

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**LOCAL COMMITTEE (SURREY HEATH)****DATE: 14 JUNE 2018****LEAD OFFICER: ANDREW MILNE – AREA HIGHWAYS MANAGER (NW)****SUBJECT: REPLACE ZEBRA CROSSING ON MYTCHETT ROAD WITH A PUFFIN CROSSING - PETITION RESPONSE****DIVISION: FRIMLEY GREEN AND MYTCHETT****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

A petition has been received by the Surrey Heath Local Committee asking for the Zebra crossing on Mytchett Road, between Rorkes Drift and Potteries Lane, to be changed to a Puffin crossing. The wording of the petition is;

“We would like the zebra crossing at the junction with Rorkes Drift and Potteries Lane changed to a puffin crossing to enable school children and residents to cross safely. We are encouraging healthy choices for our children by walking to school and preventing congestion-and associated hazards-around school gates. We need to be reassured that cars will stop; a traffic-light controlled puffin crossing is a safe solution for our children.”

The petition contains 92 signatures.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Surrey Heath) is asked to note the contents of this report and the conclusion that the Zebra pedestrian should remain in place but that if funding can be identified, the existing Belisha beacons should be replaced with more conspicuous “Zebrite” beacons.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

There is a perception that signal controlled crossings provide a safer alternative to Zebra crossings but this is not always the case. In addition, the regulations relating to the installation of these types of crossings permit Zebras to be constructed where it would not be possible to install a Puffin crossing. This is the case on Mytchett Road and a Puffin crossing could not be substituted for the existing Zebra crossing in the same location. In addition, no personal injury collisions have taken place involving people using the Zebra crossing and so it would be difficult to justify the cost of a Puffin crossing when a pedestrian facility already exists. Installing new style Belisha beacons would make the crossing even more conspicuous and should help to reduce the number of failures to give way to pedestrians.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 Mytchett Road forms part of the busy B3411 route and is close to two junctions on the A331 Blackwater Valley Road.
- 1.2 In the vicinity of Mytchett Road's junctions with Rorkes Drift and Potteries Lane, there are a number of shops, food establishments and other commercial premises, as well as a bus lay-by on each side of the road, all of which help to generate a lot of pedestrian crossing movements.
- 1.3 A Zebra crossing has been in place for many years between the Rorkes Drift and Potteries Lane junctions to facilitate these crossing movements.



Pic 1. Existing Zebra crossing looking north – Potteries Lane on the left.

2. ANALYSIS:

- 2.1 Zebra crossings can provide safe and convenient crossing facilities for pedestrians. However, they have certain disadvantages in terms of facilities for users with sight or mobility impairment. Audible and tactile warnings on signal controlled crossings give a better indication to sight impaired users that they have priority to cross, which Zebra crossings do not have and Puffin crossings can extend the amount of time that a pedestrian is given to cross, if the crossing detects that they are moving slowly and need more time to do so. That having been said, a pedestrian has right of way when they are on a Zebra crossing and even if they are moving slowly, vehicles should wait.

- 2.2 The personal injury collision history for the immediate vicinity of the Zebra crossing shows that two personal injury collisions have taken place in the last 3 year period, neither of which involved pedestrians either on the crossing or close to it. In terms of the personal injury collision history statistics, therefore, the crossing is safe and given that no pedestrians have been injured using it, a Puffin crossing could not improve that record.
- 2.3 The wording of the petition implies that vehicles do not stop at the Zebra crossing and that a Puffin crossing would overcome that problem. It should be noted that drivers can fail to stop at signal controlled crossings in the same way that they sometimes do at Zebra crossings. The situation could be made worse if pedestrians cross as soon as the “green man” appears and do not look to see if traffic has stopped before they step into the carriageway.



Pic 2. Existing Zebra crossing looking south – Rorkes Drift on the left.

- 2.4 The design guidelines for pedestrian crossings include information on how close Zebra and Puffin crossings may be located to a side road. A minimum distance of 20m from a side road to the stop line at a signal controlled crossing is suggested, whereas the distance between a side road and the give way markings at a Zebra crossing may be as little as 5m. The guidelines suggest that this distance is measured from the position of a driver waiting at the give way lines at the side road.
- 2.5 The reasoning for these different dimensions is that at a Zebra crossing, the driver only has to be able to see a pedestrian waiting to cross the road whereas at a signal controlled crossing, the driver must be able to see the traffic signal and looking from a side road, this becomes increasingly difficult the closer the driver is to the signals. If the distance was too short, the driver might not see a red signal and could pull away from the side road and pass through the crossing when pedestrians have priority. Although this may happen at low speed, there still remains the potential for conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.

ITEM 4b

- 2.6 The distance from a driver's position at the give way markings in Rorkes Drift to the give way marking at the existing Zebra crossing is approximately 12m. From Potteries Lane, this figure is just 9m. Even if there was scope to make the crossing narrower, it would not be sufficient to increase these distances to the figure suggested in the DfT guidance.
- 2.7 Unfortunately, on each side of the existing crossing, there are so many driveways that there is nowhere with a sufficiently long length of uninterrupted kerb opposite each other where the crossing could be relocated to as a Puffin Crossing.
- 2.8 Although there is a bus layby on each side of the road, with each being on the outbound side of the crossing, the forward visibility of the crossing is good and there should be no reason why approaching drivers cannot see pedestrians who are about to cross the road.

3. OPTIONS:	
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- 3.1 The proximity of Rorkes Drift and Potteries Lane means that a puffin crossing could not be accommodated at the existing location and the conflicting driveways etc elsewhere along Mytchett Road mean that there is no alternative location.
- 3.2 Since it is not possible to replace the existing crossing or to find an alternative location for a Puffin crossing, retaining the Zebra crossing is the only viable option.
- 3.3 There is no high friction surfacing (anti-skid) on either approach to the crossing. Although the petition implies that some vehicles are failing to give way at the Zebra crossing, there appears to be no suggestion that this is because vehicles cannot stop because of the carriageway surface or the lack of anti-skid. However, providing anti-skid might be an option but one that could be prohibitively expensive.
- 3.4 Providing anti-skid for 50m on each approach would cost in the region of £10,500. However, as can be seen in Pic 2, there are numerous patches and utility reinstatements on the southbound carriageway and it is highly likely that this approach would need to be resurfaced in order for anti-skid to be successfully applied and this would cost, at least, an additional £6,500. The northbound approach looks suitable to accept anti-skid without being resurfaced but if this is not the case, an additional £6,500 would be required on this side of the road, too.
- 3.5 The provision of anti-skid would therefore cost at least £17,000 but this could be £23,500 if the northbound approach needs to be resurfaced. Given that there appears to be no issue with vehicles being unable to stop because of the carriageway condition, it is not recommended that anti-skid surfacing is applied at the current time.
- 3.6 It was noted that the existing Belisha beacons are slightly faded and as is often the case with original style beacons, the flashing light inside is not always clearly discernible during daylight. A more recent style of Belisha beacon, known as a "Zebrite" beacon and which can be used on the Highway, consists of a brighter globe surrounded by a halo of LEDs. These make Zebra crossings

more conspicuous and might be helpful in Mytchett Road. However, these cost approximately £5,500 a pair and only one pair would be needed to upgrade this crossing.

- 3.7 No budget has been identified to change the Belisha beacons but if funding can be found, it is suggested that the existing globes are replaced with “Zebrite” beacons.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 No consultation has taken place.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 Replacing the Zebra crossing, if site constraints had permitted, is likely to have cost the same as any other new Puffin crossing, ie approximately £100,000. In view of the personal injury collision history, this would represent poor value for money.
- 5.2 Although there have been no pedestrian injuries at the Zebra crossing, replacing the Belisha beacons with “Zebrite” beacons would make the crossing more conspicuous and even though this would cost £5,500, this would be good value for money as it should help to reduce the number of failures to give way to pedestrians.

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 residents of Mychett and for whom Mychett Road is a barrier that severs the communities that live on each side of it.

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
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9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 9.1 There is an existing Zebra crossing on Mytchett Road, located between its junctions with Rorkes Drift and Potteries Lane. There have been no pedestrian related personal injury collisions at this crossing in the last 3 year period.
- 9.2 The design guidelines relating to Zebra and Puffin crossings give minimum distances from a driver's position at any nearby side road and the give way or stop lines at the crossing. Whilst these are satisfied for the existing Zebra crossing, they are not achievable for a Puffin crossing, which means that a signal controlled crossing could not be accommodated in place of the Zebra.
- 9.3 Conflicting driveways elsewhere along Mytchett Road mean that there is no suitable alternative location where a Puffin crossing could be accommodated.
- 9.4 The existing Belisha beacons could be replaced with new, brighter "Zebrite" beacons, which would make the crossing more conspicuous and which might help to reduce the instances of drivers failing to give way to pedestrians. Although funding has yet to be identified, it is recommended that the beacons are replaced if possible.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 The petitioner will be advised.
- 10.2 If funding can be identified, the Belisha beacons will be replaced with new, brighter "Zebrite" beacons.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted: -

Annexes:

None

Sources/background papers:

None
