

**SEVENOAKS JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD – 26<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2008**

**REQUEST FOR SPEED REDUCTION AT CHART LANE, BRASTED**

Report of the: Local Transport & Development Manager

Status: For Consideration

**Chairman** Mr Brazier

**Head of Service** Head of Transportation & Planning (KHS) – David Hall

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**Recommendation:** It be RESOLVED that Members:

(a) note the progress made on the investigation into this matter; and

(b) endorse the officers' proposed strategy for taking the matter forward (which will be confirmed at the meeting, based on the information being reported verbally).

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**1. Background**

1.1 A petition has been received from the campaigner, Brasted Residents Acting to Keep Everyone Safe (BRAKES) on behalf of the residents of Chart Lane following a speeding investigation carried out by KHS in October 2007. Although, the speed survey results showed that vehicles travelled within the speed parameters of the current 40mph and the personally injury crash record did not suggest that some form of intervention is required in speed reduction/ road safety terms. Resident of Chart Lane, Claire Brown wanted to pursue the matter and as a result formed a road association BRAKES on the advice of KHS to raise concerns of residents related to the general road safety in Chart Lane.

**2. Introduction**

2.1 In accordance with the protocols required on the receipt of petitions, the Board is informed that a petition has been received from BRAKES. A questionnaire distributed by BRAKES forms the petition of which there were 98 signed returned forms out of 120 distributed. The petition forms as part of a questionnaire which was handed to all households and signed individually. BRAKES have received 98 signatures out of 120 in Chart Lane.

2.2 This report contains the opinions of households about the road and a summary of the results from the questionnaire. A list of households who completed the questionnaire is included in the report. The actual petition will be available to the board for inspection from the BRAKES campaigner, Claire Brown.

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2.3 Chart Lane is a ‘C’ classification road with speed limits of 30, 40 and National Speed Limit (NSL) of 60mph. The 30mph starts at the junction of the A25 High Street, Brasted for up to 125m in a southerly direction to the point where the 40mph comes into force for 1100m uphill. The NSL applies at this point. The lane links the High Street to Ide Hill. The road is mainly formed of high banks, hedges and covered in canopy of tree vegetation that gives a ‘tunnelling effect’. Chart Lane has a series of shallow bends and, consequently restricted forward visibility for all road users. The road is governed by the continuous ‘hazard’ centre line to indicate drivers that it is not advisable to overtake and it also has edge markings to give clear definition of the road ahead.

2.4 The petition suggests that the speed of the road be reduced down to 30mph from the current 40mph.

**3. Discussion**

3.1 Officers undertook to commission a 24 hour automatic traffic speed survey in Chart Lane at two locations 750m apart in order to obtain an objective traffic data at each location in conjunction with the nature of the road at these survey points.

3.2 Speed and volume surveys were carried out over a period of 7 days commencing on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2007

**Location 1: North (outside Cacketts Cottages)**

Current speed limit (mph)	85 <sup>th</sup> percentile northbound (downhill) mph	85 <sup>th</sup> percentile southbound (uphill) mp	Mean northbound (mph)	Mean southbound mph
40	47	44.5	39.5	37.2

**Location 2: South (outside Quakers)**

Current speed limit (mph)	85 <sup>th</sup> percentile northbound (downhill) mph	85 <sup>th</sup> percentile southbound (uphill) mph	Mean northbound (mph)	Mean southbound mph
40	43.4	43.2	36.5	35.9

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The above table shows Mean speeds and 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds (the speed at or below which 85% of the traffic is travelling).

- 3.3 The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed was used, until recently, to establish local speed limits (Circular Roads 1/93). Recorded speeds of 47/ 43.4 mph and 44.5/ 43.2 mph reinforce the position that the existing 40 mph speed limit is still appropriate.
- 3.4 The latest Government guidance, Circular 01/ 2006, uses the mean speed to establish the speed limit. The mean speeds of 39.5/ 36.5 mph and 37.2/ 35.9 mph exceed the stated threshold for the requested 30 mph speed limit is introduced on the road; research concludes that it would be unreasonable to expect drivers to adhere to it.
- 3.5 The personal injury crash data for Chart Lane shows only two crashes within the 40-mph speed limit section over the 3-year period to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008. The crashes are classified as 'slight' and a 'serious'. The later involved a cyclist travelling downhill and lost control whilst going past a stationary vehicle along the side of the lane. The former crash involved a pedestrian in the middle of the lane retrieving a dog. These crashes are not classified as speed related.
- 3.6 There are rumble strips to indicate drivers approaching from the south where the speed limit is the NSL that they are approaching a 40-mph section of Chart Lane. Although the strips are no longer used in the county any longer, KHS feels that its presence in the rural road helps to slow down the speed.
- 3.7 It should be noted that the high speeds of 81 and 72 mph in the campaigner's summary is probably the resultant speed recorded when two on- coming vehicles cross over the speed sensors at the same time.

**4 Conclusion**

- Appendix D of the DfT Circular 1/2006, "Setting local speed limits" sets out criteria for speed limits for the upper tier (i.e. A & B) and lower tier, classification C roads.

The appendix goes to say that 50mph : "***should be considered for lower quality C and unclassified roads with mixed function where there are a relatively high number of bends, junctions or accesses***".

For a 40mph : "***should be considered for roads with a predominately local access or recreational function, or if it forms part of a recommended route for vulnerable road users***".

- The speed limit in Chart Lane falls within the above category of assessment for setting speed limits for C roads and appropriately for the local surroundings. Therefore further lowering of the speed limit in Chart

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Lane will not make a significant difference as the road is mainly used by local residents and based on the traffic survey the residents are driving within the accepted range of the speed limit.

**5. Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

- 5.1 Any action or works arising from the proposed investigations would need to be evaluated and prioritised in the context of other schemes and funded from the Local Transport Plan.

**Sources of Information:** A25 Worships Hill, Riverhead – Route Study by Jacobs

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**GEOFF MEE**

**DIRECTOR OF KENT HIGHWAY SERVICES**