

**SPELTHORNE BOROUGH COUNCIL AND
SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**

SPELTHORNE JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 20TH MARCH 2017



SURREY

LEAD OFFICER: NICK HEALEY, AREA HIGHWAY MANAGER (NE)

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO A PETITION: WRAYSBURY ROAD

AREA(S) AFFECTED: STAINES-UPON-THAMES

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

The Spelthorne Joint Committee received a petition from Mrs Claire Peters which contained 96 signatures calling on Surrey County Council to 'Change the Speed Limit on Wraysbury Road (B376) from 40mph to 30mph'. This report responds to the concerns raised.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Spelthorne Joint Committee is asked to:

- (i) Decide whether to proceed with a full speed assessment in the context of a feasibility study, noting that funding of approximately £5,000 would need to be allocated for this purpose.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendations are made to enable the 2017-18 Highways programmes funded by the Joint Committee to be decided in good time to facilitate timely delivery of those programmes.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

1.1 The text of the petition is as follows:

"Wraysbury Road (B376) runs from the M25 roundabout through to Staines town centre. It runs past residential buildings, residential street entrances/exits and fundamentally a very busy and popular family park. There isn't a safe crossing at any part of the road, so our children and other local residents are forced to cross a busy 40mph road. We frequently see drivers reaching much higher speeds. We fear that nothing will change with this road until tragedy strikes, so we are campaigning now to take action. We are asking Surrey County Council to change this road from a 40mph speed limit to a 30mph to keep everyone safe - pedestrians and motorists."

1.2 Wraysbury Road (B376) is classed as a 'B' class road, and has been given a Surrey Priority Network (SPN) code of 2 which is classified as a main distributor - Major Urban Network and inter-Primary Links. Short – medium distance traffic.

Wraysbury Road provides a direct link from the M25 (Jn13) with Staines-upon-Thames town centre.

1.3 Wraysbury Road straddles the County boundary with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. The boundary is just to the southeast of Lammas Drive. The road has a 40mph limit from the county boundary to Moor Lane, a section predominantly rural in aspect, with virtually no frontage development - although it does run alongside the park, which is cited in the petition. Prior to entering Surrey County there is a more urban feel due to the presence of residential houses on the north side of the carriageway therefore a lower speed limit may be deemed more appropriate in this environment, but this would be a matter for the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. It is also likely that vehicle speeds would increase as driving environment changes from urban to more rural when crossing the county boundary when entering Surrey.

1.4 There is single footway on the north side of the road from the County boundary up to the entrance to Lammas Rec, which adds to the rural feel; from this point towards Staines-upon-Thames there are footways on both sides of the carriageway. There is an on carriageway cycle facility. The road has a continuous system of street lighting.

1.5 This section of Wraysbury Road is wide with approximate width at the county boundary 10.8m and approximately 9m outside Lammas Rec.

1.6 The speed limit changes to 30mph at the junction with Moor Lane.

1.7 The road has a continuous system of street lighting.

1.8 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 who unashamedly flout the law, quickly and effectively.

2. ANALYSIS:

- 2.1 Wraysbury Road (B376) is classed as a 'B' class road, and has been given a Surrey Priority Network (SPN) code of 2 which is classified as a main distributor -Major Urban Network and inter-Primary Links. Short – medium distance traffic
- 2.2 A three (3) year personal injury data has been investigated for the section of Wraysbury Road in question between the periods of 1st January 2013 to 31st October 2016. There have been no recorded collisions with the result of personal injury where speed was a contributory factor.
- 2.3 Surrey Police undertook speed surveys in 2012 at the junction with Vicarage Road. This showed average speeds of 46mph Westbound and 43mph Eastbound. Surrey Police have been consulted regarding this petition and will undertake further speed surveys.
- 2.4 By reference to Surrey County Council's Setting Local Speed Limits Policy, it is highly unlikely that a reduction in speed limit would be successful without significant supporting engineering measures. Simply changing the posted speed limit is likely to lead to mass defiance by drivers.
- 2.5 If a speed limit is set too low and is ignored then this could result in the majority of drivers criminalising themselves and could bring the system of speed limits into disrepute. There should be no expectation that the 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.

3. OPTIONS:

Reducing the Speed Limit

- 3.1 Experience has shown that lowering a speed limit on its own will not necessarily reduce speeds sufficiently. If a speed limit is set much lower than the existing traffic speeds then motorists are likely to ignore the limit unless the character of the road or environment indicate otherwise. There are likely to be insufficient police resources to provide effective enforcement for locations where speed limits are unrealistic. Speed limits inform the driver of the environment and hazards they should encounter on such a road.
- 3.2 Any changes to the existing speed limit would be undertaken in consultation with Surrey Police, as they will have the responsibility for the enforcement of the new speed limit.

Traffic Calming

- 3.3 Research has shown that traffic calming measures have a positive effect on reducing speeds and casualties. However, these measures are rarely used on 'B' class roads, where the road's function is to carry large volumes of traffic at reasonable speeds. Significant hard measures would be needed to reduce the current speeds to comply with a 30mph speed limit.
- 3.4 Residents are frequently not supportive of such measures, due to the intrusion element and additional noise and vibration implications from such measures as speed cushions/tables chicanes and other priority devices.

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- 3.5 Experience has shown traffic calming on major roads, shows drivers can often be more focused on their driving line through traffic calming, than on other road users or events.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 Consultations have been carried out with Surrey Police and their view is that they cannot make any comments until a full speed assessment has been carried out by Surrey County Council.
- 4.2 Surrey Police support Surrey County Councils speed limit policy which aligns with national guidance and the police's approach to speed enforcement.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The estimated cost of carrying out speed assessment on the B376 Wraysbury Road in the context of a feasibility study is within the region of £5000.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 It is an objective of Surrey Highways to treat all users of the public highway equally and with understanding.

7. LOCALISM:

- 7.1 The Joint Committee prioritises its expenditure according to local priorities.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 A well-managed highway network can contribute to reduction in crime a disorder as well as improve people's perception of crime.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 Existing signs such as terminal signs and repeater signs are appropriate. There is sufficient information given for a responsible driver to treat the section of road in question with respect.
- 9.2 To introduce a 30 mph limit on Wraysbury Road would require the entire removal of all the existing 40 mph entry and repeater signage and all the existing 30 mph signs from the side roads. In accordance with government legislation 30mph repeater signs would not be allowed to be used therefore there would be less signage to inform drivers of the speed limit after it was reduced than there is now.
- 9.3 Although vertical traffic calming measures would provide positive control on speed, officers would not recommend it for 'B' classified roads because it generates noise and causes problems for snow ploughs.

- 9.4 Any reduction in speed limit would have to be done in conjunction with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 10.1 If the Spelthorne Joint Committee decides to pursue this request, the Area Highways Team, who report to the Spelthorne Joint Committee, will lead the process to assess a potential change in speed limit, in the context of a feasibility study.

The Area Highways Team will be assisted by the Road Safety Team and will consult with Surrey Police's Road Safety and Traffic Management Team.

The output would be a report and recommendations in accordance with Surrey County Council's speed limit policy for consideration by the Joint Committee, who will then decide whether to allocate funding for a scheme to change the existing speed limit or not.

Contact Officer: Nick Healey, Area Highway Manager (NE)

Consulted: None

Annexes: None

Sources/background papers: Setting Local Speed Limits – SCC's Speed Limit Policy

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