

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**LOCAL COMMITTEE (MOLE VALLEY)**



**DATE: 02 DECEMBER 2015**  
**LEAD OFFICER: SARAH SMITH, COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AND COMMITTEE OFFICER**  
**SUBJECT: WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**  
**DIVISION: ALL**

**Questions received from Mr Jim Howley**

1.The appalling traffic delays on the A25, on both East & West of Dorking that have resulted from the ill conceived traffic lights arrangements, as above MUST be addressed. We have now had 10 months of purgatory & trade in the town must be suffering also as a result of this bureaucratically introduced hell. The previous Zebra pedestrian crossing was both adequate & safe. Vehicles emerging from Waitrose’s car park in Junction Rd. do not need a traffic light at all, but should take their chance when a gap permits but there should be another Zebra pedestrian crossing across Junction road from Waitrose entrance to Cummings side.

**Response from SCC Highways:**

A question was asked by the divisional Member for Dorking South and the Holmwoods at the September Mole Valley Local Committee meeting regarding the operation of the traffic signals in Dorking and the current levels of congestion. A meeting has subsequently been held to discuss the issue and forms the subject of a report on the agenda of this meeting.

The introduction of traffic signals at the South Street/Junction Road junction was part of the highway works associated with the planning permission for the new Waitrose store. The view of Members at the meeting referred to above was that the signals at the South Street/Junction Road signals were not contributing to the congestion in Dorking. Officers concur with this view and would comment that the signalised crossing facility provides pedestrians with a dedicated phase to cross the road when traffic is stopped.

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**2. Vincent Lane, Dorking**

The arrangements here are not working well, causing extensive holdups again particularly at the Guildford Road end. Any heavy vehicle & buses in either lane prevents the flow of vehicles in the other lane, due to the narrow nature of the road, at that end.

A C.P.O. taking just a few feet from the ends of the gardens at that end would make a world of difference and help to reduce the gridlocking which occurs with the present arrangements.

**Response from SCC Highways:**

As reported in the separate paper on this agenda regarding the traffic signals in Dorking, the operation of all the junction signals in Dorking will be reviewed. The data set used to operate the signals at the Westcott Road/Vincent Lane junction will be assessed and revalidated to see if any changes can be made to improve their operation.

The use of compulsory purchase to acquire land is a lengthy and costly process. Officers would advise that there is no intention to follow this course of action.

**Questions received from Mike Giles (on behalf of the Westhumble Residents' Association)**

In October, a petition presented at County Hall by Westhumble Residents' Association to Councillor Furey, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding, sought provision of funds to overcome the presently intractable problem of Westhumble Bridge.

Could the Mole Valley Highways Officers please advise us on progress since that meeting in the search for options alternate to the obvious solution of replacing supports to the bridge deck with modern materials?

In responding, would they please include the following:

- 1) full details of the plans for camera, or other enforcement, and, most importantly, an assessment of outcomes, including advice from the emergency services as to the impact on attendance times for vehicles unable to cross the bridge.

Westhumble Residents' Association has already advised that there is no room for a turning space below the bridge, so we see no benefit in expending further time and money in considering that option, but there would be need for significantly enhanced signage on the A24, since inadvertent transgressors would not have benefit of avoiding prosecution by turning round before the bridge;

- 2) an update on progress in persuading satnav companies to indicate both the weight restriction on the bridge and the total unsuitability of the lanes to the west of the village for HGV's, in particular, commenting on the incompatibility between the prevention of overweight vehicles using the bridge and the proper discouragement of such vehicles from using the alternative routes;
- 3) reaction to our concern that consideration of approaches other than the proper reconciliation of this matter will consume funds better directed towards the final solution;
- 4) since the local Mole Valley Highways Officers will be familiar with the only alternatives for vehicles over 7.5 tonnes,

justification for the consequential increase in the use of these lanes by

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vehicles totally unsuited to their narrow and twisting nature, with significant hills; routes which are formally acknowledged as "quiet lanes" which HGV's should already avoid, and which they are to be further discouraged from using, as in 2) above;

- 5) we are mindful of the realities of budget constraints, but can only view the proposed enforcement of the weight limit as a temporary and potentially expensive solution. Sooner, rather than later, the deck of the bridge must be replaced and monies devoted to interim schemes will prove to have been expensive and wasteful distractions. The argument that it is inappropriate to use public funds for structural alteration of a third party asset is unconvincing in this case, since the sole outcome will be the provision of a highway suited to modern requirements, where no other alternative exists, which is the council's responsibility ~ no benefit will accrue to the owners of the bridge.

*Please assure us that at the earliest opportunity the Westhumble Bridge will be given due consideration for upgrade and that we will not have further to take up the valuable time of Councillors and Officials in pressing an irrefutable case.*

**Response from SCC Highways:**

The Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Flooding considered the West Humble Residents Association petition for funding of £750,000, to strengthen the Network Rail owned West Humble Railway Bridge, on 9th October, and approved the response attached.

The Local Committee has very limited funding, under increasing pressures, and there is not the level of funding available to fund works of this scale, and on a third party asset. There is also very limited CIL and other developer funding available, and this is generally only available to fund specific infrastructure measures to mitigate for the development. However, the Local Committee will discuss this issue at the informal Local Committee Meeting in February 2016.

The priority of strengthening of this Network Rail bridge is low as the bridge is not on a strategic route and is not a link road to villages, towns, areas of interest/economic activity and is therefore unlikely to be a priority for other funding sources such as bids to the Local Enterprise Partnership.

Although the decision is disappointing to you, this Network Rail bridge will continue to be monitored through safety inspections.

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**Question received from Roger Troughton (on behalf of the Mole Valley Cycling Forum)**

Earlier this year Surrey Highways refreshed the white-lining on the A24 and A25 roads. Could they confirm when they are going to complete the refresh of the white-lining and symbols on the cycle routes alongside these roads?

Only a few were refreshed at the time – eg. at the end of Ashcombe Road (which weren't that old anyway). To assist Surrey Highways, back in May I provided them with a pilot survey which I carried out on behalf of Mole Valley Cycling Forum and which identified many of these issues in the Dorking area. In my most recent correspondence with Peter Shimadry back in September, he was unable to provide any information as to when this refresh would be carried out.

Nevertheless, recently it was possible for a brand new white line and symbol to be painted on the pavement alongside the A24 between Deepdene Station and Deepdene roundabout (effectively creating a segregated route) whilst many of the other cycle symbols in the area are now worn beyond recognition.

### **Response from SCC Highways:**

Refreshing road markings on the main road network, defined as Surrey Priority Network (SPN) 1, 2 and 3 roads, is carried out Countywide on a three year rolling programme. Mole Valley was one of four Districts/Boroughs where the SPN 1, 2 and 3 network road markings were refreshed in 2015/16. As part of this refresh, the cycle markings on the path alongside the carriageway should have been refreshed.

Officers have raised the omission to refresh the road markings on the cycle route alongside the A24 and A25 with the contractor. The contractor is investigating this issue and it is hoped that a verbal update can be provided at the meeting. Officers would be pleased to continue to work with the Mole Valley Cycle Forum to ensure that the road markings identified as being on the SPN 1, 2 and 3 network are refreshed as part of this year's programme.

It should be noted that refreshing road markings is a revenue function whereas the new road markings provided on the footway alongside the A24 between Deepdene Station and Deepdene roundabout were funded from a separate capital budget.