



I am a Road Safety and Traffic Management officer for Surrey Police and I am authorised to respond on behalf of the Chief Constable to the results of the Speed survey on the A245 Stoke Road at Stoke D'Abernon. .

**In view of the results of the survey, Surrey Police cannot support the continued implementation of a 30mph speed limit at this location.**

- 1.1 Surrey Police fully support the Surrey County Council speed limit policy document "Setting local speed limits 2013" and I was consulted on its various drafts.
- 1.2 I am grateful for the provision of the speed data that has been collected at various locations along this stretch of road. I was fully consulted and I am confident that the data represents a fair reflection of the actual speeds of traffic.
- 1.3 Only sites 1 and 2, have been analysed as there appears to be no historic data for sites 4 and 5 and site 3 is within the 40mph section.

**Basis of concern**

**Site 1**

- 2.1 93,496 vehicle speeds were recorded travelling Westbound. Of these, 74,862 were exceeding the posted speed limit. **That is a non-compliance rate of 80%.** Or, in other words, only a 20% compliance level.
- 2.2 **34,928 vehicles travelling Westbound were travelling faster than the police prosecution threshold. That equates to 37.3% of the total.**
- 2.3 98,085 vehicles were recorded travelling Eastbound. Of these, 77,650 were exceeding the posted speed limit. **That is a non-compliance rate of 79.1%.** Or, in other words, only a 20.9% compliance level.
- 2.4 **35,548 vehicles travelling Eastbound were travelling faster than the police prosecution threshold. That equates to 36.2% of the total.**
- 2.5 The average speeds have risen by around 2 mph in each direction. The DfT equate a 1mph rise in average speeds to a 5% increase in the risk of collisions. **This increase therefore equates to a 10% rise in that possibility. This is wholly unacceptable.**
- 2.6 I am also concerned that the differential in speed between those vehicles travelling at a compliant speed and those who are exceeding the limit, is becoming greater. This may well impact upon the extent of injuries sustained in any collision.
- 2.7 Based on these vehicle speeds I am forced to conclude that the speed limit reduction at this location has been a failure and, over time will directly lead to an increase in

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collisions and an additional demand for police resources. This situation has been entirely created by the reduction of the speed limit.

### **Site 2**

- 3.1 93,788 vehicle speeds were recorded travelling Westbound. Of these, **56,831 were exceeding the posted speed limit. That is a non-compliance rate of 60.5%**. Or, in other words, only around a 40% compliance level.
- 3.2 **17,934 vehicles travelling Westbound were travelling faster than the police prosecution threshold. That equates to 19.1% of the total.**
- 3.3 98,367 vehicles were recorded travelling eastbound. Of these, 49,778 were exceeding the posted speed limit. **That is a non-compliance rate of 50.6%**. Or, in other words, only a 49.4% compliance level.
- 3.4 **14,538 vehicles travelling eastbound were travelling faster than the police prosecution threshold. That equates to 14.7% of the total or over 1 in 6 vehicles.**
- 3.5 Based on these vehicle speeds I am forced to conclude that the speed limit reduction at this location has been a failure and, over time will directly lead to an increase in collisions and an additional demand for police resources. This situation has been entirely created by the reduction of the speed limit.

### **Other sites**

- 4.1 I note with some concern the increase in average speeds by around 5mph at location 3. Whist this is still within the 40mph posted speed limit, any increase in average speeds is unwelcome.

### **Observations**

- 5.1 In my original letter to you I expressed concern that average speeds might rise in the absence of any repeater signs, which cannot be placed where a system of street lights exist. It appears that observation has been proven correct.
- 5.2 Various data from around the country suggests that VAS do not have a significant, long term impact on average speeds. Indeed a long term study in Kingston-on-Thames showed a reduction in averages, by only around 0.2mph. The results of the VAS at this location have been similarly disappointing.
- 5.3 No study of the speeds in the surrounding roads has been undertaken. As the terminal 30mph speed limit signs were removed from these roads, as there is now no difference in the speed limit between these roads and Stoke road, we strongly suspect that average speeds on these roads may well have increased.

### **Conclusion**

- 6.1 None of the sites have shown a significant benefit of a reduced speed limit.
- 6.2 **None of the sites showed the expected 2mph or more reduction in average speeds, that the DfT and the Surrey County Council speed limit policy, anticipated would occur.**
- 6.3 Increases in average speed are directly related to increases in collisions and their severity. As it stands, drivers on this road are now statistically, more likely to sustain injury.

- 6.4 **As an exercise to reduce speed levels, this experiment cannot be construed as a success**
- 6.5 These results are what you would expect **before a speed limit had been reduced; not afterwards**
- 6.6 The implementation of the VAS appears to have had very little impact on the average speeds.

Unless the council are prepared to implement a significant number of speed counter measures to get compliance to a more acceptable level over the entire length of this road, then it would appear that the council have no option but to comply with their speed limit policy and return this speed limit to 40mph.

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Operational Support

Road Safety and Traffic Management Team (Strategic Road network, Tandridge, Epsom and Ewell, Reigate and Banstead, Mole Valley and Elmbridge)

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