

Report for: ACTION



Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	NO - Part I
Title	Chobham Road, Sunningdale - Petition to Reduce Weight Limit from 18T to 7.5T
Responsible Officer(s)	Simon Fletcher - Strategic Director of Operations
Contact officer, job title and phone number	Ben Smith - Head of Highways & Transport (01628) 796147
Member reporting	Councillor Colin Rayner, Lead Member for Highways & Transport
For Consideration By	Cabinet
Date to be Considered	26 November 2015
Implementation Date if Not Called In	Not Applicable
Affected Wards	All
Keywords/Index	Chobham, Road, Sunningdale, Weight limit, lorries, traffic regulation order

Report Summary

1. A petition with 1003 signatories was submitted to Council on 22 September 2015 by Councillor Mrs Bateson seeking to reduce the weight limit on Chobham Road railway bridge, Sunningdale from 18 tonnes to 7.5 tonnes.

The Mayor agreed that this petition should be submitted to Cabinet for consideration. Therefore, the purpose of this report is to consider the content of the petition and resolve a way forward.

2. This report recommends that:

- Consultation be undertaken in respect of a proposed order to reduce the weight limit of Chobham Road railway bridge, Sunningdale.
- The results of the consultation be reported to Cabinet for consideration on 25 February 2016.

3. This recommendation is being made in response to the concerns raised in the petition submitted to Council for consideration.

4. The financial implications of undertaking the consultation exercise (and subsequent scheme delivery – if approved) will be contained within existing approved budgets.

5. Additional points to note are that an 18T weight limit was introduced on this bridge on 1 June 2015. This report considers the request to reduce this limit to 7.5T.

If recommendations are adopted, how will residents benefit?

Benefits to residents and reasons why they will benefit	Dates by which they can expect to notice a difference
<p>1. Undertaking a consultation exercise (including Parish Councils and Surrey County Council) in response to the petition provides an opportunity for transparent engagement with the local community.</p> <p>This benefits residents and other road users by achieving direct improvements in local highway conditions where appropriate.</p>	<p>December 2015 - January 2016</p>
<p>2. Subject to the outcome of the consultation, reducing the weight limit will positively respond to residents concerns; reduce road safety risks and offer environmental benefits in the local area</p>	<p>March 2016 (subject to outcome of consultation)</p>

1. Details of Recommendations

RECOMMENDED: That:

- (i) **Consultation be undertaken (including residents in the Royal Borough and Surrey; Parish Councils; Surrey County Council; Thames Valley and Surrey Police) in response to the request to reduce the weight limit of Chobham Road railway bridge, Sunningdale.**
- (ii) **The results of the consultation be reported to Cabinet for further consideration in February 2016.**

2. Reason for Decision and Options Considered

- 2.1 A petition with 1003 signatories was submitted to Council on 22 September 2015 by Councillor Mrs Bateson seeking to reduce the current weight limit on Chobham Road railway bridge, Sunningdale from 18T to 7.5T.
- 2.2 The Mayor agreed that this petition should be submitted to Cabinet for consideration.
- 2.3 The petition reads, ‘...*We, the undersigned, wish the RBWM to consider reducing the recently implemented 18 tonne weight limit on the Chobham Road railway bridge to a maximum of 7.5 tonnes. We are concerned that the large lorries pose a safety risk due to the narrow road over the bridge. Large vehicles are forced to cross the central double-white line on a bend where visibility is limited and oncoming traffic may not see them in time...*’
- 2.4 In order to introduce a legally enforceable weight limit the Royal Borough is required to undertake a period of statutory consultation. In addition, it is recommended that the formal consultation be extended to engage directly with key stakeholders, including Sunningdale Parish Council.

- 2.5 The results of the consultation will be reported to Cabinet on 25 February 2016. Adoption of this approach offers a robust, positive and transparent response to the petition.

Option	Comments
Introduce a traffic regulation order which reduces the weight limit to 7.5T with immediate effect	This is not an option as a legally enforceable weight limit cannot be introduced without following a statutory consultation process, which includes a period to invite objections
Introduce alternative measures to mitigate the safety risk	Alternative measures including the introduction of traffic signals and single-way working over the bridge or removing on-street parking may mitigate road safety risks. However, the overall impact on all road users is considered disproportionate.
Undertake a full consultation and report the outcomes to Cabinet for consideration	This is the recommended option which offers a robust, transparent and positive response to the petition
Consider the petition and resolve to take no further action	This option is not recommended as it does not respond appropriately to the petition. Larger 18T vehicles, potentially increasing in volume, presents an increased road safety risk and greater environmental concern than a 7.5T weight restriction

3. Key Implications

Defined Outcomes	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date they should be delivered by
Undertake consultation and report outcomes to Cabinet	beyond February 2016	25 February 2016	28 January 2016	No objections are received to the consultation	25 February 2015
Introduction of a reduced weight limit by (Subject to consultation outcome)	Beyond 31 March 2016	31 March 2016	29 February 2016	31 January 2016	31 March 2016
Reduced number of lorries using Chobham Road (Subject to consultation outcome)	Lorry numbers increase	0 – 70%	71 – 85%	➤ 85%	31 March 2016

4. Financial Details

4.1 Revenue Funding

There are no revenue financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

4.2 Capital Funding

The estimated cost of the recommended consultation is £3k.

Subject to the outcome of the consultation exercise - if a reduced weight limit was implemented the estimated costs would be £2k, which would be funded from the approved capital budget 'Traffic Management' (CD10) - £150k'.

This overall programme budget includes an allocation for responding to petitions.

<i>Description</i>	<i>Ref.</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Estimated Costs</i>
Traffic Management	CD10	£150,000	£5,000

5. Legal Implications

5.1 The process to introduce a traffic regulation order reducing the weight limit to 7.5T will be undertaken in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and the Traffic Management Act 2004 and the regulations and statutory guidance issued thereunder.

5.2 Section 1 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 enables a traffic regulation order to be made where the authority considers that it is necessary for avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road or for preventing the likelihood of such danger arising.

5.3 When exercising functions under the 1984 Act the authority is required, insofar as it is practicable to do so having regard to the matters specified in section 122(2) to have regard to the duty conferred upon it under section 122 which requires it to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic including pedestrians. The matters listed in sub-section (2) of section 122 are as follows:

(a) the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises;
(b) the effect on the amenities of any locality affected and (without prejudice to the generality of this paragraph) the importance of regulating and restricting the use of roads by heavy commercial vehicles, so as to preserve or improve the amenities of the areas through which the roads run;

[
(bb) the strategy prepared under section 80 of the Environment Act 1995 (national air quality strategy);

]
(c) the importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and of securing the safety and convenience of persons using or desiring to use such vehicles; and

(d) any other matters appearing to the local authority to be relevant

5.4 In relation to section 122 (2)(d), the inclusion of the Chobham Road route in the Construction and Environmental Management Plan for the redevelopment of the DERA site at Longcross will be relevant since the proposed order will require construction lorries exceeding 7.5T to use the other route specified by Surrey County Council. However, if it is considered that the potential danger to pedestrian and other traffic presented by the current use of the Chobham Road Bridge outweighs the inconvenience caused to the affected construction and other HGV traffic, the proposed restrictions may be justified.

5.5 Section 16 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 confers a duty on local traffic authorities to manage their road networks with a view to achieving, so far as may be reasonably practicable, having regard to their other obligations, policies and objectives, the following objectives- (a) securing the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network; and (b) facilitating the expeditious movement of traffic on road networks for which another authority is the traffic authority. This duty is a qualified duty and it is doubtful whether this duty is engaged given that it does not significantly add anything over and above the matters required to be considered by the authority under the duty conferred under section 122 of the 1984 Act other than the requirement to recognise the importance placed on making the best use of the existing road space for the benefit of all road users.

6. Value for Money

6.1 Subject to the outcome of the consultation – the implementation of any scheme would be undertaken by the term maintenance contractor whose rates have been competitively attained and bench-marked to ensure value for money.

6.2 The recommendations of this report offer a robust, transparent and positive approach which minimise the risk of legal challenge offering value for money.

7. Sustainability Impact Appraisal

A reduction in large vehicles in Chobham Road, Sunningdale may have positive sustainable and environmental benefits in the local area.

8. Risk Management

The recommendations of this report offer a robust, transparent and positive response to the petition offering a balanced approach to risk.

9. Links to Strategic Objectives

Relevant Strategic Objectives are:

Residents First

- Improve the Environment, Economy and Transport
- Work for safer and stronger communities

Delivering Together

- Strengthen Partnerships

10. Equalities, Human Rights and Community Cohesion - None

11. Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications - None

12. Property and Assets

Introduction of a reduced weight limit may offer additional protection to the highway asset by reducing the risk of damage to the bridge, and approaches, by large vehicles.

13. Any other implications - None.

14. Consultation

14.1 This report will be considered by members of the Highways, Transport and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 25 November 2015 with the panel's comments reported to Cabinet for consideration.

14.2 This report recommends statutory and extended consultation with stakeholders (including Sunningdale Parish council) as a positive response to the petition.

15. Timetable for Implementation

Stages	Timescale
Consultation Period	December 2015 to January 2016
Cabinet Report	25 February 2016
Scheme Implementation (subject to Cabinet decision)	31 March 2016

16. Background Information

16.1 An 18T weight limit was introduced on the railway bridge in Chobham Road, Sunningdale with effect from 1 June 2015.

16.2 The bridge forms part of an 'S-bend' in the road and was implemented as a result of requests from residents and Parish Council to Ward Members to reduce the size and weight of lorries crossing the railway bridge and entering Sunningdale.

16.3. The basis of the 18T weight limit was to address legitimate concerns, including:

- the safety of vehicles on the railway bridge as it is too narrow for large vehicles and forms part of the 'S-bend' in the road
- the local access road and premises close to the bridge with limited visibility
- the additional road traffic pollution in the area affecting residents either side of the bridge
- reduced traffic flow due to limited visibility and road width when large vehicles are approaching
- danger of pedestrians shopping at local shops in the central part of the village
- danger of increased congestion at the junction of the A30 (London Road) and Chobham Road close to the pedestrian crossing

16.3 The request to reduce the weight limit appears to have been generated by a recent increase in lorry movements resulting in lorries were unable to cross the bridge without travelling across the centre white line into the path of oncoming

vehicles; damage only collisions between lorries and cars and congestion in Chobham Road in the vicinity of the shops.

- 16.4 Surrey County Council and Surrey Police objected to the 18T traffic regulation order as it was considered unnecessary and created negative benefits on communities in Surrey.

It should be noted that planning consent for the DERA site includes the use Chobham Road route in their construction and environmental management plan. The Royal Borough formally objected to the inclusion of the Chobham Road Route in that plan at that time and maintains this position.

- 16.5 Notwithstanding the objections of the Surrey County Council and the Surrey Police, the Council was of the view that in the vicinity of the Chobham Road bridge, the safety of pedestrians and the safe movement of vehicular traffic outweighed any inconvenience caused to the traffic affected by the proposed restriction and so an appropriate and legally compliant process was conducted in respect of the proposal to introduce the current weight limit.

Following the making of the Order, Surrey County Council advised the Council of its intention to judicially review the process and in the light of the Council's response the threat of legal action was subsequently withdrawn.

- 16.6 The Lead Member for Highways & Transport (Councillor Rayner) met with the Executive Member for Highways at Surrey County Council to understand Surrey County Council's concerns in respect of the current 18T and to investigate the possibility of securing a mutually acceptable solution. This was not achieved as Surrey County Council are of the opinion that Chobham Road is a suitable route for large vehicles and does not warrant restrictions. This is not a position shared by the Royal Borough.

It is anticipated that similar objections will be received from Surrey County Council to a proposed traffic regulation order seeking to reduce the weight limit to 7.5T.

- 16.7 A location plan highlighting the existing 18T weight limit is attached as Appendix A.

- 16.8 The proposed reduction in the current 18T weight limit to a 7.5T weight limit is considered necessary to reduce the road safety risk created by large vehicles using Chobham Road, Sunningdale. It appears from local feedback that the volume of large vehicles has increased recently as has the incidence of damage only accidents or near-misses.

- 16.9 Alternative measures to a reduction in the weight restriction from 18T to 7.5T to mitigate road safety risks could include:

- introduction of traffic signals and single-way working over the bridge
- removal of on-street parking in Chobham Road between the bridge and the A30 (London Road)

These alternative measures are considered inappropriate as they:

- create an unnecessary negative impact on all road users
- increase congestion and delays
- negatively impact on local shops and trade undermining the vibrancy of this area
- increase vehicle speeds and increase road safety risks

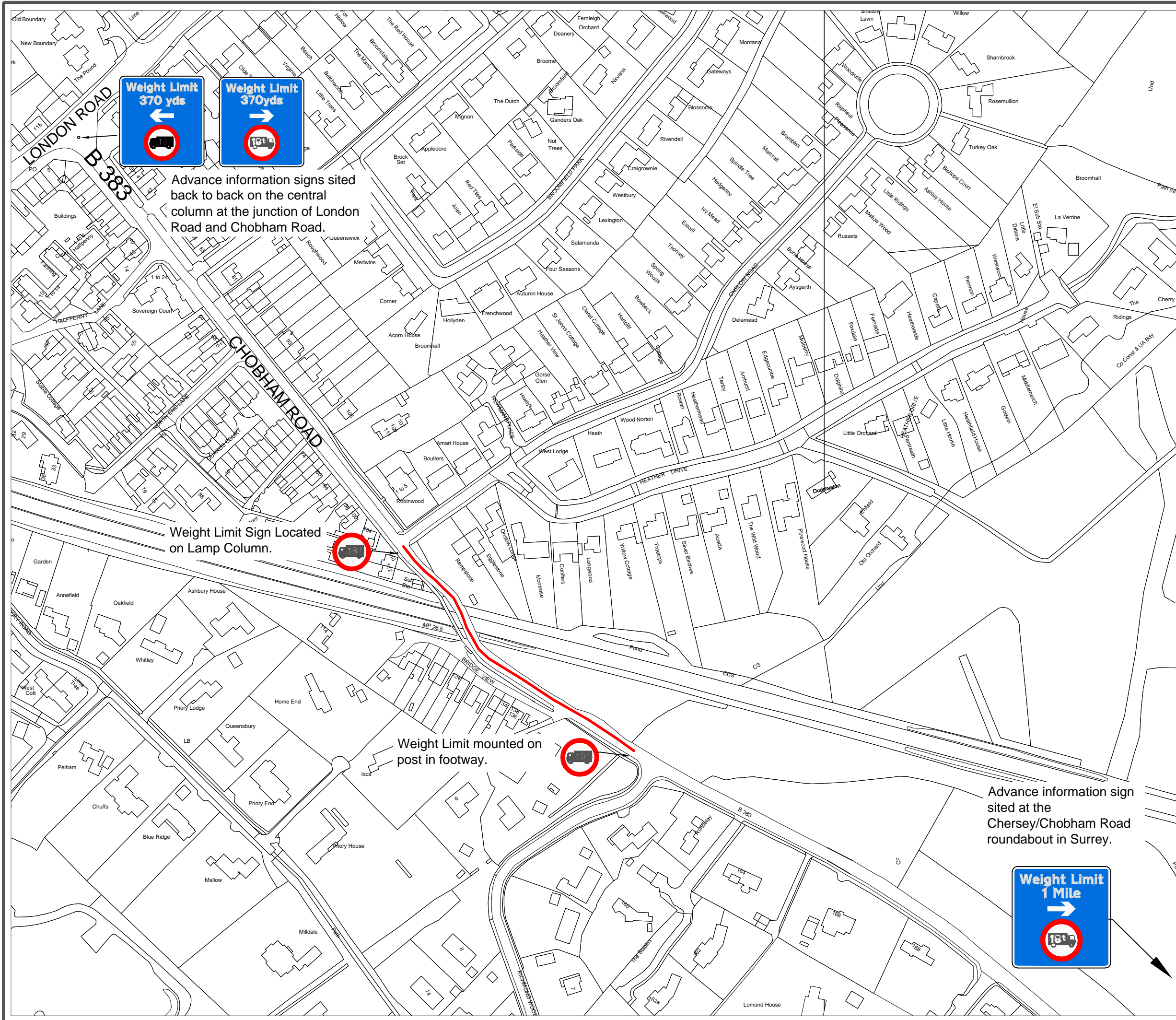
17. Consultation (Mandatory)

Name of consultee	Post held and Department	Date sent	Date received	See comments in paragraph:
Internal				
Cllr Rayner	Lead Member for Highways & Transport	23.10.15	30.10.15	Additional detail included with respect to consultation
Cllr David Burbage	Leader of the Council	30.10.15	03.11.15 04.11.14	Approved Additional outcome included
Michael Llewelyn	Cabinet Policy Office	23.10.15	26.10.15	Minor comments to narrative throughout the report
Catherine Woodward	Shared Legal Solutions / Monitoring Officer	23.10.15	26.10.15	Legal Implications updated / comments included throughout the report to reduce risk of future challenge
Mark Lampard	Finance Partner	23.10.15	30.10.15	Financial implications updated
Huw Jones	Traffic Engineer	23.10.15	23.10.15	Minor technical updates

Report History

Decision type:	Urgency item?
	No

Full name of report author	Job title	Full contact no:
Ben Smith	Head of Highways & Transport	01628 796147



Advance information signs sited back to back on the central column at the junction of London Road and Chobham Road.


Weight Limit Sign Located on Lamp Column.

Weight Limit mounted on post in footway.

Advance information sign sited at the Cherse/Chobham Road roundabout in Surrey.



Drg No.		Rev.	
PN-1702-31			
18 Tonne Weight Limit to extend for 200m From junction with Richmond wood to junction with Onslow Road over rail bridge.			

Rev	Date	Amendments	By
Directorate of Operations			
Town Hall, St. Ives Road, Maidenhead, Berks, SL6 1RF.			
			
Tel: 01628 683800			
Fax: 01628 796774			
http://www.rbwm.gov.uk			

Project:
Local Safety Schemes

Title:
Chobham Road Weight Limit

Drg No.		Rev.	
		-	
Date	Scale	Size	
10/02/15	NTS	A3	
Drawn By	CAD By	Checked By	Signed Off By
Drawing Path.			
K:/Drawings/			

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