

Farnham Infrastructure Programme

Farnham Board Meeting

DATE: 22 JANUARY 2021

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REPORT OF: MR TIM OLIVER – BOARD CHAIR

LEAD OFFICER: CHRIS TUNSTALL

SUBJECT: SPEED STUDY

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

To note the outcome of the recent Speed Study (Annex A) and agree the recommended quick-win interventions for further consultation and subsequent implementation and those interventions to be considered as part of the wider Optimised Infrastructure Plan (OIP).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Note the outcome and recommendations of the Speed Study; and
2. Agree the following 'Quick Win' improvements to be recommended to Surrey County Council for further consultation and subsequent implementation:
 - Town Centre – 20mph Zone
 - West Street Gateway – 20mph limit with Gateway Feature
 - East Street Gateway – 20mph limit
 - Castle Street Gateway – 20mph limit
 - Upper Hale – Signage Refresh in Upper Hale
 - Gateway Treatment
 - Hale School Review
 - Heath End - Gateway Feature.
3. Agree those interventions to be considered as part of the wider OIP considerations detailed in paragraph 13.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Traffic speeds within the Farnham area have been cited as a key concern by local members and residents.

The recent HGV Study reported to the Board on the 20 November 2020 also identified speed as an issue that required separate consideration and a recommendation that a Study be undertaken at those locations identified with a view to the findings being dealt with as necessary as a 'Quick Win'.

The Study (Annex A) details the findings and makes recommendations as to those interventions that could be pursued now, as Quick Win improvements and those that should be part of the wider OIP consideration.

DETAILS:

Background

1. Understanding the issues and developing effective solutions for the town centre is a critical part of the OIP. Key stakeholders have emphasised the need to rapidly understand the current problems, their causes, and potential solutions. There is a need for both quick wins and long-term solutions to the problems faced in the town centre.
2. A specific problem perceived with speed has been identified both anecdotally and more recently as a result of the HGV Study reported to the 20 November 2020 Board meeting. This study resulted in a recommendation that a specific Speed Study be undertaken in those areas identified as part of the HGV Study, with the intention being that any findings could be incorporated into the Quick Wins project as appropriate.
3. The study comprised:
 - Review of existing data and evidence base;
 - Identification of critical speed issues and, where possible, root causes; and
 - Identification of a range of potential intervention measures, including alignment with policy issues/ guidance and next steps.
4. The data used came from various sources and included:
 - Automatic Traffic Counts 2019/ 2020;
 - Navman average speed;
 - Waverley Air Quality 2020 Report;
 - Collision Statistics; and
 - Anecdotal evidence and written representations.
5. It should be noted that due to the impact of Covid-19 the current traffic flows, and as such, speeds identified are not representative of pre Covid-19 flows but every effort has been taken to correlate the pre and post speeds as far as is possible.
6. Any Quick-Win interventions will need to be agreed, consulted on and implemented with the Highway Authority, Surrey County Council (SCC).

Policy and Guidance

7. Prior to identification of potential mitigation measures, national and local policies and guidance have been reviewed to understand the requirements for implementation of speed-related measures and the process which must be followed.
 - Changing to a lower speed limit on its own will not necessarily be successful in significantly reducing the speed of traffic if the prevailing mean speeds are much higher than the proposed lower speed limit.
 - There should be no expectation that the police would be able to provide regular enforcement if a speed limit is set too low, and Surrey Police do not support 20mph speed limits that are not generally self-enforcing.
 - Speed limits should be considered as part of a package of measures to manage vehicle speeds and improve road safety. Changes to the highway layout may be required to encourage lower speeds, in addition to any change in speed limit.
 - Where the mean speed is already **at or below 24mph** on a road, introducing a 20mph speed limit through signing alone is likely to lead to general compliance with the new speed limit.
 - Where the existing mean speeds are **above 24mph** then a 20mph scheme with traffic calming measures (known as a 20mph zone) will be required.
 - It is possible to implement 20mph schemes that consist of a combination of physical features (where existing speeds are high), and signs alone (where speeds are already low) on different sections of the same road.
 - Department for Transport (DfT) regulations now allow the use of advisory “20 when lights show” with amber flashing lights on the approach to schools. However, the influence of these signs on vehicle speeds is likely to be minimal and is not enforceable as it is an advisory sign rather than a legal limit.
 - SCC Highways will not support the use of mandatory variable 20mph speed limits, and it is their policy that there should always be an overall assessment of the safety issues outside a school to investigate and define the problem rather than consideration of the speed limit in isolation.

Findings

8. Full details of the findings and the background to them can be found in Annex A.
9. Potential interventions have been developed to respond to the key issues identified, with due consideration of where:
 - Speed survey data indicates there are existing issues with speeding.
 - There is local support for lowered speed limits.
 - Safety issues have been raised or identified.

- National and Surrey County Council guidance would support additional measures.
 - There is an opportunity to complement interventions to encourage an increase in walking and / or cycling and an associated reduction in pollutants / emissions.
10. Due to the nature of the study, potential interventions have been grouped by location and are summarised in paragraphs 12 and 13 below. The priority of interventions and whether they are progressed will be dependent on local community and member support (in line with the policy and guidance requirements).

Potential Interventions

11. Following the analysis, based on the findings in the Speed Study, the following 'Quick Win' potential improvements for further consultation and subsequent implementation have been identified.

12. Quick Wins to be progressed as soon as possible:

- Town Centre – 20mph Zone;
- West Street Gateway – 20mph limit with Gateway Feature;
- East Street Gateway – 20mph limit;
- Castle Street Gateway – 20mph limit;
- Upper Hale – Signage Refresh in Upper Hale;
Gateway Treatment;
Hale School Review; and
- Heath End - Gateway Feature.

13. Longer Term interventions to be considered as part of the Optimised Infrastructure Plan:

- East Street – Further assessment required for appropriate traffic calming measures linked to the Brightwell and Woolmead Developments;
- Castle Street Gateway – Further assessment required for appropriate traffic calming measures linked to possible OIP Interventions in Castle Street;
- Castle Street Gateway – Pedestrian Crossing – Further assessment required;
- Folly Hill – Further surveys required;
- Upper Hale – Hale School Review – Potential interventions arising may require further surveys/ assessments;
- Upper Hale – 20mph speed limit - Further assessment required; Extensive liaison with SCC Highways and Surrey Police required;
- Weybourne Road – Speed Cameras – Further assessment and liaison with SCC Highways and Surrey Police required;
- Coxbridge roundabout approaches – further consideration and linking to A31 findings.

CONSULTATION:

14. Consultation will be required with Surrey Police, the local community and members together with internal Surrey County Council consultation. In the case of any 20mph

speed restrictions the Traffic Regulation Order TRO will also be consulted on for the statutory 28-day period.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

15. The Board has no Statutory powers and as such any decisions requiring approval by the responsible Authorities, in this case Surrey County Council, will have individual risk assessments.

FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

16. The cost and value for money in respect of the works will be identified within the Surrey County Council Report.

SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTARY

17. As proposals are developed, that require necessary Surrey County Council approval, individual S151 approval will be sought.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS – MONITORING OFFICER

18. The Board has no Executive Powers. Any decisions made would require Surrey County Council to follow its own legal advice and its approval procedures.

EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY

19. As part of Surrey County Council reporting requirements, individual Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) will be undertaken as required.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

20. There are no other implications in respect of this Report.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

21. The proposed quick win improvements will be worked up in more detail for implementation and progress reports brought back to the Board.

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Annexes: Annex A – WS Atkins Speed Study

Sources/background papers: As detailed in Annex A and the WS Atkins HGV Study

Annex A – WS Atkins Speed Study