



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE
SURREY HEATH**

**RED ROAD, LIGHTWATER
RESPONSE TO PETITION FOR CREATING A SAFE
CROSSING POINT**

16 FEBRUARY 2012

KEY ISSUES

To respond to the petition received by Surrey Heath Local Committee on 17 February 2011, worded as follows, and signed by over 600 residents:

“We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to create a safe crossing point on Red Road in Lightwater. Red Road (B311) in Lightwater divides residential housing from the recreational heathland of Brentmoor Heath, and Hangmoor. A pedestrian footpath is completely absent from one side of the road for its whole length, and on the other side exists only in a small part.

It is a hazardous experience for pedestrians and cyclists to cross this busy feeder road to J3 of the M3, to which a recent tragic death of a jogger testifies.

This petition asks for the provision of a safe crossing of Red Road, either through traffic lights, traffic island, or pedestrian crossing. Your support will save lives.”

SUMMARY

This report considers the issues raised by this petition and makes recommendations in response to it.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Surrey Heath) is asked to note the contents of this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Following the fatality of a jogger crossing Red Road in the vicinity of Briar Avenue on 9th October 2010, an e-petition was received by Surrey Heath Local Committee on 17 February 2011 asking for a safe crossing point to be provided along Red Road. This petition was signed by over 600 residents.
- 1.2 Red Road is a 2km long single carriageway B Class road of strategic importance. It serves as a primary link between Camberley, West End and Chobham, and presently has a de-restricted speed limit of 60mph.
- 1.3 It is noted that in its meeting of October 2011, Surrey Heath Local Committee approved the introduction of a reduced speed limit of 50mph along the entire length of Red Road in response to safety concerns.
- 1.4 The implementation of this speed limit reduction will take place in the 2012/13 financial year and will be funded from the central safety schemes fund held by Safety Engineering. When implemented, this speed limit reduction will assist in improving the safety of highway users wishing to cross Red Road.
- 1.5 Along the length of interest, Red Road is bounded on one side by heathland owned and maintained by the Ministry of Defence, and on the other side by residential development. Footpath is provided on the developed side of the road.
- 1.6 It is recognised that many local residents make use of the public rights of way on the heathland for recreational purposes such as jogging, dog-walking and cycling.
- 1.7 There are several crossing points used by residents along the length of Red Road to access the heathland, all of which are used regularly. These are located in close proximity to the junctions with Lightwater Road, Briar Avenue and MacDonald Avenue.
- 1.8 During the last 3 year period, 26 personal injury collisions have occurred on Red Road, resulting in 23 slight injuries, 6 serious injuries and 1 fatality as summarised in Table 1 below:

Table 1 – Red Road personal injury statistics between Jan 2009 and Jan 2012.

Injury severity	No. of injuries	No. of pedestrian and cyclist injuries
Slight	23	1 (cyclist)
Severe	6	1 (cyclist)
Fatality	1	1 (pedestrian jogger)

- 1.9 It is noted that neither of the accidents involving cyclists were associated with crossing Red Road.
- 1.10 The pedestrian fatality was that of a jogger, and did involve crossing Red Road. This occurred in dark conditions with the jogger emerging from the heathland side where inter-visibility between heath users and drivers is restricted due to the vegetation on the heathland.

2.0 ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 The standard options for crossing facilities included Zebra, Pelican and Puffin crossings, and pedestrian refuge islands.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 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.
- 2.6 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.
- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 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.

3.0 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 Surrey Police have been consulted and have no objections to the action recommended.

4.0 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The estimated cost of providing a pedestrian refuge island near the junction with Briar Avenue together with associated footpath is approximately £45,000.

5.0 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

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

6.0 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None.

7.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 For the reasons outlined in this report, it is recommended that no further action is taken in response to the provision of pedestrian crossing facilities.
- 7.2 It is also recommended that Surrey Highways arranges a meeting with Defence Estates to discuss management of vegetation on the heathland side, and formally requests that Defence Estates undertakes further vegetation work to improve visibility in the vicinity of heathland access points.

8.0 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 8.1 Subject, to Committee agreeing with the recommendations of this report, a meeting with Defence Estates will be arranged to discuss the cutting back and thinning out of vegetation at the various locations where footpaths emerge on to Red Road.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: None