

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**LOCAL COMMITTEE (SURREY HEATH)****DATE: 10 MARCH 2016****LEAD OFFICER: ANDREW MILNE****SUBJECT: PETITION RESPONSE – Install a Pelican Crossing on Portsmouth Road, Frimley****DIVISION: HEATHERSIDE AND PARKSIDE****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

The Local Committee received a petition at its meeting on the 10 December 2015 signed by 242 local residents requesting the installation of a Pelican Crossing on Portsmouth Road, Frimley by the entrance to The Grove County Primary School.

The petition stated that “Due to the ever increasing volume & speed (cars are not adhering to the 30mph speed limit before or after the 40mph limit) of traffic on the Portsmouth Road it has become harder and more dangerous for people to cross over, especially with young children attending the school. Older children leaving for secondary school are having to leave earlier to allow for crossing as it can take a while for a safe gap in traffic flow. However it is still safer to cross by the school gate as we only have two lanes of cars to battle as opposed to 5 lanes (2 lanes coming off and 3 lanes joining) up by the roundabout.”

RECOMMENDATIONS:**The Local Committee (Surrey Heath) is asked to agree that:**

- (i) a pedestrian survey is undertaken to assess how many pedestrians cross Portsmouth Road throughout the day at the location referred to in the petition.
- (ii) the County Council supports the school in trying to re-establish a School Crossing Patrol at the existing uncontrolled pedestrian crossing near the school gate on Portsmouth Road.
- (iii) if the school is unable to recruit a new School Crossing Patrol Officer and the pedestrian survey indicates that pedestrians cross at the location throughout the day, a proposal to introduce a signalised pedestrian crossing is added to the list of schemes to be assessed for inclusion in the Local Committee’s programme of works for 2017/18.
- (iv) the section of Portsmouth Road between its junction with Chobham Road and the start of the 40mph speed limit is assessed for inclusion in the Surrey Heath Speed Management Plan.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

A School Crossing Patrol Officer previously helped pedestrians cross the A325 Portsmouth Road near the gate to the Grove County Primary School at the start and end of the school day. However, there is no School Crossing Patrol operating at present and the school are trying to recruit a new Officer.

If the School Crossing Patrol can be reinstated then this would provide an appropriate way of assisting pedestrians to cross safely at the times of the day when there is the greatest demand to cross Portsmouth Road.

Without a School Crossing Patrol to help there can be times when it can be difficult to cross the road due to the volume and speed of traffic. If a School Crossing Patrol Officer cannot be recruited then, subject to there being demand for pedestrians to cross throughout the day, a signalised crossing could potentially be introduced as an alternative.

However, such a proposal would be costly and the Local Committee would not be able to consider funding a signalised crossing until the 2017/18 financial year since it has already fully committed its 2016/17 capital allocation to an agreed programme of works.

A speed survey undertaken over 7 days recorded an average speed slightly higher than would be desired for a 30mph speed limit (although speeds were found to be lower at the times when the greatest numbers of pedestrians cross the road). As such, it is recommended that the location is assessed for inclusion in the Surrey Heath Speed Management Plan.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 The A325 Portsmouth Road is a busy A-class road that carries a significant volume of traffic.
- 1.2 The section of Portsmouth Road identified by the petitioners is located next to The Grove County Primary School, between the junctions with Chobham Road (B311) and Bayfield Avenue. A footway runs along the northwest side of the carriageway between the two junctions. The footpath on the southeast side runs from the junction with Chobham Road for approximately 110m away from the junction. A system of street lighting defines the road as urban and subject to a 30mph speed limit.
- 1.3 There are currently two formal uncontrolled crossing points for pedestrians along this section of Portsmouth Road. One crossing is located next to the rear entrance to The Grove County Primary School at the end of the footpath on the southeast side. A School Crossing Patrol previously helped pupils and other pedestrians cross the road at this location during peak times. However, there is not one operating at the moment but the school are attempting to recruit a new Officer.
- 1.4 The second uncontrolled crossing is at the junction with Chobham Road and pedestrians cross the road in two stages using a traffic island to wait in the centre of the road. This means they only need to consider traffic from one direction when crossing each carriageway. This crossing is on the desire line for pedestrians wanting to cross when using the footpath between Denton Way and Portsmouth Road.
- 1.5 There are two signs that warn northbound drivers to expect children in the road ahead as they approach the pedestrian crossing points. In addition there are flashing wig-wags lights which operate at the start and end of the school day. There is also a warning sign, "SLOW" marking on the road and flashing wig-wag lights for southbound traffic. All the warning signs are on yellow backing boards to make them as conspicuous as possible to drivers.
- 1.6 Other features in the area include a bus stop for southbound buses, verge marker posts and pedestrian guard railings. In addition, waiting restrictions (double yellow lines) make parking on the road illegal at any time.
- 1.7 Although there are other controlled crossings on Portsmouth Road, they are a significant distance from the school.
- 1.8 The Grove County Primary School does not currently have a school travel plan. (A school travel plan is a strategy which aims to encourage parents and children to use alternatives to cars when travelling to and from school).

2. ANALYSIS:

- 2.1 The uncontrolled pedestrian crossing previously used by the School Crossing Patrol has dropped kerbs on either side of the road. The carriageway is approximately 7.2m wide at the crossing point.
- 2.2 Visibility at this crossing is good in both directions and gives pedestrians the opportunity to assess vehicle speeds and determine when it is safe to cross.

2.3 The uncontrolled crossing closest to the roundabout requires pedestrians to cross two separate carriageways, approximately 6.2m and 6.7m in width. Visibility at the crossing is predominantly very good and, although pedestrians are required to cross a number of lanes, they only have to assess traffic from one direction as they cross each carriageway.

2.4 Following receipt of the petition, a traffic survey was undertaken in January 2016 to determine vehicle speeds over a 7 day period (see image below).



2.5 The table below shows the average vehicle speeds recorded in either direction over the full week, and between 0800 and 0900 (AM) and between 1500 and 1600 (PM) when demand for pedestrians to cross is generally highest.

Direction	Week Average (mph)	School day AM Average (mph)	School day PM Average (mph)
Northbound	34.7	32.7	32.8
Southbound	32.4	18.5	25.0

2.6 The data collected shows that congestion heading southbound (i.e. towards the roundabout) significantly reduced the average speed during the peak hours. The average speed of northbound traffic is also lower at peak times, although not to the same extent.

2.7 Collision data indicates there were 4 personal injury collisions over the 3 year period between December 2012 and November 2015 (latest available data) between the roundabout and the southern junction of Bayfield Avenue. All the collisions resulted in slight injuries and 3 involved injuries to pedestrians.

2.8 One of the pedestrians injured was a 13 year old child. A further pedestrian was injured at 4pm but no details of their age are available. The third

pedestrian was an adult injured in the evening (and non-highway related factors may have contributed to the accident occurring).

- 2.9 It cannot be determined whether the accidents would have been avoided had a signalised crossing been present at that time.
- 2.10 Pedestrian surveys would need to be undertaken to determine the level of demand to cross at the location at different times of the day. However, whilst a significant number of pedestrians cross at the start and end of the school day it is likely that much fewer pedestrians cross at other times.

3. OPTIONS:

School Crossing Patrol

- 3.1 A School Crossing Patrol provides a crossing facility at the times when most pedestrians want to cross at the location. Given the nature of the road and the pattern of demand for pedestrians to cross, it is therefore an appropriate and cost effective option.

Signalised Pedestrian Crossing

- 3.2 A signalised pedestrian crossing is the only type of controlled crossing that would be appropriate at the location (a zebra crossing would not be suitable due to the approach speeds).
- 3.3 A signalised crossing would have the advantage of being available at all times of the day. However, they are costly to install (typically approximately £100,000 but often more). In addition, there are safety concerns about installing signal controlled crossings at locations where they would not be used regularly or are used mainly only at certain times of the day. This is because drivers who regularly use the route can become accustomed to not stopping at the crossing. As a result, they may begin to ignore its existence. This can potentially have consequences for the safety of both pedestrians and motorists.
- 3.4 If further consideration were to be given to installing a signalised pedestrian crossing then a pedestrian survey would initially need to be undertaken to determine whether the crossing would get used throughout the day.

Speed Management Plan

- 3.5 Surrey County Council and Surrey Police have a partnership called Drive SMART which aims to tackle concerns about speeding and anti-social driving. As part of the initiative local Speed Management Plans have been developed for each District and Borough in order to identify the sites with speeding problems.
- 3.6 The Country Council and Surrey Police jointly consider appropriate options to reduce vehicle speeds at locations included on the Speed Management Plans.
- 3.7 Further to the results of the speed survey, the section of Portsmouth Road between Chobham Road and the start of the 40mph speed limit could be assessed for inclusion in the Surrey Heath Speed Management Plan.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

4.1 Surrey Police has confirmed it has no objection to the introduction of a signal controlled pedestrian crossing subject to a pedestrian survey showing it would also be used outside of the peak hours.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The cost of installing a signalised pedestrian crossing would be approximately £100,000. However, there are a number of factors (that would not be identified until detailed design work has been undertaken) that could result in increased costs.
- 5.2 Funding would not be required from Local Committee budgets for a school crossing patrol. However, re-instating a school crossing patrol is reliant on the school being able to recruit a suitable person for the role.
- 5.3 Surrey Heath Local Committee has committed its capital allocation for the forthcoming 2016/17 financial year to an agreed programme of works. As such, it would have to consider funding any proposed measures at the location from its 2017/18 capital allocation unless an alternative source of funding can be identified.

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 Through the views and needs expressed by local communities, and accommodating where possible the involvement of local communities in looking after the public highway, localism is routinely considered as part of the consultation and bidding processes for highway-related works.
- 7.2 This report responds to concerns raised by members of the local community in Frimley.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report
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

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 9.1 An uncontrolled pedestrian crossing has been provided on the A325 Road next to the rear gate to The Grove County Primary School. A School Crossing Patrol previously helped parents and children cross at this location. However, the school crossing patrol has not operated since the end of the last school year.
- 9.2 An additional crossing is located approximately 80m south of the school gate. This crossing uses a traffic island at the junction with Chobham Road to enable pedestrians to cross each carriageway separately.
- 9.3 Traffic survey data shows that the overall average vehicle speed is higher than would ideally be desired for a 30mph road (but still lower than many other 30mph roads). As such, it is proposed that the location is assessed for inclusion in the Surrey Heath Speed Management Plan. However, it should be noted that speeds are generally lower than the overall average at times when most pupils and parents cross the road.
- 9.4 Accident data for the road indicates that there have been 3 slight injuries to pedestrians between the junctions with Chobham Road and Bayfield Avenue (southern junction) over a 3 year period. One accident involved an injury to a child.
- 9.5 A school crossing patrol would help provide a safe crossing facility at the times when most children and parents wish to cross the road. This would therefore be an appropriate and cost effective solution. As such, it is proposed that the County Council supports the school in trying to re-instate a School Crossing Patrol at the location. However, if this cannot be done then it is recommended that a proposal to introduce a signalised crossing is included in the list of scheme to be assessed for inclusion in the Local Committee's 2017/18 programme of works.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 The section of Portsmouth Road between its junction with Chobham Road and the start of the 40mph speed limit will be assessed for inclusion in the Surrey Heath Speed Management Plan.
- 10.2 A pedestrian survey will be undertaken to assess how many pedestrian cross at the location throughout the day.
- 10.3 SCC will support the school in trying to re-instate a school crossing patrol.
- 10.4 If a School Crossing Patrol Officer cannot be recruited and pedestrians are found to cross at the location throughout the day, a proposal to introduce a signalised crossing will be added to the list of schemes to be assessed for inclusion in the Local Committee's 2017/18 programme of works.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

Surrey Police

Annexes:

None

Sources/background papers:

None
