

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**LOCAL COMMITTEE (RUNNYMEDE)**

**DATE: 21 SEPTEMBER 2015**



**LEAD OFFICER: ANDREW MILNE – AREA HIGHWAYS MANAGER (NW)**

**SUBJECT: A320 GUILDFORD ROAD – SPEED LIMIT ASSESSMENT**

**DIVISION: FOXHILLS, THORPE AND VIRGINIA WATER**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

A speed limit assessment has recently been undertaken for the section of the A320 Guildford Road (Ottershaw) between the Borough boundary with Woking and the existing 40/50mph speed limit boundary approximately 390m north of the junction with Brox Road.

This report details the outcome of the assessment and the resultant recommendation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Local Committee (Runnymede) is asked to agree that:**

- (i) the existing 50mph speed limit is retained between the Borough Boundary with Woking and the start of the existing 40mph speed limit approximately 390m north of the junction with Brox Road.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

The recommendation has been made taking into account existing vehicle speeds, the nature and function of Guildford Road, the guidance within Surrey County Council's speed limit policy and the views of Surrey Police.

**1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

- 1.1 The Runnymede Local Committee agreed that a speed limit assessment should be undertaken as part of its 2015/16 programme of works for the section of A320 Guildford Road (Ottershaw) between the Borough boundary with Woking and the existing 40/50mph speed limit change approximately 390m north of the junction with Brox Road.
- 1.2 This length of road is currently subject to a 50mph speed limit and the assessment has been carried out to determine whether a reduction in speed limit to 40mph would be appropriate in response to requests from local residents.
- 1.3 The Woking Joint Committee has also agreed that a similar assessment should be undertaken for the adjoining section of Guildford Road in Woking between the Borough boundary and Six Crossroads. This length of road is similar in nature to the section being assessed in Runnymede and also currently has a 50mph speed limit.
- 1.4 This report details the outcome of the assessment and the resultant recommendation for the length of Guildford Road considered in Runnymede. An equivalent report is being presented to the Woking Joint Committee for the length of Guildford Road assessed in Woking.
- 1.5 The A320 Guildford Road has been assessed as a strategic route within Surrey's highway network. It is the main road between Woking and Chertsey and is also a key feeder route to the M25.



Guildford Road, Ottershaw

- 1.6 Surrey's policy for determining speed limits was updated in June 2014 and involves an 8 step approach consisting of:

Step 1 – Request to change speed limit is received.

Step 2 – Measure existing speeds and analyse road casualty data.

Step 3 – Compare the existing speeds with the suggested new speed limit.

Step 4 – Conduct feasibility of supporting engineering measures.

Step 5 – Consult with Surrey Police Road Safety and Traffic Management Team.

Step 6 – Local Committee decision and allocation of funding

Step 7 – Advertisement of legal speed limit order and implementation.

Step 8 – Monitoring of success of scheme

- 1.7 There should be no expectation that Surrey Police would be able to provide regular enforcement if a speed limit is set too low as this could result in an unreasonable additional demand on police resources. It is also important to set reasonable speed limits to ensure consistency across the country.

## **2. ANALYSIS:**

### **Vehicle Speeds**

- 2.1 A 7-day automatic traffic survey was undertaken at 2 locations in the length of road assessed. A summary of the speed data recorded (average across both survey locations) is shown in the following table:

Road	Average daily flow	Average 85%ile speed (mph)	Average mean speed (mph)
A320 Guildford Road	12829	48.3	42.5

### **Accident History**

- 2.2 There have been a number of personal injury collisions on the section of Guildford Road being assessed. The table below shows the number of collisions for the 3-year period from June 2012 until May 2015 together with their severity:

Year	Number of collisions			
	Slight	Serious	Fatal	Total
2012 (from June to December)	0	0	0	0
2013	5	0	0	5
2014	2	0	1	3
2015 (until end of May)	1	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>

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- 2.3 Excessive speed was not recorded as a contributing factor for any of the collisions.

### Results of Assessment

- 2.4 Under Step 3 of the policy, the table below compares the requested speed limit, the existing mean speed and the predicted mean speed of the road (should the requested limit be introduced without additional measures).

Road	Current limit	Requested limit	Existing mean speed	Predicted mean speed
A320 Guildford Road	50 mph	40 mph	42.5 mph	39 mph

- 2.5 Based on the guidance in the County Council's current speed limit policy, the recorded vehicle speeds suggest a reduced speed limit of 40mph could be introduced without the need for any additional speed reducing measures. The policy also predicts a reduced mean speed of 39mph (compared with an existing mean speed of 42.5mph) if the lower speed limit were introduced.
- 2.6 The assessment for the Woking section of Guildford Road produced similar results.
- 2.7 Having considered the speed data and other factors, County Council Officers have concerns about the appropriateness of introducing a 40mph speed limit on either the Woking or Runnymede sections of the A320.
- 2.8 Surrey Police have been consulted about the results of the assessment and have expressed similar concerns
- 2.9 In response to these concerns, Officers from Surrey County Council and Surrey Police have visited the location and driven along Guildford Road at different speeds to jointly consider the appropriateness of reducing the existing speed limit.
- 2.10 At certain times of the day, speeds are artificially low due to congestion (and this will have influenced the average speeds recorded). The site visit reinforced the views of both Surrey Police and County Council Officer's that 50mph is an appropriate speed to travel in free flow conditions (although there will be times when prevailing conditions dictate that lower speeds are appropriate as is the case with any speed limit). Furthermore, the existing 50mph speed limit is generally consistent with other roads of a similar nature and function.
- 2.11 It is also noted that, based on the existing speed data, if a 40mph speed limit were introduced then approximately 64% of drivers would exceed the new limit and effectively be criminalised.
- 2.12 As such, it is the opinion of both County Officers and Surrey Police that the existing 50mph speed limit is appropriate and should be retained on the sections of the Guildford Road assessed in both Runnymede and Woking.

**3. OPTIONS:**

- 3.1 The Local Committee is recommended to agree that the existing 50mph speed limit is retained.
- 3.2 In exceptional circumstances the Local Committee may like to proceed with a change to a speed limit against officer advice. In this instance the Local Committee can request that the final decision is taken by the Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Transport.

**4. CONSULTATIONS:**

- 4.1 As outlined previously in the report, detailed consultation has been carried out with Surrey Police's Road Safety and Traffic Management Team and a site visit has also been undertaken.
- 4.2 Surrey Police consider that a reduced speed limit of 40mph would be inappropriate for a road of this nature and function. Its view is therefore that the speed limit over the length of Guildford Road assessed in both Runnymede and Woking should remain at 50mph.

**5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 5.1 There would be no costs associated with retaining the existing 50mph speed limit as recommended.

**6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 6.1 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.

**7. LOCALISM:**

- 7.1 Local communities would be affected by having to comply with the speed limit agreed upon by the Local Committee.

**8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	No significant implications arising from this report
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report

**9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 9.1 This report details the outcome of a speed limit assessment undertaken for the A320 Guildford Road (Ottershaw) in accordance with the County Council's speed limit policy.
- 9.2 The outcome of the speed data assessment suggests a speed limit of 40mph could be introduced over the length of road considered. However, this does not necessarily mean that the speed limit should be reduced. As highlighted within the County Council's speed limit policy it is also important that the desire for lower speeds is balanced against the position of the road within the County Council's Strategic Priority Network and the need to ensure consistency in speed limits and reasonable journey times.
- 9.3 Having considered the outcome of the assessment together with other relevant factors, County Officers and Surrey Police both consider that a reduced speed of 40mph would not be appropriate for a road of this nature and function.
- 9.4 It is therefore recommended that the existing 50mph speed limit is retained over the length of road assessed.
- 9.5 Following a similar assessment of the adjoining section of Guildford Road in Woking, the Woking Joint Committee has also been recommended to agree that the existing 50mph speed limit is retained.

**10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

- 10.1 If the existing speed limit is retained then no further action is required.

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**Contact Officer:**

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**Consulted:**

Surrey Police Road Safety and Traffic Management Team

**Annexes:**

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**Sources/background papers:**

Surrey County Council, "Setting Local Speed Limits", July 2014

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