

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL



SURREY

LOCAL COMMITTEE (ELMBRIDGE)

DATE: **16 November 2020**
 SUBJECT: **A244 Leatherhead Road, High Street, Warren Lane, Oxshott**
 DIVISION: **Oxshott, Hinchley Wood and Claygate**

PETITION DETAILS:

A petition with 973 signatures has been received relating to the A244 in Oxshott. The lead petitioner is Ian Dilks representing the Federation of Oxshott Residents' Associations (FEDORA). The petition reads as follows:

We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to support the following measures to limit the impact on local residents of traffic traveling through Oxshott on the A244 and improve road safety by:

- 1) Installing average speed control cameras in both directions at the entrance and exit to the village at appropriate places AND liaising with the Police to ensure enforcement*
 - 2) Engineering a solution to the speed and conduct of traffic in the High Street, for example by incorporating a raised platform/ramp to the Pelican Crossing outside the Oxshott Village Stores/ Post Office; ghost islands and improved road markings*
 - 3) Improving road and pedestrian safety to the south of the village by the creation of continuous pavement(s) into the village centre to minimise pedestrian road crossing; improvements to retained island refuges; and replacement of the island refuge adjacent to the entrance to Danes Hill School with a pedestrian crossing.*
 - 4) Improved road signage to support measures taken including repeater speed limit signs.*
- We also request the Local Committee to ask Surrey to work with the other relevant authorities to implement measures to reduce the impact on local residents of excessive volumes of HGV traffic passing through Oxshott on the A244. Specifically, we request a weight limit of 7.5T to apply between the hours of 8pm and 6am.*

Further supporting details are provided as follows:

The A244 bisecting Oxshott has become a regular traffic route between the A3 and the A243/M25 to the serious detriment of the safety, health and well-being of residents of Oxshott. Speed data provided by Surrey Police show that speeds are excessive for a built-up area (average 36mph at the 85th percentile and up to 70mph) with a school population across 3 schools of over 1000 children. Daily vehicle numbers can be up to c17,500. Continuous pavements through the village are lacking and the few island refuges are unsafe and frequently damaged by traffic. A recent major problem is large volumes of HGV traffic at night for which this road was never designed, creating excessive noise, pollution and damage. A significant factor in the increased HGV use is the Low Emission Zone now in operation on the A243 starting at Malden Rushett but which excludes the A3 until New Malden and which therefore diverts polluting HGV traffic onto the A244, a problem exacerbated by poor signage.

RESPONSE:

Surrey County Council officers and members have been in dialogue with FEDORA representatives for a number of years to address the issues raised in this petition relating to the A244, which includes Leatherhead Road, High Street, Warren Lane and Copsem Lane. The issues described in this petition concern Leatherhead Road, High Street, and Warren Lane. There are long standing concerns within the Oxshott community about the speed and volume of traffic, the volume of HGV traffic, congestion, poor pedestrian facilities, and the implications of all these for road safety. From Surrey County Council's point of view as Highway Authority, it is essential to weigh up the concerns and desires of the community on one hand, versus the function of the A244 as a principal route within the county's network hierarchy.

Regarding road safety, the council currently receives funding to be used specifically to reduce road casualties. In partnership with Surrey Police road collisions are monitored across the county. There are thousands of road traffic collisions every year that result in an injury. We focus our road safety resources on those sites where there are patterns of casualties, since we can then be reasonably confident of identifying whether an engineering intervention might help reduce the frequency of casualties at a particular site. We then prioritise investment in those sites with the highest frequency of casualties, where we believe an engineering intervention would be beneficial. Given the number of existing sites where there are patterns of casualties, when considering investment in road safety, we are obliged to prioritise those sites with the greatest frequency of casualties, ahead of those sites with a lesser frequency of casualties.

Surrey Police shares data on collisions where an injury has been recorded. The police record likely factors that may have contributed to a collision resulting in injury. Collision data may be viewed on the publicly-accessible website www.crashmap.co.uk.

When monitoring road casualties it is standard practice to review data from the most recent three year period. This enables patterns to be identified and sites to be compared. For the A244 between Oxshott Station to the north and the borough boundary to the south, available data for the most recent three-year period records the following:

- 3 July 2019; near junction with Charlwood Drive; two vehicle collision; rear end shunt; one casualty, slight injury; recorded factor of 'failed to look properly'.
- 8 October 2018; outside Oxshott Mead; three vehicle collision; rear end shunt at temporary traffic signals; two casualties, serious injury; recorded factors of 'Careless/Reckless/In a hurry, Failed to judge other persons path or speed, Following too close, Sudden braking'.
- 6 June 2018; near junction with Birds Hill Rise; two vehicle collision; rear end shunt; one casualty, slight injury; recorded factor of 'failed to look properly'.
- 31 December 2017; outside 'Laurels'; two vehicle collision; southbound vehicle crossed into path of northbound vehicle; four casualties; serious injury; recorded factor of 'Careless/Reckless/In a hurry'.
- 28 October 2017; outside The Bear; three vehicle collision; rear end shunt; one casualty, slight injury; recorded factor of 'Failed to judge other persons path or speed'.

The above data shows that the A244 through Oxshott does not have a recent history of collisions causing injury where a pattern can be identified. This means that specific road safety funding could not be justified when compared with other locations.

As well as schemes to specifically address problems evidenced by a history of injuries, Surrey County Council does introduce other local highways improvement schemes. For example, these may be to improve traffic flow, relieve congestion, provide or improve facilities such as pedestrian crossings, or to address locations where residents have highlighted areas of concern. These are the types of schemes promoted via the Local and Joint Committees, with consideration of all schemes and available funding.

In response to the petition's specific requests:

1) Installing average speed control cameras in both directions at the entrance and exit to the village at appropriate places AND liaising with the Police to ensure enforcement

Excessive speeding can increase the risk of collisions and can make the consequences worse. It can also deter more walking, scooting and cycling and make places less pleasant to live. Therefore, Surrey County Council work closely with Surrey Police to develop local speed management plans whereby locations are investigated if there are concerns over speeding. This is done through the deployment of speed detection radar boxes that are mounted on street furniture for a week without anyone really knowing that they are there or what they are doing. Data from the speed survey equipment, data on personal injury collisions, and the characteristics of the site are used to determine the extent and nature of the problem, and if necessary, what might be possible in terms of enforcement or engineering to address the problems.

Within Surrey safety cameras (including average speed cameras) are reserved for the very worst collision hotspots where there has been a serious history of collisions causing injury and where speeds have been measured and endemic speeding has been confirmed. This ensures that enforcement resources are prioritised at the very worst collision hotspots. It also helps to maintain public support for speed cameras as a road safety intervention rather than being seen incorrectly as a "tax on the motorist". As the level of collisions and speeding on the A244 through Oxshott is not that great compared to many other roads across Surrey there are no current plans to introduce average speed cameras or permanent spot speed cameras on this stretch.

A number of speed management measures have been implemented previously including amendments and enhancements to the speed limit gateways, and implementation of vehicle activated signs (electronic signs that illuminate to drivers to remind them of the speed limit if they have been travelling too fast). A hard standing was also installed to allow the safe positioning of a police safety camera enforcement van at the side of the road. It is anticipated that the police safety camera van will continue to visit from time to time to provide enforcement.

2) Engineering a solution to the speed and conduct of traffic in the High Street, for example by incorporating a raised platform/ramp to the Pelican Crossing outside the Oxshott Village Stores/ Post Office; ghost islands and improved road markings

This suggestion has already been noted on Committee's prioritisation list of possible future schemes.

3) Improving road and pedestrian safety to the south of the village by the creation of continuous pavement(s) into the village centre to minimise pedestrian road crossing; improvements to retained island refuges; and replacement of the island refuge adjacent to the entrance to Danes Hill School with a pedestrian crossing.

A number of improvements to pedestrian facilities have been provided to the south of the village in recent years. These include:

- Two new pedestrian crossings outside Danes Hill School.
- A new footway link on the west side of the road immediately to the south of Danes Hill School entrance.
- Widening and improving the profile of the footway immediately adjacent to The Bear.

There is now a continuous footway on the western side of the A244, from the village boundary to Danes Hill School. Further works are in progress including:

- Negotiation with the developer of Willow Croft to improve the adjacent footway.
- Feasibility study work and discussions with landowners to potentially continue the western footway from Danes Hill to connect to the existing footway at Broom Hall.

Should viable solutions be identified for these latter two improvements, funding may be sought to implement such as from the Community Infrastructure Levy or third-party sources.

4) Improved road signage to support measures taken including repeater speed limit signs.

Surrey County Council is directed by the legislation of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions, and the guidance of the Traffic Signs Manual. Surrey, as highway authority, has to comply with national regulations (the Road Traffic Regulation Act) covering the signing of speed limits. In this instance the 30mph limit is indicated to drivers by the system of street lighting in the road, as described in Sections 124 and 125 of the Highway Code. Although permanent conventional speed limit repeater signing is not allowed, it has been possible to provide electronic vehicle activated signs that will illuminate to remind of the speed limit if drivers are approaching too fast. There is also signage on the approach to the mobile speed camera enforcement site to highlight that regular enforcement takes place and to remind drivers of the speed limit.

We also request the Local Committee to ask Surrey to work with the other relevant authorities to implement measures to reduce the impact on local residents of excessive volumes of HGV traffic passing through Oxshott on the A244.

Specifically, we request a weight limit of 7.5T to apply between the hours of 8pm and 6am.

Unfortunately this suggestion is not feasible for a number of reasons:

- The A244 is a principal route within the county's road network; Surrey County Council would not wish to obstruct any kind of traffic from using a principal route, as it may result in traffic diverting onto less suitable alternatives.
- Surrey Police have indicated that they would not support a new weight restriction.
- If HGV drivers were to abide by a new weight restriction, it could well result in drivers diverting through Cobham. This means that the concerns of the Oxshott community would simply be transferred to the Cobham community, with no net benefit achieved.

RECOMMENDATION

The Local Committee is asked to:

- (i) *Consider in due course whether or not to prioritise funding for a speed management scheme in Oxshott village centre;*
- (ii) *Support the ongoing work to provide pedestrian improvements to the south of the village centre.*

Contact Officer:

Nick Healey, Area Highways Manager

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