

SEVENOAKS JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD – 26TH JUNE 2008

REQUEST FOR TRAFFIC CALMING AT FIVE FIELDS LANE

Report of the: Local Transport & Development Manager

Status: For Consideration

Chairman Mr Brazier

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

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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BACKGROUND:

- 1 Five Fields Lane is a classification 'C' road that links Bough Beech Road in Four Elms (B2027) and Four Elms Road. There are 17 residential properties and farms along its length of some 1280m. The road is a typical rural country lane with limited verges, high hedges and restricted forward visibility due to many bends. The road is subject to the national speed limit for rural roads as defined by the Government. The road has previously been examined in 2003 following a request by a resident of Five Fields Lane and improvements carried out. Signing and lining improvements were carried out and to acknowledge the high equestrian ownership warning signs were introduced.

Introduction:

- 2 The Parish Council of Hever on behalf of another resident of Five Fields Lane has brought the matter again for the attention of KHS as regards to the safety of the highway users in connection with the speeding on the road.
- 3 KHS investigated the matter in 2007 and reported its findings in a letter dated 12th November 2008 to the Parish Council. The Parish Council have requested that the matter be debated in the Joint Transportation Board meeting (both letters as attached).
- 4 The Parish Council suggests in its letter that some form of traffic calming is required in Five Fields Lane and KHS undertook a speed survey of the road.

Item No. 7**Discussion:**

- 5 Traffic speed and volume surveys were carried out over a period of seven days commencing on 4th February 2008.

Current speed limit (mph)	85 th percentile speed westbound (mph)	85 th percentile speed eastbound (mph)	Mean speed westbound (mph)	Mean speed eastbound (mph)
60	40.9	40.9	35.6	35.9

- 6 The above table shows mean speeds and 85th percentile speeds (the speed at or below which 85% of the traffic is travelling). The figures for each category and direction are the average speeds recorded over the seven days.
- 7 The 85th percentile speed was used until recently to establish local speed limits (Circular Roads 1/93). Recorded speeds of 40.9mph in both directions suggests that vehicles travel at an appropriate speeds and at the speed appropriate to commensurate with this type of road.
- 8 The latest Government guidance, Circular 01/ 2006, uses the mean speed to establish the speed limit. The average mean speeds of 35.6 and 35.9 mph indicates that further intervention of traffic calming and reducing the speed limit in Five Fields Lane is not required to slow down drivers further.
- 9 The injury crash data for Five Fields Lane over the three year period to 31st January 2008 would indicate that the road has had no reported injury related crashes.
- 10 It should be remembered that the existing national speed limit set by Government is not a target speed. Drivers have a duty of care and should proceed at a speed appropriate for the rural conditions. This is a requirement contained in the Highway Code and clearly from the survey information the majority of drivers are driving appropriately.
- 11 In setting any limit both the Police and the County Council are seeking limits that foster compliance and as much self – enforcement as possible. This can be achieved if the criteria are strictly applied and that the majority of drivers 'believe' in the posted limit and understand why it is there. Speed limits are likely to be at their most effective where it reflects the local environment as in this case.

Conclusion

- 12 Given that the vehicle speeds recorded are within the Government guidance and the personal injury record for past three years is good, KHS is not able to recommend any further measures justifiable in Five Fields Lane in a form of traffic calming.

Any Further Headings the Author considers relevant

Options (and Reasons for the Recommendation)*

Key Implications

Financial

(Any problematical financial implications must be referred to the Corporate Resource Director or Chief Finance Officer or Head of Financial Services for advice and such advice must be set out within the report).

Resource (non-financial)

(Any problematical non- financial resource implications must be referred to the relevant Officer for advice and such advice must be set out within the report).

Legal etc.

(Any problematical legal implications must be referred to the Legal Section for advice and such advice must be set out within the report).

Value For Money

(Contact the Head of Policy and Performance or the Chief Finance Officer for clarification.)

Also insert any other “Key Implications” headings as appropriate

Conclusions*

Sources of Information: Please note that phrases such as “all Council files of Blighs” etc means that all confidential information contained in those files is automatically available to the public – please be careful.

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**GEOFF HARRISON-MEE
DIRECTOR OF KENT HIGHWAY SERVICES**

RISK ASSESSMENT STATEMENT (compulsory)

