



## **OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (ELMBRIDGE)**

### **SAFE CROSSING PETITION – STATION ROAD, THAMES DITTON**

**22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2008**

#### **KEY ISSUE**

To update members on the investigations carried out, the results obtained, and the conclusions and recommendations made, following the presentation of the petition to the March meeting of this committee.

#### **SUMMARY**

This report updates members following the petition at the March Committee, accompanied by a verbal presentation by Mrs. Melisa Byatt, highlighting her concerns regarding the existing road table crossing point. A verbal response, by the Local Highways Manager, to the petitioner was given at the meeting, highlighting the limitations of the site and work carried out previously. A further report to the Committee was agreed following further investigation. This report presents the results of those findings.

#### **OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Local Committee (Elmbridge) is asked to:

- (i) Note the report for information.
- (ii) Approve the installation of a red surface to the flat top crossing, complete with improved warning signs, to highlight to vehicular traffic the existence of a non controlled crossing location.

## 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Members are reminded that a petition was submitted to the March 2008, meeting of the Local Committee concerning parental road safety concerns crossing Station Road, Thames Ditton. Mrs Melisa Byatt, a parent at the nearby Thames Ditton Infants school addressed the meeting to highlight the particular concerns of parents for children attending the school in Speer Road. Specific concern was raised around pupils and parents crossing in Station Road, near to the junction with Speer Road, with a request to establish improved crossing facilities at this location was made.
- 1.2 Station Road is the B3379, which is the main classified route through Thames Ditton and is capable of carrying vehicles of all weights through the village. There is however a height restriction of 11'9" which applies to both railway arches which limits access from either side.
- 1.3 The road is subject to a 20mph speed limit and is well lit by a continuous system of street lighting. Footways are provided on both sides of the road, albeit on the north side the footway, immediately in front of the Almhouses where the table is located, it is very narrow. This was raised at the time of constructing the road table with the various parties but the school crossing patrol was happy that this location afforded her the most suitable location for crossing the children. Station Road also benefits from traffic calming in the form of road cushions.
- 1.4 An extensive traffic-calming scheme was introduced in 2001, throughout a large part of the Thames Ditton area, together with major alterations at the railway bridge arches at the junction of Station Road, Weston Green Road, and Ember Court Road, converting this into a roundabout through the bridge arches. The traffic order for the 20mph zone was introduced in 2003, in accordance with the County policy, once the actual speeds had been effectively reduced to justify the new limit.
- 1.5 It was during the consultation for the traffic calming proposals that, in liaison with the school, parents and school crossing patrol, that the table was proposed and subsequently introduced at the location where the patrol operated.
- 1.6 Pedestrian safety rails were also introduced extensively around the new roundabout, to chaperone pedestrians to the desired crossing location.
- 1.7 The school crossing patrol has subsequently left and a vacancy exists which Surrey education is struggling to recruit to fill.
- 1.8 Although the Surrey County Council's Elmbridge Community Travel Advisor has been in contact with both the Infant and Junior schools, assisting them both with their Travel Plans, neither school has raised any issues regarding the crossing direct with her. Both schools have an

approved school Travel Plan to encourage sustainable travel to and from school.

## **2 ANALYSIS**

- 2.1 It is proposed to lay a red antiskid surface to the top of the flat road table to highlight to vehicular traffic that this is an uncontrolled crossing point. Yellow backed school crossing signs are also proposed immediately either side of the crossing point to advise drivers.

## **3 OPTIONS**

- 3.1 A formal puffin crossing cannot be constructed at this location, as the footway widths on the northern side are well below that required to enable a traffic signal pole and pedestrian safety barrier to be located.
- 3.2 A zebra crossing similarly would require a flashing yellow beacon to be erected on the inadequately wide path together with pedestrian safety barriers.
- 3.3 During the last few months contact has been made with the Chair of Trustees, for the Almhouses (58-68) Station Road, to ascertain whether willingness to dedicate the necessary land, to permit the widening of the footway would be forthcoming. Unfortunately although the Chair of Trustees was willing to remove a hedge close to the boundary of number 58, he was not prepared to dedicate any of the already quite small front gardens.
- 3.4 Provision of a red surface to the flat part of the road table would enhance its visibility to motorists, and with improved yellow backed warning signs on both approaches, afford pedestrians greater confidence.
- 3.5 Whilst a school crossing patrol remains the most suitable solution, the red surface will also serve to assist the patrol when one is finally appointed. The schools could consider a change to the job description of the caretakers to act as the crossing patrol as this is the situation in some other schools.
- 3.6 It needs to be clearly understood by users that the red surface does not afford pedestrians priority to cross and that the surface serves merely to highlight the crossing point to motorists. Hence work is also needed to ensure that pupils and parents are properly educated in road safety.

## **4 CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 Contact has been made with Chair of Trustees, for the Almhouses (58-68) Station Road.

## 5 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The estimated cost of the proposal is £2500, which County Councillor Mr Peter Hickman's has agreed to fund from his allocation subject to approval of the Local Committee (Agenda Item 16).

## 6 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None.

## 7 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Not applicable.

## 8 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The report recommends improvements to the current crossing layout, in the vicinity of the school, to increase road safety perception in the area.

## 9 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The proposal would improve pedestrian safety and encourage walking by creating greater confidence and safer environment.

## 10 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 10.1 If the Committee agree with the recommendations and agree the improvements, then the construction phase will be started this financial year.
- 10.2 Surrey County Council will continue to monitor the junction and liaise with the school through the Community Travel Advisor.

**LEAD OFFICER:** Frank Apicella, Local Highways Manager

**TELEPHONE NUMBER:** 08456 009 009

**E-MAIL:** eastsurreyhighways@surreycc.gov.uk

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Frank Apicella, Local Highways Manager

**TELEPHONE NUMBER:** 08456 009 009

**E-MAIL:** eastsurreyhighways@surreycc.gov.uk

### BACKGROUND PAPERS:

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