

# SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL



SURREY

## LOCAL COMMITTEE (ELMBRIDGE)

DATE: 11 June 2018  
 SUBJECT: A petition signed by 2,179 people for the installation of traffic lights or a pedestrian crossing to be sited in or around the Ditton Reach area of the Portsmouth Road  
 DIVISION: The Dittons

### **PETITION DETAILS:**

This is the scene of the incident on the Portsmouth Road, Long Ditton in which my sister was fatally injured. Please join in my Petition to the local Council for Traffic lights or a Pedestrian crossing to be sited on this busy road, ideally by the Windmill Lane intersection. My hope is that further fatalities will be avoided with an appropriate traffic calming measure and a new pedestrian crossing point so that Billie's death will not have been in vain.

### **RESPONSE:**

A petition was presented to Elmbridge Local Committee at its meeting in December 2014. In summary the petition requested

**“... due consideration to installing either a Pedestrian Crossing or a traffic island by Ditton Reach in order to facilitate a safer crossing point. Residents include an older population and find particular difficulty in crossing this extremely busy road.”**

The petitioners spoke at the meeting, explaining the situation and the difficulties in crossing particularly for the elderly and infirm. A crossing point outside the City Arms pub was suggested, and the needs of the scouts and the residents of City Wharf House noted. The presentation highlighted concerns that “there will be a fatality which is why they are asking for a zebra crossing or refuge island”.

A response to the petition was reported to Elmbridge Local Committee at its meeting in February 2015. The response referred to the road layout, cycle lane, parking and information on collisions resulting in injury. It commented on types of crossing (zebra, puffin, refuge island) and their likely costs. The Committee agreed “to include a feasibility study scheme on ITS [Integrated Transport Schemes] schedule of works, which is to be programmed by this committee and the Divisional Member, in due course.”

Highways improvement schemes, such as crossings, changes to speed limits or alterations to road layouts, are promoted via the local committee for Elmbridge. The publicly-elected committee must support any requests for the council to make improvements, with consideration of all schemes and available funding.

A crossing point was recommended to be the subject of a feasibility study, reported to Elmbridge Local Committee in December 2016. It was included in the forward programme in February 2017. The Committee funded a feasibility study with the intention that, should suitable measures be identified, a bid for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding would be made to Elmbridge Borough Council to enable construction. For some time Committee has not had the means to deliver schemes of any significant size but the CIL process has given the opportunity to develop schemes for funding bids.

The study assessed the feasibility of a crossing point on Portsmouth Road, between the junction with Ferry Road/Thorkhill Road and the bus stop on the eastbound side of the carriageway near to the junction with Prospect Road. The study was reported to Elmbridge Local Committee in March 2018. Prior to this, the works had developed sufficiently to make a bid for CIL funding in January 2018. The bid was accepted by the Strategic Spending Board and it was recommended that "£160,000 be allocated to Surrey County Council to improve the pedestrian facilities in three separate priority locations across the Borough." This allocation included £50,000 for facilities on Portsmouth Road, Long Ditton.

The recent study, and subsequent recommended scheme, did not include for a zebra or other signalised crossing. A refuge island as proposed provides benefits for pedestrians relatively close to the most direct desire line, and is considered suitable for the likely level of demand. The study, and subsequent funding bid and allocation, also included improvements to pedestrian facilities in the vicinity such as dropped kerbs and tactile paving.

It should be noted that the recommendation for funding from the Elmbridge Strategic Spending Board includes "confirmation that a pedestrian refuge island would be installed at the crossing points in both the Cobham [a separate scheme included in the funding application] and Long Ditton pedestrian schemes". It also includes the condition that specific timescales be adhered to, namely:

- December 2018 – completion of design
- 31 December 2019 – completion of construction of scheme

The proposed scheme has been discussed with County and Borough Councillors. The current intention is to consult with the public on the option as recommended in the feasibility report, for a refuge island to the east of Windmill Lane. This is recommended in terms of the anticipated benefits, available funding and projected scheme costs, potential impacts during construction and adherence to the funding conditions. The scheme will be subject to independent road safety audit as design progresses. A further independent safety audit will take place following construction.

The consideration of a zebra or signalised crossing would require further assessment works and, should a feasible option be identified, further funding. The progression of the proposed scheme does not preclude the consideration of further measures on this section of Portsmouth Road.

Surrey County Council works in partnership with Surrey Police to identify and address highway safety issues. This includes the monitoring of collision data and identification of measures to attempt to reduce casualties at a particular site, such as physical changes, enforcement, or educational campaigns. The Police share information of recent incidents with the council through the safety partnership initiative. The recent (April 2018) Road Safety Working Group meeting of Surrey County Council and Surrey Police reported that police investigation was currently ongoing into the tragic incident on Portsmouth Road. Surrey Police's Road Safety and Traffic Management Team have advised that a court case was heard in April and the road safety partnership will include at its next meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Local Committee is asked to:

- (i) *Note the petition and response.*

**Contact Officer:**

Peter Shimadry, Senior Engineer, North East Area Highways Team

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