

PETITION 3

ITEM 7

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

LOCAL COMMITTEE (ELMBRIDGE)



SURREY

DATE: 19TH DECEMBER 2016

LEAD OFFICER: NICK HEALEY, AREA TEAM MANAGER (NE)

SUBJECT: PETITION RESPONSE – HEATHSIDE JUNCTION

DIVISION: HINCHLEY WOOD, CLAYGATE & OXSHOTT

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

Concerns have been raised about safety at the junction of Heathside and the A309 Kingston Bypass.

A petition has been received calling for highways measures to be installed, including realigning the kerb and extending the existing island.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that a scheme to alter the road layout at Heathside not be progressed at this time.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

With consideration of the issues at the location, and of current prioritisation of potential schemes and available funding.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 Concerns have been raised about safety at the junction of Heathside and the A309 Kingston Bypass.
- 1.2 The concerns are with regard to over-running of the existing kerbs by vehicles near to the junction, and of drivers using the mouth of the junction to turn from eastbound to westbound on the A309 Kingston Bypass.
- 1.3 A petition has been received, with 65 signatories, calling for highways measures to be installed, including realigning the kerb and extending the existing island. The petition reads as follows:

*To the members of the Elmbridge/SCC Committee,
ENTRANCE TO HEATHSIDE, HINCHLEY WOOD*

The attached petition with 65 signatures expresses the rising concerns of local residents that the entrance to Heathside is an increasing danger to everyone entering and leaving our estate of 200 homes.

Heathside is unique in the area in being the ONLY way in and out of a residential estate for wheeled vehicles, including cycles, wheelchairs and baby carriages. (A pedestrian cut-through to the shops requires a climb over steps at the station.) Of the 500 or so residents of Heathside, Heathside Close, Harefield and Medina about 200 have use of some 400 vehicles. These are augmented by scores of service and delivery vehicles. Our main concerns are:

PETITION 3

ITEM 7

1/That the 90-degree left turn on entering Heathside — designed in the 1930s— is no longer fit for purpose as it is too tight and blind for the volume and size of today's vehicles. So many larger vehicles are forced to go over the kerbstones that they have to be replaced every two or three years.

We request that this kerb be pulled back closer to the path by about one metre, enabling better manoeuvrability.

2/MORE IMPORTANTLY, The triangular traffic island at the mouth of the entrance is improperly and increasingly being used as a roundabout by vehicles wanting to turn back onto the A309 — primarily to turn left on Uttleworth Road just past the fire station. This is a short cut to the back of Esher and to Claygate, particularly at morning and evening rush hours when traffic is heavy into Esher along Portsmouth Road and around the Scilly Isles.

It is not illegal, but it is clearly a rising danger to drivers simply wanting to enter and exit Heathside, and to cyclists and pedestrians who do not expect such movements. It should be noted that there is already a proposal, listed as ME— 247693 by Surrey Highways, to rebuild the footpath there as a cycle/footpath to link the Hinchley Wood lights with cycle lanes already established by 5CC along Portsmouth Rd and Hampton Court Rd. Should this proceed, U-turning traffic at Heathside will cause even more danger to cyclists and pedestrians unless something is done.

An independent, 12-hour video analysis of the entrance by Traffic Watch (UK), taken on Tuesday, 22 Nov1 2016, showed that nearly 300 vehicles did U-turns around the bollards at the Heathside entrance, including 11 which did it illegally on the dual carriageway itself, between 7.30am and 7.30pm. This is just ONE DAY.

A more detailed analysis by myself unveiled a further 11 U-turning vehicles, bringing the total to 296. A further 388 vehicles exited Heathside and 454 entered during this time, on a fairly light day. U-turners therefore totalled almost one in three of all Heathside traffic.

Extracts of the video showing several hairy incidents are planned to be presented to the committee at its meeting on 19 December. All residents here have had similar experiences. In order to deal with this we propose:

That the triangular traffic island be extended about three metres into Heathside with high-sided concrete to prevent vehicles from turning here.

This would not prevent vehicles from travelling deeper into Heathside and turning into driveways or around the grass triangle at the junction with Medina but, as saving time is apparently of greatest concern to the U-turners, it should be a cheap and simple deterrent. They can always reach Claygate or Esher by turning right into Manor Rd South at the Hinchley Wood traffic lights. Fire and ambulance officers at Esher Fire Station say they would not be concerned if they had to turn at Claygate Lane on the A309 as they would be returning from shouts, not going to them.

2. ANALYSIS:

- 2.1 Works to alter the road layout at the entrance to Heathside are not currently on any programme of works. The Local Committee may choose to allocate funding in a future Financial Year, but is advised to weigh up the relative priority of such a scheme compared to the other demands on the Local Committee's budgets.

PETITION 3

ITEM 7

- 2.2 Surrey Highways, in partnership with the police and travel advisors, identify locations with a poor safety record by analysing collision data. Assessment potentially leads to the development of measures such as physical changes, enforcement, or educational campaigns. Available records show the current layout has been in place for a number of years. Collision data provided by Surrey Police records one incident involving injury has taken place in the last five years, involving a cyclist on the A309 making their way through traffic being hit by a car turning right into Heathside. These records suggest that the current layout has been successful in safety terms. As funding for road safety improvements is prioritised to those locations which are known collision hotspots, specific road safety funding for measures could not be justified when compared with other locations.
- 2.3 It is recognised that the kerbs near the entrance to Heathside are subject to over-running by some vehicles. A scheme to alter the kerb line would require significant funding and likely drainage works as well as kerb works. Any design would need to consider impact on the speeds of vehicles entering Heathside as well as impact on pedestrians who would be closer to the traffic.
- 2.4 The proposed extension of the island at the mouth of the junction may provide the results stated in the petition. However, it may lead to drivers turning in Medina Avenue or in private drives or using vehicle crossovers where the footway is wide. It may also lead to an increase in illegal U-turns on the A309. This potentially creates a greater risk to safety than the current arrangement. Alternative options may include closing the gap in the central reserve on the A309 so that right turns are no longer possible. However, this may be unpopular with residents as it would require a lengthy diversion of approximately 1.5 miles via the Claygate Lane roundabout, plus passing twice through the traffic signals at Manor Road North/South. Any design would need to consider these impacts.
- 2.5 Should the footway on the south side of the A309 be improved and/or converted to a shared-use facility for pedestrians and cyclists the arrangements at the junction could be reviewed. Pavement Horizon is a £20m project to undertake restoration of Surrey's pavements which will be delivered over a five to six year period from 2016 - 2021/22. To date, there has not been any funding allocated to improve the footway at this location.
- 2.6 With consideration of the above, and of current prioritisation of potential schemes and available funding, it is not recommended that a scheme to alter the road layout at Heathside be progressed at this time. In the meantime the County Council will continue to inspect Heathside for safety defects as part of its routine inspection schedule, and would of course respond to any reports of specific safety defects made by residents.
- 2.7 Residents may be interested in the Drive Smart partnership between Surrey Police and Surrey County Council, which has the aims of reducing road casualties, tackling anti-social driving and making the county's roads safer and less stressful for everyone. The below website includes information on enforcement, education and community initiatives.

<http://www.drivesmartsurrey.org.uk/i-am-worried-about-the-safety/>

www.surreycc.gov.uk/elmbridge

PETITION 3**ITEM 7**

- 2.8 Concerns regarding driver behaviour may be raised to Surrey Police's Road Safety and Traffic Management Team, who are responsible for enforcement. You may find the following websites useful

<http://www.surrey.police.uk/contact-us/report-online/report-anti-social-behaviour-and-driving/>

https://my.surrey.police.uk/SPLOnlineReportingWeb/Content/AntiSocialDriving/?category=Anti_social_driving

3. OPTIONS:

- 3.1 Not applicable.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 Not applicable.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 Not applicable.

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 Not applicable.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

- 8.1 None.

9. CONCLUSION:

- 9.1 With consideration of the issues at the location, and of current prioritisation of potential schemes and available funding, it is not recommended that a scheme to alter the road layout at Heathside be progressed at this time.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 Not applicable.

Contact Officer: Nick Healey, Area Team Manager (NE)

Consulted: Not applicable

Annexes: None

Sources/background papers: None.
