

Annex C – Surrey Police response to Charlton Lane objections

The following comments were received from Graham Cannon of Surrey Police's Road Safety and Traffic Management Team.

My views have not changed on this matter.

As you will be aware I requested that the speed limit on this road was reviewed as it was on the borough Speed Management Plan and the SDR data in July 2013 indicated that the mean average speeds were sebd 45mph and nebd 44mph. Following this request you have carried out some further speed reading in the latter part of last year and these indicated that combined mean averages were in the region of 37mph. Whilst this is a lot lower than the readings obtained in 2013 they are still above the guidelines in your Speed Limit Policy. Indeed you have confirmed that the current 30mph speed limit does not meet with your policy and there were three options.

- 1) Raise the speed limit to 40mph along the whole of Charlton Lane.
- 2) Keep the limit at 30mph and consider other measures to ensure compliance.
- 3) Raise the limit to 40mph on the majority of the road, but leave it at 30mph from near the rail bridge to the junction with Upper Haliford Road (residential area).

It was felt that it would not be acceptable to local residents to increase the speed limit at the eastern end and that it would be very difficult and costly to introduce any engineering measures that would ensure compliance of the 30mph limit over the entire length of Charlton Lane. In light of this, both SCC and SP agreed that it would be best to go for option 3.

It is accepted in both DfT guidance and comments from Association of Chief Police Officers that in most cases drivers drive at a speed that they feel is correct to the nature of the road. If a road looks and feels like a 30mph limit they will more than likely comply with it. If a limit is inappropriate and artificially low and drivers cannot see the need for such a low limit, then most will drive at what they feel is a sensible speed. We have all agreed that the western section does not look or feel like a 30mph and this is why drivers are driving at the current indicated speeds, which are way above the posted limit. You have a situation where the mean average speeds are near 37mph, which with the ACPO enforcement guidelines being 36mph (discretion -10% plus 2= 35mph) indicates that over 50% of drivers are driving at a speed that the should be reported for. Such mass offending must indicate that the limit is inappropriate rather than the fact that all of these drivers are travelling at an excessive speed.

In my view a change to 40mph in the western section will not result in an increase in vehicle speeds. In other locations where a speed limit is lowered to an inappropriate level, drivers have carried on driving at what they consider to be an appropriate and sensible speed and it has made no difference to the mean average speeds on that road. Therefore I do not see this as being any different and research suggests that drivers drive to the nature of the road and not any unrealistic signed limit.

Indeed, one of the problems is that the current 30mph speed limit is indicated by means of street lighting (restricted road) and therefore apart from the terminal signs, there is no other positive indication to drivers as to what the speed is. Of course if the recommendation is followed and the western section is changed to a 40mph then there will be 40mph repeater signs along the route. I feel that this will have a positive effect on vehicle speeds. Also the eastern section, that is intended to remain at 30mph, will have terminal signs at the very point you want drivers to slow down. Again I feel that this will have a positive impact on vehicle speeds in this more residential area.

Officers from both SCC and SP have agreed that the western section of Charlton Lane does not look or feel like a 30mph. It is wide, there is little pedestrian crossing movement and there is sufficient visibility, in and out of the Waste Collection site, which has a wide protected right turn lane to aid entry. Again all of this would indicate that a 40mph limit would be perfectly acceptable and in keeping with this environment.

In conclusion I remain of the opinion that the speed limit change should be progressed as advertised.

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