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Oxshott weighs in with traffic control camera

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A Surrey village is set to get a new traffic camera to protect its streets from heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) following a residents' petition – although many believe this measure does not go nearly far enough.

Oxshott community group Fedora launched a petition this summer calling for stringent new actions to stem the flow of large vehicles through the village's narrow roads.

The petition gathered more than 800 signatures, and Surrey County Council has now agreed to install a single automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) camera in Oxshott. It will be placed at the Copsem Lane end of the A244, and is expected to be operational in early 2027.

But the original petition demanded more sweeping measures to improve road safety – including ANPR and speed control cameras in both directions and building continuous pavements so pedestrians do not have to cross the busy road so frequently.

Fedora chair Ian Dilks told councillors that installing just one ANPR camera would only solve "half of the problem" as HGVs travel in both directions through the village.

His petition noted that Oxshott has more than 1,000 children attending its schools, many of whom have to walk to school through the village despite the lack of continuous pavements.

"All of this has a direct impact on the quality of daily life," he said. "Residents face noise disturbance, particularly at night – and it creates health and safety risks. Road conditions continue to deteriorate."

Mr Dilks wants the council to further consider the full list of requests in his petition, saying: "We welcome [Surrey County Council's] recognition of the problems, but we are concerned by the response."

He added: "On behalf of Oxshott residents, we ask you to respond positively to these requests and suggestions and agree to work with local residents on solutions."

Surrey County Council's transport lead Councillor Matt Furniss (Conservative: Shalford) noted there had been a similar situation in Farnham, where the deployment of a single ANPR camera quickly brought down the number of vehicles exceeding weight restrictions.

He said: "As soon as the camera was introduced, it dropped off dramatically within a matter of weeks once the tickets started to be issued. We do know it is an effective solution."

The Fedora petition had welcomed measures from three years ago to bring in a night time HGV ban and a 20mph speed limit in the village centre, but claimed the problem was lack of enforcement.

Division Councillor Andy Burton (Liberal Democrats: Hinchley Wood, Claygate and Oxshott), who supported the petition, said further measures should be considered to control the "unacceptable" weight of traffic bearing down on Oxshott.

"The cause of all of this is the volume of traffic going through Oxshott, and I think at a strategic level, something needs to be done about that," he said.

"There are things that we could talk about now, a ULEZ expansion potentially, maybe a charging regime going through the road, or a daytime HGV ban. I think all of these things need to be tabled and considered at a strategic level."

While Surrey County Council is currently responsible for the county's highways, this will pass over to the two new unitary authorities in the West and East from next April.

Councillor David Lewis (Conservative: Cobham) said: "We've mentioned the fact there are currently plans just for a single ANPR camera.

"I think two cameras would be better – and I think if there's anything the county council can do between now and the end of March to obtain funding for a second camera, that would be very welcome."

But Councillor Furniss warned that ULEZ-style measures – such as London's Ultra Low Emission Zone, which charges high polluting vehicles to drive – could be "deeply unpopular".

"There needs to be a bit of a realisation about what can and cannot be done on the network," he said. "We can target particular vehicles such as HGVs, which is what we're doing in this case.

"But I do think we need recognition that we have the highest car ownership and twice as many vehicles on our roads as other areas do."

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He also expressed his desire to see the impact of a single ANPR camera before considering a second one. “If it’s having the impact already, without having to install a second camera, that would be particularly key,” he said.

James Moules Local Democracy Reporter

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Image: Oxshott Road Sign (Credit: Google Maps)

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