

PETITION 4

ITEM 7



SURREY

SCC LOCAL COMMITTEE IN ELMBRIDGE – 19 December 2016

AGENDA ITEM 7

PETITIONS

To receive a petition with 32 signatures from a resident, Debbie Chitty, requesting Surrey County Council to introduce restricted parking in Silverdale Avenue and place it on an equal footing with all the other surrounding local roads.

The petition states:

Introduction

Silverdale Avenue is a residential road in Oxshott. There are no retail or commercial premises in the road, which is approximately 400 meters long and is in fact, a cul de sac. Any visitor to the area would assume that it is a quiet road and a peaceful place to live and bring up a family and this is how it used to be. However, now it is a road that suffers from significant all day (during working hours) on street parking by non residents and at various times during the day, an extremely high volume of traffic that often renders the road impassable. These developments have significantly increased the safety risks faced by the school children and adults who use the road as pedestrians.

This paper reviews how this situation has come about and sets out some measures that should improve the situation and benefit the local community. It also requests that the relevant local authorities review the position and take the necessary steps to effect improvements.

Traffic issues facing Silverdale Avenue

Silverdale Avenue suffers from two main traffic issues at present:-

All day parking

1. There is a significant amount of all day parking by non residents during working hours. This effectively turns the road into a one way street. It also means that people visiting properties in Silverdale Avenue often have great difficulty finding a parking space. Additionally, residents also frequently have significant problems accessing their own properties, particularly at the peak times for school traffic.

School short cut

2. At school drop off and pick up times there is a significant flow of traffic. Although there is an exit point from Broom hall onto the A244, for some reason this is permanently closed. The school vehicles therefore have to turn round and exit Silverdale Avenue at the same time as other school vehicles are trying to enter it. Combined with the all day parking, the road often becomes impassable. Residents setting off to work have extreme difficulty leaving their houses and exiting the road at these times.

The excess volume of traffic and all day parking presents a serious safety hazard, particularly in view of the large number of pedestrians using the road, of which a large number are young children going to school. In addition, the excess volume of

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traffic has already caused significant damage to the road and environmental/health problems are highly likely to have increased.

Because of driver frustration, vehicles often mount the pavements with all the consequent safety risks and damage to property/vehicles that action results in.

It is also highly probable that during the school traffic periods (which can extend up to 60 minutes at both ends of the day), any emergency vehicle would have extreme difficulty gaining speedy and adequate access to properties in the road. This is naturally of great concern to all residents.

These two traffic problems are extremely serious and in the view of the residents of Silverdale Avenue, should not have been allowed to build up over the years. With appropriate action they could have been contained and some urgent action is now required to rectify the problems.

Factors behind the traffic problems in Silverdale Avenue

Silverdale Avenue is approx. 15 minutes walk from Oxshott station and 5 minutes walk from the village shops. It is only about a 2 minutes walk from the Royal Kent School and about 15 minutes walk from the main entrance to Danes Hill School, however there is a pedestrian footpath by the Broom Hall flats that is also used as an access point to Danes Hill School. This is only about a five minute walk from the school's main entrance.

Silverdale Avenue is therefore well situated in relation to a number of the local facilities and amenities but it is a residential road and should not be used as a free car park for commuters, school vehicles, or shop keepers and their staff. However, this is what it is fast becoming.

The main reasons for this are:

1. Parking

All the local surrounding roads have some form of parking restrictions:-

Goldrings Rd from 09.30 to 11.00

Holtwood Rd from 09.30 to 11.00

Sheath Lane from 09.30 to 11.00

Steels Lane no parking

Oakshade Rd from 08.00 to 18.30

High street from 08.00 to 18.30

Crown Estate a private estate with controlled parking

Most of these restrictions have only been introduced fairly recently and the only road close to the station, schools and shops that does not have controlled parking is Silverdale Avenue. The fact that a lot of the cars that previously parked in these other roads now use Silverdale Avenue is hardly surprising. It has effectively been policy driven. Moreover, it is not only private cars that now opt to park in Silverdale Avenue. Commercial vehicles belonging to contractors working on local property developments have increasingly begun to use it. These vehicles, in all probability, have been a significant factor behind the amount of damage to the road that has occurred in recent times.

A further policy action that has probably compounded the parking problem is the decision to introduce parking fees in the Council owned car park in the village. This car park should be for the benefit of Oxshott's retail establishments and pubs and restaurants, but by introducing fees for short stay visits, local trade is either reduced,

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or the vehicle owners opt to park close by free of charge. This inevitably, during working hours, means Silverdale Avenue.

2. School traffic

The parents of the children at the two local schools make significant use of Silverdale Avenue both for parking and, in the case of Danes Hill School, as an access road to the pedestrian entrance in Broom Hall. At school drop off and pick up times the road becomes practically grid locked. Danes Hill School's main entrance is off the A244 and there is a staff entrance off Wrens Lane but about 20 percent of the Danes Hill School vehicles use Silverdale Avenue and Broom Hall. Additionally it has been noted that some Danes Hill School staff regularly use Silverdale Avenue rather than the school's car park to park all day.

Silverdale Avenue was never intended to be a vehicle access point to Danes Hill School. The pedestrian footpath was originally opened up so that the school children could walk to St Andrews church. Not for their parents to stop using the main entrance to the school.

Solution to the Silverdale Avenue's traffic problems

1. Parking

The logical solution to the all day parking problem is to put Silverdale Avenue on an equal footing with other local roads and introduce parking controls. These would need to address the commuter, local shops and school elements. Having a restriction between 08.00-10.00 and from 15.00-17.00 should significantly ameliorate the problem.

Close to Silverdale Avenue there are 3 large parking areas: The Oxshott Village Centre, St Andrews Church and the Council car park in Steels Lane. These could, and in some instances are, being used as drop off points. In the case of Danes Hill School there is also potential for a further drop off point off Blundels Lane. Another action that ought to improve the parking situation is to introduce free parking in the Council car park for short stay visits.

2. School traffic

As indicated the cut through point by Broom Hall was not intended to be a vehicle drop off point and this could easily be closed. This would then require that the parents to use the school's main entrance or a different drop off point. The closest car parks to Dane Hill School, apart from the school's own car parks, are the Council's village one and possibly the Bear pub in the morning. As mentioned other drop off points could also be introduced.

If closing Silverdale Avenue as an access point increased traffic flows on the A244, measures could be introduced to mitigate this, for example mini roundabouts or restricted turning.

Conclusion

The management of parking restrictions in Oxshott has resulted in Silverdale Avenue having significant problems with all day parking. This has caused serious problems at many levels and we believe the logical solution is to:

Introduce restricted parking in Silverdale Avenue and place it on an equal footing with all the other surrounding local roads.

Silverdale Avenue was never intended to be a cut through access point to Danes Hill School. A review of local traffic management measures to either stop this or significantly reduce the volume of this traffic is urgently required.

Silverdale Avenue Residents Association
November 2016

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