

Our ref: FOI 083/02
CRS 577,295

4 April 2008

[Name removed under the Data protection Act]

Dear **[Name removed under the Data protection Act]**

I am writing in response to your further email of 10 March requesting, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, copies of all reports, emails, internal and external communications held between the Highways Agency, Guildford Borough Council and any other relevant body relating to matters surrounding the A3 and Beechcroft Drive.

We have estimated that the cost of compiling your request will exceed £600. Section 12 of the Act does not oblige us to comply with requests if they exceed this limit.

However, I will try to answer your individual questions.

My response to the information requested on 10 March is as follows:

1. What measures have been discussed and or implemented to ensure that the speed limit of 50mph is maintained.

The Highways Agency is committed to improving road safety, and speed enforcement is an essential tool in achieving this objective. Once limits have been agreed and implemented, responsibility for enforcement rests with the police, either through on-road patrols or, increasingly, through their participation in Safety Camera Partnerships. Consideration is being given to the use of SPECS cameras although discussions about suitability and priority are at an early stage within the Safety Camera Partnership and no decision has yet been taken.

2. Information that demonstrates that traffic flows have increased by 1 or 2 % per year

Traffic data is collected from automatic traffic count sites along the motorway and trunk road network. In 2005 the two-way Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) flow along this section of the A3 was 82,900 vehicles. Over the past two years traffic levels have increased by 0.8% from 82,900 (2005) to 83,600 (2007). It is worth noting that, since 2000, traffic levels have increased by a total of 5%, which is equivalent to an annual increase of 0.7%. During this period, the year-to-year growth has ranged from -1% (a decrease) to 3%.

3. Identifying whether the junction of the A3 with Beechcroft Drive meets or conflicts with current design standards

It is true to say that the junction of Beechcroft Drive with the A3 trunk road does not meet current design standards. It would, however, be unaffordable, and in practical terms unfeasible, to upgrade the entire network every time design standards change. I can confirm that funding has been allocated to carry out a study in the 2008/09 financial year to look at the options for this junction, specifically the feasibility of closing the access and providing an alternative one.

4. The implementation of the SPECS Camera System

See my response to question 1.

5. "Investigation of construction costs".

This relates to the proposed 2008/09 study, referred to in my response to question 3, in which we will look into the construction costs of a new access in order to determine and assess whether such a proposal is likely to represent good value for money.

6. "What other safety schemes are being considered under the Highways Agency improvement programme"

As mentioned in my response to question 3, we have allocated funding to carry out a study at Beechcroft Drive in 2008/09 – this will be a stand-alone study to look at the feasibility of closing the access and providing an alternative one. We are also planning to carry out a number of safety improvements between Guildford and Ripley during the course of the year, at Clay Lane, Potters Lane, Send and Beechcroft Drive. The proposals for Beechcroft Drive include improved road markings, antiskid surfacing on the northbound approach to Beechcroft Drive and upgrading of the signing.

7. Evidence that porous asphalt reduces noise, and represented the optimum solution for noise egress.

As stated in previous correspondence, all relevant information on the issue of noise has been supplied to you already. As such, although I acknowledge and appreciate your continuing discontent, there is nothing further that I can usefully add.

8. Evidence of studies that confirm that acoustic fencing could not be erected at Beechcroft Drive.

See my response to question 7.

I trust that this information is useful.

Yours sincerely

[Name removed under the Data protection Act]