Proposed 20mph Scheme on the roads around George Abbot School, Guildford

Public Engagement Results



Public Engagement Overview

Background & Purpose

Surrey County Council is proposing a 20mph scheme on Woodruff Avenue and the roads around George Abbot School.

A public engagement exercise was carried out between **28 January and 26 February 2026**, providing residents, local businesses, and other road users with an opportunity to review the proposed scheme and share their views.

The purpose of the engagement was to gather local insight, understand any concerns, and ensure that all affected stakeholders had the chance to contribute before the scheme progresses further.

This report summarises the feedback received throughout the engagement period and sets out officers' recommendations and responses to the comments raised.

Engagement Methodology

Engagement materials - including plans, supporting information, and speed data - were made available on the project webpage: https://george-abbot-school.commonplace.is/

To ensure wide awareness, all residents and businesses within the area were notified by letter, local schools were contacted by email, posters with QR codes and large information boards were placed in the area.

Proposed Scheme Impacts

- **6** Roads included in the proposed 20mph limit area
- **295** Households / businesses affected
- **1** School within the area

Engagement Response Level

- **596** Visitors to engagement webpage
- **143** Survey respondents
- **48** Respondents live on impacted roads
- **40** Respondents have children travelling to school on these roads

Recommendation

The engagement findings support progressing the scheme as proposed, with no amendments required.

Feedback highlighted a range of views, with strong support centred on improving safety for children travelling to and from George Abbot School, reducing vehicle speeds and creating a safer environment for people walking and cycling. Concerns primarily related to school-related parking and congestion, with many respondents feeling these issues posed a greater safety concern than vehicle speeds. Concerns were also raised regarding existing traffic speeds, enforcement and compliance.

No new issues were identified that require changes to the proposal, and the roads remain appropriate for inclusion within the proposed 20mph scheme.

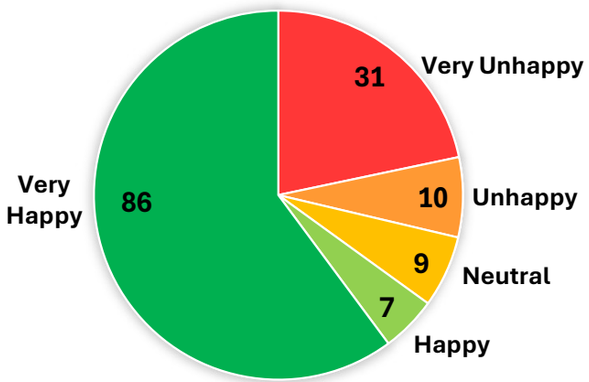
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Sentiment of Respondents

How people feel about the proposed 20mph scheme

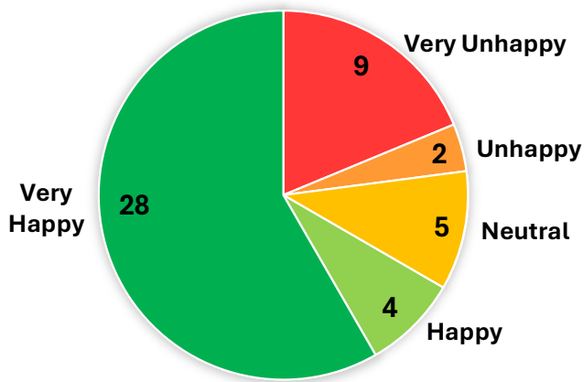
Support for the scheme is consistently high across all respondent groups, with the strongest support from families with children travelling to school.

Overall
(143 respondents)



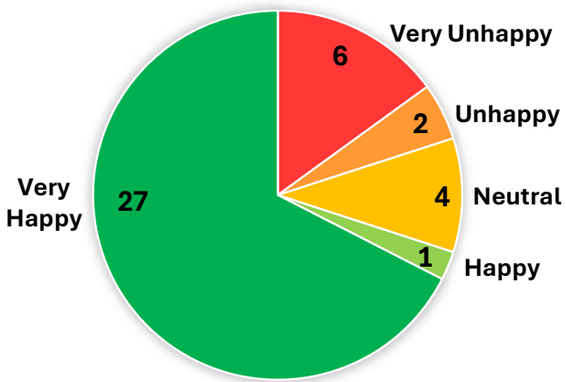
65%	happy or very happy
29%	unhappy or very unhappy
6%	neutral

Residents of impacted roads
(48 respondents)



67%	happy or very happy
23%	unhappy or very unhappy
10%	neutral

Families with children travelling to school
(40 respondents)



70%	happy or very happy
20%	unhappy or very unhappy
10%	neutral

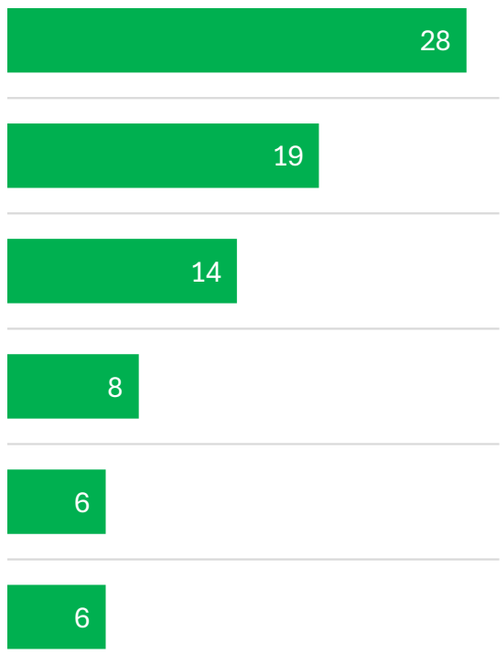
Positive Feedback

What people said they like about the proposed 20mph scheme

Key Positive Themes

- ✓ Strong support for improving safety for children travelling to and from school
- ✓ Support for a wider and more consistent residential 20mph area
- ✓ Support for reducing vehicle speeds and creating calmer traffic
- ✓ General support for safer roads and reducing the risk of collisions
- ✓ Support for creating a safer environment for people walking and cycling
- ✓ Interest in extending 20mph to additional roads and school travel routes

Number of mentions



Key Insight

Supportive feedback focused primarily on improving safety for children travelling to and from George Abbot School. Respondents frequently cited concerns about vehicle speeds and felt the proposed 20mph limit would create a safer environment for people walking and cycling. Many also welcomed the estate-wide approach and the more consistent speed environment it would provide.

What people told us...

> Excellent idea, it will make it so much safer for young people going to school.

> This estate, with a large school and only two access points, lends itself perfectly to a 20mph speed limit.

> People fly down Woodruff Avenue, so definitely on board with 20mph proposal.

> Calming the traffic is the only way to improve safety. Having a slower speed will improve reaction times and encourage safer use of the roads and pavements for all users. Crossing roads as a pedestrian is a major hazard.

> It will make the area safer for people walking and cycling and encourage healthier travel choices.

> The A3100 London Road and New Inn Lane should also be 20mph!

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Objections and Concerns

What people said they did not like about the proposed scheme

Key Objection Themes*	Number of mentions
Parking, congestion and school traffic are bigger issues than speed	18
Existing speeds already low / scheme has little benefit	16
Concerns about enforceability and compliance	14
20mph limits should be focused on schools or school times	11
Funding should be directed towards road maintenance and other priorities	10
Prefer targeted measures such as parking controls, crossings or School Streets	9
20mph is too slow / will inconvenience drivers / will create congestion	7

** Please see Concerns and Suggestions page for more details on these comments*

Key Insight

Concerns focused primarily on school-related parking and congestion, with many respondents feeling these issues posed a greater safety concern than vehicle speeds. Respondents also questioned whether a sign-only 20mph limit would be effective without enforcement and whether lower speed limits should be focused around schools rather than applied throughout the wider area.

What people told us...

> The traffic around the George Abbot school certainly needs addressing. The congestion and parking are the main issues.

> The average speed on those roads is already 20 mph why are you wasting further time and money on this.

> The money would be better spent fixing potholes and maintaining the roads.

> Kids aren't going to/from school 24/7. Reducing the speed limit will inconvenience many more people as it'll be all day, every day.

> I would prefer the roads became School Streets with restricted access during school times.

> Decreasing the speed limit will simply make travel even worse and slower than it already is.

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Concerns & Suggestions (1/4)

Summary of concerns raised and officer responses

Concern	Officer response
This is unnecessary as speeds are already low.	• The proposed 20mph limit reflects the speeds already being achieved on many of the roads within the scheme area and formalises the existing speed environment. • While average speeds may already be relatively low on some roads, a 20mph speed limit helps establish clear expectations for drivers and supports a more consistent speed environment across the wider residential area. • Lower vehicle speeds provide drivers with more time to react to unexpected hazards and can reduce the severity of collisions should they occur.
Without enforcement drivers will not comply / include physical calming measures.	• We will only implement 20mph speed limits that are predominantly self-enforcing and therefore retain credibility with motorists. When a new 20mph limit is introduced, we monitor speeds and repeat surveys once the change has bedded in. We will consider additional physical traffic-calming measures if the data shows vehicle speeds are higher than we would like. • Enforcement of speeding is the responsibility of Surrey Police not Surrey County Council, and decisions about enforcement methods are made by the police. • The evidence is that drivers drop their speed when a 20mph limit is introduced, even without enforcement. In the most recent implementation of 20mph across Wales, mean speeds dropped by 2.5mph and up to 6mph on faster roads. This occurred without any police enforcement in the first six months on 20mph roads.

The money for this should be spent on resurfacing or potholes instead.	• It is recognised that some residents and road users would like to see additional repairs to roads in Surrey.
	• Countywide road maintenance works are funded from a different budget than the funding that has been allocated for delivering this 20mph scheme. These works are prioritised using a number of criteria including:
	  ◦ Risk to the public – calculated using data such as number of insurance claims and number of small repairs carried out.
	  ◦ Condition of road – this includes an engineer's assessment.
	  ◦ Road priority – greater priority is given to roads with greatest usage or need. Road class (A,B C and D), speed limits and daily traffic are all factors in this.
	• This prioritisation is to ensure that roads and pavements in greatest need of treatment are addressed in a fair and consistent manner across the county. Further details of how we prioritise road resurfacing works can be found here: https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roadworks-and-maintenance/maintenance

Concerns & Suggestions (2/4)

Summary of concerns raised and officer responses

Concern	Officer response
Why are you reducing the speed limit when most roads have few or no recorded collisions?	• The number of collisions is not the only reason Surrey Highways changes the speed limits. The presence of schools, pedestrian activity, vehicle speeds, road layout and the overall character of an area are also important considerations. • Within the proposed scheme area there were two recorded injury collisions between 2021 and 2025. One involved a pedestrian and the other involved a cyclist. • Lower speed limits can help to reduce personal injury collisions and will also make using these roads safer and more pleasant. It has been shown that the slower a vehicle is travelling, the lower the likelihood of a serious or fatal injury occurring. • Collision data is published by the Department for Transport and is available through the Department for Transport's MAVRIC collision analysis tool.
A 20mph limit will only cause more congestion.	• 20mph limits on short residential roads have minimal impact on journey times. There is no evidence to show that congestion has increased where the speed limit has been reduced on similar roads in Surrey. Most of the delays that occur for motor vehicles in built up areas are at junctions, rather than the roads between junctions. • The introduction of a 20mph limit may also encourage more people to walk, scoot and cycle in a residential area near to a school. This could mean that fewer people use their cars for short journeys, which would reduce congestion, making routes safer and more pleasant for walking and cycling.
The existing 30mph limit is adequate.	• The proposed 20mph speed limit scheme is intended to address road safety concerns by reducing vehicle speeds and improving conditions for all road users, particularly pedestrians and cyclists and where collisions have occurred. Reduced vehicle speeds can also make it more attractive for people to walk and cycle for short journeys thus reducing reliance on the private car.
The 20mph limit should be implemented at school travel times only.	• This area has children, pedestrians and cyclists using the roads throughout the day — not only at school peak times — so a full-time 20mph limit provides consistent expectations for all drivers at all times of the day and night. A permanent limit also avoids confusion about when the restriction applies and is much easier for drivers to follow. • Timed speed limits require additional signing, flashing units or electronic time-based equipment, which is significantly more expensive and more visually intrusive than a standard sign-only 20mph scheme.

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Concerns & Suggestions (3/4)

Summary of concerns raised and officer responses

Concern	Officer response
The 20mph limit should only be introduced on school roads.	• The extent of the proposed 20mph speed limit has been designed to apply consistently across the surrounding residential roads, including those not directly adjacent to the school. This approach avoids frequent changes in speed limits over short distances and provides a clear and consistent message to drivers. Applying different speed limits to similar neighbouring roads could lead to confusion and reduce overall compliance. • Residential streets across the area form part of the routes that children and families use to walk to and from school and experience pedestrian activity throughout the day, not just in the immediate vicinity of the school. These roads therefore remain appropriate to include within the same speed environment. • Lower speed limits are associated with reduced collision severity and improved safety for vulnerable road users, including children, pedestrians and cyclists. Reduced vehicle speeds can also make it more attractive for people to walk and cycle for short journeys, reducing reliance on the private car.

Concerns & Suggestions (4/4)

Summary of concerns raised and officer responses

Suggestion	Officer Response
Improve parking controls and enforcement to address school-related parking issues.	• Requests for new or amended on-street parking restrictions are considered separately through Surrey County Council's borough-wide Parking Review Process, which considers requests across the whole district and prioritises them for inclusion in the next available review. Further details on how parking changes are assessed and prioritised can be found on our website: https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/parking/reviews/process • Issues relating to vehicles obstructing dropped kerbs or parking on double yellow lines constitute illegal parking and can be reported to the Parking Enforcement team via Surrey County Council FixMyStreet. Reports help to inform enforcement activity and may result in increased patrols where persistent problems are identified.
Improve safety outside schools through measures such as School Streets and park-and-stride schemes	• We note the suggestions for School Streets, park-and-stride schemes and other school travel initiatives. • Improving safety outside schools is recognised as an important priority. Surrey County Council has a dedicated Road Safety Outside Schools (RSOS) process, which assesses site-specific conditions and identifies appropriate measures such as crossings, traffic management or layout changes. Parents and/or the school can apply for an assessment via our website: https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-safety/outside-schools • Measures such as School Streets, park-and-stride schemes and some other school travel initiatives fall outside the scope of the current 20mph proposal and would require separate assessment, engagement, funding and prioritisation. Even where additional school travel measures are introduced, a 20mph speed limit can still provide complementary safety benefits by helping to support lower vehicle speeds across the wider residential area.
Extend the scheme to include key school travel routes such as London Road and New Inn Lane.	• The requested roads have been noted. • As additional engineering measures, such as traffic calming, would normally be required to support a speed limit reduction on these roads, any such proposal would need to be considered through a separate scheme, subject to future assessment, funding and prioritisation by the new unitary council of West Surrey.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Conclusion

The engagement exercise has shown clear overall support for introducing a 20mph speed limit across the residential roads around George Abbot School, with the strongest support coming from residents concerned about the safety of children travelling to and from school. Respondents highlighted the benefits of lower vehicle speeds, safer conditions for people walking and cycling, and a more consistent speed environment across a substantial residential area.

Concerns raised during the engagement primarily related to school-related parking and congestion, with many respondents feeling these issues posed a greater safety concern than vehicle speeds. Respondents also questioned whether lower speed limits should be focused around schools, whether existing speeds are already appropriate, and whether a sign-only 20mph limit would be effective without enforcement.

Some respondents also suggested additional measures, including parking controls, School Streets, park-and-stride schemes, and the inclusion of additional roads. These suggestions fall outside the scope of the current scheme but have been recorded for future consideration through the appropriate highway and road safety programmes.

Overall, the findings support progressing the 20mph scheme as proposed, without amendments.

Next Steps

A draft Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) will now be prepared and advertised for statutory consultation. This legal process provides an opportunity for formal representations to be submitted before a decision is made on whether the 20mph scheme should be implemented.

Requests for additional 20mph roads and other highway measures raised during the engagement will be recorded for future consideration by the new unitary council of West Surrey following Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in April 2027.

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