



## OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (MOLE VALLEY)

### LOWER ROAD, BOOKHAM – PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

14 SEPTEMBER 2011

#### KEY ISSUE

To consider options for improving safety in Lower Road for pedestrians crossing Lower Road, Bookham, between the Middlemead estate and the Recreation Ground.

#### SUMMARY

Following a recent incident on Lower Road and a Member question asked at Local Committee in June 2010, options to improve safety for pedestrians crossing Lower Road between the Middlemead estate and the Recreation Ground have been investigated. Five options have been considered, ranging from a signalised crossing to 'do nothing'. It has been concluded that the most feasible option is to provide coloured surfacing, road markings and signs to highlight to drivers that pedestrians may be crossing the road.

#### OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

**The Local Committee (Mole Valley) is asked to agree that:**

- (i) Option 5 (road markings, traffic signs and coloured surfacing) be approved for design and implementation at an estimated cost of £2,500, to be met from the 2011/12 Integrated Transport Schemes budget for Casualty Reduction Schemes.

## 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Lower Road is a residential local distributor link road running in an east-west direction through the villages of Bookham and Fetcham. The road is a two-way, single carriageway with a width of approximately 6.0m. The road is street lit and subject to a 30mph speed limit. There is a footway on the southern side of the carriageway but the footway on the northern side ends at the alleyway that links Lower Road to the residential Middlemead estate to the north. Lower Road is fronted by residential properties on the northern side and the recreation ground and children's playground on the southern side. A location plan is attached as **Annexe 1**.
- 1.2 A petition was presented to the Local Committee in June 2009 seeking 'the urgent provision of a safe crossing of the Lower Road, opposite the Recreational Ground'. The petitioners were advised that the provision of facilities at this location had been previously considered and not found to be feasible on technical grounds. Alternative locations were subsequently suggested but these were found to be either too far away from pedestrians' desire line or too close to junctions with resulting visibility issues.
- 1.3 Following an incident involving a child pedestrian in May 2011, a Member question was submitted to Local Committee in June 2011 asking if Surrey County Council is inclined to install a crossing facility in Lower Road adjacent to the alleyway. In response, the Member was informed that previous feasibility work had failed to identify a suitable place for a crossing and that the matter could be placed on the priority list for 2011/12 to be the subject of a further feasibility study.
- 1.4 A site meeting was held in July 2011 attended by the Local Divisional Member and the Area Team Manager to discuss options.

## 2 ANALYSIS

- 2.1 Pedestrian movements in the area are generated by the local schools, in particular Howard of Effingham and also by the Recreation Ground and playground. This means that many of the pedestrians are children and young people.
- 2.2 Prior to the incident in May 2011, there has only been one recorded personal injury accident in the three year period 2008 to 2010 plus latest available for 2011. This accident involved a single vehicle where the elderly driver was taken ill.

## 3 OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1 **Option 1 – Signal Controlled Crossing (Puffin Crossing)**  
Signal controlled crossings are most suitable at locations where traffic speeds and volumes are higher and there are significant numbers of

pedestrians crossing. In locations where pedestrian flows are light for long periods of the day, it is necessary to exercise caution over the use of signal controlled crossings as drivers may become accustomed to not being stopped at the crossing and so may begin to ignore its existence.

3.2 In Lower Road a signal controlled crossing is not considered feasible for the following reasons:

- Land take from nearby residential properties would be necessary
- A minimum width footway (reservoir area) cannot be provided within the existing highway boundary on the north side
- The signal equipment as well as the required road markings are likely to be considered visually intrusive by local residents and some properties would have the equipment very close to their front windows
- The cost of a signalised crossing would be in excess of £100,000
- Analysis of existing sites shows that there is a high likelihood of there being on average one injury accident a year at a crossing

### 3.3 **Option 2 – Zebra Crossing**

Zebra crossings are most suited to locations where pedestrian crossing flows are relatively low on lightly trafficked roads. Lower traffic levels help pedestrians to establish priority over traffic by stepping onto the crossing. At sites where higher traffic speeds and flows exist, pedestrians will require longer gaps in the traffic flow or be exposed to the risk of injury if the driver does not concede priority. In particular, young or infirm pedestrians may feel it is hazardous to step onto the crossing where there are fewer perceived safe crossing opportunities. Advice issued by the Department of Transport suggests that zebra crossing should not be installed on roads with an 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed of 35mph or above.

3.4 In Lower Road it is likely that 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds are in excess of 35mph. Also traffic flows are high and for much of the day, pedestrian flows are light. A zebra crossing is not considered feasible at this location.

### 3.5 **Option 3 – Raised Table**

The provision of a raised table would provide a level crossing point for pedestrians and traffic would need to slow down to negotiate the vertical deflection. A series of raised tables have been provided in Lower Road between west of The Garstons and east of Pine Walk. To effectively slow traffic, tables need to be provided at distances of no more than 100m apart. The existing tables are located at distances of between 50m to 90m apart.

3.6 The distance between an additional raised table in the vicinity of the alleyway and the nearest existing raised table by The Garstons is approximately 200m. Spacings between vertical deflection measures greater than 100m do not encourage drivers to adopt steady speed, but

induce increased braking and acceleration. Apart from increasing the speed between measures, this is likely to increase traffic noise. Surrey's Traffic Calming Good Practice Guidance therefore recommends that the spacing between vertical deflection measures should not exceed 100m.

3.7 The provision of an isolated raised table without any additional features eg. road narrowing, is not considered best practice and may result in drivers not slowing down sufficiently to safely negotiate the measure. In addition, it may send the wrong message to pedestrians that it is a place where drivers will slow down to allow them to cross the road.

3.8 **Option 4 – Do Nothing**

With the exception of the recent incident where a child pedestrian sustained slight injuries, there is no record of pedestrian personal injury accidents in Lower Road near the Recreation Ground. There has been sustained public campaigning for the provision of a crossing facility at this location for a number of years and there is a perception that it is not safe to cross Lower Road at this location.

3.9 To do nothing would not address the concerns of local residents.

#### 4 **SUGGESTED OPTION FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

4.1 **Option 5 - Road markings, traffic signs and coloured surfacing**

The appropriate use of road markings, traffic signs and coloured surfacing can raise drivers' awareness that there may be pedestrians crossing the road ahead.

4.2 In Lower Road red coloured surfacing could be provided across the width of the road between the alleyway and the Recreation Ground with markings such as dragons teeth provided on the approaches. Signs warning of Children with the Playground plate underneath could be provided on each approach. The Local Divisional Member is hoping to purchase a portable Vehicle Activated Sign which alerts speeding drivers to slow down. This sign would be moved between sites within Bookham and Fetcham and Lower Road would be an ideal location to deploy such a sign.

#### 5 **CONSULTATIONS**

5.1 There has been correspondence between local residents, the Residents of Middlemead Estate Committee and County officers over a number of years. No formal consultation has been carried out to date, as there have been no specific proposals for this site.

5.2 If Local Committee approves option 5, as set out in section 4 of this report, consultation will be carried out with the emergency services and local residents and other interested parties informed of the proposals.

## 6 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 It is estimated that it would cost £2,500 to design and implement option 5, excluding the mobile VAS which will be funded elsewhere. The scheme could be funded from the 2011/12 Integrated Transport Schemes budget for Casualty Reduction Schemes.

## 7 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no equalities and diversity implications arising from this report.

## 8 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

## 9 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 A number of options have been investigated to improve safety for pedestrians crossing Lower Road between the Middlemead estate and the Recreation Ground. On consideration of the physical constraints of the site, the traffic and pedestrian flows and accident record, the option recommended taking forward for design and implementation is option 5 (road markings, traffic signs and coloured surfacing).

## 10 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Option 5 would raise drivers' awareness that there may be pedestrians crossing the road ahead.

## 11 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 11.1 Scheme design and consultation will be carried out. Implementation is likely to take place towards the end of the financial year.

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS:** Petition Report - Local Committee 24 June 2009  
Member Question – Local Committee 8 June 2011

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