

## STOKE ROAD – ROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS – CONSULTATION – 2020

### COMMENTS

**Any measures to slow vehicles down have my full support since on a daily basis I witness cars exceeding the speed limit (in some instances to an alarming extent) and worry for my safety and that of my family**

**We live on the Stoke Road in Cobham and wanted to respond to your recent letter regarding the speed reduction proposals in Stoke road**

**Firstly, we wanted to say that we fully support speed limit reduction measures. The speed on the road is extremely concerning, and is backed up by the number of accidents that have occurred on the road. It has to change and we appreciate the effort the local councils - Elmbridge & Surrey, as well as councillors, residents and Police have put into this.**

**Reviewing your plans, we wanted to point out that it is very hard to read the plans as they are very small and also they are not up to date of house footprint ect. That may be worth noting in case of impact to homes. We believe more detailed plans from different angles are required with measurements - as you would have with a house plan application.**

**Whilst we support the approach we are concerned about the impact to walkers on the pavement, as the pavements are already far too narrow, and if this is reduced by effectively taking away the safety of the grassed area, how will you maintain safety of people who may be walking by the island as a truck swerves into the overrun area. This is a major area of concern that we would like to know more about. When a truck comes past right now, we always step back onto the grass for safety reasons. Please note, my neighbour was hit over 10 years ago as she was standing in the island outside the petrol station, she suffered major injuries and it actually was a trigger for the petition to reduce the speed all those years ago. Walking next to that island is like taking your life in your hands - so this has to be improved with any new proposals. The pavements are simply too narrow and unsafe as a result. Any is a land need to have sufficient room to accommodate swerving of vehicles and safety of pedestrians.**

**In addition, how high will the island be, and will it restrict view down the road as we come out of our driveway? It's already very difficult due to speed and volume of traffic to turn right out of the drive, will this be impacted? People turning right out of Pipers close may have a similar issue?**

In addition, what is the expectation about noise of braking outside our house and acceleration? What have past projects shown happens? We would like to see the data surrounding this please.

Here are some additional questions we have:

- 1) why have the locations on the map been chosen? Please can you provide more explanation behind this.
- 2) why haven't areas that have a larger grass verges been chosen so the impact to pavement and ultimately pedestrian safety is maintained? For example just after the Tilt - where drivers accelerate considerably today....
- 3) how big will the pavement be where it is altered? Is this an effective width given speed of traffic?
- 4) what is the impact to homes - what movement and cracking is expected ? This already happens today to some homes. What cover do we have if a crack appears as a result?
- 5) The height of curb is very low outside our house, which further impacts pedestrian safety, what is the curb height proposal in these new plans

How wide will the road be either side of the pedestrian crossing? Researching this, I understand

- Normally, road widths must be at least 4 to 4.5 meters either side of the refuge (if large motor vehicles are expected which is the case on Stoke road the advice is this must be increased). Does this meet the limit?
- The guidance states that pedestrian refuges are not suitable for locations with high levels of motor vehicle traffic which is the case on Stoke Road. Zebra or Puffin crossings might be more appropriate. Why haven't Zebra or puffin crossings been considered?

Regarding the overrun and traffic island

- 1) how will large trucks be able to turn left out of Pipers close? Looking at the basic plans it seems this would be very difficult
- 2) why is it so close to a junction, i understood this is not optimal?
- 3) how do you stop traffic travelling at speed going through private fences - i.e they hit the Chicane at speed and veer off
- 4) how do you accommodate cyclists in this narrowed road?

**I am concerned about this proposal and would ask that the following views are taken into consideration:**

- The visual amenity of this semi - rural road will be compromised. There will be more road furniture and visual obstructions that will detract from the existing rural appearance. Aside from the appearance, the Council Planning take seem to take into account the degree of rural/urbanisation, so leading to further development if the area is further urbanised by street signs and islands, more associated with urban centres.**
- This can be a busy road, so to intentionally interrupt flow seems counter intuitive. This potentially disrupt road users and create more pollution with vehicles braking and accelerating due to the use of traffic calming measures. I regularly use this road, and my experience is that with increased traffic the speed one drives at is at best 30mph. Add cyclists, parked vehicles and the speed is often lower. The regular use of this road by cyclists already slows traffic and causes congestion. For the safety of all users it would seem more of a priority to install cycle lanes alongside the existing footpaths. The verges are already very wide along the majority of Stoke Road and where it isn't, proper maintenance would increase the width on narrower sections by between 1 to 2 meters.**

**Use of these proposed traffic calming measures will create more congestion and danger to both cyclists and road users. The long traffic island in particular will be an area that will create unnecessary congestion as wider vehicles negotiate it, increased danger to cyclists and to pedestrians.**

**The cost of this scheme seems a waste of scarce council funds. Although it is proposed to take the monies from the CIL fund, this amount seems disproportionate in relationship to the number of potential supporters who may perceive a benefit, against the thousands of the borough's population who maybe negatively impacted by this proposal.**

**I attended the Council meeting that was held to discuss this matter. I contend that the process was flawed for the following reasons;**

- It was apparent that the resident's representative had developed a long term working relationship with the Councils highways representative. My concern is that listening to the dialogue, it was apparent that the highways adviser was ' sympathetic ' to the cause of the roads representative.**
- The meeting had not been widely publicised, even though this is a proposition that effects the wider community. As a result, it seemed the only members of the public there were those that supported it as a result of canvassing by the Stoke Roads representative.**

A councillor at the meeting highlighted that when the footpaths were improved some time ago it was at considerable cost, and was only a result of a Stoke Road pressure group. This councillor questioned the improvements value for money due to the very low use it has. My concern is that again, a pressure group will demand council funds to install measures that are not required.

Furthermore, the Chair of Stoke D Abernon Residents association and a Surrey County Councillor live either adjacent to or on the Stoke Road. Whilst, at the meeting this association was disclosed, it does not alter the fact that the proposed scheme has had involvement from advantaged residents to guide this process to where we are now. What evidence is there that these measures will improve the road use for the benefit of the residents on this road? This is a process that more local residents should have a say in i.e. anyone living in Cobham, Stoke D Abernon, Oxshott, Esher to name but a few.

The council are but servants of all members of the community, not just minority pressure groups. And why is the speed limit enforced, if indeed it is necessary to, in the same way as all roads are.

Road users should have the ability to make good progress on the road without deliberate obstructions. After all, people want to be able to visit town centres efficiently.

I go to work via Cobham station on foot and crossing the road has become dangerous at times. Therefore having extra pedestrian islands will help - especially since there are none on this side of Stoke Road. Speed has become a real issue. My neighbour has lost 7 cats because of it. Past a certain hour people are driving in their expensive cars well over 50-60mph. A camera would definitely help restore some order.

I fully support the implementation of the proposed speed management and pedestrian crossing improvements. I believe that they will significantly enhance the safety of all road users.

We are writing in support of the proposed Stoke Road speed management and pedestrian crossing improvements. As residents, we know how difficult and dangerous it often is when trying to cross the very busy Stoke Road or pulling out onto it from our road. These proposals will go a long way towards making negotiating Stoke Road safer and reducing the risk of serious accidents. We very much hope that these proposals are approved.

**On behalf of my own family and several other Families in Knowle Park, Cobham, I am writing to offer our support for this initiative. Having lived here for 22 years, the Stoke Road has become unacceptably busy and unsafe due to the speed of cars and HGV Lorry's. There are extremes on this road. I recently heard that over 18,000 vehicles a day move up and down this residential road. It is either so busy that exiting our load takes a significantly long time and dangerous, or when it clears a little, un-responsible drivers speed excessively beyond legal limits. Cycling is highly dangerous and crossing the road equally as bad! I recall one of our elderly neighbours being killed on this road and many wonder when the next death will be!!**

**I have no objection to the scheme to reduce speed on the Stoke road but would like to request the proposed long traffic island that currently ends at the point of Pipers Close is pushed slightly further down the stoke road towards Cobham. I believe the current proximity to Pipers close will make entering and exiting Pipers Close more difficult. Have visuals been modelled to illustrate the height and change in vision of oncoming traffic when exiting Pipers Close? I would appreciate confirmation of my remarks being reported to the committee**

**I especially welcome the pedestrian refuge near Avenue Road. This is a popular short cut for those taking the footpath across the Ashford bridge to walk to Downside as well as those en route to the station from the Stoke Road. On a personal note, I often walk along Avenue Road myself and, living on the opposite side of the Stoke Road, I feel vulnerable crossing over the main road due to the high volume and speed of the traffic.**

**The VAS signs alone does not deter a large number of motorists. Our only concern is that the proposals are mainly centred on the main residential area of the road, and the Stoke Road section which runs from Leigh Place to the Filling Station and obviously in the opposite direction has no 30 mph warnings. In our local discussions I have suggested a couple of the smaller 30 mph VAS signs might help in this section and act to warn drivers prior to reaching the present ones in the more built up area and drivers as they approach Mill Road.**

**In spite of the road being limited to 30mph there are still a great number of drivers who ignore the speed limit. I know this because there is a speed warning light at the end of Oak Road where I am resident which lights up whenever a driver exceeds 30mph.**

**Cobham and Downside Residents Association (CDRA) would like to express their support for the scheme.**

**Believes the VAS is sufficient and traffic calming will make the congestion worse and difficult to overtake cyclists causing a lengthy traffic jam**

**We both feel that this is a completely unnecessary change to the road and will probably have an adverse effect on the community as a whole. This proposal and past speed restrictions have been pushed forward largely by Mary Lewis and a local small action group and doesn't represent the feelings of the majority of local residents.**

**This is fundamentally a safe road and in my opinion there is no need to restrict it to below 40 mph as it is essential main road to Cobham and the A3. What is FAR more important is the safety at the junction of Stoke Road with Blundel Lane and Station Road. This is a serious intersection and during school run times you take your life in your hands in trying to get out from either Blundel Lane or Station Road. It would be of far greater benefit to the community to put a mini (or two) roundabout here. There would need to be some calming bumps coming over the bridge, however this would also slow the traffic at this point on Stoke Road.**

**As a Stoke Road resident the traffic moves greatly in excess of the 30mph limit. Traffic would benefit from being slowed to the 30mph limit and even better to limit the heavy lorries which shake our property as they thunder past. We live near the Blundel Lane junction and as we indicate left to turn into our drive traffic behind assumes that we are indicating to turn up Blundel Lane. We slow down and on more occasions than I can recall I have an irate speeding driver almost in the rear of our car. Anything which can calm the speed will be hugely appreciated by those of us who live right on the road itself.**

**My worry is that if these measures are introduced it will be virtually impossible to overtake cyclists safely on the Stoke Road. Can this be in the interests of road safety? Surely it will lead to dangerous overtaking measures putting road users at risk and an increase in frustrated motorists becoming increasingly impatient outside of the scheme trying to make up speed?**

**I am a resident of Stoke Road and strongly support the proposed speed management and pedestrian crossings. As someone who not only lives on Stoke Road but also frequently walks and cycles on it I believe it will make the road both safer and more pleasant by reducing some of the reckless speeding that unfortunately occurs**

I wish to record my disagreement with the proposal to add 'traffic calming' obstacles to the carriageways in the Stoke Road between Cobham and Stoke d'Abernon. The stated reason for these changes is to force a reduction in the speed of traffic on the Stoke Road, the maximum limit of which was reduced from 40mph to 30mph some 5 to 6 years ago. The reason given for the speed limit reduction at the time was poorly communicated, but appeared to be a belief amongst some Stoke Road residents that 40mph was 'too fast' for such a road, despite the responsible Police force at the time having a different view and the road being relatively straight, well away from the centre of Cobham and with housing set far back from the thoroughfare – in fact, all of the characteristics of a semi-rural 40mph stretch of road.

Unsurprisingly, carefully timed Community Speed Watch checks have since shown that there are times when vehicles exceed 30mph. In reality, there're probably very few 30mph roads in the entire country where speed checks outside of busy times would show most vehicles keeping to speeds of 30mph and below! So this is not a good reason for the proposed engineering work.

The remedy is, of course, to actually enforce the speed limit and fine drivers who exceed it. The answer is not to create artificial obstacles that will cause unnecessary bottlenecks and exacerbate traffic gridlock, which is already a significant problem in the area for most of the day.

Some of the claimed benefits of the proposal appear tenuous at best. For example, introducing very long pedestrian refuge islands in the middle of the road to help those pedestrians walking the Stoke Road who will also want to cross it. Has Surrey Highways studied the Stoke Road pedestrian traffic volumes? My wife walks from Stoke d'Abernon to Cobham and back on the Stoke Road once or twice every week. She rarely sees anyone else on the entire length of the walk until she is almost in Cobham or after she leaves Cobham on the return.

Very few people actually walk that road, not because it's unsafe but because they have cars available to them. Unless they are very local, most rail commuters also travel to the station and back in a car, as do most school children, thereby adding to the traffic problem in the morning and late afternoon/early evening. Most school children who use public transport also appear to be dropped at the bus stops from a parent's car!

Public transport is hopeless in this area but, irrespective of that, this is an area of multiple car ownership and, like it or not, people will always prefer to drive.

The proposed long, central, pedestrian refuges are pointless. From a personal point of view queue of traffic in Blundel Lane every morning, trying to turn right onto the Stoke Road can add 10 minutes or more to any journey. This situation

has got worse and worse over time and is now a huge annoyance. I can only see this scheme adding to a problem and any change that does that is unacceptable to me unless it promises other significant benefits.

I assume those who designed these measures have taken into account the size of some of the transporters and plant and equipment delivery lorries that use the Stoke Road, often as an alternative when there are hold-ups on the M25? Engineered pinch points just 3.0 metres wide seem extremely optimistic when one thinks about the huge, international, articulated carriers that frequently travel the road. Whilst vehicles of such a size may just pass through the chicanes they would do so at a crawl, causing even more traffic delay and build up.

Finally, Surrey Highways' North East Area Highways Manager states, in his consultation letter, that 'It is hoped that the proposed measures will make Stoke Road a safer place for all road users.....' the implication being that currently the road is unsafe because of accidents caused by speeding. Where is the evidence to support this? Surely road engineering changes of this magnitude need to be backed by factual evidence that there have been more than the anticipated number of speed related accidents and/or injuries for a road of this type and traffic volume.

I have lived in the area for more than 30 years and the only accidents I have ever seen on the Stoke Road are at the dangerous staggered crossroads with Blundel Lane and Station Road in Stoke d'Abernon, which the Council have declined to address in the past as the junction had not exceeded some accident number threshold!

Of course, I may have missed all of the other incidents so will Surrey Highways please publish the statistical evidence that these measures are required in order to reduce an unacceptable number of speed related accidents and injuries occurring on the Stoke Road? Without this evidence I can't see how it is possible to support such a scheme.

We understand there is a consultation imminent to look at improvements for the road. The road cutting through Cobham has a number of issues, not limited to the speed of cars driving up and down well in excess of the 30-mph limit, but also with high volumes of traffic making crossing and pulling out of side roads incredibly challenging. As a parent of 4 young children, we fear the safety of this road as they grow older and become independent enough to cross the road. Please include us in any consultation material

I am writing on behalf of Stoke D'Abernon & District Residents' Association which represents over 600 homes in the area. Our committee comprises representatives of all roads in the Stoke D'Abernon area, and we discussed the Stoke Road proposal at our recent committee meeting. The Association is supportive of the proposal, with a clear majority of the committee being in favour. We see a need to make our roads and pavements safe for pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles while facilitating the free movement of traffic along Stoke Road and adjacent roads. Encouraging motorists to keep to the 30mph limit should help to make the road safer. We are also in favour of providing more crossing points for pedestrians who use and cross the road, sometimes at their peril.

Some of our members expressed concerns about the proposed scheme. One concern is that the scheme might create bottlenecks and queues. There was concern about the quantity of HGVs that use the road and their ability safely to navigate the new islands and deflections. It was suggested that cyclists might be in increased danger, as the new islands would make it harder for motorists to overtake them safely particularly at the new long island, and this would hold up traffic. The published consultation documents contained little factual evidence about the current layout being unsafe, or about impact analysis. It was also noted that the Police don't carry out speed enforcement, although the CSW scheme was noted.

I am a regular user of Stoke Road and fully support the proposed traffic calming scheme. It would make it much safer for all road users and pedestrians.

I refer to the proposals for traffic calming measures along Stoke Road and would like to register my wholehearted support for such a scheme. As a Stoke Road resident for 30 years I am well aware of the speed some drivers think is appropriate down our road, despite the repeater signs now in operation. I have grandchildren and dogs which I walk down through Avenue Road to The Tilt and the River Mole a few times every week - a journey that would be made safer and less fraught if additional traffic calming measures were in operation, with perhaps even occasional police surveillance...?

I am opposed to the scheme for the following reasons:

- Stoke Rd is a major arterial road in the Cobham, Stoke d'Abernon area and impacts a much larger geographical area. Traffic has steadily increased on the Stoke Rd over the last few years and at certain times of the day the queues build up significantly causing delays and logjams.

I am concerned that this scheme; in particular the long island chicane which will deflect traffic either side of it, will worsen this traffic build up and severely impact the traffic flow. I am also concerned about the width of the road either side of this long deflection island and worried that large lorries (which frequently use the road) will be a risk to pedestrians as they swerve round this island.

I am concerned that this island will also create additional problems for cyclists and create difficulties for cars overtaking cyclists leading to slowing of traffic flow, bottlenecks and delays. We get a large number of cyclists using the Stoke Rd and overtaking them is problematic.

In addition to my objections above I also believe there are better uses for the £95k that I understand will be the cost of the scheme. At this time with cash strapped councils I do not believe this is a good use of strategic CIL money. I am also concerned that there has been no evidence cited to support the scheme and provide the rationale for introducing it.

The reasons seem rather subjective and influenced by resident pressure groups. How does the Council know that this will in fact slow down traffic? Surely the best way to slow down traffic is to have the 30mph enforced by the Police rather than spend significant sums of money building traffic deflection lanes with potential unintended consequences. My objections are all focused on the long traffic island and the deflection of traffic. I am however supportive of the 2 small pedestrian islands being proposed.

I live on Stoke Road and would like to register my support for the traffic Calming scheme. Unfortunately there are still drivers who ignore the speed limit and do present a danger to those of us that access Stoke Road directly from our driveways

I live in Lodge Close Stoke D'abernon. The proposals seem ok especially the new refuge areas to assist pedestrians crossing the road. Whether traffic will slow down with the new refuges and the other measures remains to be seen- I am not sure. However one thing that I do feel strongly about is the traffic problem at the junction of Blundell Lane and the Stoke road together with the Station road / Stoke road junction almost opposite.

There were promises of a roundabout some years ago which was not carried out due to funding problems- so we were advised. The creation of a roundabout would make traffic flow respect the 30 mph speed limit more effectively, rather than the cars whizzing over the railway bridge at present and continuing at speed thereafter along Stoke road. It should

**also resolve the impatient sharp and risky manoevers by motorists trying to get onto the Stoke road from Blundell lane and Station road. Could you please consider the above points.**

**We are writing in regards to the above propose scheme. We have examined the plans and are strongly in support of the scheme. I live on Stoke Road and I am aware of how dangerous it is to cross the road. Speed is a big concern for the safety of the local residents especially for children and elderly people using school buses and public transport. The two new pedestrian refuge islands will improve the safety and help pedestrians cross the road. The design of the speed management measures based on horizontal deflections (chicanes) should work well in reducing the speed and would provide safer and easier access on to Stoke Road**

**I am a regular user of Stoke Road and fully support the proposed traffic calming scheme. It would make it much safer for all road users and pedestrians.**

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