

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

LOCAL COMMITTEE (WAVERLEY)



DATE: 26 MARCH 2021

SUBJECT: PETITION RESPONSE REPORT – Install a speed VAS and a junction warning VAS, and to implement some improvements to signage, road markings and speed limit locations on the A283, along with some changes to the New Road junction

DIVISION: GODALMING SOUTH

RECOMMENDATION

This site falls between the Godalming South, Milford and Witley division and the Eastern Villages division and therefore It would be at the discretion of the divisional members to decide whether they wish to part fund any or all of the proposed works. However, both Witley and Hambledon Parish Council's may wish to fund the works themselves and the County Council would be happy to undertake the projects on their behalf subject to the funds being made available.

PETITION DETAILS:

A petition has been submitted to the Local Committee from Witley Parish Council. The petition has received 301 signatures. The petition's details read:

Witley and Hambledon Parish Councils have listened to concerns from their residents and have issues with safety aspects on the A283 at Culmer and Wormley Hill.

We the undersigned petition SCC to consider the following:

- A permanent VAS sign for speeding
- Moving the 40mph sign down from the crest of Wormley Hill (towards Chiddingfold)
- Addressing the safety of property accesses on Wormley Hill
- A permanent VAS sign for the junction with New Road
- A possible shared cost mobile VAS sign with other parishes
- Solid white lines from Combe Lane junction to the brow of the hill
- A review of signage locations and visibility
- Make some improvements to the New Road junction.

SCC have advised that they don't think a mobile VAS would be of any benefit on the A283 and that they rarely use VAS in 50 speed limits, but consider a permanent sign is required.

Witley and Hambledon Parish Councils therefore request that simple adjustments are considered, even if they vary slightly from current guidelines, and that there is consideration for some improvements to the New Road junction. The safety and security of residents and road users is our principal concern in this regard.

RESPONSE:

- A permanent VAS sign for speeding

Speed surveys were carried out on the A283 Petworth Road at King Edwards School. Close to Wormley Lane, and Philips Garage (near Chiddingfold) in October 2020. The data shows that average speeds are generally compliant with the posted 50 mph speed limit in both directions along this section of the A283 apart from the southbound approach from Wormley Lane to Lane End where average speeds were found to be higher than desired and at the threshold for Police enforcement to be considered. As a result Surrey Police have identified two sites where speed enforcement can be carried out by the Surrey Safer Camera Partnership in an effort to try and raise awareness of the 50mph speed limit. The speed data is as follows:

King Edwards School 40 mph limit
North (towards Milford) 39 mph
South (towards Chiddingfold) 41 mph

Near Wormley Lane 50 mph limit
North 52 mph
South 58 mph

Philips Garage 50mph limit
North 48 mph
South 51 mph

VAS are generally only used in 30 mph and in some instances 40 mph speed limits. They are rarely, if ever, used in 50 mph limits in the county. However, there may be some exceptions at sites where there are high numbers of casualties and the VAS are used in combination with other speed reduction measures.

In this instance the County Council do not deem it appropriate to deploy a speed Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) along the A283 Petworth Road due to the relatively good compliance with the posted speed limit. The Surrey Safer Camera Partnership will undertake speed enforcement on the section where the data shows excess speed. However, a crossroads warning sign VAS is proposed for this location to raise awareness of the Lane End and New Road crossroads.

- Moving the 40mph sign down from the crest of Wormley Hill (towards Chiddingfold)

The speed data shows good compliance for the most part with the posted 50 mph which would suggest that the limit has been correctly set for this section of road, however, as the average speeds on the southbound section to Lane End are higher than desired (58 mph) it would not meet the criteria to extend the 40 mph speed limit southbound beyond its current position. The criteria to reduce the limit is average speeds of 46 mph or less.

- Addressing the safety of property accesses on Wormley Hill

The County Council are not aware of any direct complaints or enquiries from residents relating to access difficulties to properties on this section of road. The A283 Petworth Road is very busy A road with a 50 mph speed limit that has been proven to be appropriate in terms of the recorded average speeds which are in line with the County Council policy for 'setting local speeds' limits for the location. If residents have specific concerns that are not addressed in this response they can contact the County Council via the SCC website.

- A permanent VAS sign for the junction with New Road

The County Council Road Safety Team have discussed the possibility of upgrading the existing static warning signs and using a permanent crossroads warning sign VAS for the southbound approach to Lane End crossroads due to the higher than desired average speeds. The unit would be required to have a passively safe post and permanent electric mains feed so that it is fully operational 24 hours a day seven days a week. The estimated cost to upgrade the signs and supply and install a mains operated VAS could be in the region of £15,000.

- A possible shared cost mobile VAS sign with other parishes

Portable VAS sites must be risk assessed by a member of the Road Safety Team. There must be suitable street furniture that can be used to attach the equipment and the location must be safe for the operatives to deploy the unit. Operatives also require specialist training and personal protective equipment before they can deploy VAS on the network. Unfortunately, Surrey County Council do not support the use of portable VAS in speed limits above 30 mph due to the risk of incident on a high speed roads.

- Solid white lines from Combe Lane junction to the brow of the hill

A solid white line system is already in place from the junction of Coombe Lane to just south of Milestone Cottage. The design layout is correct for the location and cannot be altered.

- A review of signage locations and visibility

A review of the signage has been carried out and has identified that the crossroads signs could benefit from being upgraded to provide more awareness of the Lane and New road junction. It has also been suggested that a permanent crossroads warning sign could be installed on the southbound approach to Lane End crossroads. The combined cost of the sign upgrade and VAS would be in the region of £15,000. A further VAS could be considered on the northbound approach to the crossroads which would be in the region of £10,000.

- Make some improvements to the New Road junction.

The County Council would need to undertake a feasibility study to look at this junction in more detail. The cost of a study is likely to be £10,000. However, from initial site observations there is very little that can be done to improve or alter the geographical layout of the junction due to the proximity of the bend and the lack of available highway land. The forward visibility when looking southbound from New Road is limited which can make it difficult for vehicles to exit the junction, in particular if they wish to turn right towards Chiddingfold.

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