



WOKING JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 24 MARCH 2021
SUBJECT: WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS
DIVISION: WOKING

Written Question from Yvonne Lowe, resident at Old Woking Road.

Although classified as a B road, the Old Woking Road is a major road within the division of Woking South East. Concern is being raised in particular regarding the stretch from the Inn at Maybury to East Hill which includes Greenfield Primary School.

Over the last year or so the profile of road users has changed significantly from primarily cars to a high proportion of HGVs, often at speed. This results in wear and tear on the road, homes and boundary fences plus danger to residents and schoolchildren. It should also be noted that the stretch of road in question has 2 bends. Undoubtedly there is also an adverse impact on the many oak trees which are covered by TPOs.

In view of these issues a number of residents are requesting the WBC adopt the following safety and environmental proposals:

- 1 Speed restriction of 30 mph (signposted in good time for drivers to adjust their speed and avoid breaking on a bend)
- 2 Speed camera to ensure enforcement
- 3 Weight restriction on vehicles

Answer from Surrey Highways

The current change between the 30 and 40mph speed limits on Old Woking Road is adjacent to the car park of The Inn at Maybury. From here to the junction with East Hill, the two bends that are mentioned are more like one long, sweeping right hand bend that can be negotiated at the posted speed limit and is not so severe that it would warrant advisory maximum speed signs. Indeed, the bend and the transition into it, are such that there are no bend warning signs at all. Our accident database indicates that there have been no personal injury collisions on the bend in the last five-year period. Other than collisions at the Maybury Hill and East Hill junctions themselves, there has been just one such collision on the stretch of road between these junctions.

Speed surveys along this length of road indicate relatively good compliance with the existing speed limit. One that was undertaken outside the school site in September / October 2019, shortly after it was occupied by Greenfield School, recorded overall mean speeds of 36mph for traffic heading towards West Byfleet and 37mph for traffic heading towards Old Woking. The 85th percentile speed, which is the speed at which or below 85% of vehicles are travelling, was 42mph in both directions. As mentioned, this indicates relatively good

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compliance with the existing 40mph speed limit but these speeds are too high to allow the limit to be reduced to 30mph, based on our current speed limit policy.

The location would not satisfy the criteria for the provision of speed cameras. In addition, it would be bad practice to reduce a speed limit and immediately enforce it with cameras as this is likely to be viewed by motorists as an indication that the limit is unrealistically low and its reduction and enforcement is a revenue generating exercise. Although the road is on our Speed Management Plan, it is a low priority in terms of police enforcement due to the recorded speeds. There are no plans to reduce the speed limit along the road and Surrey Police are in agreement with this stance.

The 2019 speed survey also recorded traffic volumes and gave an indication of how many vehicles were HGVs. However, we do not have any recent data to be able to comment on whether there has been an increase in HGVs using the road, a proportion of which are probably associated with the building works that are currently taking place at the school.

As Mrs Lowe says in her question, the Old Woking Road is a major road in the Woking South East Division and, as the B382, is an important part of the strategic highway network. It is intended to carry a large volume of traffic made up of all types of vehicle, including HGVs and there are no plans to introduce a weight limit on the road. As a general point, however, it should be noted that any such weight limit would be “environmental” and would allow for legitimate access to properties within it. This would, for instance, include the works taking place at the school and any large vehicle needing to access that site could legally do so.