

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL****LOCAL COMMITTEE (RUNNYMEDE)****DATE: 2 DECEMBER 2013****LEAD OFFICER: ANDREW MILNE, AREA TEAM MANAGER****SUBJECT: PETITION RESPONSE – MARINA CLOSE****DIVISION: CHERTSEY****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

The Local Committee received a petition at its meeting on 30 September signed by a number of residents from Marina Close, Chertsey, regarding concerns about maintenance work carried out to vegetation on the public highway in Marina Close, and requesting that additional works are carried out.

The petition stated that "The residents of Marina Close agreed with Surrey County Council that they could cut our conifer trees along the entrance to Marina Close to 3m high, leaving us some seclusion from the mobile home park. The work was carried out w/c 29<sup>th</sup> April 2013 and the results are appalling. We have been left with gaps, uneven trees, bushes were completely taken out and bare twigs have been left from an ivy bush. It has totally ruined the look and feel of our quiet cul-de-sac and we are now open to noise and have been left with no seclusion at all from the mobile home park, not to mention the building work that may start on the site if plans go ahead. We want the damage to be rectified and the area tidied up from the rubbish and debris that has been left." A list of additional specific works was appended to the petition.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Local Committee (Runnymede) is asked to agree that:**

- (i) the petition response is noted.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Maintenance work was carried out on the public highway in response to concerns expressed by residents. These works have been completed and no further works are necessary.

**1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

- 1.1 Maintenance of conifer trees and other vegetation located along the boundary of Marina Close with the mobile home park (Lakeside Park) was carried out in response to concerns raised by residents of the Park. These concerns related to vegetation causing damage to private property.
- 1.2 The trees involved are not of a type that would have been planted by Surrey Highways, as due to their rapid growth characteristics, they are an ongoing maintenance liability. It is presumed that these trees were introduced onto the public highway without permission, and under these circumstances Surrey Highways would normally seek to remove the trees entirely on maintenance grounds.
- 1.3 As the highway authority, Surrey County Council must seek to balance often conflicting demands between different groups, and in this case, works were carried out following consultation with the residents of Marina Close and Lakeside Park. To minimise the potential impact of these works, the decision was made to reduce the height of the trees where possible, so that a reasonable level of screening could be maintained. It must be emphasised that Surrey County Council as the highway authority has no legal duty or obligation to provide screening on the public highway.
- 1.4 Although it is appreciated that fencing is now visible over a short length of this boundary, and that there is now some limited view of Lakeside Park, the vegetation over this section was substantially overgrown ivy which was pushing over and damaging privately owned fencing. It was therefore necessary to take remedial action to prevent further damage occurring.
- 1.5 Clearance work at the time addressed many of the issues listed in the petition, including tidying up of the area where a gap had been left, removal of old/damaged fence posts, filling gaps and clearance of rubbish. As the site has been left in a tidy and safe condition, there are no plans to carry out further work at this location.
- 1.6 It is noted that the petition also expressed concern about exposure to noise. Vegetation planted in narrow strips has very little impact on noise levels, and the maintenance work that has taken place will not have had an appreciable effect in this regard.

**2. ANALYSIS:**

- 2.1 None presented.

**3. OPTIONS:**

- 3.1 None presented.

**4. CONSULTATIONS:**

4.1 As the highway authority, Surrey County Council must seek to balance often conflicting demands between different groups, and in this case, works were carried out following consultation with the residents of Marina Close and Lakeside Park. To minimise the potential impact of works, the decision was made to reduce the height of the trees where possible, so that a reasonable level of screening could be maintained. It must be emphasised that Surrey County Council as the highway authority has no legal duty or obligation to provide screening on the public highway.

#### **5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:**

5.1 N/A.

#### **6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:**

6.1 The Highway Service is mindful of its needs within this area and attempts to treat all users of the public highway with equality and understanding.

#### **7. LOCALISM:**

7.1 Works were carried out following consultation with local residents, and in response to concerns expressed by local residents.

#### **8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	Set out below.
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	No significant implications arising from this report.
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report.
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report.

##### 8.1 Crime and Disorder implications

None.

#### **9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

9.1 All necessary works at this location have been completed, and concerns expressed by residents through the petition have been responded to, except in the instances where work is outside of the scope of duty or obligation that the highway authority has.

9.2 The Local Committee is asked to note the contents of this response.

**10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

- 10.1 The lead petitioner will be advised of the Local Committee's decision.
  - 10.2 No additional action will be required if the Officer Recommendation is approved by the Committee.
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**Contact Officer:**

Andrew Milne, Area Highways Manager (NW), Telephone: 0300 2001003

**Consulted:**

Residents and Local Member.

**Annexes:**

None

**Sources/background papers:**

Petition from residents of Marina Close.

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