

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

DATE: 14th SEPTEMBER 2015
LEAD OFFICER: NICK HEALEY, AREA TEAM MANAGER



SUBJECT: HURST ROAD – PETITION RESPONSE

<p><u>SUMMARY OF ISSUE:</u></p> <p>This report updates members following a petition by Mr Ralph to the June 2015 meeting of the Local Committee requesting that highway budgets should be allocated to fund a zebra or pelican crossing on the A3050 Hurst Road, West Molesey, outside the new Hurst Park Primary School.</p>
<p><u>RECOMMENDATIONS:</u></p> <p>The Local Committee (Elmbridge) is asked to:</p> <p>(i) resolve to fund or not to fund a feasibility study for a zebra or pelican crossing on the A3050 Hurst Road, West Molesey, outside the new Hurst Park Primary School, in view of an anticipated reduction in the number of pedestrians needing to cross the road at this location.</p>
<p><u>REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:</u></p> <p>The petitioners concerns have been prompted by the development of the new Hurst Park Primary School. Planning permission has been granted and this decision cannot be overturned by this committee. As a result of this development it is expected that fewer pedestrians will need to cross the road at this location.</p>

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 A Petition was submitted to the June 2015 meeting of the Local Committee, signed by 152 residents, requesting a pedestrian crossing on the A3050 Hurst Road, outside the new Hurst Park Primary School. Mr Matt Ralph spoke to the petition.
- 1.2 Mr Matt Ralph spoke for 3 minutes explaining that he was speaking on behalf of over 150 Molesey residents who were overwhelmed by the lack of concern shown by key decision makers and the Highway Planners recommendations not to provide a safe crossing on Hurst Rd for the children of the new Hurst Park Primary School.
- 1.3 He added that the new 2 form entry school and nursery is to be built with the main pedestrian access on the busy Hurst Road. In addition they are aware that a crossing has been installed at Grovelands Primary School 2 miles away.

2. ANALYSIS:

- 2.1 A planning application was submitted in January 2014 for a new 420 place primary school and 30 place nursery to replace the existing Hurst Park School on land at the former John Nightingale School site.
- 2.2 The planning application was reported to the Planning and Regulatory Committee on 16 July 2014 and planning permission was granted, subject to conditions. A number of these conditions required further information to be submitted.
- 2.3 A further report was taken to the Planning and Regulatory Committee on 10 June 2015. This included details of the parents' pick up and drop off facility, additional staff parking and pedestrian access from the public footpath to the east of the site. These were all permitted.
- 2.4 Details are still awaited on Condition 5 of the main planning permission which states 'The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until a scheme for speed management measures, parking restrictions and pedestrian improvements on Hurst Road and at the Hurst Road/Freeman Drive junction has been submitted to the County Planning Authority for approval in writing, and thereafter implemented in full accordance with the approved details.'
- 2.5 The applicant proposed the following measures to improve facilities for pedestrians and also to reduce traffic speeds in the vicinity of the new school as part of the original application:
- Road safety measures on Hurst Road with the aim of reducing traffic speeds including school warning signs, 'SLOW' markings on the carriageway, a vehicle activated sign, school keep clear zigzag markings and double yellow lines.
 - 2m Footway widening on Hurst Road between the site access and Boleyn Way.
 - Improvements at the junction of Hurst Road and Freeman Drive, specifically for pedestrians (tactile paving, traffic islands on Hurst Road, upgrading the existing pedestrian refuge on Freeman Drive).
- 2.6 In addition, the County Highway Authority has requested that the applicant considers the following amendments to the Hurst Road safety measures:
- Conversion of one or both of the proposed traffic islands to pedestrian refuge islands;
 - Inclusion of Wig Wags on both approaches below the School signs to create a School Zone;
 - The proposed VAS is dual aspect so that during school times it displayed the School warning triangle and outside these times the speed limit of 30;
 - To investigate the scope for an additional pedestrian refuge island just west of Berkeley Drive, near the VAS and carriageway SLOW

marking, to create a School Zone and assist children and parents crossing.

2.7 It is anticipated that the awaited details pursuant application for Condition 5 will address these matters.

3. OPTIONS:

- 3.1 Pre-planning discussions were held between Transport Development Planning officers and the consultants acting for SCC Estates.
- 3.2 At the first 'scoping' meeting the consultants were asked to consider the need for a crossing on Hurst Road. This was on the basis that moving the school from one side of Hurst Road to the other would increase the number of children needing to cross the road.
- 3.3 The analysis undertaken demonstrated that the converse was actually the case. On the basis of pupils' home postcodes, they concluded that the number of existing children at the school required to cross Hurst Road would actually reduce from around 114 to around 48.
- 3.4 Future patterns may change but as the residential area to the south of Hurst Road is significantly larger than that to the north, which is constrained by the river Thames, it is highly likely that a greater proportion of children will continue to come from the south of Hurst Road.
- 3.5 In view of the anticipated 48 pupils needing to cross from the north side of Hurst Road to the new school (as compared with the 141 pupils who currently live south of that road and cross it to reach the existing school), Planning Officers consider that a pedestrian crossing of Hurst Road is not justified and that having two or three pedestrian refuge islands on Hurst Road would be sufficient. Planning Officers also consider that these refuge islands are adequate to provide safe crossing for pupils and their parents.
- 3.6 This in no way diminishes the need for children to be able to cross the road safely but on the basis that there would be a reduction in the number of children needing to cross the road, there was no basis in planning terms to require the provision of a controlled crossing on Hurst Road as part of the development.
- 3.7 This was corroborated by the analysis of the personal injury accident records which showed that, despite a large number of recorded personal injury accidents on Hurst Road, none of those between the two school sites involved pedestrians.
- 3.8 A pedestrian audit was undertaken as part of the Transport Assessment and a number of improvements were identified, including widening the footway in places. These are anticipated in the scheme that is due to be submitted to satisfy Condition 5.
- 3.9 The Transport Assessment also identified that there are a number of uncontrolled traffic island crossing points on Hurst Road. These were considered to be adequate in the context of a reduced number of children needing to cross the road.

3.10 Traffic speeds on Hurst Road currently exceed the speed limit with average speeds adjacent to the new school site of around 36 mph and the 85%ile speed around 39 mph. There are a number of measures proposed to address this including a VAS and 'slow' carriageway markings. A reduction in traffic speeds will benefit pedestrians crossing the road via one of the uncontrolled traffic islands.

3.11 Planning conditions are used to make development acceptable. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that 'Planning conditions should only be imposed where they are:

1. Necessary
2. Relevant to planning and
3. To the development to be permitted
4. Enforceable
5. Precise and
6. Reasonable in all other respects

3.12 All conditions need to meet these six tests. To require the provision of a controlled pedestrian crossing when the number of children needing to cross Hurst Road is reducing would not meet the reasonableness test.

3.13 The Elmbridge Local Committee has limited funds which have again been reduced for this financial year. Members are conscious of the burden that school expansions have been having on their limited funding over recent years, and are hence expecting schools to fund any highway infrastructure required as part of their development plan, to ensure that this does not place unnecessary expectation on the highways allocation.

3.14 The cost of introducing a Zebra or pelican crossing is likely to be more than the Divisional Member for West Molesey has available to allocate in any financial year for the foreseeable future.

3.15 School crossing patrols are possibly the best solution as they can deal with the crossing problems during the short busy periods of the school day.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

4.1 Public consultation is automatically carried out and forms part of the planning process, and is carried out for all planning applications. Any comments or objection to the applications are taken into account ahead of any decision being made.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 The cost of introducing a zebra crossing is likely to be £50,000 whilst a Puffin could be as much as £100,000. A suitable location would need to be found for either solution.

5.2 The cost of introducing a pedestrian refuge island is likely to be in the region of £25,000.

5.3 A detailed feasibility study is likely to cost in the region of £5000 to determine if a solution exists, the most appropriate scheme, and the likely cost.

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 The school expansion project by itself does not justify the introduction of a new controlled pedestrian crossing.

9.2 Members need to determine whether the funding of a new pedestrian crossing to cater for the anticipated reduced number of pedestrians is a high priority at the present time.

9.3 If it is then it is important to note that as the area varies in nature, namely road width, junctions, driveway accesses, etc, that a feasibility study may be required to consider all these aspects and make suitable recommendations, to ensure all users are accommodated and that a crossing can be introduced.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

10.1 If members determine that this is a priority scheme which they wish to pursue, then funding for a detailed feasibility study would need to be allocated from next year's allocation.

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