



OLD WOKING ROAD FOOTPATH

LOCAL COMMITTEE (WOKING)

15 JUNE 2006

KEY ISSUE:

To correct a misconception given by a previous recommendation to Committee

SUMMARY:

The Committee was petitioned in January 2004 to provide a footway along Old Woking Road between Roundhill and Hockering Road.

An officer report to Committee on 14 October 2004 outlined a number of short term measures to mitigate the problems encountered by pedestrians and the Committee asked that these be progressed.

One of these measures as reported was to “Clear vegetation encroachment and widen existing footway” between Maybury Hill and Hockering Road. To widen the footway would require land acquisition and costly engineering work to retain the banking at the back of the footway. The author of the report had intended it should read – “Clear vegetation encroachment to widen existing footway”. The Committee is asked to agree a new Recommendation.

CONSULTATIONS:

Committee Chairman

Head of Legal Services – Ann Charlton

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to agree

- (i) That the short term measure for Maybury Hill to Hockering Road contained in the Local Committee report of 14 October 2004, Old Woking Road, should read – “Clear vegetation encroachment to widen existing footway.”**

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

1. On 28 January 2004 Committee received a petition from Mr. Johns on the desirability of providing a continuous footpath on Old Woking Road between Maybury Hill and White Rose Lane. Officers were asked to review what could be done and report back to a future meeting.
2. This report was presented to Committee on 14 October 2004 (Item 8). Whilst the solution to the problem raised by the petitioner was to provide a continuous footway along the western side of Old Woking Road this required large scale engineering work and the realignment of the eastern side of the road.
3. The Committee approved a number of short term measures but rejected the provision of a new facility as too expensive when judged against the County Council's other priorities and Local Transport Plan targets.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

4. One of the short term measures was wrongly worded in the original report to Committee and gives the impression that the short section of footway from Maybury Hill to Hockering Road would be widened. This was not the intention of the author.
5. The wording accepted by Committee read, "Clear vegetation encroachment and widen existing footway". It was intended to read, "Clear vegetation encroachment to widen existing footway."
6. This short section of footway is not Public Highway in its entirety. From a width of 5 metres at Maybury Hill it gradually tapers in until after 45 metres the Public Highway ends. Pedestrians over a considerable period of time have walked down to Hockering Road and created a narrow path throughout the route partially on private property.
7. The DFT publication Inclusive Mobility sets standards for footway width, the minimum being 1.5 metres and the preferred 2 metres. To achieve these widths throughout this section of footway would require the acquisition of land and the removal of the bank at the back of the footway with a retaining wall being built at considerable cost.
8. The intention of the short term measure in the Committee report of 14 October 2004 was to recognise the local practice of walking down this narrow, in part unsurfaced, inadequate width path by cutting back the vegetation, not to widen the path. The vegetation was trimmed back to the path edge following the Committee meeting.
9. Despite the Petitioner being told that the wording of the original report was incorrect and the true intention being explained to him, he continues to pursue a complaint, now at Stage 3 in the Surrey County Council procedure. The Committee is requested to recognise the original intention of this proposal by agreeing the amendment contained in the recommendation

above.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10. There are no financial implications.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

11. There are no sustainable development Implications

CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

12. There are no crime and disorder Implications

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

13. There are no equalities Implications

CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

14. The original recommendation to Committee for the footway between Maybury Hill and Hockering Road requires clarification, as there was not an intention to widen the footway. It conflicts with the general accepted recommendation that whilst building a footway along Old Woking Road might be desirable it was not a viable proposition judged against the County Council's other priorities and Local Transport Plan targets.

15. Adopting the recommendation will correct this inconsistency.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: Previous committee papers

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