

BRIEFING NOTE FOR HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Declassification of the B3084 Station Road/Wallop Road and reclassification of the C250 Old Stockbridge Road, Over Wallop

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1 - Background

1.1 - Purpose of study

The purpose of this study is to assess the implications of reassigning the 'B' class status from the B3084 through the village of Over Wallop to the C250 Old Stockbridge Road.

Motorists are currently using the village as a cut through between the A303, Grateley Station and the junction of B3084/A343/Salisbury Road. See Appendix 1 for plans of the area. The majority of traffic in the village is passing through and adversely impacting on vulnerable road users and listed buildings due to the volume and inappropriate speed. The C250 Old Stockbridge Road is significantly more suited for the 'B' classification status because of its width and smoother horizontal alignment and is already the signed route for larger vehicles.

In 2009 a petition (Appendix 2) signed by 215 local residents was sent to Hampshire County Council's local Area Director in favour of reclassifying the roads and is fully supported by Over and Nether Wallop Parish Councils.

1.2 - Description of the roads

B3084 Station Road/Wallop Road

The main road through the village of Over Wallop is the B3084 Station Road which is accessed from the A343 Salisbury Road. Station Road is a fairly typical rural village road with very little kerbing and is generally 5 m in width, narrowing to 4 m in places. The road is subject to a 30 mph speed limit and due to the presence of street lighting repeater signs are prohibited.

The B3084 continues out of Over Wallop where its name changes to Wallop Road and eventually links to the railway station at Grateley. Between its junction with the C250 Old Stockbridge Road and the junction with the A343 the road is subject to a 6 foot 6 inch width restriction and is approximately 2.7 miles long. Vehicles over this width are directed to use the more appropriate C250 Old Stockbridge Road.

Grateley Station has a direct line to London and the capacity of the station's car park has recently been increased. Commuters use the B3084 through Over Wallop to access the station and this creates a tidal flow of vehicles in the village. Survey data (Appendix 3) indicates that over a thousand vehicles are travelling through the village each day without stopping, although the nature of Station Road and Old Salisbury Lane makes it inappropriate for the current volume of this through traffic.

Almost 2000 vehicles per day (Appendix 4) travel through Over Wallop with speeds up to 56 mph being recorded within the 30 mph limit. There are approximately 70 properties in Over Wallop with direct access to the B3084 and there are also six highway junctions in the village.

Much of the village is within a conservation area and parts are also designated a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.

Horse traffic has been noted on the road and there are several liveries and stables. Additionally there are a number of bridleways on the north side of the village. Cyclists have also been noted using the roads in the village.

The Parish Council and residents have been concerned for a number of years by the volume and inappropriate speed of vehicles in the village. This combined with there being virtually no footways makes it difficult for pedestrians. In a village arrangement such as Over Wallop pedestrians would normally be expected to safely walk to and from local amenities such as the shop, church and bus stops.

Typical views of the road within the village are shown in Appendix 5.

C250 Old Stockbridge Road

The C250 Old Stockbridge Road connects with the B3084 and A343, is subject to a derestricted speed limit and with daily volumes of approximately 2000 vehicles (Appendix 6). The road is approximately 2.6 miles in length and about 6 m in width and is essentially bordered by fields. There are approximately 15 properties that have direct access to the road with five highway junctions along its entire length. This road is also subject to tidal traffic flows, likely due to commuters heading towards the South and to the nearby Army Aviation Centre.

Due to the environment of the road and its relative seclusion from local amenities pedestrian activity is very low.

Owing to the width restriction on Station/Wallop Road wide vehicles, and therefore Heavy Commercial Vehicles, are directed to use the more appropriate C250 Old Stockbridge Road.

A typical view of the road is shown in Appendix 5.

A343 Salisbury Road

The A343 is part of the main route between Andover and Salisbury carrying some 9000 vehicles per day (Appendix 7). Its character is quite varied and runs through a mixture of rural and semi built up areas. The total length of road between its junctions with the C214 Salisbury Lane and the C250 Old Stockbridge Road is 2.0 miles.

There is a footway in Middle Wallop on the north side between the junctions of the C214 Salisbury Lane and the B3084 Station Road and also between Kentsboro and the Army Aviation Centre. There are no pedestrian facilities in the rural section of the road. Due to the nature of the road it is very rare that pedestrians would use those sections of the A343 that do not have footways.

C214 Salisbury Lane

The C214 Salisbury Lane is approximately 0.6 miles in length, is accessed off the A343 and connects onto the B3084. Its main purpose is to serve a relatively small number of properties south of Over Wallop. It is predominately a single track with widths between 3 and 4 m. Vehicle numbers are about 1000 per day (Appendix 8).

There is no street lighting, it is subject to a 30 mph speed limit and is also covered by a 6 foot 6 inch width restriction. The lane would typically be a quiet and pleasant place for pedestrians and cyclists however it is used as a shortcut by traffic heading to and from other destinations such as Grateley Station and the A303.

The C214 Salisbury Lane forms part of the most direct route between Grateley and its junction with the A343 Salisbury Road. However the lane is totally unsuitable for the existing volumes and verge damage is occurring due to its being a single carriageway.

U80/C7 King Lane

King Lane is essentially a single track lane between Over Wallop and Old Stockbridge Road and serves some 35 properties. Part of the lane is subject to a 6 foot 6 inch width restriction. Due to its narrow width and length it is considered unlikely that any vehicles would divert onto it as a result of the reclassification of the surrounding roads.

2 - Implications of changing the classification

It is expected that the reclassification, along with a package of measures detailed in Section 3 below, will encourage drivers to use the C250 Old Stockbridge Road. This number is expected to increase over the years as new people to the area use the signed route and satellite navigation systems are updated.

A time/distance survey (Appendix 10) indicates that the estimated average additional time for motorists using the C250 Old Stockbridge Road instead of the B3084 Station Road is only two minutes 20 seconds.

It was noted that during the morning peak hour a queuing time of over three minutes was recorded. However, just outside the morning peak, when there was no queue, the overall journey took six minutes 25 seconds. This is only about one minute 20 seconds more than the average journey taken via the current route on the B3084 Station Road.

The time taken at the peak time could be reduced if minor amendments are made to allow more cars to queue separately for the left and right turn at the A343 junction.

For motorists using the C250 Old Stockbridge Road route the extra distance added to their journey would be approximately 1.6 miles. However because the majority of this distance is covered by 50 mph and derestricted speed limits the additional time, as demonstrated above, is quite small.

Vehicles heading for Romsey from the Tidworth area may start using the Danebury/Red Rice Road which joins the A30 through Stockbridge and then onto the A3057 to Romsey. Danebury/Red Rice Road is very similar in character to Old Stockbridge Road and is considered adequate to take any extra traffic. This may therefore lead to a decrease in volume of traffic on the B3084 between Awbridge and Broughton.

A recent five year reported personal injury accident summary is shown in Appendix 11. This has been used, along with other data in the report, to show the accident rate per million vehicle kilometres (R value) on the various affected roads (Appendix 12). The data suggests that the relevant section of the B3084 and the C250 Old Stockbridge Road have similar R values of 0.20 and 0.21 respectively. These values are below the national average figure of 0.35 for 'rural' 'B' and 'C' class roads.

The length of the A343 Salisbury Road referred to in this report has an R value of 0.38. This value is slightly higher than the national average figure of 0.33 for 'combined' 'A' class roads.

There are two distinct clusters of accidents on the A343; one being in the vicinity of the A343 junction with the B3084 Station Road, the other being near to the garage, just south west of the A343 junction with Danebury Road. It is anticipated that volumes will be reduced on the B3084 Station Road so there will be fewer vehicle movements, and therefore less activity and chances for conflict at the A343/Station Road junction.

These accident clusters will be reported to Hampshire County Council's Safety Engineering team who are able to investigate sites such as these and remedial measures can be installed if appropriate.

Additionally, as part of the County Council's 'A' and 'B' road speed limit review this section will shortly be assessed to determine if the correct limit has been applied.

3 - Proposed additional measures associated with the reclassification

The reclassification of the roads in question is part of a proposed package of measures to reduce vehicle volumes and speeds in Over Wallop. Individual measures alone are unlikely to properly deal with the issues.

In conjunction with the reclassification it is proposed that the road through the village be traffic calmed with appropriate physical measures such as general narrowing of the carriageway or the use of build outs, chicanes etc. Whichever methods are chosen they must respect the historic character of the village. This will make the route less attractive for through traffic due to the extra time it would take to pass the measures and help to reduce speeds. The estimated cost would be in the region of £45,000.

The signed route to and from Grateley Station will also be amended to direct motorists to use the C250 Old Stockbridge Road. This would mean changing the existing signs at the various affected junctions, the cost of which would be approximately £7000 provided that all existing posts can be reused.

Currently traffic has to physically turn off the B3084 to get onto the C250 Old Stockbridge Road. The priority at the C250 Old Stockbridge Road/B3084 junction could also be changed so that traffic is automatically routed down the C250 Old Stockbridge Road. The estimated cost of this is £20,000.

If traffic calming measures are installed on the road through the village then further vehicles may divert onto Salisbury Lane. As has already been detailed above this lane is already used as a rat run and a further increase in volume would be unacceptable. Therefore either further traffic calming measures or a physical road closure to prevent through traffic on Salisbury Lane would need to be considered. The cost of these measures would be in the region of £15,000.

In the long term improvements to Old Stockbridge Road/A343 junction may be required due to existing site line issues here. There is sufficient verge width on the opposite side to move the Give Way line further out into the carriageway so that visibility is improved. Amendments, as mentioned in Section 2 above, could also be made to the approach to the Give Way line to increase the capacity for vehicles turning left and right.

Funding of some £30,000 from developer contributions is currently held. Further funding is being sourced and it is envisaged that at least a further £20,000 is secured in agreements from development sites in the general area of the scheme.

4 - Conclusion

In conclusion, it is considered that the amenity benefit to the village and its residents outweigh the relatively small amounts of extra time and distance that motorists will be encouraged to travel. There are a dozen or so properties that would see an increase in traffic compared with approximately 350 in the village as a whole that would greatly benefit from a reduction in volume and speed.

With the reclassification the residents of Over Wallop will be more likely to be able to enjoy a village environment. They will particularly be advantaged if the overall package of measures can be introduced which aims to allow pedestrians to once again walk through the village in the knowledge that the road will be traffic calmed and vehicles will be travelling at more appropriate speeds.

It is therefore recommended that the B3084 between its junctions with the A343 Salisbury and the C250 Old Stockbridge Road be declassified to 'C' road status. The 'B' road classification to be reassigned to the nearby C250 Old Stockbridge Road.