

## SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

## LOCAL COMMITTEE (ELMBRIDGE)

DATE: 4 December 2017

SUBJECT: PETITION – A309 roundabout near Hinchley Wood Primary School, road safety

DIVISION: Hinchley Wood, Claygate and Oxshott

**PETITION DETAILS:**

The following petition has been received, with 183 signatories:

Make the A309 roundabout near Hinchley Wood Primary School safe for children

The crossing of the A309 roundabout near Hinchley Wood Primary School (crossing Claygate Lane) is not safe for the hundreds of children using it twice a day to go to school and nursery. Arriving from London, the speed limit is 50mph until very close to the traffic light, where it becomes 40mph. Cars regularly drive at over 60mph in this area. This results in cars often driving through a red signal, and near-accidents involving children starting to cross when the pedestrian signal is green. This is the death of school child in waiting. For the safety of the many children, we ask to:

- 1- Reduce speed to 40mph earlier.
- 2- Reduce speed to 30mph or 20mph near the crossing (this is a built-up area filled with families with small children and should thus NOT be 40mph).
- 3- Place a triangle road sign to inform ahead of the crossing that this is a children crossing area.
- 4- Place a visible and active speed enforcement camera (e.g. yellow box)

Lead petitioners: Joshwa Joseph & Mathilde Bresson-Joseph

**OFFICER COMMENT:****General – how Surrey County Council monitors road safety and prioritises and promotes safety schemes**

The council currently receives funding to be used specifically to reduce road casualties. In partnership with Surrey Police road collisions are monitored across the county. There are thousands of road traffic collisions every year that result in an injury, the vast majority of which are caused by human error. We focus our road safety resources on those sites where there are patterns of casualties, because we can then be reasonably confident of identifying whether an engineering intervention might help reduce the frequency of casualties at a particular site. We then prioritise investment in those sites with the highest frequency of casualties, where we believe an engineering intervention would be beneficial. Given the number of existing sites where there are patterns of casualties, when considering investment in road safety we are obliged to prioritise those sites with the greatest frequency of casualties, ahead of those sites with a lesser frequency of casualties. It is fortunate that this location does not have a recent history of collisions causing injury where a pattern and potential solution can be identified, but it does mean that specific road safety funding could not be justified when compared with other locations.

As well as schemes to specifically address problems evidenced by a history of injuries, Surrey County Council does introduce other local highways improvement schemes. For example, these may be to improve traffic flow, relieve congestion, provide or improve facilities such as pedestrian crossings, or to address locations where residents have highlighted areas of concern. These are the types of schemes promoted via the local committee, with consideration of all schemes and available funding.

### **Road safety**

Surrey Police shares data on collisions where an injury has been recorded. At this location, the available data shows there has been one collision in the five year period to July 2017. This involved a motorcyclist hitting the back of a car leading to slight injury to the motorcyclist.

The signalised crossing on the westbound carriageway has additional high level signal heads on both sides of the westbound carriageway to ensure the signals can be seen from a greater distance. There is also high friction road surfacing to reduce both skidding and vehicle stopping distances on the approach to the crossing. Just after the speed limit change there is an electronic vehicle-activated sign that will illuminate to remind drivers of the 40 mph speed limit if they are approaching too quickly. This demonstrates that this location already benefits from a number of safety measures.

Collision data may be viewed on the publicly-accessible website Crash Map.

<http://www.crashmap.co.uk/>

Pedestrian users of the crossing are reminded that they should not rely solely on the pedestrian signals and that rule 18 of the Highway Code states "When using any type of crossing you should always check that the traffic has stopped before you start to cross or push a pram onto a crossing".

In terms of safety for children travelling to school, Surrey's Safer Travel Team work with schools to improve education and lead the process to assess road safety to and from schools. Assessments have recently been undertaken for Hinchley Wood School and Hinchley Wood Primary School. These recommendations were presented to Elmbridge Local Committee who agreed to support a bid for funding to provide improvement works in the vicinity of the schools. Following a successful bid, funding was allocated for works to improve pedestrian and cyclist facilities. The design of these works is currently in progress.

Surrey's Safer Travel Team also work with schools to assist with School Travel Plans and deliver safety education initiatives. Both Hinchley Wood School and Hinchley Wood Primary School are very active in promoting safety education and sustainable travel initiatives.

Further information on school road safety is available at:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-safety/school-road-safety>

<http://www.drivesmartsurrey.org.uk/i-would-like-to-know-more-about/>

**Speed Limit**

The petition asks:

- 1- Reduce speed to 40mph earlier
- 2- Reduce speed to 30mph or 20mph near the crossing

The existing speed limit changes from 50mph to 40mph approximately 130 metres east of the access to Hengest Avenue. Changing a speed limit requires the making of a legal Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). Police support is essential to effectiveness, as the police are responsible for traffic enforcement. In this instance, an assessment of the speed limit would need to be in accordance with Surrey's Speed Limit Policy which aligns with the approaches of the Department for Transport and Surrey Police.

A speed limit assessment is likely to conclude that 50mph leading to 40mph are suitable limits for the road, which is a bypass and dual carriageway separated by a central strip with safety barriers, with wide verges and few direct accesses from the road. That is not to say that 40mph will always be a suitable speed of travel, depending on road conditions and levels of traffic. As well as being the legal limit, speed limits are a key source of information to road users, particularly as an indicator of the nature and risks posed by that road both to themselves and to all other road users.

The setting of a suitable speed limit aims to ensure that the majority of drivers will naturally drive at the appropriate speed. National guidance and Surrey County Council's policy highlights that changing a speed limit by signs alone has been demonstrated to have very little effect on driver behaviour and in order to achieve compliance of a lower limit, significant traffic calming measures would be required. Physical traffic calming would not be appropriate for the A309 Kingston Bypass which is an A-Road and a significant strategic route. Restrictions would divert traffic onto less suitable routes.

For the above reasons, it is not recommended that the speed limit be reviewed at the current time.

**Road signs**

The petition asks:

- 3- Place a triangle road sign to inform ahead of the crossing that this is a children crossing area

In terms of road signs, Surrey County Council is currently carrying out a programme of decluttering in line with Department for Transport (DfT) guidelines. DfT guidance on reducing clutter advises that the over-provision of signs and markings can have a detrimental impact on the environment and can dilute more important messages if they result in information overload. This aims to ensure that road users are not distracted from important information.

Warning signs in advance of a formal crossing point are generally provided where the visibility on approach is compromised, for example where there is a bend in the road, crest of a hill or another feature affecting visibility. At this location there are advanced warning signs immediately to the west of the roundabout, to warn eastbound drivers of the crossing 80 yards ahead. The westbound approach to the

## ITEM 6

crossing is on a straight alignment with good visibility. The electronic vehicle-activated sign will illuminate to remind drivers of the 40 mph speed limit if they are approaching too quickly.

For the above reasons, it is not recommended that additional signs be provided at the current time.

### **Enforcement**

The petition asks:

4- Place a visible and active speed enforcement camera (e.g. yellow box)

Within Surrey fixed safety enforcement cameras are reserved for the very worst collision hotspots where there has been a serious history of collisions causing injury, and where speeds have been measured and confirmed as being excessive. This ensures that enforcement is prioritised at the sites that need the most attention, and helps maintain public support for safety cameras to improve road safety. Consequently there are no plans to introduce camera enforcement at this site.

Speeding and failure to comply with the traffic signals are essentially police enforcement issues as these are criminal offences, for which the police is the sole highway enforcement agency. The concerns have been raised to Surrey Police for consideration in their enforcement duties. Residents can of course make their own representations. Residents may be interested in the Drive Smart initiative, which has the aims of reducing road casualties, tackling anti-social driving and making the county's roads safer and less stressful for everyone. The below websites include information on reporting concerns, enforcement, education and Community Speed Watch initiatives.

<http://www.drivesmartsurrey.org.uk/i-am-worried-about-the-safety/>

<http://www.surrey.police.uk/contact-us/report-online/report-anti-social-behaviour-and-driving/>

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Local Committee is asked to note the issues raised by the petition and the officer response.

### **Contact Officer:**

Peter Shimadry, Senior Traffic Engineer (NE)

Tel: 0300 200 1003