

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**LOCAL COMMITTEE (ELMBRIDGE)**

**DATE: 17<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2020**

**LEAD OFFICER: EDWARD COWLEY**

**SUBJECT: ROAD SAFETY OUTSIDE SCHOOLS – WESTWARD PREPARATORY SCHOOL**

**DIVISION: WALTON**



**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

A petition with 176 signatures will be submitted to the Elmbridge Local Committee on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020 expressing the concern for safety of children arriving and leaving Westward Preparatory School in Walton-On-Thames. This report outlines investigations into the nature and extent of the concerns, and possible highway and road safety education improvements to reduce them. These have been developed in accordance with the county council's Road Safety Outside Schools policy

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Elmbridge Local Committee is asked to agree that**

- (i) Westward Preparatory School should be asked whether they would be favourable to contributing towards the cost of the suggested pedestrian refuge island in paragraph 3.2, and;
- (ii) If Westward Preparatory School is favourable to contributing funding, add this site to Committee's prioritisation list for review later in 2020;
- (iii) The Safer Travel Team will work with the school to encourage them to take up more of the road safety education and training activities offered by the county council, this will include completing a Modeshift STARS Travel Plan.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

These proposed highway measures would improve the safety of pupils walking to and from Westward Preparatory School. These highway measures would help to reduce antisocial parking and so would reduce risk of collisions and improve the road environment to encourage more walking and scooting to school. A successful increase in these modes would contribute to fewer car journeys and less motor vehicle congestion. However the measures at this site would need to be prioritised alongside other schemes across Elmbridge. A number of other private organisations, including private schools, have contributed part or all of the cost of road improvements near their sites. The recommended school travel plan and road safety education improvements would also help to improve road safety and reduce reliance on the car for the school journey.

**1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

- 1.1 A petition will be presented on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at the Elmbridge Local Committee containing 176 signatures. Prior to this petition being submitted, investigation work had already been completed at this site and the recommendations are outlined in this report.
- 1.2 The petition highlights concerns regarding road safety in the vicinity of Westward Preparatory School and requests measures to assist in crossing the road that will make the journey to school safer. This report describes the results of investigations into these issues and presents possible highway and road safety education improvements to address the concerns. These have been developed in accordance with the county council's Road Safety Outside Schools policy approved by county council Cabinet on 24 June 2014. The petition states:

*We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to improve road safety outside Westward School and the Forthhouse Surgery, Hersham Road, Walton-on-Thames.*

*Hersham Road is an extremely busy road between Walton and Hersham. The speed limit of 30mph is often exceeded. There is no designated place to cross the road between Station Avenue/Rydens Road and Walton itself, a distance of 0.7 miles. Children & their parents coming to & from Westward School, and patients of the Forthhouse Surgery are affected by this lack of traffic control on a daily basis. Staff members in both establishments are also affected. Traffic (human & vehicular) going through the area will only increase once the new development at Stompond Lane has been completed.*

*We urge Surrey County Council to introduce some way of slowing traffic and facilitating crossing the road. An initial reduction to a 20mph zone would make a distinct difference. If this were coupled with a pedestrian crossing outside the school and surgery this would benefit all those accessing both facilities. We would ask Surrey to consider the potential vulnerability of both sets of people attending these facilities.*

**2. ANALYSIS:**

**Site Description and existing infrastructure**

- 2.1 Westward Preparatory School teaches children from ages 3 to 11 (nursery to year 6). Westward Prep is situated in Walton-On-Thames on Hersham Road.
- 2.2 The school has one pedestrian entrance/exit and one vehicular entrance/exits this is directly in front of the school and provides parking for approximately six staff vehicles. There are "School Keep Clear" road markings immediately outside of the school, which has a traffic regulation order on them making them enforceable. Near the pedestrian entrance there is one guard railing which currently serves no purpose as it is not protecting the pedestrian entrance.
- 2.3 There are two yellow backed school warning signs on the approach to the school.

- 2.4 There are double yellow lines on both sides of Hersham Road in the immediate vicinity of the school and the Doctors surgery. There is also a designated parking bay on the west side of Hersham Road.



**Figure one:** Location plan of Westward Preparatory School

### Road User Behaviour Observations

- 2.4 A Site visit involving county council highway engineers, Road Safety Team, Safer Travel Team and Police colleagues was undertaken during June 2019, the following observations were made;
- Pedestrians including parents and children were observed crossing at many different locations along the Hersham Road.
  - There were no cyclists or scooters observed travelling to school during the assessment.
  - Hersham Road is extremely busy during the school peak both with parents and commuter traffic.
  - There is available on street parking spaces opposite the school, which parents use to drop off/pick up time, this means that many parents are parking across the road from the school and crossing across the busy Hersham Road
  - There is one pedestrian island currently in place along the Hersham Road, but is a long way from the school entrance and does not follow the desire lines that most pedestrians seemed to follow.
  - Hersham Road during school peak times is very busy with a constant stream of traffic often making it difficult for pedestrians to cross the road.



**Figure two:** Looking north down Hersham Road



**Figure three:** Looking south down Hersham Road

### **Analysis of Collision and Speed Data**

- 2.5 The county council's database of personal injury collisions recorded by the police has been checked. This shows that over the last five years in the immediate vicinity of the school there have been 2 slight road injury collisions recorded, these were in 2014 and 2016 and involved car occupants at the junction with Hersham Road, Midway Road and Ashley Drive to the south of Westward Preparatory School. This information is available to the public via [www.crashmap.co.uk](http://www.crashmap.co.uk):
- 2.6 There are currently no speed surveys for outside of the school, this however has been requested (February 2020). If the local committee choose to

prioritise this site for possible future ITS schemes, the speed data will be analysed.

### **3. OPTIONS:**

#### 3.1 Road Safety Education and Training

Surrey County Council's "Road Safety Outside Schools" policy highlights that road safety education and training for children is just as important as the infrastructure outside schools. The county council's Safer Travel team provide a range of resources for schools, Westward Preparatory School are scheduled to receive "Pedals" Year 2 (age 6/7) Scooter and bicycle training, "Bikeability" bicycle training Level 1 Year 4 (age 8/9) and Level 2 Year 6 (age 10/11) The school also takes part annually in the Golden Boot Challenge: an inter-class challenge to encourage more sustainable travel to and from school.

#### 3.2 Suggested Highway Improvements

The following highway improvements are suggested to improve the pedestrian, cycling or scooter facilities for pupils arriving and leaving Westward Preparatory School.

<b>Suggestion</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
Consider a new pedestrian island and tactile paving on the current pedestrian desire line for pedestrians, pupils and cyclists accessing Westward Preparatory School.	A pedestrian refuge would assist the pedestrians crossing to access both Westward School and the Drs Surgery. It may also act as a traffic calming feature and help manage speeds.
<b>Estimated Cost: £20,000</b>	
<b>Total Cost:£20,000</b>	

### **4. CONSULTATIONS**

- 4.1 As part of the Road Safety Outside Schools policy process, the school and the divisional member have been informed of the site visit and resulting report.

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

- 5.1 Any recommendations for engineering measures to improve this location are subject to funding being available from the Elmbridge Local Committee, any highway infrastructure improvements can be added to the list of possible future highway improvement schemes for prioritisation alongside other requests for schemes within Elmbridge. This will take into account the likely effect of the proposals on congestion, accessibility, safety, environment and economy (CASEE). Officers will also seek any alternative sources of funding that may arise, for example as a result of property development in the local area. Any recommended school travel plan and road safety education activities could be delivered using existing staff resources.

<b>6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:</b>
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- 6.1 This report has been created in accordance with the council's "Road Safety Outside Schools" Policy which has been subject to Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment. Highway improvements are subject to independent road safety audit which takes into account the needs of all road users including those with mobility impairment.

<b>7. LOCALISM:</b>
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- 7.1 A number of the suggested improvements would benefit those choosing sustainable modes of transport. If these were to be implemented they might encourage more walking, cycling and scooting to school and help reduce car journeys, anti-social parking and congestion which have a negative impact on the local community.

<b>8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:</b>
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Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	See below
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	See below
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications
Public Health	See below

- 6.1 Crime and Disorder implications Proposals deriving from the investigation could contribute to reduce anti-social driving.
- 6.2 Sustainability implications Proposals deriving from the investigation could reduce fear of road danger and encourage more sustainable modes of travel. This would result in fewer carbon emissions and less air pollution.
- 6.3 Public Health implications Proposals deriving from the investigation could reduce the risk of road collisions and support active travel which improves the health of the participants. Reduced reliance on motorised road travel reduces emissions that are detrimental to air quality and public health.

<b>9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:</b>
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- 9.1 Concerns have been raised by residents and Westward Preparatory School through a petition over the safety of children arriving and leaving the school. Investigation has been undertaken in accordance with the county council's "Road Safety Outside Schools" policy. This has included assessment of the history of road collisions, site observations and assessment of the school travel plan and road safety education delivered by the schools.

- 9.2 It is recommended that the highway measure described within this report are added to the list of possible future highway improvements for Elmbridge, and prioritised using CASEE. The local committee will then decide whether to allocate funding from their future annual budget for highway improvements.

<b>10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:</b>
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- 10.1 The Safer Travel Team will work with the school to introduce the recommended Modeshift STARS Travel Plan. Engineering improvements will be added to the running list of improvement schemes.
- 10.2 The local Area Highways Team will add the proposals to the list of possible schemes for the local committee to consider funding. It may also be possible to seek developer contributions to help fund the proposals.

Edward Cowley – Safer Travel Officer, Road Safety and Active Travel Group

**Consulted:**

During this process the following people have been consulted:

Divisional Member

School Leadership Team

Surrey Police Road Safety Manager

Local Area Highways Team

Road Safety Engineering Team Surrey County Council

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