



LOCKFIELD DRIVE NEAR KIRKLAND AVENUE – TOUCAN CROSSING

LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR WOKING 26 APRIL 2004

KEY ISSUE:

To consider a proposal to replace an existing uncontrolled crossing with a Toucan crossing on Lockfield Drive, between its junctions with Kirkland Avenue and Creston Avenue and to provide a mini-roundabout at the Kirkland Avenue junction, traffic calming and an enhanced entry to the 30mph speed limit.

SUMMARY:

Discussions with a local school in 2002 identified a wish for a signal controlled pedestrian crossing over Lockfield Drive to increase safety and encourage more parents and pupils to walk to and from school. No pedestrian accidents have been recorded at the existing crossing point, although a number of injury accidents have resulted from vehicles turning into or out of Kirkland Avenue. Existing vehicle speeds in the vicinity are in excess of the 30mph speed limit. Consequently, a mini-roundabout is proposed at the junction of Kirkland Avenue to improve turning manoeuvres, which in turn will reduce vehicle speeds in the area. An enhanced entry into the 30mph speed limit is also proposed

along with two sets of speed cushions.

CONSULTATIONS:

Surrey Police are generally in favour of the proposal and await a formal written consultation after the Local Committee.

The Divisional Member is aware of and generally supports the proposal.

The Beaufort Community Primary School has been approached and remains keen to see the crossing provided.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to agree

- (i) that the proposals shown on drawings No 11724 and 11725 be approved for construction.**

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

1. During 2002, in preparation for the now postponed Project Pegasus, a number of schools were consulted to determine what improvements would be needed to encourage more children to walk or cycle to school and reduce the use of the private car for the 'school run'.
2. Discussions with the Beaufort Community Primary School located in Kirkland Avenue, Goldsworth Park revealed concerns about the safety of parents and pupils crossing the road in the immediate vicinity of the school. Consequently, a Pelican crossing was constructed outside the school during Spring 2003.
3. The discussions with the school also identified a wish for a signal controlled crossing to be constructed in place of the existing uncontrolled pedestrian refuge island on Lockfield Drive between Kirkland Avenue and Creston Avenue. This would provide controlled pedestrian facilities along the wider route that parents and pupils use to and from the school. Unfortunately, funds were not available for this at the time and only the crossing outside the school was built.
4. Although the crossing on Lockfield Drive could not be built, the 30mph speed limit on the road was extended to a point approximately 160 metres south west of its junction with Kirkland Avenue during the Summer of 2003.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

Existing situation

5. Speed surveys were carried out close to the existing pedestrian refuge island in June 2003, which indicated that the 85th percentile speeds were 43mph north-west bound and 41mph south-east bound. These are far in excess of the 30mph speed limit, which consequently receives regular enforcement by Surrey Police. Signs indicating the presence of Police Enforcement Cameras were erected along this stretch of Lockfield Drive in March 2004.
6. A pedestrian count was also undertaken in June 2003 at the existing pedestrian refuge island. Between 7am and 7pm, 127 pedestrians were recorded crossing from the Kirkland Avenue side to the Creston Avenue side and 134 in the reverse direction. The figures recorded during the morning and afternoon school periods clearly show that it is an important crossing point for parents and pupils.
7. There is another crossing location close to the start of the 30mph speed limit. Pedestrians cross here from a footpath from Oakfield on the eastern side of Lockfield Drive to Staveley Way and Dunnets to the west. Although no formal pedestrian count has been undertaken here, observations have shown that it is well used, despite there being no refuge or any form of controlled crossing facility. No injury accidents have been recorded here in the last 3 years and no works are proposed at this location.

8. A speed survey was also undertaken in March 2004 in the 50mph speed limit section of Lockfield Drive, between Kirkland Avenue and Clifton Way. This showed 85th percentile speeds of 49mph south-east bound and 50mph north-west bound. These speeds suggest that there is not a speeding problem along this section of Lockfield Drive and that the 50mph limit is appropriate. Consequently, no work is proposed along this length of road.
9. There is clearly a need to reduce vehicle speeds in the vicinity of Kirkland Avenue. This should be done before a toucan crossing is constructed and, as well as improving safety at the crossing location, it will have a similar effect at the junction with Kirkland Avenue, where the only personal injuries in the vicinity have been recorded.
10. In the last three years, there have been no reported personal injury accidents involving pedestrians crossing Lockfield Drive in this vicinity. There have, however, been eight recorded collisions resulting in 9 slight and 3 serious injuries as a consequence of turning manoeuvres into and out of Kirkland Avenue.

Proposal

11. A mini-roundabout is proposed at the junction of Lockfield Drive and Kirkland Avenue, which will improve the safety of turning manoeuvres, thereby reducing injury collisions. A mini-roundabout in itself will not always reduce vehicle speeds but vehicles slowing to turn will; there appears to be sufficient turning traffic at this junction to have this desired effect.
12. Approach speeds to the mini-roundabout must be reduced however, as the recorded vehicle speeds mentioned in paragraph 6 demonstrate. To achieve this, two sets of speed cushions are proposed. A pair of cushions is proposed adjacent to the existing traffic island to the south-east of Kirkland Avenue, with one cushion on each side of the island. A set of three cushions is proposed to the north-west of Creston Avenue to reduce the approach speed of vehicles coming from the Littlewick Road roundabout. None of the proposed cushions will affect the Number 91 bus, which runs along Lockfield Drive between Creston Avenue and Kirkland Avenue.
13. At the moment, it would appear that many drivers have failed to see or acknowledge the 30mph speed limit signs and there are no other environmental changes to suggest to them that they have entered a lower limit. It is therefore proposed to apply an area of red 'Rippleprint' to create a gateway feature at the speed limit change. 'Rippleprint' is a proprietary material that is laid with a gently undulating top surface that imparts vibration into the vehicle cabin but does not cause noise pollution or vibration to neighbouring properties. Where this material has been tested in Fleet, Hampshire, it has not, in itself, had a marked effect on vehicle speeds but it does bring drivers' attention to the presence of a hazard or change of environment. A carriageway roundel, indicating the 30mph limit will be incorporated into the gateway feature, along with more prominent 30mph speed limit signs to provide further indicators to the driver.

14. It is proposed that the above measures, designed to improve safety at the junction and reduce speeds in the vicinity, will form the first phase of the scheme. Having reduced approach speeds, the second phase of the scheme will be to construct a Toucan crossing in place of the existing pedestrian refuge island, which will be removed. It is proposed that the carriageway is narrowed between Creston Avenue and Kirkland Avenue. This will reduce the distance that pedestrians have to cross and should maintain reduced speeds by moving vehicles closer together. Additionally, moving just the eastern kerbline (on the Kirkland Avenue side) will move vehicles away from the junction such that they are more visible to traffic in the side road. The proposed scheme is shown on Drawings 11724 and 11725.
15. It is envisaged that cyclists will continue on the carriageway through the site, as happens at present, although this can be considered in more detail during the final design stages.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

16. There is already £55,000 allocated to this scheme during the 2004 / 2005 financial year. However, it has become clear that there are other issues that need to be addressed on site before a Toucan crossing can be introduced and, consequently, the cost of the scheme has increased. It is therefore proposed that the scheme be phased such that the mini-roundabout is constructed first, to improve safety at the junction and reduce vehicle speeds. The Toucan crossing can be scheduled for construction, when funds are made available, during the 2005 / 2006 financial year, unless additional funds are found during the current financial year. The revised overall scheme estimate is £180,000. It should be possible for construction to take place as a seamless two-phase programme, even if funding is split over 2 financial years.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

17. The proposal would, initially, reduce vehicle speeds along Lockfield Drive and reduce the number of accidents at the Kirkland Avenue junction. Reduced vehicle speeds will make crossing Lockfield Drive safer for pedestrians, even before the Toucan crossing is constructed. The proposal should encourage an increase in the number of pupils walking to the Beaufort School.

CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

18. There are no crime and disorder implications.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

19. A Toucan crossing will improve accessibility for the visually and mobility impaired by provide a controlled crossing over Lockfield Drive that currently does not exist in the vicinity.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

20. The existing refuge island is clearly on a desire line and is well used by pedestrians and by parents and pupils in particular. Replacing this island with a controlled crossing point will not, in isolation, provide a safer crossing point. However, the addition of a mini-roundabout at the junction of Kirkland Avenue will improve the safety for vehicles turning into and from Lockfield Drive, where personal injuries are currently being recorded. These turning manoeuvres will slow vehicle speeds in the vicinity and sets of speed cushions will have slowed vehicles on each approach to the junction. It is important that vehicle speeds are reduced first and the proposed phased approach to the scheme will achieve this, allowing the controlled crossing to be installed into a slower, traffic calmed environment.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS:

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