

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND FLOODING****DATE: 9 SEPTEMBER 2015****LEAD OFFICER: TREVOR PUGH, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE****SUBJECT: A25 WESTERHAM ROAD, LIMPSFIELD – SPEED LIMIT ASSESSMENT****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding is asked to consider whether to endorse the Tandridge Local Committee's request to lower the speed limit on the A25 Westerham Road in the vicinity of Limpsfield Church of England (C of E) Infant School from 40mph to 30mph. The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding is given the authority to endorse a new speed limit which does not comply with Surrey County Council's (SCC) policy 'Setting Local Speed Limits' (July 2014).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding decide either:

1. To endorse the request of the Tandridge Local Committee to reduce the speed limit of the A25 Westerham Road between the start of the existing derestricted speed limit, approximately 117m east of Ballards Lane and the eastern boundary of the property Bower Lodge, from 40mph to 30mph, (to include the short sections of Limpsfield High Street and Wolf's Row as set out in paragraph 10), **or**
2. That the speed limit of the A25 Westerham Road between the start of the existing derestricted speed limit, approximately 117m east of Ballards Lane and the eastern boundary of the property Bower Lodge, (to include the short sections of Limpsfield High Street and Wolf's Row as set out in paragraph 10) remain unchanged at 40mph, in accordance with Surrey County Council's 'Setting Local Speed Limits' policy.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To enable the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding to decide whether or not to endorse the Tandridge Local Committee's request to reduce the speed limit of the A25 Westerham Road from 40mph to 30mph between the start of the existing derestricted speed limit, approximately 117m east of Ballards Lane and the eastern boundary of the property Bower Lodge, (to include the short sections of Limpsfield High Street and Wolf's Row).

DETAILS:

1. Tandridge Local Committee has previously requested speed limit assessments for the section of the A25 between Oxted and Limpsfield. The existing speed limit of 40mph extends from a point approximately 117 metres east of the junction with Ballards Lane (Limpsfield) to a point approximately 120 metres west of the junction with Church Lane (Oxted). The Committee is particularly concerned about traffic speeds on the section of road in the immediate vicinity of Limpsfield C of E Infant School.

Background

2. In December 2012 a petition bearing 292 signatures was received by Tandridge Local Committee, stating:

“We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to reduce the speed limit on the A25 outside Limpsfield C of E Infant School between Ballards Lane and the Junction with Limpsfield High Street from the current 40mph to 30mph speed limit.”
3. The Local Committee allocated funding to investigate measures to reduce traffic speeds in the vicinity of the school (Integrated Transport Schemes programme for 2012/13). Following speed surveys and investigation of recorded personal injury collisions, an advisory 20mph speed limit outside the school was implemented and is currently in place. The 20mph advisory limit is implemented by signs with the schoolchildren warning triangle and statement ‘School, 20 when lights show’ along with lights that flash at school drop-off and pick-up times. The 20mph speed limit is not enforceable.
4. In March 2014 Tandridge Local Committee was asked:
“To consider a petition containing approximately 175 signatures (from teachers and school children) requesting that the speed limit of the section of road outside the Limpsfield C of E School (Westerham Road, Oxted) be reduced to 20mph or 30mph, in order to address concerns from school children, teachers and parents regarding safety.”
5. The petition was presented by school pupils and their teacher to the Local Committee meeting. At the time the policy “Road Safety Outside Schools” was being developed and Surrey’s speed limit policy was also being updated to take into account new government guidance. These were presented to Tandridge Local Committee in draft form and it was agreed that they be used to form the basis of how the request for a reduced speed limit outside Limpsfield Infant School is taken forward. It was also agreed that a further speed survey at this location be carried out, to form part of a wider speed limit review of the A25 between the County boundary and Godstone.
6. The speed limit policy ‘Setting Local Speed Limits’ and the policy ‘Road Safety Outside Schools’ were approved by SCC’s Cabinet in June 2014 and became effective in July 2014.
7. In early 2015 a speed limit assessment was undertaken for the 40mph section of the A25 between Limpsfield and Oxted with a view to lowering the speed limit to 30mph. See section ‘**Speed surveys**’ below.
8. At the Local Committee meeting of March 2015, County Councillor Mr Skellett (Divisional Member for Oxted) asked for an update on the speed limit outside Limpsfield C of E Infant School. It was reported that automatic traffic surveys carried out near the school showed that the recorded speeds were found to be above the

threshold for a lowering of the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph in accordance with the speed limit policy. It was noted that electronic vehicle-activated signs (VAS) could be installed to advise drivers approaching the school, with the view that such measures may encourage slower vehicle speeds. At the time of the committee meeting, the surveys for the remainder of the 40mph section west of the school, between Limpsfield and Oxted, had yet to be completed due to highways works in the area. Officers advised that compliance with the speed limit policy for the section west of the school may allow for a lowering of the speed limit to be extended to the section outside the school.

9. In June 2015, a formal public question was brought to Tandridge Local Committee asking for an update on the request for a 30mph speed limit outside Limpsfield C of E Infant School. The question was supported by the attendance of school pupils and their teacher at the Local Committee meeting. The results of the assessment for the 40mph section of the A25 between Limpsfield and Oxted were reported, stating that the recorded mean speeds are above the policy threshold for a signed-only lowering of the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph. The Chairman advised that the Committee agreed with the request but that the current rules say that the speed limit cannot be changed. The Committee agreed they would appeal to SCC's Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding to make an exception for a speed limit reduction to 30mph on this section of the A25 and look at putting in a Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS). The Area Highways Manager advised that the implementation process could take up to nine months from the time it was referred to the Cabinet Member.
10. Tandridge Local Committee is seeking approval from the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding to lower the speed limit to 30mph, the Committee's preferred speed limit, of the A25 Westerham Road between the start of the existing derestricted speed limit, approximately 117m east of Ballards Lane and the eastern boundary of the property Bower Lodge, as shown in Annex 2. To avoid short sections of higher speed limits, it is suggested that a short section of Limpsfield High Street (approximately 50m northwards from the junction with the A25 Westerham Road) and a short section of Wolf's Row (approximately 25m southwards from the junction with the A25) are included.

Speed surveys

11. Automatic traffic surveys were carried out at various locations on the A25 between the junction with Ballards Lane in Limpsfield and Church Lane in Oxted. Annex 1 illustrates the locations of speed surveys.
12. The table below sets out the current speed limit, measured mean speeds, preferred speed limit under the policy and proposed limit recommended by officers.

Location of speed survey	Current limit	Measured mean speeds		'Preferred limit' under policy	Proposed limit
		Eastbound	Westbound		
<u>Site A</u> Near junction with Church Lane	40mph	39.9mph	39.4mph	40mph	40mph
<u>Site B</u> Near junction with Snatts Hill	40mph	29.6mph	33.3mph	30mph	40mph
<u>Site C</u> Near property 'Court Langley'	40mph	40.9mph	42.0mph	40mph	40mph
<u>Site D</u> Eastern end of central island outside school	40mph	38.7mph	38.6mph	40mph	40mph

13. The results of the survey were analysed and the recorded speeds were found to be above the threshold for a lowering of the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph, in accordance with SCC's policy 'Setting Local Speed Limits'.
14. To comply with SCC's speed limit policy, measured mean speeds need to be 35mph or below to enable a signed-only lowering of the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph. The survey results for the 40mph section of the A25 show a mean speed of 37.3mph in the eastbound direction and 38.3mph in the westbound direction. Therefore, the recorded mean speeds are above the threshold for a signed-only lowering of the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph.
15. The survey location near Snatts Hill recorded mean speeds that comply with the policy criteria for a signed-only change from 40mph to 30mph. The policy states "The length of road over which a speed limit change is being considered should be at least 600m. This should ensure against too many speed limit changes that could be confusing to the motorist within a short space of road." Therefore, it is not recommended that the speed limit be lowered on this section. It should be noted that this survey location is close to the recently-installed signalised pedestrian crossing of the A25 which is likely to have affected the measured speeds.
16. The officer recommendation is that, based on the evidence and in accordance with the policy, no change be made to the speed limit.
17. It is stated under the speed limit policy that "If the local committee disagree with the recommendations presented to them by the Area Highways Manager and wish to

proceed with an alternative option, then the issue must be submitted for decision by the Cabinet Member responsible for road safety”.

CONSULTATION:

18. Surrey Police’s Road Safety and Traffic Management Team were consulted as part of the speed limit assessment process. The Police view is that the speed limit should be set in line with the preferred limit as determined by SCC’s policy ‘Setting Local Speed Limits’ and they would not support a reduction in the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph. Surrey Police have confirmed that if the limit is lowered no routine speed enforcement will be undertaken at this location in accordance with the speed enforcement policy of the Association of Chief of Police Officers (ACPO).

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

19. If a decision is made to endorse the Local Committee’s request to lower the speed limit, the advertisement of a speed limit order will be required. Objections may be received when the speed limit order is advertised. Tandridge Local Committee has authorised delegation of authority to the Area Team Manager in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Local Committee and the local Divisional Member to resolve any objections received in connection with the speed limit proposals.
20. There will be no risk management implications arising from a decision to retain the existing 40mph speed limit.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

21. The cost of changing any speed limit includes legal advertisement costs associated with the statutory process together with the costs of design and implementation.
22. If the request to lower the speed limit is approved, Tandridge Local Committee would consider the allocating of funds from the Integrated Transport Schemes programme to cover the cost of traffic orders, advertising and implementation which is estimated to be £5,000. The installation of two vehicle-activated signs (VAS) to encourage lower speeds is likely to cost £8,000.
23. There will be no costs incurred if the speed limit remains unchanged at 40mph.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

24. The Section 151 Officer (Chief Finance Officer) confirms that all material, financial and business issues and risks have been considered.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

25. If the request to lower the speed limit is approved, changes to speed limits are introduced through the making of a Speed Limit Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Equalities and Diversity

26. 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.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

27. If the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding decides to agree with the officer recommendation of this report, the speed limit of the A25 Westerham Road in the vicinity of Limpsfield C of E Infant School will remain unchanged at 40mph.
28. If the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding decides to endorse the Local Committee's request to lower the speed limit in the vicinity of Limpsfield C of E Infant School, and subject to the allocation of funding, the intention to make a Speed Limit Order will be advertised in the local press. Any objections will be considered by the Area Team Manager in consultation with the Tandridge Local Committee Chairman, Vice-Chairman and local Divisional Member and reasons given whether they are upheld or not. After any objections are resolved a decision will be made by the Area Team Manager in consultation with the Tandridge Local Committee Chairman, Vice-Chairman and local Divisional Member to make the Speed Limit Order and implement the scheme. The provision of vehicle-activated signs (VAS) to encourage lower speeds will also be investigated. The Tandridge Local Committee will be updated on progress. It is estimated that the implementation process could take up to nine months from the time of referral to the Cabinet Member.

Contact Officer:

Zena Curry, South East Area Team Manager – email: zena.curry@surreycc.gov.uk.

Consulted:

Surrey Police
SCC Legal Services
SCC Chief Finance Officer
SCC Assistant Director, Highways and Transport

Annexes:

Annex 1 – A25 speed assessments, Oxted and Limpsfield; Existing speed limits and data collection sites.

Sources/background papers:

- Meeting of Tandridge Local Committee, 14 December 2012; Petition
- Meeting of Tandridge Local Committee, 7 March 2014; Petition – Reduce speed limit to 20mph or 30mph outside Limpsfield C Of E School – Westerham Road, Oxted
- Meeting of Tandridge Local Committee, 26 June 2015; Formal Public Question – Update on request for a 30mph speed limit on A25 outside Limpsfield C of E School
- Data from speed assessments carried out during 2015 at four locations on the A25 in Limpsfield and Oxted.
- Surrey County Council policy 'Setting Local Speed Limits' (July 2014)