

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**LOCAL COMMITTEE (ELMBRIDGE)**

DATE: 23rd FEBRUARY 2015
LEAD OFFICER: NICK HEALEY, AREA TEAM MANAGER



SUBJECT: Esher Road, East Molesey

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

This report updates Members following a petition by Ms Leona Farquharon to the September 2014 meeting of the Local Committee concerning pedestrian crossing safety, and speed of traffic along Esher Road, East Molesey, in particular between the two bridges. A report was presented to the December 2014 Local Committee meeting where it was resolved to defer the decision for further officer meetings.

This report now updates Members to enable a more informed decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS:**The Local Committee (Elmbridge) is asked to:**

- (i) To await the construction of the new bridge over the River Mole which will be designed to accommodate a wider carriageway and pedestrian footways on either side of the carriageway, subject to successful land purchase negotiations, thus negating the need for pedestrians to cross the road.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The new bridge will be designed to provide a new footway on the west side, subject to successful land purchase negotiations, hence removing the need for pedestrians to cross the road between the two bridges.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

1.1 A petition was submitted to the September 2014 meeting of the Local Committee, signed by 58 residents, concerning pedestrian safety when crossing, and speed of traffic along Esher Road, East Molesey, in particular between the two bridges. Ms Leona Farquharon spoke in support of the petition

1.2 The narrow bridge over the River Mole effectively determines the extent of the available public highway. It only carries a narrow footway on the east side and hence pedestrians are required to use the pedestrian refuge islands either side of the bridges to cross the carriageway.

- 1.3 A report was presented to the 8th December 2014 local Committee meeting suggesting that the available options were essentially to carry out a feasibility study or await the construction of the new bridge.
- 1.4 Stuart Selleck, the divisional Member, said he was reluctant to ask the Local Committee to spend money on a feasibility study only to find out that the options resulting from it were too expensive to carry out. He proposed that the decision be deferred until he had met with officers in January 2015 to find out more detail.
- 1.5 Cllr Steve Bax supported Stuart Selleck, but added that he thought a new bridge could increase traffic speeds.
- 1.6 SCC Councillor Christian Mahne said any solution must include a pavement on the west side, which would eradicate many problems.
- 1.7 SCC Councillor Ernest Mallett said his concerns were more with the fact that the bridge cannot accommodate both a car and a lorry.
- 1.8 The Local Committee resolved to agree to defer the decision until the next meeting of the SCC Local Committee (Elmbridge) on 23rd February 2015, by which time, Members would be more informed on details of the options to ensure the most appropriate and well informed decision is made.

2. ANALYSIS:

- 2.1 In early 2000 a casualty reduction scheme was introduced along Ember Lane and Esher Road, to directly impact the high numbers of road casualties, reduce vehicle speeds, prevent overtaking and provide additional safer pedestrian crossing points.
- 2.2 Between the Ember bridge and Embercourt Road, four pedestrian refuge islands were constructed, together with central hatching along the entire section. The first pedestrian refuge island was located just south of Embercourt Road, the second by number 181, a third just south of Ember Farm Way, and the fourth south of Riverside Avenue.
- 2.3 Centre hatching was also applied to the entire length to prevent overtaking, provide benefit for turning vehicles into side roads, and create a sterile area for pedestrians wishing to cross.
- 2.4 Crossing points were not introduced between the 2 river bridges due to the site limitations and existing layout of the bridges over both the Mole and Ember rivers. However SLOW road markings on red patches were installed to remind drivers, either side of the Ember bridge. A junction ahead warning sign was also installed on the southern approach to Aldersgrove, coincident with the SLOW marking to additionally warn drivers of the junction.
- 2.5 Due to the discontinuity of pedestrian footway on the west side near Summer Road due wholly to the narrow bridge over the River Mole, a further scheme was also carried out to benefit pedestrians directly. This included improvements to the footway near the roundabout with Walton Road, together with road widening, and the introduction of a pedestrian refuge island. This also included landscaping of the site of the former residential

dwelling, where the pumping station now resides, on the western corner opposite the old Police Station.

- 2.6 Pedestrians can hence cross both Embercourt Road and Esher Road but near to Riverside Avenue are encouraged to cross to the eastern footway, which will facilitate easier access to Walton Road, due to the environmental limitations. It is appreciated however that residents of Aldersgrove will be placed at a disbenefit, as they would need to walk to the first island south of Riverside Avenue to be able to use the crossing points provided.
- 2.7 The 3 year personal injury collision data has been investigated for this area of Esher Road between the period 01/01/2011 to 31/08/2014 and although there have been 5 slight personal injury collisions, all the accidents appear to be wholly random.
- 2.8 There have been no personal injury accidents involving pedestrians recorded during this time frame.
- 2.9 An initial investigation has shown that the bridge construction is very shallow and cannot accommodate traffic signal poles or any other highway furniture. It is for this reason that street lighting poles are positioned either side of the bridge and not on it as they would affect the structural integrity of the structure.
- 2.10 Unfortunately this would preclude the construction of either a Pelican crossing or a pedestrian refuge island on the structure.

3. OPTIONS:

- 3.1 A principal inspection has been carried out of the bridge over the River Mole, which has shown that the structure is nearing the end of its serviceable life. It is 120 years old and suffering heavy corrosion. A further assessment is to be carried out later this financial year. Pending the outcome of the assessment, it is anticipated that funding will be secured for a replacement bridge within the next few years.
- 3.2 The current bridge is narrow and there is scope to improve the width and alignment and introduce a wider bridge with suitable footways on both sides subject to the availability of the required land and the necessary funding.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 Public consultation would be required in the development of any scheme.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The cost of a replacement bridge over the River Mole is unknown at this stage.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 It is an objective of Surrey Highways to treat all users of the public highway equally and with understanding.

7. LOCALISM:

7.1 The solutions identified are in response to perceived concerns raised by the local community.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

8.1 A well-managed highway network can contribute to reduction in crime and disorder as well as improve people's perception of crime.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

9.1 It is important to note that the data confirms that there have been no cases of recorded personal injury accidents involving pedestrians.

9.2 A new bridge over the River Mole will provide the necessary continuous footway for pedestrians, subject to successful land purchase negotiations, and remove the necessity to cross between the two bridges.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

10.1 The feasibility study is currently taking place. The structures team will be carrying out the design process in 2015-16 and it will be at that point that more information will be available on the design, costs, and timescales, of this major civil engineering project. If funding is available, construction is anticipated between 2017 and 2019.

- **Contact Officer:** Nick Healey, Area Team Manager (NE)
- **Consulted:** None.
- **Annexes:** None
- **Sources/background papers:** None.