WOKING JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: **24 SEPTEMBER 2014**
LEAD OFFICER: **REBECCA HARRISON, SUSTAINABILITY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TEAM LEADER**

SUBJECT: **ROAD SAFETY OUTSIDE SCHOOLS REPORT HORSELL C OF E JUNIOR SCHOOL**

AREA: **GOLDSWORTH EAST AND HORSELL VILLAGE**

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

Concern has been expressed over the safety of children arriving and leaving Horsell Junior School and the associated congestion caused by school journey traffic. This report outlines the nature and extent of the road safety problem, and possible highway and road safety education improvements to address the problems identified. These have been developed in accordance with the county council's Road Safety Outside Schools policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Woking Joint Committee is asked to agree that:

(i) Horsell Junior School will be asked to undertake additional school travel plan and road safety education activities. This will include take up of Teaching Assistant Pedestrian Awareness Skills courses, Park SMART and the setting up of a walking bus. The school will be supported in these activities by the county council's Sustainable Travel Team.

(ii) The highway improvement proposals presented within this report are added to the Woking list of possible future highway improvements, and are prioritised alongside other schemes using the "CASEM" countywide scheme assessment process. This will take into account the likely effect of the proposals on congestion, accessibility, safety, economy and future maintenance liabilities..

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The recommended highway measures would help to reduce traffic speeds and reduce antisocial parking and so would improve the road environment to encourage more walking, scooting and cycling to school. A successful increase in these modes would contribute to fewer car journeys and less motor vehicle congestion. The recommended school travel plan and road safety education improvements would also help to improve road safety and reduce reliance on the car for the school journey.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

1.1 One of the most frequently expressed road safety concerns is that of the safety of children outside schools. At school drop off and pick up times the roads in the immediate vicinity of schools are especially busy and there is usually a higher level of vehicle, pedestrian, scooter and cyclist activity. This causes slower vehicle speeds and congestion and very often leads to frustration from residents and motorists at the apparent chaos caused by parents and children arriving or leaving the school.

1.2 Concerns have been expressed over the safety of children arriving and leaving Horsell Junior School in Woking and a petition raised by the parents has been submitted to the committee. There have also been ongoing concerns over the behaviour of parents parking inappropriately on Meadway Drive and congestion caused by school journeys.

1.3 This report describes the results of investigations into these issues and presents possible highway and road safety education improvements to address the problems identified. These have been developed in accordance with the county council's Road Safety Outside Schools policy approved by county council Cabinet on 24 June 2014.

2. ANALYSIS:

Site Description and Existing Infrastructure

2.1 Horsell Junior School teaches children from ages 7 to 11 (years 3 to 6) and is a three-form entry school. It is worth noting that there are also other schools close by including Horsell Village Infants, and Woking High School which add to the level of traffic and congestion on the local roads during school journey peak times. Meadway Drive is also one of the main access roads to Woking High School.

2.2 Meadway Drive is a residential road with a 30 mph speed limit. The school has two pedestrian entrances and one vehicle entrance on Meadway Drive. One small pedestrian entrance is used by staff, the other wider entrance to the playground is used by parents and children. There is a lay-by on the school side of the road with room for approximately six cars.

2.3 There is a 4m wide pavement near the school playground entrance which serves as a waiting area for parents and children prior to the playground gates being opened at the beginning and end of the school day. There is an uncontrolled crossing point with dropped kerbs and tactile paving on both sides of the road near the school playground entrance. There is guard railing provided on the school side footway, either side of the uncontrolled crossing point. There are enforceable school keep clear markings on both sides of the crossing point with clearly visible timing plates.

2.4 There are double yellow lines extending along Meadway Drive from the end of the school keep clear markings in the northbound direction opposite the school. There are no parking restrictions extending along Meadway Drive from the end of the school keep clear markings in the southbound direction opposite the school. There are school warning signs on both approaches to the school.

2.5 Over 12 years ago a school crossing patrol used to operate on Meadway Drive at the uncontrolled crossing point described above. This has been vacant for 12 years (it

has not been possible to recruit to the post due to a lack of interest in applying for the job). The site has been rated as a low risk site and as such funding is no longer available to support a school crossing patrol at this site (even if the post could be filled) because under the council's new policy, resources are diverted to other sites with a much greater risk.

Perceived problems

2.6 A meeting was held with the Divisional Member Councillor Colin Kemp on the 15 April 2014. A subsequent site visit with police colleagues, road safety team, sustainability team and local highway engineers took place on the 8 May 2014. The concerns that were raised included the following:

- Inconsiderate parking on Meadway Drive where vehicles were blocking resident's driveways, and obscuring crossing points.
- A lack of crossing facilities on Meadway Drive.
- A request was also made by Cllr Kemp to ensure that we took into account Woking High School further up Meadway Drive.

Analysis of Road Collision Data

2.7 A plot of personal injury collisions recorded by the police covering the period from 1 January 2011 to May 2014 is attached within Annex 1. Table 1 below summarises the number of collisions in the vicinity of the school over last three calendar years plus the current year 2014 to the end of May. This does not include collisions resulting in damage only as this is not systematically reported to, or recorded by the police.

Table 1: Collisions in the vicinity of Horsell Junior School from January 2011 to end of May 2014

Road	Collisions			
	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Total
Meadway Drive	0	0	1	1
High Street	0	1	4	5
Total	0	1	5	6

2.8 The above collisions resulted in injuries to 6 casualties, and 3 of these were children under the age of 16. The child casualties and circumstances of these are summarised below:

- 15 year old male cyclist lost control and went over the handlebars outside 109 High Street, whilst travelling southeast, leading to slight injury at 15:30, Monday 16 May 2011.
- Collision between 11 year old male cyclist emerging from Hill Close onto Meadway Drive, and car travelling southwest on Meadway Drive, leading to slight injury to cyclist at 13:30, Saturday 22 June 2013.
- Four year-old male climbs out of window of parked car on High Street, 20m southeast of Meadway Drive, then walks into path of car travelling northwest on

the High Street leading to serious injury to child pedestrian at 18:42, Tuesday 10 December 2013.

2.9 Although any one collision resulting in road casualties is one too many, the collision history around the school does not represent a very concentrated pattern of collisions compared to many other sites across Surrey. For example there have not been any child pedestrian casualties on Meadway Drive in the vicinity of the school (Information on personal injury collisions throughout Great Britain is available to view via www.crashmap.co.uk). None-the-less the fear of road danger across the school community, irrespective of the number of collisions, along with the perceived inconvenience of accessing the school by walking, scooting or cycling can deter these modes.

Speed Survey Data

2.10 Speed surveys have been conducted by police colleagues using speed detection radar boxes that are attached to lamp columns to measure speeds without drivers knowing they are there. Speeds were collected for a one week period in each instance. The following Table 2 summarises the data collected for Meadway Drive and The High Street.

Table 2: Speed Survey Data

Location	Date	Direction	Mean mph	85 th percentile* mph
Meadway Drive (near junction with Hammond Road)	May 2014	Northbound	22	29
		Southbound	23	29
High Street (near junction with Horsell Way)	June 2014	Northbound	28	31
		Southbound	23	29

* The 85th percentile speed is the speed above which the fastest 15 per cent of vehicles were travelling.

2.11 The data for Meadway Drive shows that speeds are well below the existing speed limit of 30 mph. This is probably due in part to the congestion and queuing traffic on this stretch, parked vehicles and the minor nature of this residential road.

Road User Behaviour Observations

2.12 A site visit involving county council highway engineers, road safety team, and sustainability team took place on the 8 May 2014. The following observations were noted.

- A high proportion of pedestrians accessing the school came from the direction of Horsell High Street.

- Although there is an uncontrolled crossing facility provided near the school gate, the majority of the pedestrians (including parents accompanying children) chose to cross Meadway Drive at a point a few metres to the south of the uncontrolled crossing facility. This is because this provides a more direct route to the school entrance along the pedestrian “desire line”. This resulted in the pedestrians being partly masked by stationary parked vehicles on both sides of the road when attempting to cross at this point.

- There were over 75 parents and children that crossed Meadway Drive at either the uncontrolled crossing point or at the point a few metres to the south of the uncontrolled crossing point on the pedestrian desire line. There were over 20 children who used the correct crossing location independently.

- There were at least 3 vehicles that illegally stopped on the mandatory school keep clear markings.

- The current layout of the lay-by adjacent to the school encourages some drivers to temporarily park within the tapered entrance to the lay-by resulting in the rear of the vehicle obstructing the main carriageway, and potentially obstructing passing traffic and obscuring pedestrians waiting to cross at the uncontrolled crossing facility.

School Travel Plan and Road Safety Education

2.13 The county council provide resources for schools to encourage pupils to choose sustainable transport choices wherever practical. The following are the road safety, travel planning and sustainability activities that Horsell school undertake:

- Bikeability Training Level 1 & 2. This is an on and off road cycle training courses carried out in years 5 and 6 (9 and 10 year olds). There is a charge for this activity, with the vast majority of the children taking this up.

- School Travel Planning. The school first produced a travel plan in 2007 and this would have made the school eligible for a government grant to purchase equipment to encourage sustainable travel to and from school. The school travel plan will need to be reviewed and updated.

2.14 The following are other road safety, travel planning and sustainability activities that are made available by the county council but Horsell school have not previously undertaken:

- Teaching Assistant Pedestrian Awareness Skills course. This enables the school to be able to provide pedestrian awareness courses for years 3 and 4 (8 & 9 year olds). This would include practical training within the area immediately surrounding the school.

- Park SMART. This is carried out by the county council's Community Engagement Team and the Casualty Reduction Officer from Surrey Police. A number of children from the school are taken out prior to the afternoon peak to look at parental parking behaviour. They identify with the help of officers vehicles that are parking inconsiderately or obstructing residential properties and then an advisory leaflet is filled out by the children and left on the windscreen of the car or given directly to the driver.

- Walking Bus. The walking bus is a measure used to encourage walking to school; it forms a crocodile of children wearing high visibility tabards operated by parent volunteers.

3. OPTIONS:

3.1 A number of measures have been considered with the aim of calming traffic, reducing antisocial parking, and making crossing the road safer. This would improve the environment to encourage more walking, scooting and cycling to school. A successful increase in these modes would contribute to fewer car journeys and less motor vehicle congestion.

1) School Crossing Patrol. When funding was available in previous years it was found that it was not possible to recruit a school crossing patrol officer due to lack of interest in taking up the role. Recruitment was attempted for a period of 12 years. Following the recent update to the county council's school crossing patrol policy the county council are no longer able to provide funding for low risk sites such as this, even if it was possible to successfully recruit someone. If the school are able to provide funding for a school crossing patrol officer (costing £3,600 per year) and someone suitable applied for the role, or if the school are able to recruit suitable volunteers, then the council's sustainability team would provide support in the form of training and annual risk assessments. However experience suggests that this is unlikely to be a viable option and is therefore not recommended.

2) Relocate existing uncontrolled crossing point. Estimated cost: £5,000. The site observations highlighted that the majority of pedestrians did not use the existing uncontrolled crossing point and instead crossed a few metres to the south. The uncontrolled crossing point could be relocated a few metres to the south to facilitate the desire to cross as this point. The existing guard railing would be amended. However it is not considered that this option would make very much difference to changing behaviour of motorists, and would not make much difference to how safe pedestrians feel when accessing the school. Therefore this option is not recommended.

3) Raised Road Table. Estimated cost: £20,000. A raised table could be installed and positioned to facilitate the pedestrian desire to cross a few metres to the south of the existing uncontrolled crossing point. The raised table would provide a clear crossing point on the pedestrian desire line, and would encourage lower speeds in the vicinity of the crossing point. It may be possible to provide a different coloured surface on the top of the raised table to highlight the crossing point. This would encourage eye contact and interaction between pedestrians and motorists to facilitate crossing movements on the desire line. The existing guard railing would be amended.

4) Zebra Crossing. Estimated cost: £60,000. The crossing would be provided on a raised table in order to encourage slower vehicle speeds in the vicinity of the crossing point. Anti-skid road surfacing would also be provided on the approaches to the zebra crossing in order to assist braking vehicles and reduce skidding and risk of shunt collisions. The standard zig-zag lines would extend from the crossing to prevent parking on the immediate approach to the crossing. The existing guard railing would be amended. However the provision of a zebra crossing would be substantially more expensive than the raised table described above, and would not be in use for most of the day. For this reason this option is not recommended.

5) Parking restrictions. Estimated cost £5,000. If a raised road table was installed then the school keep clear markings would be amended along with the double yellow lines to deter parking on the immediate approach to the raised table crossing. This would deter anti social parking along this stretch which currently results in obscuring the visibility for pedestrians trying to cross the road as well as blocking adjacent driveways. If a zebra crossing was installed then the standard zig-zag lines on the approach to the crossing and amendments to the double yellow lines would be made to achieve the same result.

6) Amend the lay-by. The long taper of the lay-by outside the school would be amended to discourage vehicles positioning half within the taper with the rear of the vehicle obstructing the main carriageway and potentially obscuring pedestrians waiting to cross. Estimated cost £5,000.

3.2 For the reasons described above it is recommended that a raised road table alongside the proposals for amended parking restrictions and lay-by would provide a cost effective solution (options 3, 5 and 6 above). The total cost is estimated to be around £30,000. For the reasons described above a school crossing patrol is not recommended. The comparatively larger cost of a zebra crossing facility is also not recommended as this more expensive facility would not be in use for large periods of the day.

School Travel Plan and Road Safety Education

3.3 In addition to the above highway measures it is recommended that the school undertake the following school travel plan and road safety education activities:

- Update of the School Travel Plan
- Teaching Assistant Pedestrian Awareness Skills course
- Park SMART
- Walking Bus

Woking High School

3.4 This report has focussed on the issues in the immediate vicinity of Horsell Junior School on Meadway Drive in response to the public petition. However Meadway Drive together with Morton Road is also a main access route to Woking High School. Traffic speeds were measured halfway along on Meadway Drive and found to be 23 mph. Therefore it is recommended that a second phase of work be completed to consider speeds, casualties and behaviours in the immediate vicinity of Woking High School on Morton Road.

3.5 This would include the feasibility of introducing a 20 mph scheme throughout the length of Meadway Drive and Morton Road, encompassing the adjoining side roads. If speeds are found to be similarly low on Morton Road, then such a scheme may be possible using signs without the need for additional traffic calming. The aim would be to encourage more walking, scooting and cycling on the main approaches to both Horsell Junior School and Woking High School.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

4.1 A meeting was held with the Divisional Member Councillor Colin Kemp to understand the perceived problems on 15 April 2014. Site visits were subsequently undertaken on the 8 May 2014 with police colleagues, local highway engineers, road safety team and sustainable travel team.

4.2 The Divisional Member and School Leadership have subsequently been presented with the proposed options.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 The recommended school travel plan and road safety education activities could be delivered using existing staff resources. The cost to implement the recommended highway improvements (including statutory consultation) is detailed in section 3 above.

5.2 The proposals presented here would need to be prioritised alongside other schemes within Woking using the countywide scheme assessment process to ensure value for money. This will take into account the likely effect of the proposals on congestion, accessibility, safety, economy and future maintenance liabilities.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT:

6.1 There could be a risk that the cost of the proposed highway improvements could increase above the initial estimate provided within this report. This would be mitigated by confirming more detailed cost estimates following detailed design before then deciding to proceed.

There could be a risk that the proposed measures do not achieve the desired outcome. This has been mitigated by ensuring road safety, highway, sustainable travel specialists within the council have been consulted, along with police colleagues. Consultation has also been undertaken with the local councillor. Monitoring will also be undertaken following the implementation of any measures.

7. LOCALISM:

7.1 The proposals presented within this report have been developed following consultation with the local Divisional Member and School Leadership. If implemented they would improve road safety and encourage more walking, cycling and scooting to school and would help reduce car journeys, anti social parking and congestion which have a negative impact on the local community.

8. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

8.1 This report has been created in accordance with the council's Road Safety Outside Schools Policy which has been subject to Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment. Highway improvements are subject to independent road safety audit which take into account the needs of all road users including those with mobility impairment.

9. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	Set out below.
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	Set out below.
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	Set out below.
Human Resource/Training and Development	No significant implications arising from this report.

9.1 Crime and Disorder implications

The proposals would contribute to reduced speeding offences. They would also help to reduce anti-social parking and possible confrontations between parents and residents.

9.2 Sustainability implications

The proposals would reduce road danger and encourage more sustainable modes of travel. This would result in fewer carbon emissions and less air pollution.

9.3 Public Health implications

The proposals would encourage active travel which improves the health of the participants.

10. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

10.1 Concern has been expressed over the safety of children arriving and leaving Horsell Junior School and the associated congestion caused by school journey traffic. Investigation has been undertaken in accordance with the county council's Road Safety Outside Schools policy. This has included assessment of the history of road collisions, traffic speeds, site observations and assessment of the school travel plan and road safety education activities delivered by the school.

10.2 Consequently it is recommended that Horsell Junior School will be asked to undertake additional school travel plan and road safety education activities. This will include take up of Teaching Assistant Pedestrian Awareness Skills courses, Park SMART and the setting up of a walking bus. The school will be supported in these activities by the county council's Sustainable Travel Team.

10.3 It is also recommended that design work for highway measures described within this report will be included within the local committee's forward programme of highway improvements. The committee will then be able to decide whether to allocate funding to implement the preferred scheme in future years. It may be possible that other funding sources may become available too (for example developer contributions).

10.4 These highway measures would help to reduce traffic speeds and reduce antisocial parking and so would improve the road environment to encourage more walking, scooting and cycling to school. A successful increase in these modes would contribute to fewer car journeys and less motor vehicle congestion. The recommended school travel plan and road safety education improvements would also help to improve road safety and reduce reliance on the car for the school journey.

11. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

11.1 The Sustainable Travel Team will work with the school to introduce the recommended additional school travel plan and road safety education activities.

11.2 If the Joint Committee decide to proceed, then the Area Highways Team will incorporate the design of the highways measures described within this report within the Joint Committee forward programme of highway improvements.

Contact Officer:

Rebecca Harrison — Sustainability Community Engagement Team Leader
03456 009009

Duncan Knox — Road Safety Team Leader
0208 541 7443

Consulted:
Divisional Member, Surrey Police, School Governor

Borough Portfolio Holder
n/a

County Council Cabinet Member
Mr John Furey

Annexes:
Annex A: Collision plot
Annex B: Pupil postcode plot

Sources/background papers:
- Surrey County Council's policy Road Safety Outside Schools
