

SEVENOAKS JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD – 16 DECEMBER 2008

A25 ROUTE STUDY

Report of the: Local Transport and Development Manager
(Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells)

Status: For Consideration

Head of Service Head Of Transportation and Planning(KHS)-David Hall

Recommendation: It be RESOLVED that Members note;

- (a) the progress made on the investigation into this matter; and
 - (b) endorse the officers' proposed strategy for taking the matter forward
-

Background

- 1 Jacobs Engineering UK Ltd was commissioned by Kent Highway Services to carry out a route study crash investigation of the A25 from its junction with Dryhill Lane, in the east, to the Surrey Border, in the west.
- 2 The report was commissioned to consider and provide information and recommendations on the following:
 - a) A detailed site investigation / Survey – Walking of whole route – reported by Km length
 - b) A detailed crash analysis
 - c) Outline crash remedial measures and costs
 - d) An assessment of existing through traffic signing
 - e) Assessment of existing speed limit and recommendations for changes

Key Implications

Financial: Resource(non-financial);Value for Money

- 3 None for Sevenoaks District Council

Introduction

- 4 The route study investigation deals with the A25 on a section from its junction with Dryhill Lane westwards through the semi-rural villages of Sundridge, Brasted, and Westerham to the Surrey Border.

Item No. 7

- 5 The A25 is a major A road but not considered to be a primary route, it is moderately trafficked, carrying traffic from the A20 London Road, Wrotham Heath to Redhill via Limpsfield in Surrey, although this scenario changes when the M25 and M26 motorways are closed for whatever reason and becomes heavily trafficked. The route runs generally east to west and varies in characteristics throughout its length but is predominantly rural single carriageway.
- 6 The study covers approximately 7 kilometres (4.35 miles) and for assessment purposes crash analysis, observations and recommendations have been carried out per Km length. This is also the same for crash remedial works which have been grouped into sites in order to identify complete packages of works.
- 7 The Km sections are shown on the analysis drawings at the end of each site specific analysis section in the report document.

Executive Summary

- 8 This executive summary has been included in the report to the Joint Transport Board to provide a quick overview of the main findings of the route study investigations and to indicate the areas that are to be considered by Kent Highway Services for inclusion in current and future work programmes as necessary.

General Analysis

- 9 There have been 37 crashes on the A25 between Dryhill Lane and the Surrey border in the last 3 years; this is compared to the previous 3 years where there were 46 crashes.
- 10 Generally the severity ratio for the route is below the national average for both built up and non -built up A roads. However over the past 2 years there has been a gradual decrease with a sharp increase over the last year.

Surface

- 11 The last 3 years identify a lower level of crashes on the A25 occurring on wet road surfaces at 24%, this level is lower than the National average.

Time of Day

- 12 The analysis highlights a high proportion of crashes occurring during the AM and PM peak times. Tuesday experiences the highest number of crashes with 27%.

Speed Limit

- 13 The majority crashes occur in the built-up areas within the 30mph speed limits.

Manoeuvre

- 14 Aside from “going ahead other” the dominant manoeuvres involved in crashes are those related to vehicles turning right/waiting to go ahead, highlighting the dangers of vehicles turning across fast moving on coming traffic.

Junction Detail

- 15 The highest proportion of crashes relates to those at T or staggered junctions. This may be related to both maintenance issues and/or lack of suitable signing.

Age of Driver / type of vehicle

- 16 The highest category of vehicle involvement is cars at 81% followed by powered two wheelers at 9%. This last figure is slightly higher than the county average which stands at 8%.

Casualties

- 17 There is a fairly even spread of casualties by type and age grouping. Pedestrians account for 15% of all casualties which is a fairly high figure compared to the national average of 8% (RCGB 2006) indicating the route is heavily used by this casualty class. The 30 to 59 year old age group experiences the highest number of casualties with 34%.

Speed limit review

- 18 The existing speed limits were generally found to be suitable and compliant with the Dft Circular 01/2006. The 30mph speed limit gateways for Sundridge, Brasted and Westerham should be enhanced significantly to increase driver awareness.

Site Specific Analysis and Assessment

Carriageway markings

- 19 The road markings from Dryhill lane to the Surrey border generally require installation and or reinstatement in site specific locations. In particular the double yellow lines on either side of New Road Sundridge should be extended by +/-18 metres to improve the view for vehicles exiting New Road at peak times. Install ‘Slow’ road markings on the eastern and western approaches to the shop and post office in Sundridge as well as the western approach to the junction with Hosey Hill and the eastern approach to Vicarage Hill in Westerham. The ‘give way’ road markings on Farley Lane should be aligned and reinstated with the existing carriageway edge line.

Junctions

- 20 A significant number of crashes have occurred at T or staggered junctions and many along the route were found to be insufficiently lined and signed. Also the speed at which vehicles are travelling on the majority of the route makes it

Item No. 7

harder for vehicles exiting T junctions onto the main road. It is desirable that all junctions should be similarly signed and enhanced in order to establish consistent warning at each junction.

Speed Limit Gateways

- 21 The conspicuity generally of the gateways are poor, in particular the gateway features on the western approach to the eastern gateway Brasted and the approach to the eastern gateway Westerham. The gateways should be enhanced to a similar standard in order to effectively reduce speeds.

Pedestrian Features

- 22 The majority of the A25 route is through rural areas however there are a number of pedestrian features which require improvements. There are sections of the footpath which are in a poor condition, in particular the sections along the Main Road in Sundridge, from adjacent 'Park Cottage to the National Speed limit gateway in Brasted and from just prior to the 30mph speed limit eastern gateway to the Darent Car Park and from Goodley Stock Lane in Westerham to the Surrey Border.

Powered 2 Wheelers

- 23 (9%) crashes occurred which is slightly higher than the county average which stands at 8% for the latest available 3 year period, and is lower than the national average for A roads of 12% for the same period.

Surfacing

- 24 Generally the A25 road surface is deteriorating with cracks, road surface breaking away, sunken road surface and utility covers and sections where there are potholes forming. A significant number of junction interfaces along the route require repairs to the surfacing and also the reinstatement of the high friction surfacing.

Signing

- 25 There are signs which are dirty and missing which require cleaning and replacing. It is recommended to install a 'road narrows on both sides ahead' sign opposite the entrance to 'Owl House' Westerham to increase awareness of the 'pinch point' on Vicarage Hill and to enforce the 30mph speed limit in this section.

Drainage

- 26 A large proportion of the gullies along the A25 were found to be blocked and with a high number of crashes on the route, it is imperative that the drainage is maintained.

Village

- 27 The speed limits throughout the villages do not appear to be observed. Improvements to all village gateways as well additional road markings will assist to increase visibility and awareness to inform drivers to reduce speeds when required.

Carriageway Definition

- 28 There are a number of locations where road marker posts have been damaged, missing or coated in grime and require cleaning and replacement.

Key works in each section.

- 29 **1km** improvement to the junction mouth at Dryhill Lane, repair sunken carriageway along Main Road, replace Kee Klamp fencing and clean gullies.
- 30 **2km** reinstate road markings, surfacing and improvements to the junction mouth at New Road and clean gullies.
- 31 **3km** surfacing repairs, improvements to the junction mouth at Church Road and vegetation removal at the western approach to the 30mph speed limit gateway Brasted.
- 32 **4km** footpath repairs, surfacing repairs and improvements to the junction mouth at 'Park Farm' Cottage.
- 33 **5km** surfacing repairs, clean gullies and repair pedestrian crossing floodlights.
- 34 **6km** footpath repairs, install road markings, surfacing repairs and install signage on Vicarage Hill.
- 35 **7km** surfacing repairs, footpath repairs and improvements to the junction mouth at Farley Lane.

Discussion

- 36 The report has indicated a range of works and measures to be considered as highlighted in the executive summary for routine maintenance works and also possible changes to improve driver awareness.
- 37 The key findings to come from this route study in regards to the safety aspects show that overall there has been **a reduction in total number of crashes** and that this road is **generally below the national average for crashes** and we must continue to work on crash reduction measures where possible to further reduce crashes.
- 38 The next steps are for the report to be circulated within Kent Highway Services for each team to include the recommended works within current and future programmes within the budget constraints. The estimated costs for the works are £285,750.

Item No. 7

- 39 Also to circulate the report to the parish councils along the A25 route corridor and to discuss the reports findings with them to make sure we have gathered all the necessary local knowledge and that they are included in the prioritisation of any works within their area.
- 40 Since the document is now in the public domain it is important for all comments and observations to be recorded and responded to as necessary and I am including a contact address for this purpose later in this report.

Conclusions

- 41 The route study report has given us a good overview of this section of the A25 and the recommendations in the report provide Kent Highway Services with more information to enable us to better manage this section of highway.
- 42 The report will help in providing an informed basis for discussions with interested groups regarding the A25 and will also help in the production of the Sevenoaks Transport Strategy and Implementation Plan.

Financial

- 43 Any action or works arising from the investigations will be carried out as part of current and future works programmes within budget constraints. The estimated costs for the works are £285,750.

Sources of Information: KHS A25 (Dryhill Lane to Surrey Border)Route Study

Contact Officer(s): Alan Ash 08458 247 899
Local Transport and Development Manager
Kent Highway Services
Doubleday House
St Michaels Close
Aylesford
Kent
ME20 7BU

DIRECTOR OF KENT HIGHWAY SERVICES:
Caroline Bruce

Please note: The full A25 Route Study is available to view online through the Committee Management Information System (CMIS) at www.sevenoaks.gov.uk