



Petitions Panel

1 December 2016

1. Background to the Petition Scheme

- 1.1 The County Council's Petitions Scheme was adopted on 29 April 2010 and came into effect on 15 June 2010. The Scheme was subsequently updated by the County Council on 21 July 2016.
- 1.2 If a petition is supported by 50 or more signatories then it will be dealt with by a small customer focussed panel. If a petition is supported by 1,000 or more signatories it will be scheduled for a debate at the next meeting of the full County Council.

2. Petition – Request for traffic calming measures in Woodlinken Drive, Verwood

- 2.1 The County Council received a petition organised by Mr and Mrs M Andrews on 17 October 2016. This reads as follows:

In our opinion, supported by the undersigned, there is a need for traffic calming measures to be installed to reduce excessive speeding on the road, and we would respectfully ask that this matter is given due consideration.

The recent demolition of a wall at 53 Woodlinken Drive highlights the speeds at which drivers use this road – there have been a number of similar occurrences at the bend/junction of Woodlinken Close, where the wall to 6 Woodlinken Close has been demolished on several occasions, and where plastic kerbside bollards were installed by you [Highways] fairly recently.

- 2.2 As this petition contains more than 50 signatures, the Panel are invited to note and discuss.
- 2.3 This petition contains 85 signatures, seven additional letters of support and a report compiled by Verwood's Neighbourhood Policing Team.
- 2.4 A copy of the petition and supporting letters can be found at Appendix A.
- 2.5 This discussion should conclude with a decision as to how to respond to the petition. This may include one or more of the following:
 - taking the action requested in the petition
 - considering the petition at a council meeting
 - holding an inquiry into the matter
 - undertaking research into the matter
 - holding a public meeting
 - holding a consultation
 - referring the petition for consideration by the council's Audit and Governance Committee
 - calling a referendum
 - writing to the petition organiser setting out the Panel's views about the request in the petition.
- 2.6 Alternatively, the Panel may determine a combination of the options above, or decide on another course of action as appropriate.

3. Context

3.1 Woodlinken Drive is a residential road with a speed limit of 30mph which is by virtue of street lighting. Speed limit repeaters signs or '30' roundel painted on the road are not permitted by strict regulations. If they were to be installed it would render the speed limit unenforceable.

3.2 The only non-residential property on Lake Road/Woodlinken Drive is a Doctors surgery on Lake Road.

3.3 Woodlinken Drive has a junction with the B3081, Ringwood at the northeast end and is linked with the B3072, Manor Road via Lake Road and Newtown Road.

3.4 Lake Road/Woodlinken Drive can be used to get from the B3072 to the B3081 avoiding other routes through Verwood.

3.5 Lake Road/Woodlinken Drive is approximately 1km in length.

3.6 Based on traffic survey conducted in August and September 2015, traffic flows on the Lake Road/Woodlinken Drive route are in the region of 2,500 to 3,000 vehicles per day.

Peak flows are around the morning and evening 'rush hour' periods, which is to be expected.

The average vehicle flow per hour between 07:00 and 19:00 is typically between 180 vehicles and 220 vehicle per hour; approximately 3 to 4 vehicles per minute.

3.7 There are four bus stops and three bus routes for Woodlinken Road/Lake Road:

- Yellow Buses – 70/77, Verwood - Queen Elizabeth's School, Wimborne
- More Bus – 771, Ferndown - Verwood – Queen Elizabeth's School, Wimborne
- More Bus – X6, Poole – Ferndown – Verwood – Ringwood – Bournemouth

A map showing all the features mentioned above is at Appendix B.

3.8 Collisions resulting in damage to private property have recently occurred at the bend/junction to Woodlinken Close.

3.9 The County Council has access to road traffic collision data from January 1998 to July 2016. This data is recorded and validated by Dorset Police. Data available only includes collisions that resulted in personal injury that were reported to the police.

It is acknowledged that the County Council will not have details on all collisions that have occurred on Lake Road/Woodlinken Drive. If the collisions mentioned in the petition that resulted in damage to private property were either not reported to the police or did not result in personal injury then the County Council would not have any record of them.

It is standard practice to use the latest available five years of collision data (injury collisions) to assess the priority of need for safety improvements.

Between August 2011 and July 2016 there was one collision recorded (slight injury) on Woodlinken Drive/Lake Road. This collision was the result of a driver losing control on the bend at the junction to Woodlinken Close (left hand bend) into the path of two oncoming vehicles. The contributory factors recorded were loss of control and slippery road – due to weather.

3.10 The petition includes a brief report by Verwood's Neighbourhood Policing Team. PC Robertson provided brief information on recorded incidents on Woodlinken Drive or in close proximity between 1 April 2014 and 1 October 2016.

A total of eight incidents were recorded. Of these eight incidents, two were recorded as vehicles leaving the road on Woodlinken Drive at the bend/junction with Woodlinken Close.

- June 2016 - Non injury – Vehicle failed to negotiate bend – private wall damaged
- July 2015 – Non injury – Vehicle failed to negotiate bend – private wall damaged

The road surface of both these incidents was recorded as 'wet'.

One other collision was recorded at the junction between Woodlinken Drive and Woodlinken Close. No details other than 'two vehicle non-injury'.

Two further collisions were recorded; neither felt to be relevant for this report. One the result of a vehicle pulling out onto Ringwood Road from Woodlinken Drive across path of motorcyclist; serious injury. The other, junction overshoot from Lake Road onto Newton Road; single vehicle, non-injury.

Three incidents of anti-social or dangerous driving reported – no further police action. No specific location for two, one report of dangerous driving reported on Woodlinken Drive.

3.11 The road surface condition for the single injury collision and two non-injury collisions at the bend/junction to Woodlinken Close which resulted in vehicles losing control was recorded as 'wet/damp'. This is a strong indication that the skid resistance at the bend was not as good as it could be.

3.12 Investigations by were conducted on the back of local concern regarding vehicles losing control on the bend revealed that the skid resistance was insufficient. As a result this section of Woodlinken Drive was surface dressed in August 2016.

The surface dressing has improved the skid resistance.

After the surfacing dressing was completed the centre lines were reinstated and the SLOW markings on the approach to the bend were refreshed.

Bend warnings signs have been installed on both approaches to the bend/junction with Woodlinken Close both augmented with 'SLOW' road markings.

3.13 Traffic signing and lining are seen as 'soft' traffic calming measures. They are relatively inexpensive and often result in an improvement in driving behaviour.

3.14 'Hard' traffic calming features fit into two categories, vertical and horizontal.

Vertical traffic calming features are those which vehicles drive over; speed humps or cushions. Horizontal features are those which vehicles drive through or around; chicanes or pinch points for example.

The cost of installation is high, particularly when applied to a route.

Both vertical and horizontal form of traffic calming do result in a general reduction in vehicle speed. However considerations need to be made on the potential negative impacts such schemes can have.

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The number and frequency of private driveways, bus stops and side road junctions on Lake Road/Woodlinken Drive would make it very difficult to establish an effective system of traffic calming without adversely affecting residents.

Traffic calming can result in a displacement of traffic to nearby routes. There is high likelihood that this could happen in this case, with traffic choosing to use Lake Road (north). This essentially would move the perceived issues rather than address them.

Vertical features are used much less often than in the past. The cost of installation and ongoing maintenance is prohibitive.

Vertical calming features are typically installed on routes with notable pedestrian movements along and across roads and where speed has been recorded as a common theme in the occurrence of collisions i.e. close to schools and town centres.

Horizontal traffic calming features are the most common form of 'new' traffic calming features.

Horizontal traffic calming features are installed on routes used as 'rat runs' where traffic speeds are notably higher than the speed limit.

They tend to be used on routes where there is notable pedestrian movements alongside and across the road and where speed has been recorded as a common theme in the occurrence of collisions i.e. close to schools or where there is a mix of residential properties and local shops/services.

The only non-residential property on Lake Road/Woodlinken Drive is a doctor's surgery at the western end of Lake Road – shown on the map at Appendix B.

Vertical and horizontal calming features are not universally welcomed. Emergency services are generally opposed to their use on key routes as they impact upon response times and make transporting injured patients more problematic for the Ambulance Service. Bus companies are also opposed to such features due to the impact upon journey times and seriously consider alternative routes to avoid proposed traffic calmed areas.

Residents can also be negatively affected by vertical traffic calming features due to the additional noise they create, both due to vehicles slowing prior to and accelerating after the feature and the noise created by vehicles travelling over such features. The latter is a particular issue for larger vehicles such as trucks and buses.

Horizontal traffic calming features can also create noise that residents find more disruptive. Although typically travelling slower, the noise generated by vehicles decelerating and accelerating through horizontal features is typically louder than without such calming features.

Horizontal calming features can also present areas of conflict between vehicles that did not previously exist.

3.15 The petitioner cites speed surveys that were conducted in September 2015. The petitioner suggests that these surveys were conducted at a location not representative of speeds on other sections of Woodlinken Drive and has questioned, with respect, the conclusions drawn from the results of the speed surveys.

Two speed surveys were conducted in response to resident concerns raised via Verwood Town Council about vehicles losing control at the bend/junction with Woodlinken Close.

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A survey was conducted approximately 65 metres west of the junction with Woodlinken Close between 2 September and 8 September 2015; the equipment used was 'speed tubes' laid across the road. This survey is referred to 'west'.

Another survey was completed using radar equipment in order to survey speeds in the bend. This survey was conducted between 21 August and 9 September 2015. Survey referred to as 'east'.

The Department for Transport guidance on speed monitoring suggests that both the mean average and 85thile speeds should be considered.

The 85thile speed is the speed at which 85% of vehicles are travelling at or below. The top 15% are not included as they are felt to be unrepresentative of typical speeds; all vehicles are included in the mean average.

The seven day average 85thile speed for the east survey was 31mph and the mean average was 26mph.

Chart 1 shows the seven day average 85thile speeds and mean average speed by hour.

Chart 2 shows the seven day average speed distribution by hour.

Chart 1

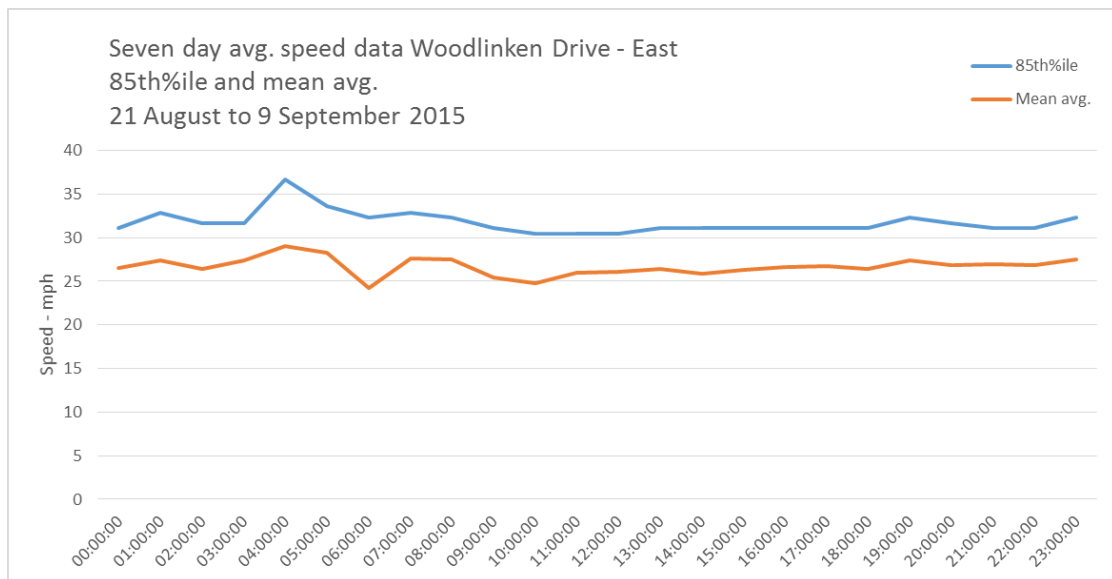
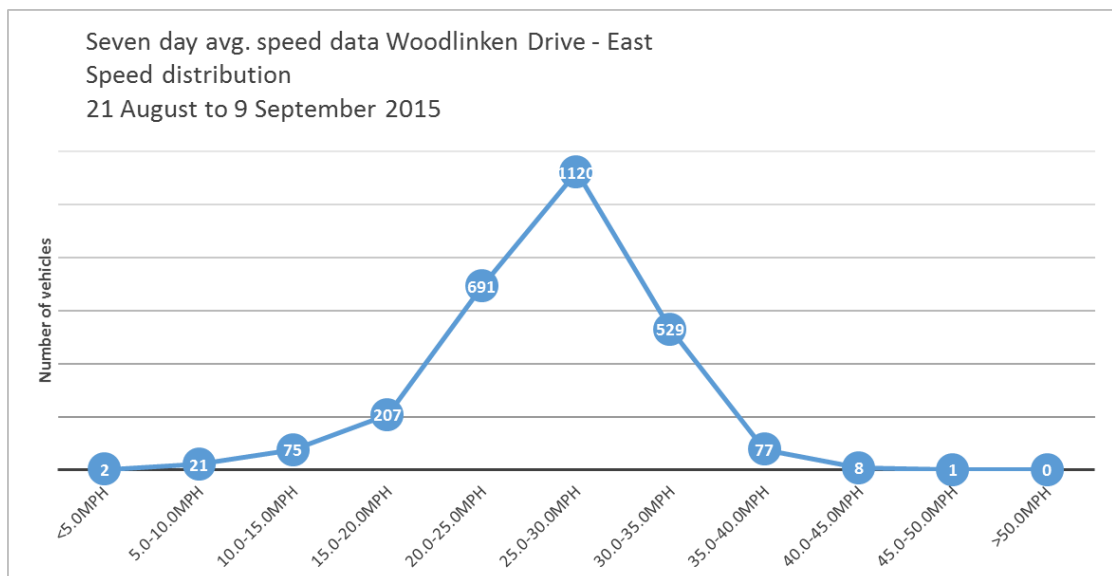


Chart 2



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The seven day average 85th percentile speed for the west survey was under 32mph and the mean average was under 27mph.

Chart 3 shows the seven day average 85th percentile speeds and mean average speed by hour.

Chart 4 shows the seven day average speed distribution by hour.

Chart 3

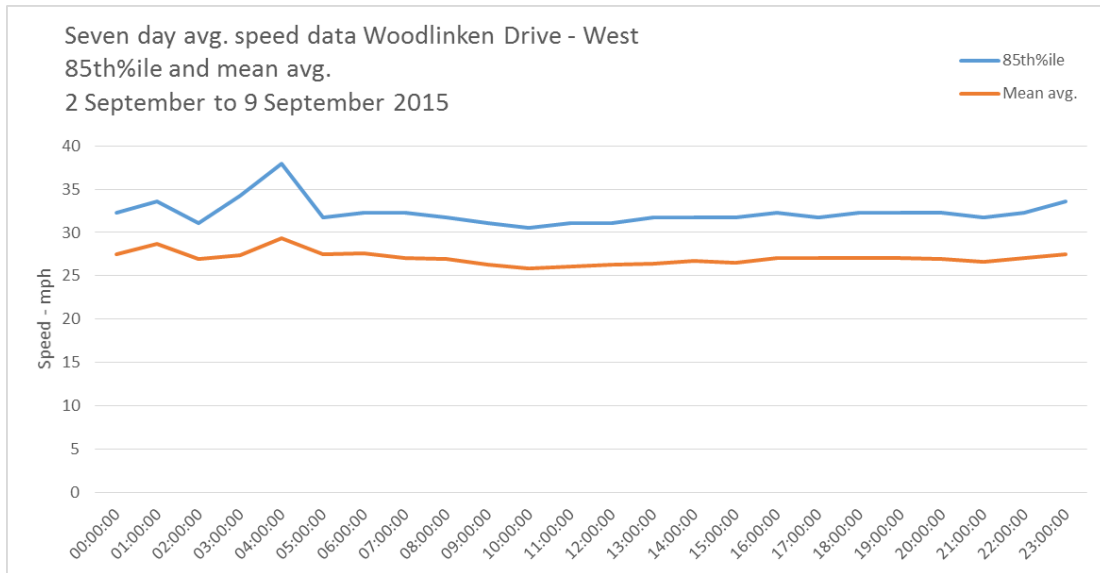
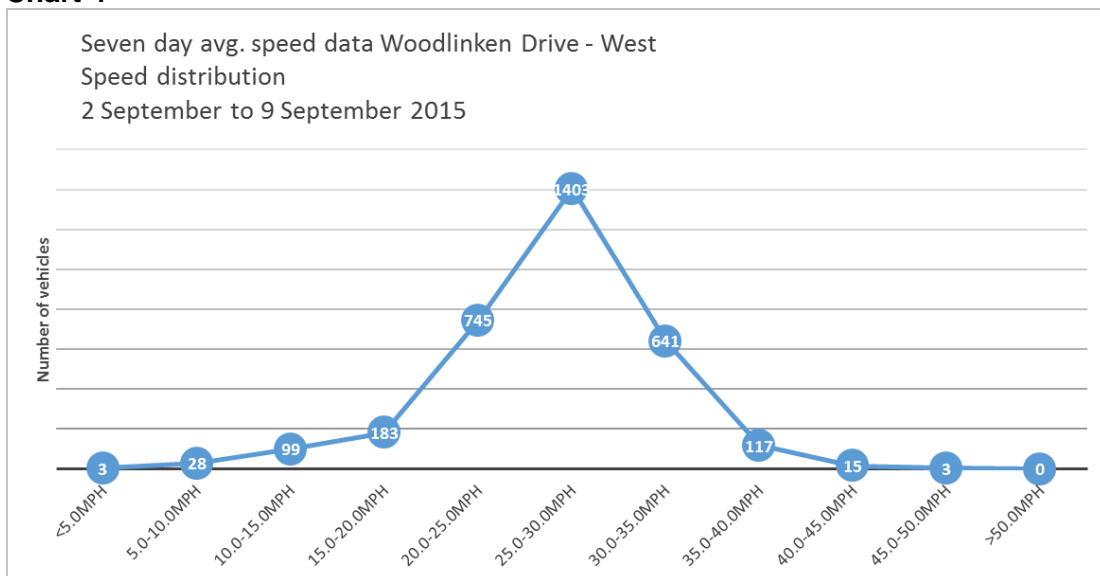


Chart 4



Speed and traffic flow data tables for both east and west survey sites are available at Appendix C

- 3.16 The report provided by Verwood Neighbourhood Policing Team's PC Robertson includes an overview of speed enforcement that has been conducted on Woodlinken Drive:

Since the 10th July 2015 and 28th September 2016 the Dorset camera safety partnership [Dorset Road Safe] have deployed a camera van in the location of Woodlinken Drive on 14 separate occasions.

The average duration of the site visit was around 50 minutes.

The camera was activated on 21 occasions in all an average of 1.5 activations per visit. (Very low)

The vast majority of enforcement took place outside number 39 Woodlinken Drive – highlighted on the map at Appendix B. This section of Woodlinken Drive is straight. The low number of activations across multiple visits suggest that vehicles are travelling at appropriate speeds. It is accepted that the presence of the speed camera van will have likely had a positive effect on speeds travelled, however if excessive speed was inherent on Woodlinken Drive higher activation rates would have been expected.

One of the seven letters detailing support for this petition requests the installation of a speed camera. The information provided by Dorset Police regarding speed enforcement reveals a 'very low' level of activation, this is a strong suggestion that investment in a speed camera would be disproportionate to need.

- 3.17 The petitioner's comment that the speed surveys are not representative of speeds across Woodlinken Drive is accepted. However, both speed surveys and the enforcement information provided by Dorset Police suggest that speeds are not likely to be generally inappropriate for the layout and use of the route.

It is also accepted that there are a minority of drivers who are travelling at inappropriate speeds on Lake Road/Woodlinken Drive. Such drivers would be unlikely adjust their behaviour with the presence of traffic calming and could present greater disruption to residents particularly in the late/early hours owing to deceleration and acceleration.

It is important to note comments provided by PC Robertson regarding speed of vehicles using Woodlinken Drive.

As with other roads there are issues around speeding however in my considered view, no more than in other locations in Verwood.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 The Panel is invited to note the receipt of this petition and decide how to respond to it, possible options are available in paragraph 2.5.
- 4.2 Based on the available data and information outlined in the report it is recommended that 'hard' traffic calming measures are not investigated further for Lake Road/Woodlinken Drive.

The nature of use and the layout of Woodlinken Drive mean that establishing an effective traffic calming scheme would not likely be feasible without adversely affecting residents.

Traffic flows and speeds recorded in the two survey conducted across August and September 2015 combined with information from Dorset Police regarding speed

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enforcement suggest that extensive 'hard' traffic calming measures would be disproportionate to need.

- 4.3 In recognition of the petitioner's concerns supported by 85 residents and seven supporting letters, additional 'soft' traffic calming measures in addition to those already in place on Lake Road/Woodlinken Drive could be investigated.
- 4.4 A request could be made for Dorset Road Safe to conduct enforcement at specific times. Visits would have to be programmed alongside other enforcement in the area.
- 4.5 It is not known whether Verwood Town Council are members of the Community Speed Watch project run by Dorset Road Safe. This could also be suggested for residents to explore via the town council.

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