

Seven Hills Road

Shared Footway / Cycleway

Feasibility Report

MARCH 2020



Project Title: **Seven Hills Road, Cobham**
Shared Footway / Cycleway

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Prepared By: Andy Curtis

Authorised By: Jamie Daly

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1. INTRODUCTION:

The B365 Seven Hills Road carries large volumes of traffic, with a significant proportion of HGVs. It is not an appealing route for cyclists, and due to the volume of traffic in both directions, there is often limited opportunities for drivers to pass safely. Consequently cyclists have been observed riding on the existing footway.

Surrey County Council has been asked to investigate improving provision for cyclists. There is an existing footway running the full length of the eastern side, and due to a lack of available road width, a shared footway / cycleway is realistically the only option, and is therefore the one considered in this report.

2. SITE ANALYSIS:

Seven Hills Road is a 'B'-classified road and acts as a Main Distributor within Surrey's road network. It links the A317 Queen's Road in the north to the A245 Byfleet Road in the south (and in turn to the A3), and is an important and well used route. The site location is shown at *Figure 1*.

Seven Hills Road is fairly rural in nature, with very few properties directly fronting the carriageway and only a handful of side roads / communal accesses. It is subject to a speed limit of 40mph.

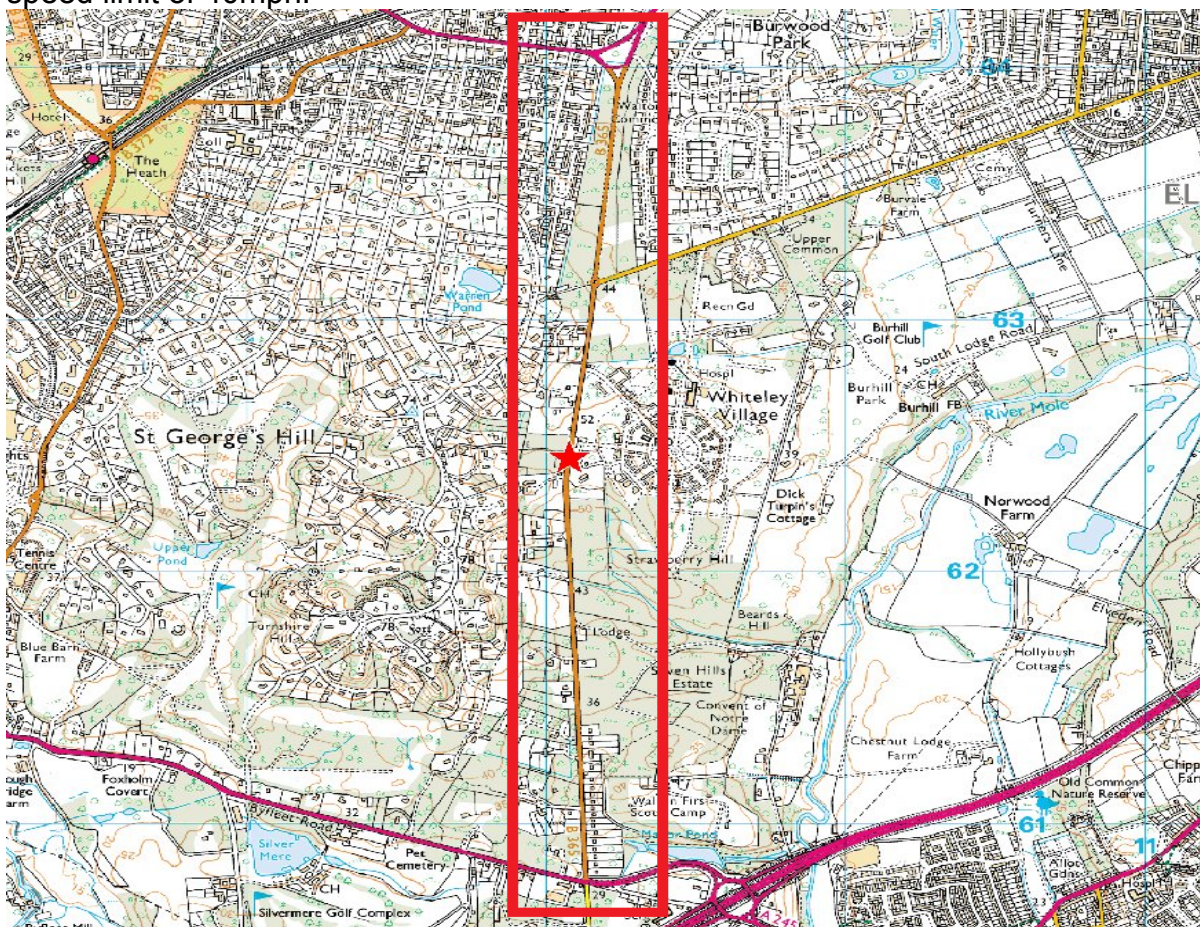


Figure 1 – site location

3. DATA COLLECTION:

3.1 Highway Extents

The Highway Extents along Seven Hills Road are shown on the plan in Appendix A, and are represented by the areas shaded yellow.

Currently there is encroachment onto the public highway, by approximately seven properties. The encroachment is in the form of illuminated and non-illuminated posts, fences and hedges. This is shown shaded red on Drg No. PC0934-03.

3.2 Personal Injury Collision Data

An assessment has been made of the personal injury collisions to cyclists and pedestrians for the study area for the last 3 full years and the part of 2019 where data is available, giving the period between 1st January 2016 and 31st March 2019. When the police attend personal injury collisions they assess and log the likely contributory factors. The Police and Surrey County Council do not collect or hold 'damage only' collision data, and therefore we are unable to report or comment on these.

- October 2016; Queens Road roundabout between Seven Hills Road and Queens Road westbound; serious injury to cyclist; cyclist on roundabout collided with vehicle; no recorded contributory factors
- June 2017: near properties Longwood, Redwood; serious injury to cyclist; cyclist struck from behind by vehicle; recorded contributory factor of 'poor turn or manoeuvre'
- September 2017; Queens Road roundabout between Seven Hills Road and Queens Road westbound; slight injury to cyclist; cyclist on roundabout collided with vehicle entering the roundabout; no recorded contributory factors

The recorded data is not indicative of a pattern of incidents relating to either the highway layout or driver behaviour.

4. DISCUSSION AND OPTIONS

4.1 Design and Road Safety Audit

The feasibility designs are based on Ordnance Survey mapping. Detailed design would determine the exact highway widths available via topographical surveys as necessary. This would allow for confirmation of turning movements and available highway space.

An independent road safety audit has been undertaken on a number of the options where changes to the highway layout are proposed. Comments are included within the discussion of the options. Further independent safety audits would take place on any options that were to be progressed

4.2 Option 1 Do Nothing

This option maintains the existing arrangement at the site. While this option provides no improvements, it can be reasonably be considered due to the low pedestrian /cyclist presence and the collision history. However the importance of Seven Hills Road on the strategic network and the high traffic volumes mean the potential for personal injury would remain with this option. A proportionate improvement scheme would therefore be justified at this location.

4.3 Option 2 – 1.9m Shared footway/cycle way with additional highway improvements

(refer to drawing PC0934-03)

The scheme as designed would involve the siding-out of the majority of Seven Hills Road, to expose the existing footway. As far as can be determined, the existing footway width switches between 1.7m and 1.9m. Current advice states that the preferred minimum width for an unsegregated shared facility is 3.0m. As Seven Hills Road, currently, is not highly trafficked by pedestrians and cyclists a width of 2.0m would be suitable. For budgetary purposes a concession has been made in the design to retain the sections that are currently 1.9m wide, though the 1.7m wide sections would be widened to 2.0m. If additional finances are available, then widening to a minimum of 2.0m throughout would be preferable, and if usage were to increase then the facility should be widened farther to reflect this. To provide a facility of 2m or more, the encroachment by adjacent landowners would need to be addressed.

The road safety audit recommended a shared footway/cycle way of at least 2m due the risk of pedestrian/cyclist conflict, when opposing users attempt to pass each other or where cyclists and pedestrians are likely to congregate when waiting at an uncontrolled crossing.

There are various locations throughout the length of the proposed shared footway where vegetation at the rear of the footway encroaches the footway, reducing the

width of the proposed shared footway, forcing pedestrians/cyclists closer to the front edge of the footway. The road safety audit recommended a regular programme of regular maintenance should be adopted after construction to ensure the maximum footway width is available.

At various points along the existing footway, there are dropped kerbs with associated tactile paving. These would be replaced as necessary to make sure they were suitable for use by cyclists. An existing drainage issue at Chestnut Avenue would also be addressed by a slight reprofiling of the carriageway.

To help cyclists, travelling west to south, bypass the roundabout and avoid the need to mix with vehicular traffic, the footway on the western side of the Queen's Road roundabout would be widened. This would also help those travelling south to west to stay off-carriageway and away from roundabout traffic.

To further assist cyclists the use of Queen's Place has been considered. Queens Place runs parallel to Queens Road on its east side, between the roundabout junctions with Seven Hills Road and Ashley Road/Burwood Park. Connecting Queen's Place to the public highway would involve a loss of natural screening between Queen's Place and Queen's Road, and would obviously involve an additional cost. As Queen's Place is a private road, its usage would have to be by agreement with the landowner(s), so costing this and determining the practicalities is outside the scope of this report. The provision of a marked, on-carriageway cycle lane is to be considered as part of the proposals to adjust the existing road markings associated with Queen's Road/Seven Hills Road roundabout (a scheme promoted by Surrey County Council's Road Safety Team for the financial year 2019-20).

At the southern end of the scheme, a small section of footway would need to be constructed on the western side just north of the signalised junction at Byfleet Road. This would allow northbound cyclists the opportunity to get out of the line of traffic and wait to cross to the eastern footway / cycleway. To assist cyclists crossing Seven Hills Road, a 'Keep Clear' marking would be provided to create a gap in queuing traffic. Southbound cyclists would rejoin the carriageway in order to negotiate the traffic signals at Byfleet Road.

The road safety audit recommended the following improvements at the Seven Hills Road junction with Byfleet Road to assist cyclists accessing the shared footway:

- For eastbound Byfleet Road cyclists provide a shared footway on the northern side of Byfleet Road prior to the signal junction and provide a length of shared footway within the existing Seven Hills Road verge to extend to the proposed crossing section.
- For westbound Byfleet Road Cyclists provide crossing facilities to assist cyclists to access the proposed shared footway
- For southbound Seven Hills Road cyclists, extend the proposed shared footway to the existing junction with controlled crossing facilities.

Highways England have plans to improve the section of Byfleet Road between Seven Hills Road and Painshill interchange, so there may be scope to link both schemes and incorporate the above recommendations. Should improvements for cyclists be part of their proposals.

Pros

- Provision of off-carriageway facility for cyclists, thus removing potential conflict with motorised vehicles.
- All works are within the Public Highway so no effect on private land.

Cons

- Current scheme is not designed to accommodate cyclists if usage increases significantly.
- A programme of regular maintenance is needed to ensure the maximum available footway width is accessible.

Guide Price 1.9m shared use footway £190,000
2.0m shared use footway £240,000

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The importance of Seven Hills Road on the strategic network and the high traffic volumes mean the potential for personal injury would remain if no improvement measures were undertaken. Option 2 is recommended, a proportionate improvement scheme would therefore be justified at this location.

6. APPENDICES

- **Appendix A - Highway Extents**
- **Appendix B – Drawing PC0934-03 – Feasibility Design**

Appendix A

