

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL



LOCAL COMMITTEE (WOKING)

DATE: 4 APRIL 2022
 SUBJECT: C141 ST JOHN'S HILL ROAD, ST JOHN'S
 DIVISION: WOKING SOUTH WEST

PETITION DETAILS:

A petition containing 56 signatures has been received stating the following:

"We ask the Joint Committee to commission a review of this road due to our concerns over;

- Road safety due to the high collision rate
- Anti-social use of vehicles
- The poor state of the road
- Lack of pavements for pedestrian use."

RESPONSE:

INTRODUCTION

The C141 St John's Hill Road is a relatively important road within the highway network around Woking as it leads to one of the limited number of crossings of the London to the south-west mainline railway, although the bridge over the railway is subject to a 13-tonne weight limit, which should reduce the number of large vehicles using the road.

The road runs in a generally east-west direction, with the level of the road dropping from the railway bridge towards St John's Village. The road is subject to a 30mph speed limit but being illuminated by a system of streetlights, it has no static speed limit repeater signs.

Land use alongside the road is entirely residential with the exception of the garage adjacent to the mini-roundabout junction with St John's Road. Amongst this residential use are several properties for retired, elderly members of the community.

From the railway bridge to the western boundary of "Glen Court", there is a footway only on the northern side of the road. At this western boundary, there is a pedestrian refuge island to allow pedestrians to cross the road to a footway on the southern side of the road. This footway starts at a point approximately in line with the eastern boundary of Glen Court and continues to the village centre.

SAFETY RECORD

The petition refers to a high collision rate and in a separate email, the lead petitioner stated that “in the last 5 years, there have been 3 slight and 5 serious collisions in a short stretch of the road”. However, the personal injury collision records have been examined for the length of St John’s Hill Road from the railway bridge to the mini-roundabout junction with St John’s Road and Warwick Lane for the 5-year period between 1 October 2016 to 31 September 2021 (latest available data), which shows three such collisions, which resulted in 1 serious and 3 slight injuries, two of the latter being sustained in a single incident. The serious injury resulted from a cyclist being hit by a passing vehicle – it is not clear whether excessive speed was an issue or whether the vehicle was simply too close to the cyclist as it passed. One of the slight injuries resulted from a cyclist slipping on ice and coming off their cycle and the other 2 slight injuries resulted from a collision involving turning vehicles at the mini roundabout. All of these incidents took place between the Church Road junction and the mini-roundabout and no personal injury collisions have been recorded along the greater length of St John’s Hill Road in the last 5-year period. The only other recorded incident was at the junction of Firbank Drive in March 2015 when a cyclist’s brakes failed, and they came into contact with a vehicle turning into Firbank Drive.

Other personal injury collisions have occurred in the village centre, at which point the road has become St John’s Road. Four personal injury collisions have been recorded in the most recent 5-year period between the mini-roundabout and the canal bridge, resulting in 4 serious injuries. One involved an intoxicated cyclist falling from their bike, another involved a pedestrian crossing the road from the drivers offside, which partially masked them from the driver’s sight (this seems to have been at the pedestrian crossing, but the details of the collision report suggests that the pedestrian was not using the crossing correctly). In another incident, a pedestrian ran into the road, from the shops, in front of a vehicle. In the remaining incident, a vehicle pulled out of St John’s Lye just as a pedestrian crossed the road from the shops.

SPEED DATA

St John’s Hill Road is included on our Speed Management Plan for Woking. This is a list of those roads where concerns have been raised about vehicle speeds and is compiled in conjunction with our colleagues in our Road Safety Team and Surrey Police Officers. All the roads on the list will have speed surveys undertaken to determine the extent of any speeding issues and these results, combined with the personal injury collision history for each road, will allow the police to prioritise their enforcement resources. The Speed Management Plan is periodically reviewed with our colleagues in our Safety Engineering Team and Surrey Police, and we will bring this petition to their attention when the Plan is next reviewed, with a view to new speed surveys being undertaken along the road.

A speed survey was undertaken in St John’s Hill Road between the 9th and 16th May 2018 using a device mounted on lamp column 15, which is outside Glen

Court. The survey recorded an average mean speed of 32mph for traffic heading uphill and 33mph for traffic travelling downhill towards the village.

We do not have any speed data for the length of St John's Road from the mini-roundabout junction with St John's Hill Road / Warwick Lane to the canal bridge.

The results of the speed survey carried out in St John's Hill Road in 2018 indicate a relatively good level of compliance with the speed limit and combined with the personal injury collision history, means that the road does not actively receive police speed enforcement.

We note from the lead petitioner's separate email, that he has approached Surrey Police about establishing a Community Speed Watch but has yet to hear back from the police. Our police colleagues are looking into this but have advised that a Community Speed Watch was set up in the road in 2018 but ceased in March 2019.

CARRIAGEWAY CONDITION

All roads and footways in Surrey are subject to routine safety inspections. Surrey County Council's Safety Inspection Policy can be viewed online at [SCC Highway Safety Inspection Policy Dec 2018 \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/transport-and-roads/safety-inspection-policy)

The frequency of inspection depends upon the Surrey Priority Network level rating that has been applied to that road. In the case of SPN 1, 2 and 3 roads, this frequency is once a month – St John's Hill Road is rated as SPN 3. These inspections look for safety defects and it is possible that some carriageway defects that are unsightly for residents do not constitute such defects within our safety inspection matrix. However, we will liaise with our maintenance colleagues about this road, but it should be noted that although any safety defects that might be identified will be prioritised for repair, there are no proposals for the complete resurfacing of the road.

LACK OF PAVEMENTS

As outlined in the introduction, for approximately three-quarters of the road's length, there is a footway only on the northern side of the road, which changes to the southern side for the remaining length closest to the village centre.

The extent of public highway land on the southern side of the road is such that a footway could not be provided within the boundary of the adopted highway. Notwithstanding the limited highway extent, the provision of a footway over such a length would potentially be prohibitively expensive.

ANTI-SOCIAL DRIVING

This is something that would normally be addressed by Surrey Police and we will discuss it with our police colleagues. Any engineering measures that Surrey County Council might introduce would be intended to address a personal injury

collision history rather than anti-social driving, particularly if this was predominantly the nuisance caused by deliberately noisy exhaust systems.

FURTHER ASSESSMENT

There are no plans for any engineering measures to be introduced in St John's Hill Road, but the road will remain on our Speed Management Plan and further surveys will be undertaken to collect up to date speed data. Personal injury collision cluster sites that develop will be picked up by our colleagues in our Safety Engineering Team and discussed at our Road Safety Working Groups as appropriate.

As with every road on the Surrey highway network, St John's Hill Road will also continue to receive regular safety inspections with any necessary repair work undertaken as necessary.

RECOMMENDATION

The Local Committee is asked to note that:

- (i) Previous speed surveys undertaken along St John's Hill Road have indicated a generally good level of compliance with the existing 30mph speed limit. As such, it has not been identified as a priority site on the Woking Speed Management Plan and there are no existing proposals to introduce speed enforcement / reducing measures. However, further surveys will be undertaken to gather up to date speed data.
- (ii) The road will continue to receive regular safety inspections, with remedial work undertaken as necessary but that there are currently no plans to resurface the entire road.
- (iii) The limited extent of adopted highway land precludes the construction of additional lengths of footway.
- (iv) Officers will liaise with Surrey Police about the proposed Community Speed Watch and allegations of anti-social driving.

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