

## Mole Valley Local Committee – 10 November 2021

### Written Public Questions

#### Question from Mr Sven Hughes

Would the Committee agree that, assessed based on the evidence as presented within the document, 'Guildford Road / School Lane', a refresh of existing signage and road markings in the specified 'area of interest' (Westcott) would be appropriate? And, assuming that mean speeds (around the school turning and through Westcott) are not subsequently reduced, then one or more of the suggested behavioural interventions may wish to be considered by the Committee?

*Mr Sven Hughes submitted a document (included as Annex A) to the Local Committee that raises a number of road safety concerns about the A25 Guildford Road, Westcott, in the vicinity of the junction with School Lane.*

#### Response

The A25 Guildford Road in Westcott forms part of the principal road network that links Dorking and Guildford. The speed limit of the section of the A25 Guildford Road through Westcott is 30mph. A number of safety concerns have been raised that relate to the A25 in the vicinity of School Lane. School Lane is a private road that is a cul-de-sac and which has a public footpath running over it. Surrey Hills Primary School is located at the southern end of School Lane away from the A25 Guildford Road.

There is an existing signalised pedestrian crossing on the A25 Guildford Road to the west of School Lane. The pavement on the north side of the A25 is at the same level as the road for a distance of approximately 20m east of the pedestrian crossing. East of this the pavement is on a bank that is higher than the A25 Guildford Road, and it is separated from the road by a fence and vegetation.

Surrey County Council has a Road Safety Outside Schools policy that sets out how safety concerns around schools can be investigated. The policy can be downloaded from the Surrey County Council website by using the following link:

[Road safety outside schools - Surrey County Council \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/road-safety-outside-schools)

A Road Safety Assessment as outlined in the Policy was carried out on the A25 Guildford Road in Westcott in December 2014. A number of recommendations were made as a result of that assessment and some works were carried out as follows:

- A wooden post, possibly part of an old pub sign, that restricted the width of the pavement near the signalised pedestrian crossing was removed.
- The existing triangular school warning signs were replaced with school warning signs on yellow backing boards to make them more visible to drivers.
- Additional lengths of pedestrian guard railing were provided on the southern pavement of the A25 Guildford Road to the east of the pedestrian crossing.

A number of safety concerns have been raised in the document that was sent to the Local Committee and these will be answered in the order set out in the document:

## ITEM 4

1. SLOW road marking – there is a SLOW road marking on the eastbound carriageway of the A25 Guildford Road in the vicinity of School Lane. It is suggested that this marking is not effective as it is just after the junction and that it be moved to the west of the junction.

Moving this SLOW marking as is suggested does not prioritise over other similar requests in the Mole Valley Area. For this reason, there are no current plans to change the location of this SLOW marking.

2. School Warning signs – the school warning signs either side of school lane do not face oncoming traffic and have not been maintained.

Thank you for drawing these matters to our attention. The school warning sign to the west of school lane has been slightly turned round and the school warning sign to the east of school lane is dirty. We will arrange for these signs to be turned round and cleaned in due course, but we do not have a timescale for these works at this time. Residents may find it helpful to report such matters in future on the Surrey County Council website using the link below:

[Surrey County Council - Tell us about a highway issue \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/tell-us-about-a-highway-issue)

3. School Lane sign – the School Lane sign is barely legible and hidden in the verge undergrowth.

There is a historic sign saying School Lane at the rear of the pavement on the north side of the A25 Guildford Road, Westcott. This is sited on the same post as the public footpath sign. The yellow backed school warning signs are the correct signs to advise drivers of children going to school. Should the School Lane sign be beyond maintainable repair it would not be replaced by Surrey Highways, as this is a historic road name plate.

4. Dropped kerb – seemingly authorised crossing point near School Lane.

There are historic dropped kerbs on the pavement on the south side of the A25 Guildford Road just to the west of the School Lane junction. There is no footway at road level opposite this dropped kerb as the footway is on a bank that is higher than the road. There is no tactile paving associated with this dropped kerb. These dropped kerbs do not form part of a crossing point on the A25 Guildford Road at this location. There are no current plans to make any changes to these dropped kerbs.

5. Lack of signage at Prince of Wales pub crossing.

It is suggested that direction signs are provided on the pavement north of the signalised pedestrian crossing to direct school pupils and their parents accessing the school across the crossing. We are not able to attach signs to the posts with the traffic signal heads for reasons of driver distraction. This crossing is for all pedestrians using whatever route that they chose to take to reach their destination. The provision of pedestrian routing signs on the pavement of the A25 Guildford Road in this location are not currently prioritised, as we seek to minimise additional signs wherever possible to reduce clutter and distraction on the highway.

6. Road markings – the road markings on the A25 through Westcott village are worn.

Thank you for letting us know that the road markings in Westcott Village are worn. We will arrange for all the road markings within the section of the A25 Guildford Road

in Westcott that has a 30mph speed limit to be inspected. Those markings that are worn will be added to a list to be refreshed as necessary. Please be aware that this work is weather dependent, and work will be batched with other markings in the area to provide best value for money. Therefore, it is not possible to provide a timeframe for this work at this time. Residents may find it helpful to report such matters in future on the Surrey County Council website using the link below:

[Surrey County Council - Tell us about a highway issue \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk)

7. Visibility of signs – several of the key traffic signs are obscured by trees/foliage/lamp posts.

Thank you for letting us know of your concerns regarding the visibility of signs. The road narrows sign shown in the photograph provided is located close to a lamp column. This sign is a sign for road traffic and is visible to road users as they are looking at the sign from a different angle to that of a pedestrian. It is acknowledged that in rural areas vegetation can grow to partially obscure signs. Some of the vegetation at the side of the road is in private ownership. We will arrange for all the traffic signs on the section of the A25 Guildford Road, Westcott that has a 30mph speed limit to be inspected and any required work will be programmed. It is not possible at this time to provide a timescale for any works. Residents may find it helpful to report such matters in future on the Surrey County Council website using the link below:

[Surrey County Council - Tell us about a highway issue \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk)

8. School sign at School Lane entrance – this sign is ineffective at influencing speed of approaching traffic.

The sign that is in place at the junction of School Lane and the A25 Guildford Road, Westcott is on privately owned land and has been installed by the school. There is a street name plate for School Lane that is the responsibility of Mole Valley District Council. Signs of this nature are not intended to reduce traffic speeds.

9. Recommended Actions Steps 1 and 3 – Community Awareness Campaign

It is suggested that a refresh of the road markings is accompanied by a local awareness campaign and a reporting back mailshot or local meeting explains reasons for a signing refresh. Thank you again for reporting your areas of concern with the road markings and signs. We have passed your suggestion for a local awareness campaign to our Community Partnerships and Engagement Group for consideration for a future campaign.

10. Recommended Actions Step 2 – traffic speeds

Thank you for your suggestion that the Westcott Community Speed Watch team provide an average speed assessment. The average mean speed of traffic is used to assess the suitability of a speed limit as detailed in our policy “Setting Local Speed Limits”. Data from Community Speed Watches is valuable in determining the higher speeds of some drivers. However, because faster vehicles are selected by the volunteers it does not give an average mean speed.

11. Recommended Actions Step 4 (i) – bollards with pictures of children attached are provided to reduce traffic speeds

## ITEM 4

It may be possible to have temporary moveable bollards of this nature immediately outside the school entrance to be brought in and out at the beginning and end of the school day, provided that they do not obstruct access. However, and we appreciate that this will be disappointing, bollards with signs of this nature are not suitable on an A road as they are distracting to drivers.

12. Recommended Actions Step 4 (ii) – provide multi-coloured pedestrian guard railing on A25 pavement opposite junction with School Lane.

Surrey County Council carry out risk assessments when installing new pedestrian guard railing. Pedestrian guard railings do not resist impact from moving vehicles, and can also restrict the available width of a pavement. The approach taken is to only install new pedestrian guard railing where there is a risk of pedestrians running into the road from an entrance way or similar. This is not the case here and therefore new pedestrian guard railing will not be installed on the northern pavement of the A25 Guildford Road opposite School Lane.

13. Recommended Actions Step 4 (iii) – use multi coloured brickwork around the edges/entrance to school lane

The junction of School Lane and the A25 is within a conservation area. The suggested change in colour of a private wall would be a planning matter for Mole Valley District Council.

14. Recommended Actions Step 5 – lay coloured surfacing at the changes in speed limit at either end of Westcott village

Thank you for your suggestion of coloured surfacing at the changes in speed limit at either end of Westcott village. Our approach is only to install coloured surfacing to highlight a speed limit change where there is evidence that such measures would lead to better compliance with the speed limit. Our approach is also not to install this type of material on a busy A road due to the ongoing maintenance costs. However, we will discuss this request with the Police to seek their views.

15. Recommended Actions Step 6 – relocate SLOW road marking on eastbound carriageway further to the west of School Lane.

Moving this SLOW marking as is suggested does not prioritise over other similar requests in the Mole Valley Area. For this reason, there are no current plans to change the location of this SLOW marking.

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Contact Officer: Philippa Gates, Traffic Engineer

**Annexes:**

Annex A – Guildford Road School Lane