

Document 25

Report from Insp Browning (Dorset
Police) detailing Community
Concerns relating to Holes Bay site

Community concerns relating to the A350 Holes Bay, Poole.

To put community concerns in to context these can represent both the local residents along a given route and the drivers travelling along a thoroughfare who do not necessarily live in the local community. Either case will be recorded as a legitimate complaint regarding speed or inappropriate driving at that site.

Dorset Police & the Dorset Safety Camera Partnership (DSCP) receive telephone calls & emails regarding speeding or inappropriate driving across Dorset on a regular basis. Dorset Police record incident logs on a daily basis with some examples entitled "Dangerous Driver, Dangerous Driving, Informant behind a Vehicle (that is driving dangerously), Observations for Vehicle (which is driving dangerously) and Suspicious Vehicle (which is driving inappropriately). All of these logs are from members of the public calling in with concerns over speeding or inappropriate driving on roads across the county.

These messages do not generally give precise locations, as with the Holes Bay, they just state Holes Bay rather than a specific area of Holes Bay. This is important as the area complained of can cover a wider section of road rather than the specific set of traffic lights or a road junction. The initial action to be taken by the control room supervisor does not require any further detail than this so this information is not recorded.

The DSCP have not been required to keep records of all such complaints received from the public and indeed prior to 2010 there was no collective electronic receptacle for community complaints to be held. Since 2010 there have been two complaints that have been received in to the DSCP, which of course does not include the police incident logs where the majority of the public complaints would be expected to be reported. So if someone were to call in a complaint of speeding to the police it should be recorded either by way of an incident or call handling log. To search for all titles that may refer to Holes Bay would be extremely time consuming given the wide variation of the nature of these incidents and locations involved.

However, the standard process once at least one complaint is received for an area where there has been no record of previous complaints or enforcement is to carry out a visit as soon as is practicable (or series of visits) to establish the level of the problem. If there is a complaint received and enforcement has already taken place at that site a further visit may be made and this may include requests for Traffic Officers to deploy with hand held lasers if impractical for a safety camera van to deploy or for county road safety engineers to review a site.

Mobile safety cameras were first deployed to Holes Bay to tackle speeding vehicles at various positions along the length of Holes Bay – in addition to the Red Light Cameras at the Sterte Junction which went live August 2002.

The DSCP website (www.dorsetsafetycameras.org.uk) FOI area, publication Scheme page 2, Mobile & Laser Camera Sites, you will see the number of Notices issued by the mobile van during the short periods they were on Holes Bay.

With the development and type approval of the Speed on Green camera it was deemed best use of assets to place an approved camera that could both process Red Light and Speed offences at the Sterte junction allowing for continued enforcement rather than intermittent mobile safety camera van enforcement, particularly as there are several hundred speed complaint or community concern sites and a limited number of safety camera vans.

The placement of the Speed on Green Camera at Holes Bay was not considered disproportionate for the time frame that it was present. The speed limit set at the Sterte Road Junction on Holes Bay is 30 mph and large numbers of vehicles exceeded that signed limit. The placement of the camera was a proactive tactic rather than Reactive.

The Dorset Safety Camera Partnership (DSCP) receives numerous speed complaints from communities or individuals travelling routes in Dorset and there have been many such emails concerning Hole's Bay prior to the installation of the cameras. The majority of these complaints are by email so it is not possible to identify the address of the sender other than from the text stating that they have travelled along the A350 Hole's Bay and witnessed vehicles travelling at excessive speeds or driving inconsiderately.

For any one of these complaints DSCP will carry out verification of the complaints or community concerns (the stats of the tests carried out at Hole's Bay before the camera became live have been previously supplied and are on the DSCP website under the FAQ's). Once the risk of excessive speed is confirmed action is taken accordingly.

In conclusion, DSCP had received a number of complaints highlighted as community concerns which, in addition to the speed data and KSI information previously supplied would influence the tasking or speed enforcement tactics and, in conjunction with Poole Borough Council, the initial placement of fixed speed cameras at the Holes Bay location. Equally, when complaints were received Poole Borough Council reacted accordingly and removed these fixed speed camera sites (please see previous report).

This data will not settle the arguments of what level of complaint, number of KSI collisions or other information merits the deployment of speed enforcement tactics or the use of fixed cameras. What it does indicate is that there are a number of variables that will influence any such tactic.