



**OFFICER REPORT TO THE LOCAL COMMITTEE
(SURREY HEATH)**

**Red Road Improvement Update
13th March 2013**

KEY ISSUE:

Update the Local Committee on the implementation of safety improvements to Red Road.

SUMMARY:

Following comments made during the Open Public Question Time section of the Local Committee meeting on 13th December 2012, the following report was requested to update the public on the progress of a number of items that were discussed during that meeting and to inform on the measures considered in the past.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Surrey Heath Local Committee:

- Note the contents of this report.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Improvements to Red Road, Lightwater were previously agreed as part of a scheme promoted by Road Safety team. The improvements included a speed reduction from National Speed Limit (60mph) to 50mph, installation of new chevron and a new Vehicle Activated Sign.

1.2 Collisions on Red Road have resulted in damage to a number existing chevron signs for both directions. At the time of the previous Local Committee meeting the signs had been ordered but had yet to be installed.

1.3 Following a petition for a pedestrian crossing on Red Road between Lightwater and Ministry of Defence land, the proposal was investigated and an initial report was presented to the Local Committee on 30th June 2011. Part of the report is shown below.

“The Local Committee is asked to note that there are several issues that have been identified for consideration within this investigation:

- **Location of requested crossing point**

Whilst the petition requests ‘a crossing point’, it is recognised that there are at least four separate locations where the Ministry of Defence land to the South of Red Road is accessed by pedestrians, notably access to the bridleway at the junction with Lightwater Road, and the pedestrian access points in the vicinity of Macdonald Road and Briar Avenue. Due to the distance between these locations, a single crossing point would not be adequate, and it is likely that residents who are not close to a crossing facility would continue to cross Red Road wherever it is most convenient for them. It would therefore be necessary to verify usage of each crossing point.

- **Physical constraints**

It is noted that Red Road is of insufficient width to accommodate pedestrian refuges in the vicinity of most of the existing access points to the Ministry of Defence land. It is also noted that additional lengths of footway may be required to service any new crossing point.

- **The potential impact of a speed limit revision**

Surrey Heath Local Committee has received a petition calling for a reduction in the existing speed limit to 40mph along the entire length of Red Road. Any reduction in speed limit will have influence over the final response to the demand for a crossing facility.”

1.4 A further report was then taken to the 16th February 2012 Local Committee meeting, Item 14. This report states:

- Should crossing facilities be provided, in view of the number of access points to the heathland and the distance between these points, a single crossing facility would not be adequate.
- The standard options for crossing facilities included Zebra, Pelican and Puffin crossings, and pedestrian refuge islands.

- Zebra crossings should only be used in 30mph speed limits and where recorded vehicle speeds are in keeping with such a limit. Consequently, zebra crossings are inappropriate for Red Road.
- A signal controlled crossing such as a pelican or puffin crossing is most suited to locations where there is sustained use, which is not the case in Red Road. Were such a facility or facilities to be provided, it would be necessary to site traffic signals, hard-standing and tactile paving on the heathland side of the carriageway. It is unlikely that this could be achieved due to various site constraints including the heathland being owned by the Ministry of Defence, the limited highway rights of no more than a 1m strip on the heathland side, the level difference between the heathland and the carriageway, and the potential ongoing issues for signal visibility posed by vegetation.
- A pedestrian refuge island is the most appropriate form of crossing facility for Red Road. However, there is insufficient existing carriageway width to provide islands in the vicinity of the crossing points, with the exception of the crossing points adjacent to Briar Avenue.
- A pedestrian island at this location could only be accommodated within the existing carriageway to the West of the junction with Briar Avenue due to the right turn lane at this junction precluding the positioning of an island to the East.
- This would mean that the island would not be on the pedestrian desire line for either of the heathland access points close to this junction, and so may not be used. A length of footway would need to be constructed on the heathland side to link the crossing point to one of the accesses, and the construction of this would be problematic due to the level difference between the heathland and the road surface.
- Based upon the accident statistics, site conditions, and other factors described in this report including the decision to reduce the speed limit along Red Road, it is considered that pedestrian crossing facilities are not necessary or readily achievable.”

1.5 Further to the above, the report recommended:

- no further action is taken in response to the provision of pedestrian crossing facilities.
- Surrey Highways arranges a meeting with Defence Estates to discuss management of vegetation on the heathland side.

2 ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

2.1 Since the last meeting a number of the safety improvements have been installed including:

- Replacement of chevrons damaged after an accident.
- Implementation of the new 50mph speed limit on Red Road along with additional adjustments to roads connected to it.
- Installation of a new chevron sign within the bends section of the road for those travelling west on Red Road.

- 2.2 In addition to these alterations, a further Vehicle Activated Sign is to be installed in place of one of the current “bends” warning sign, with the current sign being moved forward by approximately 100 metres. Installation of the Vehicle Activated Sign is expected before the end of the March 2013.
- 2.3 Vegetation along Red Road is subject to regular maintenance by Surrey Highways with Defence Estates undertaking removal of vegetation on private land. Red Road is regularly assessed and further removal of vegetation is ordered should it be seen as required.
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BACKGROUND PAPERS: Surrey Heath Local Committee, 30th June 2011, Item 23
Surrey Heath Local Committee, 16th February 2012, Item 14

Number of Annexes: 0