

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

LOCAL COMMITTEE (ELMBRIDGE)

DATE: 4TH DECEMBER 2017

**SUBJECT: PETITION TO IMPROVE ROAD SAFETY ON HARE LANE,
CLAYGATE**

DIVISION: OXSHOTT, HINCHLEY WOOD AND CLAYGATE



PETITION DETAILS:

A petition has been received which reads as follows:

We, the undersigned, petition that Surrey County Council (SCC) takes action to reduce the speed of traffic and improve safety for road and footpath users on Hare Lane in Claygate. We believe that SCC must take action to protect local residents, road users and the environment.

Hare Lane is the main artery through Claygate. It is used by a significant amount of local and non-local traffic. It is very narrow and struggles to cope with the large volume of traffic at peak times. Speeds are often in excess of the current 30 mph speed limit. During rare, quieter periods, cars travel at even greater speeds. Aside from the fact that a large proportion of vehicles using the road disregard the speed limit, we believe that the current limit of 30 mph is too high for this stretch of road and that it should be reduced to 20 mph.

Hare Lane is narrow and winding at its western end, with a narrow pavement (sufficient for only one pedestrian) on one side of the road. Vehicles pass very close to pedestrians who are in danger of being hit by wing mirrors – we have testimony from a number of pedestrians who have been hit by mirrors. Large vehicles struggle to pass each other and have been witnessed mounting the pavement for some distance. Cyclists are in great danger and create a hazard to themselves and vehicles trying to pass them. Vehicles frequently take the risk of passing cyclists as they approach blind corners, passing so close that they are in danger of hitting the cyclist. Residents on the opposite side have no footpath fronting their properties and face a perilous exit from their driveways and great danger crossing the road. The single footpath is used by commuters, employees of local businesses, local residents and many school children, some of whom are very young and accompanied by an adult with a pushchair which is only just accommodated by the pavement. The junction with Loseberry Road is particularly hazardous. Vehicles, horses, cyclists and pedestrians joining Hare Lane from Loseberry Road have no line of sight due to the curvature of the road.

Action is needed.

We demand that the Council:

- (i) Reduces the speed limit to 20 mph (at least between The Swan and the railway bridge)
- (ii) Introduces traffic calming measures, for example speed tables, i.e. raising the level of the road, at the entrance to Claygate and at the junction with Loseberry Road.

The petition has subsequently clarified that the section of Hare Lane that the petitioners intended to focus on was between The Swan PH and the railway bridge. The petition has been signed by 75 signatories, including representatives of 25 households in Hare Lane itself. Supporting information has been provided by the petitioners, and is included in Annexes A and B.

OFFICER COMMENT:

The C158 Hare Lane is the main road through Claygate. The section between The Swan PH and the railway bridge is approximately 500m long and connects with Milbourne Lane at its western end. To the south and east Hare Lane continues through the centre of Claygate eventually connecting with High Street. There are approximately 30 residential dwellings that front onto this section of Hare Lane. The environment from the drivers' point of view is semi-rural. There is frontage development on one side of the road, and a near continuous vegetation screen on the other. The geometry of Hare Lane is narrow and twisting in this section. The footways are narrow, sometimes on one side of the road and sometimes on both sides.

The speed limit in Hare Lane is currently 30mph. The petition alleges that drivers are exceeding the 30mph speed limit on a regular basis. The petitioners are encouraged to raise this specific concern with Surrey Police, as Surrey Police are the sole agency with powers to take enforcement action against drivers who exceed the speed limit. Surrey County Council does not have up to date traffic survey data for Hare Lane, and so officers cannot offer specific comments on traffic speeds.

There have been nine injury accidents in Hare Lane in the past three year period for which data is available, with four of these at the junction with Foley Road.

The recently published Esher Transport Study survey results suggest that a significant proportion of traffic in Claygate at peak times is through traffic avoiding the congestion in Esher Town Centre. Committee has agreed to develop a scheme to update and optimise the system that coordinates the traffic signals with the objective of reducing congestion in Esher, which it is hoped would have the result of reducing the desirability of Claygate as a through route compared to Esher. The earliest the scheme in Esher could be delivered would be 2019-20.

In deciding how to respond to the petition, Committee should consider two questions:

- 1) Is it feasible to reduce the speed limit in the subject section of Hare Lane?
- 2) Is it a high priority at the present time?

There are two ways to reduce a speed limit to 20mph: by means of a *20mph limit* or by means of a *20mph zone*.

A *20mph limit* is indicated by terminal and repeater signs, making them very economical to introduce. However a *20mph limit* may only be introduced where traffic speeds are already low enough to be commensurate with a 20mph speed limit. The anecdotal evidence provided with the petition suggests that traffic speeds in Hare Lane are too high to introduce a *20mph limit*.

A *20mph zone* is indicated by terminal signs, and includes traffic calming features at regular intervals to ensure that traffic speeds are low enough to be commensurate with a 20mph speed limit. This makes *20mph zones* very expensive. The anecdotal evidence provided with the petition suggests that a *20mph zone* would be needed to reduce the speed limit to 20mph in Hare Lane. The cost of a *20mph zone* would be in the range £125,000 to £210,000, as a road table or similar feature would be needed every 60m to 100m.

Traffic calming of this sort is not universally popular due to concerns about noise and vibration, and may only be introduced following consultation with residents. Committee will remember that following consultation with residents of Aston Road and The Avenue, traffic calming in these roads was removed when these roads were resurfaced.

In terms of priority, there are a number of factors to consider – including the casualty history of the road, the nature of the road, the use of the road by different road users, and the quality of life for the residents.

There has only been three injury accidents in the past three year period in the subsection section of Hare Lane. No assessment has been undertaken as to whether speed was a contributory factor in these incidents, or indeed whether they might have been prevented if a *20mph zone* had been in place. That said, there is a well-documented statistical relationship that suggests that even for incremental reductions in traffic speeds, the likelihood and severity of road traffic collisions may be reduced.

The nature of the road is not particularly well suited to its use by road users. Pedestrian provision is very poor in places; the narrow twisting geometry is not well suited for high volumes of traffic.

The quality of life consideration is well answered in the supplementary information provided by petitioners in Annexes A and B.

If Committee were minded to take this matter forwards, noting the likely cost of the solution suggested by the petitioners, the next step would be to commission a speed assessment. A speed assessment would include traffic surveys to understand traffic speeds in different locations, and assess the frequency of traffic calming features that would be needed to lower traffic speeds sufficiently to introduce a *20mph zone*. As part of this assessment we would also consult Surrey Police. Consideration would also need to be given to any diversionary routes through Claygate that drivers might choose in preference to a traffic calmed section of Hare Lane, for example Raleigh Drive and Loseberry Road. A speed assessment would cost in the range £3,000 to £5,000, and would need to be funded from the parking surplus.

Committee should note that Claygate Parish Council receives a proportion of CIL payments from developments within Claygate, and may have funding to contribute to a speed assessment, or indeed the implementation of a scheme should one prove feasible.

RECOMMENDATION

The Local Committee is asked to:

- (i) Decide whether to commission a speed assessment funded from the parking surplus, bearing in mind the likely cost of the solution suggested by the petitioners.

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