



**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL
LOCAL COMMITTEE EPSOM & EWELL
8 December 2010**

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Question 1 – Michelle Pugh and Sue Harvey

**Re: The Vale School - Proposed Traffic Restraint Measure
And Crossing Facility**

Proposals were tabled at the Local Committee meeting on 13 September 2010, and agreed subject to "informal consultation" with residents and other "interested parties". Residents were sent a letter dated 27 September 2010 from the Local Highways Manager, seeking a response by 25 October 2010. Ms Pugh believed this letter did not make clear what the next steps would be, and has received no acknowledgement of her concerns.

Ms Pugh advised she had intended to lodge a planning application for a drive-in/drive out facility in due course, following renovation to her property as her cars had been damaged on the road in recent years, the last by a member of staff at the school.

The Local Committee report stated an initial meeting had been held with the head teacher, who indicated her strong support for the measures proposed, although discussions with the Board of Governors had yet to be concluded. The report also states that 'a need has been identified for a crossing facility outside the school, which will highlight the presence of pedestrians to motorists and allow greater footway space'.

A tentative meeting date of 30 November was arranged with the Local Highways Manager and residents, but no one from the school was available, and an alternative date has yet to be confirmed.

Local residents held an informal meeting on 22 November. Many residents had not responded to the "informal consultation" letter in the mistaken belief that it did not affect them. They had not taken into consideration the "knock on effect" of restrictions on parking outside 75 and 77 Beaconsfield Road, the two properties most directly affected. The likelihood is that, with restrictions caused by the traffic restraint table, the problem will be extended further up/down the road.

At this meeting a number of residents reported their experiences of: speeding motorists, mostly parents who are running late, inconsiderate parking, including blocking of driveways and dropped curbs leading to pedestrians, including those with push chairs, walking in the road to avoid parked cars, with inappropriate language from parents, when challenged about their inconsiderate behaviour. Residents looked at the Traffic Restraint Measure and Crossing Facility plan, and made a number of constructive alternative suggestions including: reversing the traffic flow in the school car park - i.e.

- Use the lower opening for the entrance, which would improve the sight lines for the exit,
- Stop residents from further up the road using the school as a cut through to avoid queuing traffic as a result of any one way filter system,
- Marking out the upper half of the school car park as drop off only/no waiting,
- Have staff/visitor parking bays in the area nearest the fence
- Having a lollipop person (school caretaker/volunteer) further down the road to usher children across the road to the footpath,
- A 20 mph speed limit in the area around the school site
- Speed indicators showing drivers their current speed (ideally using smiley/frowning faces that young schoolchildren would respond to).

Ms Pugh requested that these suggestions would be considered.

Ms Harvey advised that she had only heard about the proposals from a neighbour, as she is one of the executors of no. 75 Beaconsfield Road. She also felt the letter from the Local Highways Manager did not make clear what the next steps would be, and she had not received any acknowledgement to her letter. She has expressed concern that the Local Committee meeting on 8 December does not include matters arising from the report on the school at the September 13 meeting.

Ms Harvey shares Ms Pugh's concern that the problem is with parents during school drop off/pick up and other functions held at the school, not residents. Ms Harvey believes that:

- Narrowing of the road immediately opposite numbers 75 and 77 will: render the driveway of 75 inaccessible (there being insufficient turning curve as a result)
- Seriously hamper access to 77
- Limit safe parking options for the residents of both properties and their visitors
- Cause delays to drivers from higher up Beaconsfield Road having to wait for the stream of school traffic to stop
- Tempt such drivers to cut through the school car park to avoid waiting, thus increasing traffic flow and potential danger to the children.

Ms Harvey also states that villagers have wider issues regarding the state of the roads and would welcome the opportunity to comment on how to spend any highways funding!

Ms Pugh and Ms Harvey would like confirmation that:

No work will be started until after the public meeting with residents has been held, and any responses will be objectively and transparently considered before feedback to the Local Committee meeting on 7th March 2011, where final decision are taken and where residents will have an opportunity to attend and address.

The following questions are put to the Local Committee:

1. What is the evidence regarding traffic flow/speeds/pedestrian habits?
2. How will the proposed plans fit into the national and local Travelling to School initiative - whose aim is to develop a strategic approach to school travel issues promoting the use of walking, cycling and public transport and reducing car dependency for journeys to school - particularly in view of the fact that planning permission for the new build was initially given only on the understanding that the school would adopt a travel plan?
3. Why was there was no consultation with local residents prior to the report on 13 September?
4. What plans are there to involve parents of children at the school, unless they are local residents?
5. What other options have been considered, as the September 13 report states that the work will be completed by the end of March 2011?
6. Is that due to a limitation on timescale for spending the section 106 funding, and why is this being rushed through?
7. What was the date of the meeting with the head teacher, and her name?

Officer Response:

A report was presented to the Local Committee in September 2010, setting out proposals for a kerb build out in Beaconsfield Road outside the Vale School and requesting approval to deliver the scheme, subject to public consultation. The Local Highways Manager had met with Clare Regnard, head teacher, Vale School in July 2010.

The report set out that any objections were to be considered by the local Member, Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman, in collaboration with Surrey County Council Officers, so that a decision could be made on the way forward. The Committee approved the proposal and letters were subsequently sent to all residents of Beaconsfield Road from Spencer Close to the cul de sac end of the road.

A number of responses have been received from residents opposing the proposals, and representatives from Vale School have expressed support. Attempts have been made to arrange a special meeting with residents so they may discuss in greater detail the scope of the scheme, its potential affects and how or whether it may be adapted to address the concerns expressed. Sadly, no firm date for the meeting has yet been agreed upon.

Surrey Highways confirmed receipt of Ms Pugh and Ms Harvey's concerns, and will ensure they are considered when all representations are collated, and the future of the scheme is determined. At that time all correspondents will be formally notified of the outcome in writing.

Supplementary Question at the Local Committee Meeting

Mr C Curtis, one of the executors of 75 Beaconsfield Road was present and asked the following question

Mr Curtis requested assurance that no work will start until further consultation had taken place. Cllr Frost confirmed this. Cllr Frost also advised that a meeting will take place on the 4 January at the school with representatives from the school and local residents invited to attend, and all issues will be considered.