



**JACK AND JILL STEPS
WHITE ROSE LANE**

**LOCAL COMMITTEE (WOKING)
15 JUNE 2006**

KEY ISSUE:

To respond to a petition from St. John the Baptist School (SJB), Woking about the condition of Jack and Jill steps (Footpath 59)

SUMMARY:

The pupils of S J B presented a petition to the Local Committee on 20 October 2005 about the state of Jack and Jill steps – footpath 59

Prior to the petition the Local Transportation Service had completed work to improve pedestrian crossing facilities at White Rose Lane by inserting a raised table, cutting back the banking at the lower stepped end and removing the heavy tree canopy in that area.

The petition asked for lighting to be installed. Consultation with residents abutting the path showed that the majority of respondees did not want lighting. The pupils have now withdrawn their request after they carried out a consultation with residents who undertook to cut

back vegetation.

The steps and the further steep section at the White Rose Lane end of the path can become slippery in wet or frosty conditions. The surface has been laid for some time and conditions would be improved if it was resurfaced. The cleaning regime needs to be rigorously enforced in particular during the leaf fall in Autumn and early winter.

CONSULTATIONS:

St John the Baptist School

Local residents

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to agree

- (i) that the contents of this report be noted as to the works already completed by the Local Transportation Service and the withdrawal of the petitioners request for lighting**
- (ii) that the resurfacing of the lower 93 metre steep section be placed on the work programme to await funding**

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

1. At its meeting on 20 October 2005 the Committee received a petition from pupils at SJB asking that improvements be made to Jack and Jill steps which is Public Footpath 59 linking White Rose Lane with Ashwood Road.
2. To avoid the congestion present outside SJB in the morning and afternoon a number of parents drop or collect their children in Ashwood Road who then use Footpath 59 and 55 to go to or from the school.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

3. From White Rose Lane to Ashwood Road is a distance of 224 metres. The initial section, 53 metres in length, comprises 18 steps of varying lengths from 1.3 metres to 4.45 metres. They might better be described as a series of ramps, which were placed in an irregular pattern to follow the natural but steep contours. This first section has an incline of 1:3 enclosed by property boundaries. The next 40 metres are not stepped and the incline lessens to 1:5.5. The path then continues through a flat section to Ashwood Road.
4. A survey of use by SJB pupils over 3 days revealed a minimum of 79 and maximum of 98 pupils using the Footpath and a minimum of 28 with a maximum of 33 vehicles waiting in Ashwood Road.
5. The Local Transportation Service had carried out various works on or associated with the Public Footpath prior to the Committee receiving the petition. As part of a traffic calming scheme in White Rose lane a raised table was installed at the crossing point where the two footpaths meet. Pedestrians had previously walked straight across the road but are now diverted by railing to a position where their sight lines are improved. The edge had encroached across the steps and this was cut back. The canopy at the White Rose Lane end was very overgrown and cleared to provide natural light whilst allowing the steps to dry much quicker in wet conditions. A new streetlight was installed at the foot of the steps.
6. One suggestion put forward involves the rebuilding of the first stepped section with "conventional steps". This would be a large-scale construction not least to protect the integrity of the existing property boundaries. Officers do not recommend this option. The steepness achieved is perceived as more dangerous than the current ramps should a person fall.
7. Footpath 59 has a streetlight at both the White Rose Lane and Ashwood Road end but none on the path itself. The petition commented upon the poor lighting. To install a system of lighting would require EDF to lay a cable throughout its length with 6 lamp columns. The twelve resident properties adjoining the Footpath were consulted about the possible installation of street lighting. Seven replies were received of which five did not want lighting, one gave partial approval and one unqualified approval. The major point of opposition was light intrusion in an area currently with low levels of intrusion. The petitioners have subsequently contacted the Local

Transportation Service to say that they have consulted residents and reached an agreement that foliage is cut back to assist in natural lighting of the path. Therefore they do not now request that street lighting be installed.

8. The path can become slippery in particular during the autumn leaf fall and frosty conditions. This is particularly acute on the lower stepped section. Officers have examined the proposal to place some form of edging on the step edge and face. This has not been recommended in itself posing a trip hazard. The current surfacing has been laid for a considerable time and is smooth. It is proposed that the 93 metres of incline are resurfaced providing improved grip. Currently this is not in the work programme and funding not allocated. The path is cleaned every 12 weeks and the Highway Steward will be requested to pay particular attention that this is achieved.
9. The Chairman and author of this report have acceded to a request that they attend SJB Student Council following this Committee, report the outcome and discuss generally the Committee process in particular the position of Members and Officers in the process.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10. No funding has been allocated for the surfacing recommended in this report and it would need to be absorbed in the work programme.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

11. Keeping the path safe encourages the pupils of SJB to take exercise in going to and from the School.

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 Local Transportation Service has previously conducted work, which meets some of the desires expressed in the petition. Lighting the Footpath is not popular with residents and it is helpful that the pupils have carried out their own consultation and withdrawn this request.
15. Surfacing the lower steep areas will assist pedestrians with improved grip and the Highway Stewards can ensure the cleaning regime provided by Woking Borough Council is completed in a timely manner.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: Nil

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