

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL
RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH COUNCIL**



JOINT COMMITTEE (RUNNYMEDE)

DATE: 18 MARCH 2019

**AGENDA ITEM 6
WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

Question from Isabel Mullens on behalf of Egham Residents Association and Jonathan Fisher on behalf of Runnymede Access Liaison Group

Will the Joint Committee help facilitate the installation of a controlled crossing over the A30 Egham by-pass as part of the Runnymede Pleasure Grounds development, taking into account the great benefit that it would provide to residents? Could you provide information on what a traffic-light controlled crossing would cost?

Background: This question arises as plans are finalised for the development of Runnymede Pleasure Grounds (RPG) and the spending of £4.8m on this, which is on the agenda for tonight's meeting. We hope that this development will benefit local residents who come on foot, as well as those who drive in from further afield. The question concerns the need for a controlled crossing over the A30 Egham by-pass at the end of Hummer Road to enable safe pedestrian access to RPG for residents of Egham.

The many residents who live on the north side of Egham High Street, and other people coming from Egham Town Centre, would like to be able to cross the A30 safely at the end of Hummer Road to enable access to the Meads and to enjoy the recreational facilities at the RPG, the river, the Skiff and Punting Club etc. In addition, the residents living on the Windsor Road, Yard Mead and on Riverside, who frequently walk in to Egham, need to cross the A30 to get in to Egham. Crossing the A30 is particularly hazardous under present circumstances for disabled people, those who are visually impaired and for those with pushchairs.

The optimum place for many residents to cross the A30 is at Hummer Road – it leads to the one good tarmac path that is provided across Runnymede, which in turn leads to a traffic island on the A308 (Windsor Road), installed at the time of the Magna Carta 800 celebrations, which allows people to cross the A308 relatively safely. While it is acknowledged that there are A30 crossing points at the roundabouts at the two ends of the Egham by-pass, the Hummer Road crossing is the route of choice for residents, and many use it currently without a controlled crossing (which is dangerous) on account of it being most direct and therefore quickest. Neither of the roundabout crossings are suitable for pedestrians from the centre of Egham – they both require us to walk considerable distances along the by-pass, and along the A308, both of which have fast traffic close to the footpath – much travelling at 50mph and often faster. The recently improved traffic flow around the Runnymede roundabout anecdotally has increased the speed of traffic along the by-pass.

The advantages of a controlled crossing include:

1. Much improved safety for disabled and visually impaired people/walkers/dog-walkers/push-chairs/children/cyclists wishing to use the Runnymede fields, Pleasure Grounds and river walks, and for residents from the Windsor Road area coming in to Egham
2. A reduction in local car use for access to the Pleasure Grounds; hence also a reduction of carbon impact.

The benefits of a controlled crossing have previously been acknowledged, and such a crossing was proposed at the time of the Olympics, and as part of the upgrading of the Runnymede Roundabout. Both times the crossing was dropped in the later stages of development to cut costs.

A controlled crossing has been requested by both Runnymede Access Liaison Group and Egham Residents Association in the past. The desire for a controlled crossing was also expressed by residents during the recent RPG consultation, as reported in the RPG consultation summary. At a time when healthy and safe recreation is being encouraged, maintaining a barrier to safe access from Egham to the RPG area is unacceptable.

Developments on the Pleasure Grounds now bring the opportunity for positive action.

Officer Response

A proposal to introduce a signalised pedestrian crossing on Egham Bypass (near the junction with Hummer Road) was one of a number of walking and cycling improvements originally included in the Egham Sustainable Transport Package major transport scheme. However, it was not possible to deliver all the measures proposed with the budget available. As a result, the crossing (and a number of other proposals) were not introduced.

Based on the design work undertaken previously, the estimated cost of installing a signalised pedestrian crossing would be approximately £350,000 to £400,000. Further detailed design work would need to be undertaken to enable a more accurate estimate to be produced.

As part of the planning process, local planning authorities consult Surrey County Council as the Highway Authority on the highway and transportation issues relating to development proposals.

We then carefully assess the likely impacts of the proposals to determine whether or not transportation concerns may arise. Having done so, we recommend to the planning authority whether there are transportation reasons why planning applications should be changed before they are granted permission, granted permission with conditions, or refused. This advice is then taken into account when the planning authority determines the application.

As such, when the planning application for the development of the Runnymede Pleasure Grounds is submitted, the county council's Transport Development Planning team will assess whether there are justifiable grounds to recommend the introduction of measures (such as the suggested crossing or other highways improvements) to mitigate the impacts of the development.