



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE
(REIGATE AND BANSTEAD)**

**MERLAND RISE, EPSOM DOWNS
- SAFER ROUTES TO SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS**

21 SEPTEMBER 2009

KEY ISSUE

To consider the introduction of a kerb build out to the north of the Epsom Downs Primary School entrance in Merland Rise with priority awarded to southbound traffic and including a pedestrian crossing point and improved street lighting.

SUMMARY

The provision of a pedestrian Safer Route to School improvements are included in the Reigate & Banstead District five-year programme of Integrated Transport schemes, as approved by the Local Committee on 20 July 2009. Following a petition considered by the Local Committee in June 2008 requesting that pedestrian lights be installed on Merland Rise between Headley Drive and the entrance to Epsom Downs Primary School, Members agreed that a suitable traffic management option be investigated to address the safety issues in Merland Rise. The provision of a kerb build out in Merland Rise north of the entrance to Epsom Downs Primary School would make crossing the road safer and help reduce the speed of vehicles in Merland Rise.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Reigate and Banstead) is asked to agree that:

- (i) Consultation be carried out with local residents, Epsom Downs Primary School and the emergency services regarding the introduction of a kerb build out in Merland Rise north of the school entrance.

- (ii) Subject to consultation and detailed design, the kerb build out as shown in Annex A be approved for construction.
- (iii) Authority be delegated to the East Area Group Manager in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and local elected Member to resolve any representation received as a result of the consultation.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A petition was considered by the Local Committee on 2 June 2008 requesting that pedestrian lights be installed on Merland Rise between Headley Drive and the entrance to Epsom Downs Primary School. The petitioners were concerned that children walking to school are in danger from speeding traffic and that motorists rarely stop to allow pedestrians to cross the road. The petition, submitted by the Head Teacher of Epsom Downs Primary School, was signed by 382 parents and local residents.
- 1.2 The Committee agreed that in view of the high cost of a signal crossing that a more cost effective and suitable traffic management option be investigated such as placement of a kerb build out with priority awarded to southbound traffic.
- 1.3 Surrey Highways have developed a forward prioritised programme of improvements schemes in Reigate and Banstead, as reported to the Local Committee on 20 March 2006. This identified Merland Rise as a site due for review in 2010/11. The current Reigate and Banstead District five-year programme of Integrated Transport schemes, as approved by Local Committee on 20 July 2009, brought forward the review of Merland Rise and Local Allocation funding has been set aside for the design and implementation of pedestrian Safer Routes to School improvements in Merland Rise in 2009/10.
- 1.4 The County's Safer Smarter Travel Team (SSTT) continue to work with the school to promote road safety. A member of the team has been into the school to provide pedestrian training which comprised both classroom sessions and practical route walking sessions outside the school, including Merland Rise. The school has also undertaken cycle training in recent years.
- 1.5 There is a school crossing patrol site on Merland Rise which continues to be assessed as a live site but is still not operational as attempts to recruit an attendant have not, to date, been successful. As part of the annual assessment by the County's SSTT it has been noted that a lot of pedestrians rely on cars stopping to let them cross the road. This is of concern as there is no guarantee that vehicles from both directions will stop at the same time, leaving vulnerable pedestrians stranded in the middle of the road.

2 PROPOSED MEASURES

- 2.1 Following consideration of various options put forward in the report submitted to the Local Committee in June 2008, Members agreed to the investigation of a suitable traffic management option to provide a safe pedestrian crossing point and to moderate traffic speeds.
- 2.2 It is proposed to provide a kerb build out immediately to the north of the school entrance including a pedestrian crossing point and improved street lighting, as shown in Annex A. Priority would be awarded to southbound drivers as they are travelling uphill and will have had less opportunity to build up speed.
- 2.3 This measure will help to slow vehicles and create natural breaks in the traffic, presenting pedestrians opportunities to cross the narrowed carriageway. The facility may also serve to encourage potential school crossing patrol (lollipop attendant) recruits whose job would be considerably aided. In addition, it will deter parking in the vicinity of the crossing point, improving sight lines for pedestrians crossing at the proposed facility.
- 2.4 The proposal will be subject to an independent Road Safety Audit which will identify any safety issues that need to be taken into account in the final design of the island.

3 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 No consultation has been carried out at this stage. It is proposed to consult those residents directly affected by the proposal (those properties between Headley Drive and Tattenham Grove) and Epsom Downs Primary School. The views of the Borough Members for the area and the emergency services will also be sought. The design will be subject to an independent Road Safety Audit which will identify any safety issues that need to be taken into account.
- 3.2 Provision of a kerb build out appeared to be well received during Initial discussions in April 2008 with the Head Teacher and the local Police Community Support Officer following receipt of the petition.

4 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 At its meeting held on 20 July 2009 the Local Committee approved funding of £20,000 from the Local Allocation budget for the design and implementation of pedestrian Safer Routes to School improvements.
- 4.2 Due to the steady increase in raw materials since the forward plan budgets were being devised, a preliminary construction estimate has been provided based on the outline design drawing in Annex A. Unfortunately it indicates that there will be an overspend on this project

of up to £5,000. Once the detailed design has been completed a final construction estimate will be required and this may well come within budget but this should not be assumed.

5 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The pedestrian crossing point would incorporate tactile paving to assist the visually impaired.
- 5.2 There are no other perceived equality or diversity implications.

6 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Improved street lighting in the vicinity of the kerb build out will help reduce the perception of crime and disorder.
- 6.2 There are no other perceived crime and diversity implications.

7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 A kerb build out to the north of the school entrance in Merland Rise with priority awarded to southbound traffic and including a pedestrian crossing point and improved street lighting would help reduce traffic speeds and improve pedestrian safety.
- 7.2 It is recommended that consultation is carried out with local residents, Epsom Downs Primary School and the emergency services on the proposal to construct a kerb build out in Merland Rise, with delegation of authority to the East Area Group Manager in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and local elected Member to resolve any issues arising from the consultation. Providing any issues arising from the consultation are successfully resolved, it is recommended that detailed design and implementation be carried out in accordance with the plan in Annex A.

8 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The provision of a kerb build out in Merland Rise north of the entrance to Epsom Downs Primary School would make crossing the road safer and help reduce the speed of vehicles in Merland Rise.

9 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 9.1 If the Local Committee approves the recommendations, consultation will be carried out with local residents, the school, Members and the emergency services. Providing any issues arising from the consultation are successfully resolved, detailed design will be undertaken and the scheme implemented during the February 2010 school half-term holiday.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: Report to Local Committee 2 June 2008
Report to Local Committee 20 July 2009