicles it carries. Additionally the personal injury accident record along Rydens Road did not justify any proposals.

Speeding is essentially a Police enforcement issue as driving in excess of the posted speed limit is a criminal offence, for which the Police as the sole highway enforcement agency, have powers to deal with offenders to unashamedly flout the law, quickly and effectively.

With the advent of highway electronic devices such as Vehicle Actuated Signs, it has been possible to effect driver behaviour in a more effective fashion. The Interactive sign targets the offending drivers, who drive in excess of the posted limit, and displays the speed limit to them, and on some units a message to 'SLOW DOWN'.

In 2008, two Vehicle Actuated Signs (VAS) were erected, one in each direction on existing lamp columns, at locations in consultation with Surrey Police, to best remind drivers of the obligations to the law and road safety.

As mentioned previously, the roads are subject to a 30mph speed limit, which is the appropriate limit for these types of road, and is the lowest limit than can be applied in Surrey, without traffic calming measures.

Some years ago a 7.5T weight restriction was introduced in Walton Park, as HGV vehicles were using this residential road as a rat run to the Molesey Industrial Estate. A short distance of restriction was introduced in Walton Park near to the Molesey Road, in agreement with Surrey Police, to enable them to enforce the restriction. Advisory advanced warning signs were erected on all approaches to the restriction.

It is not possible to introduce heavy goods vehicle restrictions on the A244 Hersham Road, C153 Molesey Road or the D3830 as these roads are the only primary routes on the highway hierarchy able of accommodating such vehicles, due to the environmental characteristics of the location. Any restrictions would merely be flouted or would migrate vehicles into more residential and less appropriate routes.

Roads are the arteries of the Country for goods and commerce and care must be taken not to adversely affect this, as when these are strangled, the economy suffers and jobs are undoubtedly lost.

Furthermore the Police would not support such a move, as the enforcement of such a ban would be impossible. Some of the side roads have already been traffic calmed over recent years, primarily to reduce personal injury accidents occurring.

Part of the site at Weylands has a lawful use certificate, issued about twenty years ago, which allows the import of inert waste material. Such documents are not subject to planning conditions and therefore the County has no formal control over working hours. The Environment Agency has a remit given the waste use and the waste team has asked to be advised of any measures they are able to apply at Weylands site.

From a Planning perspective, the problem is that there is no direct control over the timing or passage of HGV's on the public highway. There is a degree of indirect control in that access to other sites in Surrey, which have planning permission, will be restricted by planning condition. However this does not prevent vehicles travelling to sites in Surrey and beyond and, to a degree, waiting at some point for a site to open.

There is one over night weight restriction in the Elmbridge area and this was introduced some 15 years ago, in The Woodlands, Esher, between 22.00 & 6.00, to protect residential streets, from overnight HGV movement. This is easier to carry out in locations such as The Woodlands, as this is an unclassified road, and not a primary route, which would divert vehicles onto other less appropriate roads. Furthermore it gained the support of the Police who as the sole highway enforcement authority would be charge with any contravention.

From a highways perspective there are environmental restrictions that predetermine access to the Molesey Industrial Estate. This severely limits what can be introduced in terms of weight restrictions, or other mitigation measures as explained above.

What can achieved as a mitigation is to inspect the carriageway for condition, together with the status of any manholes and gullies, with the aim of repairing defects, resurfacing poor areas, raising and/or resetting Manhole chamber access covers and gullies gratings. This would at least make the ride surface smoother for all vehicles, and minimize any ground-borne vibrations and noise.