

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**LOCAL COMMITTEE (TANDRIDGE)**

DATE: 1 MARCH 2019
LEAD OFFICER: ZENA CURRY, AREA HIGHWAY MANAGER



SUBJECT: A25 GODSTONE ROAD, BLETCHINGLEY
 SPEED LIMIT REVIEW

DIVISION: GODSTONE

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

The speed limit on a section of the A25 Godstone Road in Bletchingley was reduced from 50mph to 30mph in 2012, this 30mph speed limit could not be installed by signs alone due to the high mean speeds. Therefore a “gateway” feature was installed to support the reduced speed limit.

A speed limit assessment was carried out to investigate the effectiveness of the speed limit change, following the process set out in Surrey’s policy “Setting Local Speed Limits”. This assessment showed that the reduction in the speed limit from 50mph to 30mph and the installation of a “gateway” feature has not resulted in a significant reduction in vehicle speeds. Therefore the existing 30mph is not appropriate for this section of the A25 under SCC’s existing speed limit policy, without further supporting engineering measures. There are no further supporting engineering measures that can be installed on this major strategic route that would result in mean speeds reducing by at least 6.8mph to meet Surrey County Council’s policy for a 30mph speed limit.

It is therefore proposed that the existing 30mph speed limit in a section of the A25 Godstone Road where the mean speeds do not comply with the SCC’s Cabinet approved speed limit policy, be increased to 40mph. This will create a stepped speed limit reduction from 50mph that exists on the next section of the A25. This report seeks approval for the changes to the speed limit in accordance with Surrey’s policy. If the Local Committee disagree with the recommendations presented to them by the Area Highways Manager and wish to proceed with an alternative option, then the issue must be submitted for decision by the Cabinet Member responsible for road safety.

This report has been deferred on three occasions, firstly from the Local Committee meeting on 23 September 2016, to allow for the completion of the residential development in Knights Way. Once the Knights Way development was completed, it was deferred for a second time at the meeting on 22 June 2018 pending gathering of further background information, and it was deferred a third time at the meeting on 21 September 2018 to consider the motion put forward and to a review of the speed limits coming out of Godstone, to the Tandridge boundary to be carried out.

The Local Committee have also received a petition signed by 513 local residents, a public question and six letters from District Councillors, Godstone Village

Association, Divers Cove Ltd, Orpheus Centre and Bletchingley Parish Council regarding their support for the petition and concerns on this part of the A25 between Bletchingley Village and Godstone village.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Tandridge) is asked to:

- (i) Note the results of the speed limit assessments carried out on the A25 between Godstone and the Tandridge boundary;
- (ii) Agree that, based upon the evidence, the speed limit be increased from 30mph to 40mph in the section of the A25, Godstone Road between the existing 30mph speed limit terminal signs in line with the property boundary between 14 Sunnybank Villas and Waterhouse Villa and a point 15m north-east of the north-eastern building line of the property Avalon; in the un-named service road fronting the properties Laburnums, Tall Trees Moorings, Dormers and Longacre; and in the un-named service road fronting the properties Somerstone, Pennyacre, Tonbridge and Waterhouse Villa and nos. 9 – 14 Sunnybank Villas, in accordance with Surrey’s policy “Setting Local Speed Limits”;

And;

Decrease the speed limit on the following roads from 50mph to 40mph to comply with all expert advice, in accordance with SCC’s Setting Local Speed Limits policy:

A25, Bletchingley Road, Godstone between the existing 30mph speed limit terminal signs at Godstone in line with property boundary between Priority Gates and 14 The Priory and a point 100m south-west of the junction with North Park Lane.

The un-named service road fronting the properties Tulip House and no. 1 Ivy House Cottages

- (iii) Authorise the advertisement of a notice in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, the effect of which will be to implement the proposed speed limit change, revoke any existing traffic orders necessary to implement the change, and, subject to no objections being upheld, that the order be made;
- (iv) Authorise delegation of authority to the Area Highway Manager in consultation with the Chairman, who is also the local divisional Member and the Vice-Chairman of the Local Committee to resolve any objections received in connection with the proposal.

In line with the SCC setting local speed limit policy if the Local Committee disagree with the recommendations presented to them by the Area Highways Manager and wish to proceed with an alternative option, then the issue must be submitted for decision by the Cabinet Member responsible for road safety.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The recorded mean speeds within the section of the A25 Godstone Road, shown in Table 1, are appropriate for a 40mph speed limit rather than the existing 30mph speed limit. Drivers who currently comply with the 30mph speed limit are made vulnerable to an increased risk of rear end collisions, or an inappropriate overtaking manoeuvre, because of the differential in speed between them and the average driver. Speed differentials are directly proportional to an increased risk of injury. This issue has been presented to the Local Committee since September 2016, and if the Council continue to not address this road safety issue it could mean that the Council are held accountable for any future personal injury collisions, where speed is found to be a contributory factor.

The previous speed limit reduction from 50mph to 30mph, and the installation of a “gateway” feature has not been successful in reducing vehicle speeds towards compliance with the new lower speed limit. Consideration has been given to other engineering measures that may be possible to install to encourage greater compliance with the speed limit. However, there are no suitable engineering measures that can be installed, on this major strategic route to encourage greater compliance with the existing 30mph speed limit. Or result in reducing mean speeds by 6.8mph (i.e 35mph) to at least meet Surrey County Council’s speed limit policy for a signed only 30mph speed limit. When this section of the A25 Godstone Road was reduced to a 30mph limit, this was not based on an attempt to address a collision issue, as this section of the A25 Godstone Road, despite significant traffic flows, has never had a significant collision problem.

The existing mean speeds comply with Surrey County Council’s speed limit policy for a 40mph limit. It is therefore proposed to increase the existing speed limit from 30mph to 40mph. Surrey Police have stated that they would be able to support the 40mph speed limit by authorising community speed watch to operate along this section.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 In November 2012 a speed limit order was made to decrease the 50mph speed limit on the A25 Godstone Road, Chevington Villas and Sunnybank Villas in Bletchingley from 50mph to 30mph. This order was made following agreement by Tandridge Local Committee at their meeting in 9 December 2011 that the speed limit be reduced. The speed limit policy in force in 2011 did not support a speed limit reduction to 30mph by signs alone. However Surrey Police had no objection to the extension of the 30mph speed limit, but asked that a prominent gateway feature be installed.
- 1.2 Chevington Villas and Sunnybank Villas are short roads which just provide access to the properties on these roads. Existing speeds on these roads are low, due to their length and width being significantly less than the main A25 Godstone Road. The reason for including these roads to be the same limit as the main A25 carriageway is to eliminate the need for additional speed limit signs at the entrance and exit of both roads. The nature of these roads is that a low speed of traffic is self-enforcing.
- 1.3 On 28 November 2012 the existing 30mph speed limit came into force. Within the same period, and as agreed within the minutes of the Local Committee

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meeting held on 9th December 2011 a “gateway” was installed, which consisted of a 30mph road marking, buff coloured surfacing and dragons teeth markings. As shown in the images contained within **Annex 1**. This is in accordance with Step 7 of Surrey’s Setting Speed Limits Policy – “Advertisement of legal speed limit order and implementation”. Bletchingley Parish Council installed a decorative sign on a timber gateway stating “Welcome to the Historic Borough of Bletchingley”.

- 1.4 It was hoped that a gateway feature could have been installed on the highway verge on the northern side of the carriageway, opposite the existing sign. However, the highway verge on the northern side of the carriageway was of insufficient width to install a sign at this location.
- 1.5 In July 2014, Surrey County Council’s policy for determining speed limits was updated. The aim of Surrey County Council’s policy is to set speed limits that are successful in managing vehicle speeds and are appropriate for the main use of the road. The policy also sets out that the desire for lower speeds has to be balanced against the need for reasonable journey times and the position of the road within the county’s Strategic Priority Network. This policy was developed with reference to national policy issued by central government “Setting Local Speed Limits Department for Transport Circular 01/2013”, and national policy issued by the Association of Chief Police Officers “Speed Enforcement Policy Guidelines 2011 to 2015: Joining Forces for Safer Roads”.
- 1.6 Surrey’s policy for determining speed limits states that after a scheme is implemented, surveys should be carried out to check whether the scheme has been successful in reducing vehicle speeds towards compliance with the new lower speed limit. If the scheme has not been successful in reducing vehicle speeds then a further report should be brought to the Local Committee. Consideration should either be given to any further engineering measures that may be possible to encourage greater compliance with the speed limit or alternatively the new lower speed limit could be removed and the road returned to the original or different higher speed limit. It should be noted that some forms of traffic calming will not be appropriate on major routes with large traffic flows and heavy vehicles such as the A25.
- 1.7 A speed survey to assess the effectiveness of the speed limit reduction, implemented in 2012 was carried out in July 2016 on the A25 Godstone Road. The existing speed limits and results of the speed limit surveys are shown in **Annex 2**.
- 1.8 The policy also states that the length of road over which a speed limit change is being considered should be at least 600m. This is to ensure against too many speed limit changes that could be confusing to the motorist within a short stretch of road. However in some cases a slightly shorter length may be suitable where the existing highway or roadside feature provides a natural threshold which may complement a change in speed limit.
- 1.9 A report recommending a reduction in the speed limit on the A25 Godstone Road in Bletchingley was considered by Tandridge Local Committee at their meeting on 23 September 2016. It was decided at that meeting to defer the decision so that consultation could be carried out with residents, Parish and District Councils regarding the recommended increase in speed limit to 40mph. Following this consultation this report has been deferred on three occasions, firstly from the Local Committee meeting on 23 September 2016, to allow for the completion of

the residential development in Knights Way. Once the Knights Way development was completed, it was deferred for a second time at the meeting on 22 June 2018 pending gathering of further background information, and it was deferred a third time at the meeting on 21 September 2018 to consider the motion put forward by Cllr Cannon and review of the speed limits coming out of Godstone, to the Tandridge boundary to be carried out.

- 1.10 The results of this consultation regarding the proposal to increase the speed limit, was presented to the Local Committee on 21 September 2018. The minutes of that meeting which were agreed by the Local Committee at their meeting on 30 November 2018. States the following;

“Cllr Cannon proposed an alternative recommendation. He proposed that the ‘decision on this item should be deferred until such time as the officers have implemented the supporting engineering measures decided in 2011 and any other such engineering measures that are considered necessary such as moving the VAS sign, a speed camera and pedestrian refuge, and until such time as they are ready to bring to the Local Committee a holistic and strategic response to the whole section of the A25 from Chevington Villas to Bletchingley to the boundary of Godstone where the 30mph sign is currently located to take account of the new information received from the petitioners, Parish Council, local District Councillors, Orpheus Centre, Godstone Village Association and Divers Cove’.

This was seconded by Cllr Martin Fisher. Members agreed to remove the reference to ‘pedestrian refuge’ from the proposal, as achieving this is something that would take a long time.”

“The committee moved to take a decision. Members requested a report back to the committee within 3 months, to consider the full stretch of road holistically”

“At this point, the proposed recommendation put forward by councillor Cannon during the discussion was read to the committee, with the removal of the reference to the pedestrian refuge. Members verbally indicated they supported this proposal”.

“Mr Hodge declared that the proposal was not correct. The recommendation should be that members have listened to the public. The public are clear that we want a review of the speed limits coming out of Godstone, to the Tandridge boundary. What is the right speed that officers should recommend to councillors. Then members can take a decision. If the route was 30mph, the committee could look at whether it is possible to have average speed cameras along this stretch. Members verbally indicated agreement with this”.

“The chairman confirmed that the committee was agreeing to defer the item, for officers to return with a new report”.

- 1.11 **Annex 2** shows the existing speed limits that are in place coming out of Godstone to the Tandridge boundary. The results of the speed surveys show that the mean speeds show good compliance with the existing speed limits between Godstone and the Tandridge boundary, except site 4 and site 5, where existing mean speeds do not show good compliance with the existing 30mph speed limit, but do comply with SCC’s speed limit policy for a 40mph limit.

2. ANALYSIS:

A25 Godstone Road, Bletchingley (30mph)

- 2.1 In December 2011, a decision was taken by the Tandridge Local Committee to reduce the speed limit on the A25 Godstone Road, Bletchingley, from a point 126m west of the junction with Water House Lane to a point 242m east of the junction with Rabies Heath Road from 50mph to 30mph. However, the road character was assessed as rural and the “preferred limit” determined as 50mph using the appropriate hierarchy from Surrey’s speed management policy document at that time “Determining and Applying Speed Limits”. Also a speed survey at the time recorded mean speed along this section of the A25 Godstone Road of 44.1mph. Mean speeds reflect the speed which the majority of drivers perceive as the most appropriate speed for that road. However, it was suggested that the speed limit should be reduced to 30mph rather than 40mph and a prominent gateway feature introduced, to try to reduce mean speeds to 30mph.
- 2.2 This section of road has previously been subject to a 60mph and 50 mph limit, when it was reduced to a 30mph limit. This was not based on an attempt to address a collision issue at this location, despite significant traffic flows, has never had a significant collision history and has never been referred to the Road Safety Working Group.
- 2.3 Increasing the speed limit from its current level will still mean, that it is below the 50mph speed limit that it was prior to the installation of the 30mph speed limit.
- 2.4 In November 2012 a speed limit order was made to decrease the 50mph speed limit on a section of the A25 Godstone Road, Chevington Villas and Sunnybank Villas in Bletchingley from 50mph to 30mph. A “gateway” feature consisting of 30mph road marking roundel, buff coloured surfacing and dragon’s teeth markings were also installed to further highlight to drivers the new 30mph speed limit.
- 2.5 In July 2016 a seven day automatic speed survey was carried out by Surrey County Council to review whether or not the installation of the 30mph speed limit and “gateway” feature has been effective at reducing the speed. A Speed Detection Radar (SDR) survey was also carried out by Surrey Police between 31 January and 7 February 2018 to further analyse vehicle speeds. The locations and results of these surveys are shown in **Annex 2**, the results of these surveys are also shown in **Table 1** below;

Table 1 – Results of speed surveys within existing 30mph speed limit

	Mean Speeds	
	Northeast bound	Southwest bound
Automatic speed survey (July 2016)	41.8mph	39.2mph
Speed Detection Radar (January/February 2018)	41mph	37mph

- 2.6 The results in **Table 1** above and in **Annex 2** show that the existing mean speeds do not comply with Surrey County Council's "Setting Local Speed Limits" policy, for a 30mph speed limit, without further supporting measures being installed. This policy was approved by the county council's cabinet on 24 June 2014 and became effective on 3 July 2014. The policy has been developed with reference to national policy issued by central government "Setting Local Speed Limits, Department for Transport Circular 01/2013" and national policy issued by the Association of Chief Police Officers, "Speed Enforcement Policy Guidelines 2011 to 2015: Joining Forces for Safer Roads".
- 2.7 Because the existing mean speeds are well above the existing 30mph speed limit, the difference between the 30mph speed limit currently in place and the mean speeds creates an increased risk of a rear end collision or an inappropriate overtaking manoeuvre, due to drivers driving at the 30mph limit.
- 2.8 An assessment of personal injury collisions 5 years before and 5 years after the speed limit was reduced from 50mph to 30mph, using data provided by Surrey Police is shown in **Table 2** below.

Table 2 – Personal Injury Collisions

	Personal Injury Collisions		
	Slight Injury	Serious Injury	Fatal Injury
5 years before speed limit was reduced (from 01/12/07 – 31/11/12)	1	0	0
5 years after speed limit was reduced (from 0/12/12 – 31/11/17)	1	0	0

The personal injury collision data provided by Surrey Police also shows that there has been no personal injury collisions from 01/12/17 to 31/10/18, the most recent data that is available.

- 2.9 Because the existing mean speeds are much higher than the existing 30mph speed limit, the following consideration has been given to what supporting engineering measures could be installed to reduce the existing mean speed by at least 6.8mph to comply with Surrey County Council's policy for a signed only 30mph speed limit.

Physical engineering measures (chicanes, priority give-way arrangements, speed humps, speed cushions, build outs)

Physical traffic calming measures, such as chicanes, priority give-way arrangements, speed humps and speed cushions are not appropriate for the A25 which is a major strategic economic route.

Road narrowing/traffic islands

Road narrowing would not be suitable for a major strategic economic route such as the A25 which needs to be used by heavy goods vehicles. Road safety concerns are frequently raised by residents regarding existing narrow sections of the A25, such as the short section through Nutfield. Traffic islands are also sometimes used as a form of traffic calming measure by narrowing the road. The use of traffic islands as a feature to maintain low speeds is only effective when used in combination with other physical calming measures such as build outs, or when significantly narrowing the road. For a major strategic route such as the A25, significant road narrowing using islands would not be suitable.

Additional speed limit signs

This section of the A25 Godstone Road is classed as a restricted road under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The system of street lighting in the road indicates to drivers that the speed limit is 30mph. Surrey, as highway authority, has to comply with national regulations covering the signing of speed limits. For a restricted road the 30mph speed limit can only be signed at it's terminal points and it is not permitted to use additional repeater signs or 30mph road markings.

Moving the existing Vehicle Activated Sign

There is currently a vehicle activated sign within the 30mph limit, just to the east of the junction with Rabies Heath Road. This vehicle activated sign flashes 30mph with a safety camera image to notify drivers that they are approaching a safety camera.

Vehicle Activated Signs have proved to have been effective at reducing mean speeds, however their effectiveness is limited, with the average reduction in mean speed being 4mph.

Relocating the existing vehicle activated sign closer to the start of the existing 30mph speed limit would not reduce the mean speeds by the 6.8mph needed in order for the mean speeds to comply with Surrey County Council's policy for a 30mph speed limit.

Installing a safety camera

Surrey County Council's policy for safety cameras is that they are reserved for the very worst collision hotspots where there has been a history of personal injury collisions involving vehicles exceeding the speed limit. The reason for this is that new fixed cameras are very costly to install, and then require ongoing maintenance by the council and ongoing processing of offences by the police. Consequently Surrey County Council cannot afford to expend limited resources on cameras for all the roads for which they are requested, and instead we reserve them for the most dangerous roads where they are needed the most.

In order to further investigate the feasibility of installing a safety camera on the section of the A25 Godstone Road, Bletchingley that was previously 50mph. Surrey County Council has analysed the personal injury collision database. This database contains personal injury collision data for traffic

collisions that have occurred over the most recent 3 year period for which data is available (from 01/11/2015 to 31/10/2018) this information has been provided directly by Surrey Police and shows that there has been no personal injury collisions on this section of the A25 Godstone Road, Bletchingley over this period. Therefore it is not possible to install a safety camera on this section of the A25 Godstone Road, Bletchingley and the installation of a safety camera would not be supported by Surrey Police.

Average speed cameras

Surrey County Council follows national guidance in that average speed cameras are only introduced on stretches of road where there has been a history of personal injury collisions, where speeds have been measured and found to be excessive, and where the police are satisfied that the speed limit is appropriate. This approach ensures that there is continuing public support for speed cameras as a road safety tool and that finite enforcement resources are focused on roads that need the most attention.

On the 30mph section of the A25 Godstone Road, which was reduced from 50mph in November 2012, there has been no personal injury collisions over the most recent 3 year period for which data is available (from 01/11/15 to 31/10/2018). Also following the results of the recent speed surveys along this section of the A25 Surrey Police are not satisfied that the current 30mph speed limit is appropriate, and it does not comply with the county council's speed limit policy (which the police also endorse). Therefore Surrey Police and Surrey County Council will not agree to the large investment required to introduce average speed cameras, and the ongoing resource that would be required to process offences.

Summary

- 2.10 The results of the speed surveys that have been carried out, show mean speeds 11.8mph above the 30mph speed limit, and 6.8mph above the mean speed for a 30mph speed limit under Surrey County Council's speed limit policy. Therefore as per Surrey County Council's speed limit policy consideration has been given to further engineering measures that could be installed to encourage greater compliance with the 30mph speed limit. As set out above there are no further suitable engineering measures that could be installed on this major strategic economic route, to encourage greater compliance with the existing 30mph speed limit. There are also no further suitable engineering measures that could result in reducing mean speeds by 6.8mph (i.e 35mph) to at least meet Surrey County Council's speed limit policy for a 30mph speed limit.
- 2.11 Prior to the introduction of a 30mph speed limit along this section of the A25 Godstone Road in November 2012, the speed limit was 50mph. It is not proposed to increase the speed limit back up to 50mph, but to install a 40mph speed limit. This is so that it better reflects the mean speed of drivers driving along this section of the A25, and to reduce the risk of rear end collisions and inappropriate overtaking manoeuvres. This change in the speed limit, will also help to create a stepped speed limit reduction from the existing 50mph to the east of this point.

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2.12 It is understood that there are concerns that mean speeds will increase to the same mean speeds prior to the speed limit being reduced from 50mph to 30mph. However, there is no evidence that the mean speed would increase following an increase in the speed limit. Evidence shows that mean speed decrease when the speed limit is appropriate. The existing gateway feature will also remain in place and enhanced new signing at the start of the new 30mph. A 40mph speed limit along this section of the A25 would comply with all expert advice, would comply with national policy issued by central government, national policy issued by the Association of Chief Police officers and Surrey County Council's own speed limit policy. It would also match with the existing mean speeds. At present because the existing 30mph speed limit goes against national policy, Surrey Police is unable to authorise community speed watch to operate along this section. Surrey Police have stated that they would be able to support the 40mph speed limit by authorising community speed watch to operate along this section.

2.13 It is understood that there are concerns that the increase in the existing speed limit will result in a decrease in road safety. This section of road has previously been subject to a 60mph and 50 mph limit. When it was reduced to a 30mph limit, this was not based on an attempt to address a collision issue, as this location, despite significant traffic flows and previous speed limits of 60mph and 50mph, has never had a significant collision problem. Therefore there is no evidence to suggest that the collision rate will increase as a result in the increase from 30mph to 40mph.

2.14 A plan detailing the proposed new limit is attached as **Annex 3**.

2.15 There are other locations around the county where 30mph speed limits have been increased due to regular non-compliance with the 30mph speed limit and where no suitable engineering measures can be installed to ensure regular compliance with the existing 30mph, and where Surrey Police and Surrey County Council officers consider it safe to do so. For example in Chantilly Way, Epsom, where mean speeds were recorded before and after the 30mph speed limit was increased to 40mph as shown in **Table 3**.

Table 3 – Speed survey results before and after increase in speed limit

	Before (speed limit 30mph)	After (speed limit 40mph)
Northwest Bound	34.6mph	33.9mph
Southeast Bound	35mph	31.9mph

2.16 The results in **Table 3**, are at face value counter intuitive, in that the increase in speed limit has resulted in a reduction in the mean speeds. The reason for this can be explained because the existing national regulations for the signing of 30mph speed limits does not permit 30mph repeater signs to be installed on roads where there is a system of street lighting in place. As a result on roads like Chantilly Way, Epsom which is similar to the section of the A25 Godstone Road, was without 30mph speed limit repeater signs when it was a 30mph speed limit. Chantilly Way is also similar to this section of the

A25 in that it is wide, straight and with limited properties along it. Drivers do not see a reason to comply with the existing 30mph. Increasing the speed limit to 40mph on Chantilly Way has meant that it has been possible to install 40mph repeater speed limit signs, which has served as a useful reminder to drivers of the 40mph speed limit and has insured greater compliance and a reduction in mean speeds.

2.17 The proposed 40mph speed limit in Godstone Road will slow westbound traffic on the approach to Bletchingley, acting as a buffer between the 50mph and the 30mph sections of Godstone Road. The existing VAS which is outside the cemetery and on the approach to the existing safety camera within the 30mph speed limit will be updated through the safety camera partnership.

2.18 The length of the proposed 40mph speed limit is approximately 400m. It is acknowledged that this is a shorter length than 600m as stated in the policy "Setting Local Speed Limits". However the northern boundary of Sunnybank Villas provides a natural threshold that complements the change in speed limit.

A25 Godstone Road – between existing 30mph and North Park Lane

2.19 A speed survey was carried out on the A25 Godstone Road between the existing 30mph speed limit and the junction with North Park Lane in July 2018, the results of the speed survey are shown in **Annex 2** and are copied in **Table 4** below.

Table 4 – Results of speed surveys within existing 50mph speed limit

	Mean Speeds	
	Northeast bound	Southwest bound
Automatic speed survey (July 2018)	48.6mph	47.4mph

2.20 The results of the survey show good compliance with the existing 50mph speed limit, and that the mean speeds comply with Surrey County Council's "Setting Local Speed Limits" policy for a signed only 50mph speed limit. A review of the personal injury collision data for traffic collisions that have occurred over the most recent 5 year period for which data is available (from 01/11/2013 to 31/10/2018), shows that 1 serious personal injury collision has occurred along this section of the A25. However Surrey Police did not record vehicle speed as a contributory factor in the cause of this collision.

2.21 Surrey County Council has received requests to reduce the speed limit on this section of the A25 from 50mph to 40mph. The results in **Table 4** show that existing speeds are 8.6mph above a 40mph limit and 2.6mph above Surrey County Council's speed limit policy for a signed only 40mph limit. Therefore the following consideration has been given to what supporting engineering measures could be installed to reduce the existing mean speed by at least 2.6mph to comply with Surrey County Council's policy for a 40mph speed limit.

Physical engineering measures (chicanes, priority give-way arrangements, speed humps, speed cushions, build outs)

As mentioned previously physical traffic calming measures, such as chicanes, priority give-way arrangements, speed humps and speed cushions are not appropriate for the A25 which is a major strategic economic route.

Road narrowing/traffic islands

As mentioned previously road narrowing would not be suitable for a major strategic economic route such as the A25, which needs to be used by heavy vehicles. Road safety concerns are frequently raised by residents regarding existing narrow sections of the A25, such as the short section through Nutfield. Traffic islands are also sometimes used as a form of traffic calming measure by narrowing the road. The use of traffic islands as a feature to maintain low speeds is only effective when used in combination with other physical calming measures such as build outs, or when significantly narrowing the road. For a major strategic route such as the A25, significant road narrowing using islands would not be suitable.

Additional speed limit signs

The existing mean speeds along this section of the A25 show good compliance with the existing 50mph limit. Therefore there is no need for additional speed limit signs to reduce the existing mean speeds. Surrey County Council's speed limit policy does not permit a signed only speed limit reduction to 40mph, because there is no evidence to suggest that installing 40mph signs would result in a reduction in the mean speeds to 40mph.

Vehicle activated sign

The existing vehicle activated sign, just to the east of the junction with Rabies Heath Road, flashes 30mph with a safety camera image to notify drivers that they are approaching a safety camera. Moving this sign in order to try to reduce mean speeds to comply with Surrey County Council's policy for a 40mph speed limit would mean that the vehicle activated sign would be too far from the existing safety camera.

However, vehicle activated signs have proved to be effective at reducing mean speeds at certain locations, with an average reduction in mean speed of 4mph at some locations. Such a reduction would reduce mean speeds to meet Surrey County Council's speed limit policy for a 40mph speed limit along this section of the A25. However it should be noted that, as per Surrey County Council's speed limit policy, at least 3 months following implementation of the scheme (i.e the 40mph speed limit and vehicle activated signs) a week automatic speed survey will be carried out. If it is found that the scheme has not been successful in reducing mean speeds to comply with Surrey County Council's speed limit policy, a further report will be submitted to the local committee for consideration and decision. The report will include a summary of before and after speed surveys and consideration of any further engineering measures that may be possible to encourage greater compliance with the new 40mph speed limit. An alternative could be to remove the new lower speed limit and return to the original, or different, higher speed limit.

The introduction of vehicle activated signs either end of a new 40mph speed limit, between the start of the existing 30mph limit and the junction with North Park Lane will be added to the Integrated Transport Scheme list for possible future funding.

Installing a safety camera

Surrey County Council's policy for safety cameras is that they are reserved for the very worst collision hotspots where there has been a history of personal injury collisions involving vehicles exceeding the speed limit. The reason for this is that new fixed cameras are very costly to install, and then require ongoing maintenance by the council and ongoing processing of offences by the police. Consequently Surrey County Council cannot afford to expend limited resources on cameras for all the roads for which they are requested, and instead we reserve them for the most dangerous roads where they are needed the most.

In order to further investigate the feasibility of installing a safety camera on the section of the A25 Godstone Road, Bletchingley between the existing 30mph speed limit and the junction with North Park Lane, Surrey County Council has analysed the personal injury collision database. As mentioned previously, during the most recent 5 year period for which data is available (from 01/11/2013 to 31/10/2018), 1 serious personal injury collision has occurred along this section of the A25. However Surrey Police did not record vehicle speed as a contributory factor in the cause of this collision and the number of collisions on this section of the A25 is low when compared with other roads across the county. Therefore it is not possible to install a safety camera on this section of the A25 Godstone Road, Bletchingley and the installation of a safety camera would not be supported by Surrey Police.

Average speed cameras

Surrey County Council follows national guidance in that average speed cameras are only introduced on stretches of road where there has been a history of personal injury collisions, where speeds have been measured and found to be excessive, and where the police are satisfied that the speed limit is appropriate. This approach ensures that there is continuing public support for speed cameras as a road safety tool and that finite enforcement resources are focused on roads that need the most attention.

On the section of the A25 Godstone Road, between the existing 30mph limit and the junction with North Park Lane, there has been 1 serious personal injury collision over the most recent 5 year period for which data is available (from 01/11/13 to 31/10/2018). However Surrey Police did not record vehicle speed as a contributory factor in the cause of this collision and the number of collisions on this section of the A25 is low when compared with other roads across the county.

Also following the results of the recent speed surveys along this section of the A25, which show good compliance with the existing 50mph speed limit, Surrey Police and Surrey County Council will not agree to the large investment required to introduce average speed cameras, and the ongoing resource that would be required to process offences. They would also not support the large investment that would be required to introduce average speed cameras to support a reduction in the speed limit to 40mph.

Summary

When taking account of the recorded mean speeds along the section of the A25 between the existing 30mph limit and the junction with North Park Lane, additional engineering measures would be needed before a 40mph speed limit could be installed. The introduction of vehicle activated signs, have proved to be effective at reducing mean speeds at certain locations, with an average reduction in mean speed of 4mph. Therefore the introduction of vehicle activated signs either end of a new 40mph speed limit, between the start of the existing 30mph limit and the junction with North Park Lane will be added to the Integrated Transport Scheme list for possible future funding.

A25 Bletchingley Road – between the junction with North Park Lane and the existing 30mph speed limit in Godstone.

2.22 A speed survey was carried out on the A25 Bletchingley Road between the junction with North Park Lane and the existing 30mph speed limit in Godstone in February 2019, the results of the speed survey are shown in **Annex 2** and are copied in **Table 5** below.

Table 5 – Results of speed surveys within existing 50mph speed limit

	Mean Speeds	
	Eastbound	Westbound
Automatic speed survey (February 2019)	44.1mph	44.9mph

2.23 The results of the survey show mean speeds lower than the existing 50mph speed limit. A review of the personal injury collision data for traffic collisions that have occurred over the most recent 5 year period for which data is available (from 01/11/2013 to 31/10/2018), shows that 3 slight personal injury collisions have occurred along this section of the A25. However Surrey Police did not record vehicle speed as a contributory factor in the cause of these collisions.

2.24 Surrey County Council has received requests to reduce the speed limit on this section of the A25 from 50mph to 30mph. The results in **Table 5** show that existing mean speeds are 14.9mph above a 30mph speed limit and 9.9mph above Surrey County Council’s speed limit policy for a signed only 30mph limit. Therefore the following consideration has been given to what supporting engineering measures could be installed to reduce the existing mean speed by at least 9.9mph to comply with Surrey County Council’s policy for a signed only 30mph limit.

Physical engineering measures (chicanes, priority give-way arrangements, speed humps, speed cushions, build outs)

As previously mentioned, physical traffic calming measures, such as chicanes, priority give-way arrangements, speed humps and speed cushions are not appropriate for the A25 which is a major strategic economic route.

Road narrowing/traffic islands

As mentioned previously road narrowing would not be suitable for a major strategic economic route such as the A25, which needs to be used by heavy vehicles. Road safety concerns are frequently raised by residents regarding existing narrow sections of the A25, such as the short section through Nutfield. Traffic islands are also sometimes used as a form of traffic calming measure by narrowing the road. The use of traffic islands as a feature to maintain low speeds is only effective when used in combination with other physical calming measures such as build outs, or when significantly narrowing the road. For a major strategic route such as the A25, significant road narrowing using islands would not be suitable.

Additional speed limit signs

The existing mean speeds along this section of the A25 show very good compliance with the existing 50mph limit. Therefore there is no need for additional speed limit signs to reduce the existing mean speeds. Surrey County Council's speed limit policy does not permit a signed only speed limit reduction to 30mph, because there is no evidence to suggest that installing 30mph signs would result in a reduction in the mean speeds to 30mph.

Vehicle Activated signs

Vehicle activated signs have proved to be effective at reducing mean speeds at certain locations, with an average reduction in mean speed of 4mph at some locations. Such a reduction would not be sufficient to meet Surrey County Council's speed limit policy for a 30mph speed limit along this section of the A25, which would require a mean speed reduction of 9.9mph.

Installing a safety camera

Surrey County Council's policy for safety cameras is that they are reserved for the very worst collision hotspots where there has been a history of personal injury collisions involving vehicles exceeding the speed limit.

In order to further investigate the feasibility of installing a safety camera on the section of the A25 Bletchingley Road, Godstone between the junction with North Park Lane and the existing 30mph speed limit at Godstone, Surrey County Council has analysed the personal injury collision database. As mentioned previously, during the most recent 5 year period for which data is available (from 01/11/2013 to 31/10/2018), 3 slight personal injury collisions has occurred along this section of the A25. However Surrey Police did not record vehicle speed as a contributory factor in the cause of these collisions and the number of collisions on this section of the A25 is low when compared with other roads across the county. Therefore it is not possible to install a safety camera on this section of the A25 Bletchingley Road, Godstone and the installation of a safety camera would not be supported by Surrey Police.

Average speed cameras

As mentioned previously Surrey County Council follows national guidance in that average speed cameras are only introduced on stretches of road where there has been a history of personal injury collisions, where speeds have been measured and found to be excessive, and where the police are satisfied

that the speed limit is appropriate. This approach ensures that there is continuing public support for speed cameras as a road safety tool and that finite enforcement resources are focused on roads that need the most attention.

On the section of the A25 Bletchingley Road, between the junction with North Park Lane and the existing 30mph limit in Godstone, there has been 3 slight personal injury collisions over the most recent 5 year period for which data is available (from 01/11/13 to 31/10/2018). However Surrey Police did not record vehicle speed as a contributory factor in the cause of this collision and the number of collisions on this section of the A25 is low when compared with other roads across the county.

Also following the results of the recent speed surveys along this section of the A25, which show mean speeds lower than the existing 50mph speed limit, Surrey Police and Surrey County Council will not agree to the large investment required to introduce average speed cameras, and the ongoing resource that would be required to process offences along this section of the A25. They would also not support the large investment that would be required to introduce average speed cameras to support a reduction in the speed limit to 30mph.

Summary

When taking account of the recorded mean speeds along the section of the A25 between the junction with North Park Lane and the existing 30mph limit in Godstone, additional engineering measures would be needed before a 30mph speed limit could be installed. The results of the speed survey carried out in February 2019 show that mean speeds would need to be reduced by 9.9mph, in order to meet Surrey County Council's Speed Limit Policy for a signed only 30mph speed limit. There are no physical engineering measures that could be installed on the A25 Bletchingley Road, which is a major strategic economic route, to reduce the existing mean speeds significantly for a 30mph speed limit.

However, the mean speeds along this section of the A25 comply with Surrey County Council's Speed Limit Policy for a signed only 40mph speed limit. Therefore it is proposed to include a speed limit reduction to 40mph along this section of the A25, as part of the works to increase the speed limit along a section of the A25 from the existing 30mph to 40mph, as shown in **Annex 4**. It is proposed that this section of 40mph speed limit will begin approximately 100m west of the junction with North Park Lane to include the junction with Waterhouse Lane (eastern entrance) and the existing bus stop.

Future development

- 2.25 It is understood that residents have expressed concerns about the impact of future potential development in the vicinity of this section of the A25 Godstone Road. However, major developments would be addressed within the Tandridge Local Plan and the impact of any developments that come forward will be assessed as part of the planning process.

3. OPTIONS:

- 3.1 The Committee can agree to the recommendations to increase the speed limit of the following roads from 30mph to 40mph to comply with all expert advice, in accordance with SCC's Setting Local Speed Limits policy. This also complies with national policy issued by central government, national policy issued by the Association of Chief Police officers and Surrey County Council's own speed limit policy and to reduce the risk of rear end collisions, or an inappropriate overtaking manoeuvre:

A25, Godstone Road between the existing 30mph speed limit terminal signs in line with the property boundary between 14 Sunnybank Villas and Waterhouse Villa and a point 15m north-east of the north-eastern building line of the property Avalon

The un-named service road fronting the properties Laburnums, Tall Trees, Moorings, Dormers and Longacre

The un-named service road fronting the properties Somerstone, Pennyacre, Tonbridge and Waterhouse Villa and nos. 9 – 14 Sunnybank Villas

And;

Decrease the speed limit on the following roads from 50mph to 40mph to comply with all expert advice, in accordance with SCC's Setting Local Speed Limits policy:

A25, Bletchingley Road, Godstone between the existing 30mph speed limit terminal signs at Godstone in line with property boundary between Priority Gates and 14 The Priory and a point 100m south-west of the junction with North Park Lane.

The un-named service road fronting the properties Tulip House and no. 1 Ivy House Cottages.

- 3.2 In line with the SCC setting local speed limit policy if the Local Committee disagree with the recommendations presented to them by the Area Highways Manager and wish to proceed with an alternative option, then the issue must be submitted for decision by the Cabinet Member responsible for road safety.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

Residents

- 4.1 In October 2016 a total of 54 letters and questionnaires were delivered to residents of the A25 Godstone Road, Bletchingley between Candlestick Cottage and Waterhouse Villa to seek resident's views on the proposal to increase the existing speed limit along the section of A25 Godstone Road, Chevington Villas and Sunnybank Villas.
- 4.2 Copies of the consultation letter and questionnaire are attached as **Annex 5** 39 responses have been received giving a response rate of 72%.

4.3 The results of the questionnaire are summarised as follows:

- **13% AGREED** with the proposal to change the speed limit from 30mph to 40mph (5 responses)
- **87% DISAGREED** with the proposal to change the speed limit from 30mph to 40mph (34 responses)

Table 6 below gives a summary breakdown of the comments made on the questionnaires returned

Table 6: Residents comments on consultation

Comments	Number of respondents
Difficulty crossing to bus stops	7
Lack of enforcement of speed limit	7
Concern about increased speeds should proposal go ahead	11
Requests for traffic calming	3
Concern about noise	3
Difficulty entering/exiting service roads or drives	9
Defer decision on speed limit until after development at Knights Garden Centre site complete	3
Reduce speed on 50mph section of A25 between Bletchingley & Godstone to 40mph	3
Concern about HGVs	3

It should be noted that some residents made several comments on their questionnaires and some residents made no comments.

Tandridge District Councillors

4.4 A copy of the letter and questionnaire was forwarded to the three Tandridge District Councillors for the Bletchingley and Nutfield Ward. All three Councillors had similar comments which are summarised below:

- Speed limit was decreased to address a genuine issue affecting the residents of that part of Bletchingley
- Concerns about increased traffic speeds if the speed limit is increased to 40mph
- Reduce speed limit on 50mph section of A25 between Bletchingley & Godstone to 40mph

- Defer decision on speed limit until after development at Knights Garden Centre site complete
- Concerns about lack of enforcement of current speed limit

Parish Councils

4.5 Bletchingley Parish Council was consulted, and Godstone Parish Council contacted Officers, both Parish Councils had similar comments which are summarised below:

- Consider additional traffic calming measures
- Carry out a speed survey of 50mph section of A25 between Godstone & Bletchingley
- Defer a decision until both development at Knights Garden Centre site, and additional car parking site in Godstone have been completed

Police

4.6 Consultation has been carried out with Surrey Police, who fully support the proposed speed limit increase as set out in the recommendations. Further comments from Surrey Police regarding the proposed increase in speed limit along this section of the A25 Godstone Road are included in **Annex 6**.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 The cost of changing any speed limit includes legal advertisement costs associated with the statutory process, together with the costs of design and implementation.

5.2 The cost of these works will be in the region of £12,000. If the Committee support the recommendations, or if the Cabinet Member responsible for road safety decides to support the recommendations in the report, it is suggested that the works be funded through the 2019/20 ITS small safety and improvement schemes budget, and prioritised for funding in the 2019/20 financial year.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

6.1 The Highway Service is mindful of its needs within this area and attempts to treat all users of the public highway with equality and understanding.

7. LOCALISM:

7.1 The Highway Service is mindful of the localism agenda which has been taken into account when writing this report.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report.
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	No significant implications arising from this report.
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report.
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 9.1 This report sets out the speed limit assessments conducted on the A25 between Godstone and the Tandridge District boundary. It shows that the 30mph speed limit that was introduced on the A25 Godstone Road, Bletchingley in November 2012, has not significantly reduced vehicle speeds as had been hoped. The recorded mean speeds within the section of the A25 Godstone Road, shown in **Table 1**, are appropriate for a 40mph speed limit rather than the existing 30mph speed limit. Drivers who currently comply with the 30mph speed limit are made vulnerable to an increased risk of rear end collisions, or an inappropriate overtaking manoeuvre, because of the differential in speed between them and the average driver. Speed differentials are directly proportional to an increased risk of injury. This issue has been presented to the Local Committee since September 2016, and if the Council continue to not address this road safety issue it could mean that the Council are held accountable for any future personal injury collisions, where speed is found to be a contributory factor.
- 9.2 As per Surrey County Council's speed limit policy consideration has been given to further engineering measures that could be installed, to encourage greater compliance with the 30mph speed limit. However there are no suitable engineering measures that can be installed on this major strategic economic route to encourage greater compliance with the existing 30mph speed limit or result in reducing mean speeds by 6.8mph (i.e 35mph) to at least meet Surrey County Council's speed limit policy for a signed only 30mph speed limit.
- 9.3 This section of road has previously been subject to a 60mph and a 50mph limit. When it was reduced to a 30mph limit, this was not based on an attempt to address a collision issue, as this location, despite significant traffic flows, has never had a significant collision problem. Increasing the speed limit to 40mph is below the previous 60mph and 50mph speed limits, and there is no evidence to suggest that the collision rate will increase as a result in the increase in the speed limit.
- 9.4 An assessment has been carried out of the existing speed limits on the A25 between Bletchingley and Godstone, following requests for the following speed limit reductions;

1) A25 Godstone Road – between the existing 30mph at Bletchingley and the junction with North Park Lane, speed limit reduction from 50mph to 40mph.

2) A25 Bletchingley Road – between the junction with North Park Lane and the existing 30mph speed limit in Godstone, speed limit reduction from 50mph to 30mph.

9.5 The section of the A25 Godstone Road, between the existing 30mph speed limit at Bletchingley and the junction with North Park Lane, does not comply with SCC's Speed Limit Policy for a speed limit reduction to 40mph without supporting engineering measures being installed. Consideration has been given to what supporting engineering measures could be installed to try to reduce the existing mean speeds, to comply with SCC's policy for a 40mph speed limit. As a result, the introduction of Vehicle Activated Signs either end of a new 40mph speed limit, between the start of the existing 30mph limit and the junction with North Park Lane, will be added to the Integrated Transport Scheme list for possible future funding.

9.6 The section of the A25 Bletchingley Road, between the junction of North Park Lane and the existing 30mph speed limit in Godstone. The results of a speed survey carried out in February 2019, show that the existing mean speeds do not comply with SCC's speed limit policy for a 30mph limit. There are no physical engineering measures that could be installed on this section of the A25, to reduce existing mean speeds significantly for a 30mph speed limit. However, the measures mean speeds do comply with SCC's speed limit policy for a signed only 40mph limit. Therefore it is proposed to include a speed limit reduction to 40mph along this section of the A25, as part of the works to increase the speed limit along a section of the A25 from the existing 30mph to 40mph as shown in **Annex 4**.

9.7 The recommendations have been made based on all expert advice, national policy issued by central government, national policy issued by the Association of Chief Police officers and Surrey County Council's own speed limit policy, and following consultation with residents, Tandridge District Councillors, Bletchingley Parish Council and Surrey Police.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

10.1 Subject to approval and funding being allocated from the 2019/20 ITS small improvement and safety schemes budget, the proposal to make a Speed Limit Order to increase a section of the A25 from 30mph to 40mph and reduce a section of the A25 from 50mph to 40mph as shown in **Annex 4** is advertised in the local press during 2019/20. Following the making of the Order, the contractor is instructed to install the necessary signing.

10.2 Once the speed limit is in accordance with SCC's existing speed limit policy Surrey Police have stated that they would be able to support the increased 40mph speed limit by authorising community speed watch to operate along this section.

10.3 If the Local Committee disagree with the recommendations presented to them by the Area Highways Manager and wish to proceed with an alternative option, then the issue must be submitted for decision by the Cabinet Member responsible for road safety. The meeting for the Cabinet Member for

ITEM 8

Highways decisions is held in public at County Hall. The decision is published on the Surrey County Council website.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

Residents
Tandridge District Councillors
Bletchingley Parish Council
Surrey Police

Annexes:

Annex 1 – Before and after 30mph installed
Annex 2 – Reigate and Banstead to Godstone speed survey results
Annex 3 – Plan of proposed new limit
Annex 4 – Plan of proposed new speed limits from Bletchingley to Godstone
Annex 5 – Consultation letter and questionnaire
Annex 5 – Surrey Police comments

Sources/background papers:

- Data from speed assessments carried out during July 2016 in A25 Godstone Road
 - Surrey County Council's Policy Setting Local Speed Limits (July 2014)
 - The Surrey County Council ((Various roads in Tandridge and Mid Sussex) (Restricted roads 20mph 40mph speed limit and 50mph speed limits) Order 2003) (Amendment No. 4) Order 2012
 - Report to Local Committee 21 September 2018 "A25 Godstone Road, Bletchingley – Speed Limit Review".
 - Winnett, M.A and Wheeler, A.H (2002) "Vehicle-activated signs – a large scale evaluation". TRL Report TRL548.
 - Minutes of the Tandridge Local Committee meeting held on 21 September 2018 and agreed at the Tandridge Local Committee meeting held on 30 November 2018.
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