

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**LOCAL COMMITTEE (RUNNYMEDE)**

**DATE: 19 FEBRUARY 2018**



**LEAD OFFICER: ANDREW MILNE – AREA HIGHWAYS MANAGER (NW)**

**SUBJECT: VEHICLE SPEEDS AND ROAD SAFETY IN FORDWATER ROAD – PETITION RESPONSE**

**DIVISION: CHERTSEY**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

The Local Committee has received a petition signed by 67 residents concerned about the speed of vehicles in Fordwater Road, Chertsey. The petition states: “Stop the speeding vehicles at Fordwater Road”. Residents have also submitted a number of comments in support of the petition. These highlight the following concerns in addition to speeding:

- Problems with noise and vibrations in properties (caused particularly by large vehicles).
- Vehicles failing to stop at the zebra crossing near the junction with Stepgates and Mead Lane.

Residents have suggested the introduction of a variety of measures to reduce vehicles including a speed camera, 20mph speed limit and traffic calming.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Local Committee (Runnymede) is asked to note that:**

- (i) Fordwater Road/Weir Road is an existing site on the Runnymede speed management plan but is not currently being prioritised for speed enforcement or other measures.
- (ii) Fordwater Road/Weir Road will be retained on the speed management plan and vehicle speeds and collision rates will be continue to be monitored.
- (iii) That new beacons using halo LED lighting will shortly be installed at the zebra crossing on Fordwater Road.
- (iv) An order has been placed to carry out a repair to a defect identified in Fordwater Road once new budget allocations are received in April 2018.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

The County Council receives many complaints about speeding traffic but there are only limited resources available to be able to respond to these. A process has therefore been established in partnership with Surrey Police for investigating concerns raised by residents and prioritising sites for action.

An assessment of speed data and collision rates for Fordwater Road and Weir Road indicates that there are a number of other sites that have both a lower level of compliance with the speed limit and a poorer safety record. As such, Fordwater Road and Weir Road are not currently being targeted for enforcement or other measures since the limited available resources are being targeted at other sites with more severe problems.

The installation of new beacons using halo LED lighting will help further increase the conspicuousness of the zebra crossing on Fordwater Road.

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 Fordwater Road is a B-class road (B387) that has a junction with the A317 Eastworth Road/A318 Chertsey Road at its southern end and a junction with Stepgates/Mead Lane at its northern end. Weir Road is effectively a continuation of Fordwater Road and extends north from the Stepgates/Mead Lane junction to the B375 Bridge Road. A location plan is attached below as figure 1.
- 1.2 Fordwater Road and Weir Road carry a significant volume of traffic, partly because they are on a route to and from Chertsey Bridge (which is one of a limited number of locations where motorists can cross the River Thames).
- 1.3 Residential properties predominantly line either side of both roads. Some of these properties are located relatively close to the edge of the carriageway. There are a number of residential side roads located off both Fordwater Road and Weir Road. In addition, Fordwater Road provides access to the Fordwater Trading Estate.
- 1.4 Along parts of Fordwater Road there are parking areas marked along the western side of the road. In addition there is a zebra crossing located on Fordwater Road immediately south of its junction with Stepgates/Mead Lane.

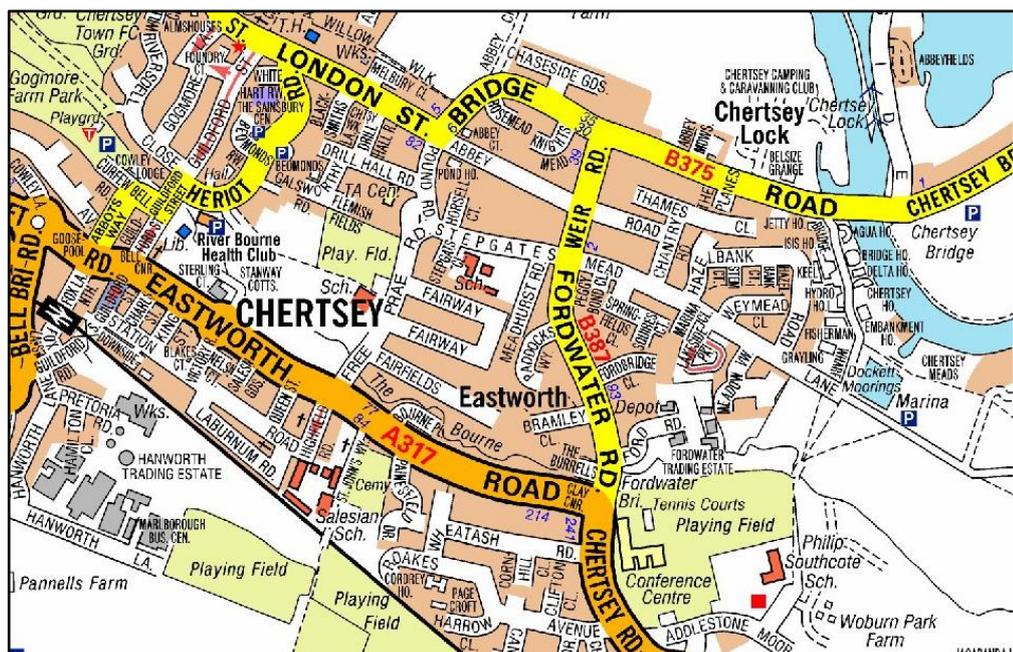


Figure 1 – Location Plan

## 2. ANALYSIS:

### Road Safety Record

- 2.1 Personal injury collision records have been examined for Fordwater Road and Weir Road for the 3 year period between 1 November 2014 and 31 October 2017 (latest available data).

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- 2.2 Over this period there have been a total of 7 personal injury collisions. One of the collisions resulted in serious injuries being sustained whilst the remainder of the collisions resulted in slight injuries.
- 2.3 There were no collisions that involved pedestrians being injured when using the zebra crossing on Fordwater Road. However, a cyclist using the crossing was involved in one of the collisions and sustained slight injuries.
- 2.4 Excessive speed was not recorded by the Police as a contributory factor in any of the collisions.

### **Vehicle Speeds**

- 2.5 A number of speed surveys have been carried out by Surrey Police in Fordwater Road. The latest survey was undertaken from 12 to 19 January 2018.
- 2.6 A summary of the results of the surveys is shown in table 1 below:

Date of survey	Average vehicle speed
7-14 October 2014	29mph
23 February – 1 March 2016	31mph
12 – 19 January 2018	30mph

Table 1 – Speed Survey Data

- 2.7 A more detailed examination of all 3 sets of survey data indicates that the average vehicle speed over the peak periods in the morning and afternoon is generally lower than the overall 24 hour average (which would be expected due to the increased flows and resulting congestion at these times).
- 2.8 During the day time off-peak period, average vehicles speeds are generally consistent with the overall 24 hour average speed.
- 2.9 During the late evening and early hours of the morning the average speeds are typically higher than the overall 24 hour average. This would be expected since traffic flows are much lower at these times so there is the opportunity for a small number of inconsiderate drivers to travel at higher speeds. However, this is the same for most roads and it would not be appropriate to design highways on the basis of a relatively small number of antisocial drivers.

### **Speed Reducing Measures Introduced**

- 2.10 The following measures have previously been introduced to help reduce vehicle speeds in Fordwater Road:
- A vehicle activated sign has been erected near the Snow and Rock store. The sign displays the “30” symbol to drivers when it is activated.

- A combined speed and red light violation safety enforcement camera has been installed at the junction of Chertsey Road with Eastworth Road and Fordwater Road. The camera enforces speed in the northbound direction and therefore helps reduce the speed of vehicles joining Fordwater Road from Chertsey Road. In addition there is a vehicle activated sign on Chertsey Road in advance of the camera which again helps reduce the speed of vehicles as they join Fordwater Road.



Figure 2 – Existing vehicle activated sign in Fordwater Road

### Safety at Zebra Crossing

- 2.11 The zebra crossing has been designed in accordance with the relevant design standards and includes the following features to help highlight its presence to motorists and improve safety for pedestrians:
- standard black and white markings on the carriageway at the crossing as well flashing belisha beacons.
  - warning signs on both approaches to the crossing.
  - buff coloured antiskid road surfacing on both approaches to the crossing (which helps highlight the crossing as well as giving improved braking for vehicles).

### Noise and Vibration

- 2.12 Fordwater Road and Weir Road are busy B-class roads that carry a substantial volume of traffic including a significant number of large vehicles due to the strategic importance of the route (although the 18 Tonne weight limit on Chertsey Bridge helps reduce the number of especially large vehicles that use the roads). Inevitably properties situated close to such a route will suffer from a commensurate level of traffic noise and there is also the potential for vibrations.

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- 2.13 The level of noise and vibrations experienced in properties due to traffic depends on many factors including the condition of the road, vehicle weight and suspension system, vehicle speed, soil type, distance of property from the road and the type of building.
- 2.14 A number of the properties in Fordwater Road and Weir Road are older buildings and are located close to the edge of the carriageway. As such, they may potentially be more susceptible to experiencing problems with noise and vibration.
- 2.15 The road surface in Fordwater Road and Weir Road is in reasonable condition and there are currently no proposals to resurface these roads. Due to the nature of the roads they are inspected monthly (which is the maximum inspection frequency).
- 2.16 A small depression in the road surface has been identified by a resident as possibly contributing to increased levels of noise and vibration at a specific location in Fordwater Road. This depression does not meet the criteria for a repair to be undertaken on the basis of it being a safety defect. As such, the Local Area Highway Team has raised an order for a repair to be carried out once new budget allocations are received in April 2018.

### **3. OPTIONS:**

- 3.1 Residents have suggested a number of measures should be introduced to help reduce vehicle speeds and improve road safety. The below comments refer to these suggestions as well as a number of alternative measures that could also be considered.

#### **20mph Speed Limit**

- 3.2 The desire for lower speeds has to be balanced against the need for reasonable journey times and the position of the road within the county council's Strategic Priority Network. As such, we would not generally consider introducing a 20mph speed limit on roads of the nature of Fordwater Road and Weir Road.
- 3.3 It should also be noted that, in accordance with the county council's speed limit policy, if a 20mph speed limit is to be introduced on a road where the average speed exceeds 24mph then it is necessary to introduce traffic calming measures to reduce speeds down to this level (see further comments below about traffic calming measures).

#### **Traffic calming measures**

- 3.4 It would not normally be considered appropriate to install traffic measures (such as speed tables/cushions, chicanes or pinch points) on roads of the nature of Fordwater Road and Weir Road. Any proposal to install such measures would also be likely to generate significant objection and the cost of the scheme would significantly exceed the total annual capital budget currently received by the Local Committee.

- 3.5 Further to concerns raised by some residents about issues with noise and vibration, it should be noted that the introduction of either speed cushions or speed tables is likely to increase the severity of any such problems already experienced.

#### **Vehicle Activated Signs**

- 3.6 As noted above, there is an existing vehicle activated sign in Fordwater Road. There is no budget currently available to install a further sign(s). Furthermore, even if there were a budget available it would be difficult to justify the site as a priority for further measures in the context of other sites in Runnymede having more severe problems with excessive speed.

#### **Mobile speed enforcement**

- 3.7 Surrey County Council and Surrey Police have a partnership called Drive SMART which aims to tackle concerns over speeding and anti-social driving. As part of this initiative local speed management plans have been developed for each District and Borough to identify the sites with speeding problems. When residents raise concerns about vehicle speeds at a particular location a speed survey is undertaken to determine the level of speeding taking place. Depending on the results of the survey, the road will then be added to the Runnymede Speed Management Plan and, in conjunction with Surrey Police, alternative appropriate options to reduce vehicle speeds are considered (which could be enforcement, education or engineering measures).

- 3.8 In response to concerns previously raised about vehicle speeds, Fordwater Road/Weir Road is one of the sites included on the Runnymede Speed Management Plan. As such, speeds are periodically monitored along this length of road. However, based on the results of recent speed surveys (see table 1 above) it is not a site currently being prioritised for Police enforcement since the limited resources available are being targeted at other sites assessed as having a more severe problem with excessive speed.

- 3.9 However, specialist road safety officers from Surrey County Council and Surrey Police meet regularly to reassess the priority of sites on the speed management plan. Fordwater Road and Weir Road will therefore be retained on the speed management. As such, vehicle speeds and collisions rates will continue to be monitored and assessed relative to other sites to determine whether the location should be targeted for speed enforcement or other measures.

#### **Permanent Speed Enforcement Camera**

- 3.10 There are currently no proposals to install new fixed site speed cameras in Surrey because the available funding is being used to undertake a programme of upgrading existing cameras. Many of these cameras still use film and are relatively old (with many parts now obsolete). As such, they are gradually being replaced by modern digital cameras.

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- 3.11 Even when funding is available to install new cameras, we would only consider installing new fixed speed cameras at the very worst collision hotspots where there has been a continuing history of collisions and where speeds have been measured and found to be excessive. This is because new digital fixed speed cameras are very costly to install and then require ongoing maintenance and processing of offences. (All the fines from cameras go to central government via the courts).
- 3.12 Whilst there is a history of personal injury collisions occurring in Fordwater Road and Weir Road, there are a number of other sites on the Runnymede speed management plan (and also the speed management plans for other Boroughs and Districts) that have poorer safety records. As such, these sites would be considered a higher priority than Fordwater Road and Weir Road if funding was currently available to install new speed cameras. In addition, the current guidance on the use of speed cameras includes criteria about specific levels of personal injury collisions occurring. The installation of speed cameras would only be considered at locations where these criteria are met. Fortunately, Fordwater Road and Weir Road do not have such a poor safety record that they meet the criteria.

### **Community Speed Watch**

- 3.13 Community Speed Watch is an initiative that enables volunteers to work within their community to raise awareness of the dangers of speeding and to help control the problem locally. The leaflet attached at Annex 1 provides more details about the initiative.
- 3.14 Residents have been provided with information about Community Speed Watch and encouraged to consider forming a group. If they decide to do so then Surrey Police would provide all required training as well as ongoing support.

### **Improvements to Zebra Crossing**

- 3.15 Some residents have suggested that the existing zebra crossing should be upgraded to a signal controlled crossing to help improve safety for pedestrians. In response to this suggestion the following points should be noted:
- Typically, the cost of installing a new signalised crossing is about £100,000. In this case, you would also have the cost of removing the zebra crossing. The total cost of such a proposal would therefore significantly exceed the total annual capital budget currently received by the Local Committee (the total capital allocation for 2017/18 was £36,363).
  - No pedestrians have been injured at the crossing over the last 5 years. However, there will occasionally be collisions at most controlled pedestrian crossings as well as “near misses”. This applies for both zebra crossings and signal controlled pedestrian crossings.
  - The minimum recommended distance that a signalised crossing should be installed from a junction is greater than for a zebra crossing. Due to this fact and the position of property accesses, a signalised crossing would potentially have to be sited some distance from the existing zebra crossing. This would move it away from the desire line for some pedestrians.

- 3.16 Further to the above comments, there are currently no proposals to replace the zebra crossing with a signalised pedestrian crossing. However, the existing belisha beacons at the zebra crossing will shortly be replaced by a new style of beacon that uses halo LED lighting to make it more conspicuous to drivers in all conditions. This will help further highlight the presence of the crossing. The new beacons are being funded by the county council's Road Safety Team and are expected to be installed before the end of March 2018.



Figure 3 – Example of beacon using halo LED lighting

#### **4. CONSULTATIONS:**

- 4.1 Surrey Police and Surrey Safety Camera Partnership have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

#### **5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications for Local Committee budgets resulting from the recommendations of this report.

#### **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 This report responds to a petition from residents about an issue of local concern.

**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 assessment of speed data and collision rates for Fordwater Road and Weir Road indicates that there are a number of drivers that exceed the 30mph speed limit and that a number of personal injury collisions have occurred. However, there are a number of other sites on the Runnymede speed management plan that have both a lower level compliance with the speed limit and a poorer safety record. The limited available resources are therefore being targeted at a number of these sites and Fordwater Road is not currently being prioritised for attention.
- 9.2 However, specialist road safety officers from Surrey County Council and Surrey Police meet regularly to reassess the priority of sites on the speed management plan. Fordwater Road and Weir Road will therefore be retained on the speed management. As such, vehicle speeds and collisions rates will continue to be monitored and assessed relative to other sites to determine whether the location should be targeted for speed enforcement or other measures.
- 9.3 There are already a significant number of measures in place to highlight the zebra crossing on Fordwater Road to drivers. However, new beacons using halo LED lighting will shortly be installed to help increase the conspicuousness of the crossing.

**10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

- 10.1 Fordwater Road/Weir Road will remain on the Runnymede speed management plan and vehicle speeds and collisions rates will continue to be monitored.
- 10.2 New beacons using halo LED lighting will be installed at the zebra crossing on Fordwater Road.
- 10.3 Surrey Police will provide training and support if residents wish to proceed with forming a Community Speed Watch Group.

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**Contact Officer:**

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**Consulted:**

**Annexes:**

Annex 1 – Community Speed Watch Leaflet

None

**Sources/background papers:**

None

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