

Reduction on Road Speed - Croydon Council's Blanket 20mph Proposal

Croydon Council's proposal may be found in North-Croydon (Area 1) Maximum 20mph speed limit proposal and on-line at https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/20mph_faq.pdf

Two areas were introduced in 2016 and the Council intend to go Borough-wide this year.

The Stated Aims of the Project are to:

- improve road safety
- discourage through traffic
- encourage walking and cycling
- make a positive contribution to improving health and tackling obesity
- improve the quality of life and the local environment

Justification for the Proposal

Evidence from Road Transport Research over many years concludes that in the event of a vehicle collision, the lower the vehicle speed the less serious are injuries. Inappropriate speed contributes to around 10% of all injury collisions reported to the police, 13% of crashes resulting in a serious injury and 24% of collisions which result in a death. This includes both 'excessive speed', when the speed limit is exceeded but also driving within the speed limit when this is too fast for the conditions at the time (for example, in poor weather, poor visibility or high pedestrian activity).

According to the Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents, if a pedestrian is hit by a vehicle travelling at 20mph there is a 2.5% chance that they will be fatally injured, compared to a 20% chance at 30mph. Slower speeds not only reduce the severity of injuries, but also the chance of a collision (road traffic accidents) occurring as people have more time to react. Based on significantly reduced stopping distances – the stopping distance for a car at 20mph is 12 metres and at 30mph 23 metres.

Accident statistics for Croydon in 2013

There were a total of 889 accidents which resulted in 1092 casualties. The casualties were broken down as follows:

Pedestrians = 188

Cyclists = 94

Powered two wheelers = 157

Cars = 562

All other vehicles (taxi, bus, Goods, etc) =91

Research by the Department for Transport (DfT) shows that a 1mph reduction in speed results in a 6% reduction in collisions so, even a modest reduction of 1mph average speed would theoretically result in 53 fewer collisions a year in the whole of Croydon (based on 889 collisions for 2013).

Process

Consultation for the remainder of the Borough has been divided into three areas [3, 4 and 5]. Sanderstead is in both areas 4 and 5.

On January 18th 2017 every address in these areas, both residential and business will be sent a letter describing the proposal. There will then be a 4-week period for any objections to be made. The requirement will not be a simple 'yes' or 'no' response, each person and each persons' objection will need to contain an explanation of the reason for it.

If you make an objection your view will be taken into consideration for the whole area, not just the road in which you live or on which you have commented.

Households may raise as many objections as they wish.

The council will restrict the responses to be considered to one per household/business because they 'believe that this approach will provide a better representation of each road as a whole rather than enabling those properties with more adults to have a greater influence.'

Is the Proposal both Valid and Justified

The majority of road accidents in Croydon occur on 'main' roads. Examination of <http://www.crashmap.co.uk/> confirms this. However it is understood that the following roads will remain at their current maximum speed limits:

A2022 - Banstead - Purley - Sanderstead - Selsdon - Addington (Downs Court Rd, Mitchley Ave, Rectory Park, Addington Rd, Selsdon Park Rd);
A22 - Godstone Road;
A23 (Purley Way, London Rd etc - full length);
A235 (Brighton Road; Purley to Croydon);
A237 (Woodcote Rd & Woodcote Grove Rd);
A232 - East-west through central Croydon, including Croydon Road, Duppas Hill Road, Croydon Flyover, Addiscombe Road;
B269 Sanderstead Road - Limpsfield Road.

As the Croydon 20mph blanket speed restriction will not be covering 'A' and 'B' roads the actual reduction in accidents could well be lower than a theoretical 53. However, if the actual reduction of speed is lower than the accepted 1% the reduction in accidents could be even higher. In Portsmouth, vehicles slowed on average by 1.3mph and collisions reduced by 21%.

The cost of the scheme is estimated at £1.5m. The generic estimate cost of a fatal casualty (all ages), including lost output, medical and ambulance costs and human costs is £1.69m.

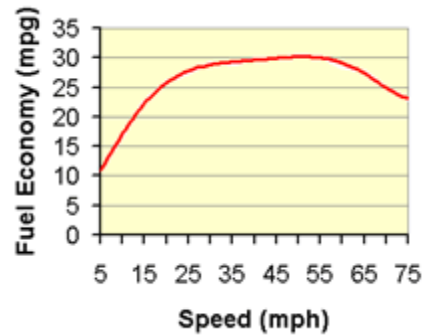
Reduction in vehicle speed can result in an increase in road capacity in some circumstances. Variable speed limits on sections of motorways do result in both a more even traffic flow with a consequent reduction in congestion and, therefore vehicle emissions.

Observations

Whilst one fatal accident reduction in Croydon would pay for the scheme, the blanket restriction does not necessarily address the high-risk areas.

It is noted that the 'Aims' benefits are not quantified and it is, therefore, difficult to assess the justification of the scheme.

The relationship between vehicle speed and fuel consumption is demonstrated in the graph below and the effect on emissions by reducing speeds of vehicles is self-explanatory.



At the first scrutiny meeting on 20mph zones the Metropolitan Police said that they would not enforce it. Exceeding a speed limit is a road traffic offence and, therefore it is incumbent on the police to uphold the law and they cannot refuse to do so. PCSO's carry out radar speed checks throughout the Borough, either at well-known speeding areas or when complaints are received, and may be accompanied by a resident volunteer.

A high proportion of accidents occur when vehicles are being driven within the speed limit when this is too fast for the conditions at the time. The proposed scheme in isolation will not deter inconsiderate/bad driving which is the cause of many accidents. Bad driving alone is only legally enforceable if it falls within the 'due care and attention' or 'dangerous' categories.

The current 20MPH zones outside schools will lose their significance and may become more dangerous.

Recommendations

- Sanderstead Residents Association request as many residents as possible participate in the process, noting that the process requires all objection[s] to be explained.
- Having considered all aspects of the proposed scheme, the Committee believe that the complete blanket approach is neither justified nor necessary. Roads should be assessed both in light of any previous accident or incident or potential risk of accident and if speed is considered to have been or may be a factor, a restriction to be considered.