

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**LOCAL COMMITTEE SPELTHORNE****DATE: 30 SEPTEMBER 2013****LEAD OFFICER: NICK HEALEY, AREA TEAM MANAGER (NE)****SUBJECT: FELTHAM HILL ROAD ZEBRA CROSSING****DIVISION: ASHFORD****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

In October 2012 Committee authorised the advertisement of the Legal Notice for the Feltham Hill Road Zebra Crossing, and to delegate authority to the Area Team Manager, in consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Divisional Member to consider any representations made to the Notice.

In anticipation of the Legal Notice local residents were consulted, and a number of representations have been received. A number of residents were opposed to the proposed crossing, and therefore the project (including the Legal Notice) was put on hold until after the Local Elections to avoid any breach of Purdah regulations.

Since the election the scheme has been reviewed with the Divisional Member, and the detailed design for the new crossing has been modified slightly in response to the representations received. Local residents have been updated with the modified detailed design, and have been informed that the matter would be considered by Committee at this meeting.

This report is intended to facilitate consideration of residents' representations by the Local Committee, and recommendations are made to bring the project to a conclusion.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Spelthorne) is asked to:

- (i) Authorise the Area Team Manager in consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and relevant Divisional Member(s), to advertise the Legal Notice for the proposed new Zebra Crossing in Feltham Hill Road, as originally authorised by Committee in October 2012;
- (ii) Authorise the construction of the Zebra Crossing, in the event that no new concerns are raised in representations made to the Legal Notice;
- (iii) Authorise the Area Team Manager in consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman, and relevant Divisional Member, to consider any new concerns raised in representation to the Legal Notices, and decide whether or not to proceed to construction in the light of the new concerns raised;
- (iv) Receive a report to a future meeting of the Committee detailing any new concerns raised and how the consideration of any such new concerns influenced the decision on whether to construct the scheme.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The recommendations are intended to bring this project to a definitive conclusion.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 In 2003 a Safe Routes to Schools study was completed in Ashford, which identified a demand to improve pedestrian crossing facilities in Feltham Hill Road. This study was reported to Committee in June 2003.
- 1.2 In 2005 the detailed design commenced for a new Zebra Crossing in Feltham Hill Road in the vicinity of Park Road. The choice of a location by Park Road was intended to serve children en route to Echelford Primary School. Two options were initially considered for the location of the new Zebra Crossing: one to the east of Park Road outside number 165, and another to the west of Park Road outside number 148. The site to the west of Park Road was selected, as the Road Safety Audit from the time concluded that this was the most favourable location of the two considered.
- 1.3 Residents were informed about the proposal for the Zebra Crossing in December 2005, and the Legal Notice for the crossing advertised in January 2006. The new Zebra Crossing was due to be constructed in Spring 2006 when two things happened at around the same time:
- Officers recall that a high voltage electricity cable was discovered, and the then Surrey County Council's contractor was unable to find a method of working to mitigate the risk of a cable strike.
 - A number of local residents objected to the proposed crossing, and the process that had led up to its planned construction.
- 1.4 Three petitions were received by the Local Committee in February 2006. The signatories opposed the new crossing, and raised concerns over the relocation of a bus stop. These petitions were noted by Committee at the time, but there is no suggestion in the record of that meeting that Committee intended to abandon the scheme.
- 1.5 A formal complaint was raised subsequent to Committee's meeting in February 2006 and reached Stage 3 of the complaints procedure that was in place at the time. The complaint hearing was cancelled at the request of the complainant on the understanding that the scheme had been withdrawn from the construction programme. A letter dated 6th June 2006 to the complainant states: *"I can confirm, as the Area Transportation Director for the North East, that the proposed Safe Routes to School scheme primarily consisting of the introduction of a zebra crossing located approximately 20 metres to the west of Park Road has been withdrawn from the construction programme."* The same letter goes on to state: *"I have also recommended that any further proposals for a Safe Routes to School scheme in this vicinity will require a consultation process with local residents over the proposed option(s), to enable positive and negative feedback to be collated and analysed."* The scheme was not abandoned indefinitely; it was anticipated that further proposals for a similar scheme in the same vicinity might come forward at a later date.
- 1.6 In September 2006 a further petition was received in support of the new Zebra crossing. In response to this petition it was reported to Committee that the original scheme had been "withdrawn from the construction programme" in the context of representations made by residents subsequent to Committee's meeting in February 2006. The recommendation to Committee

in September 2006 was that “a scheme should be reconsidered and any future proposal would include consultation with local residents”.

- 1.7 In March 2010 another petition was received requesting provision of a new pedestrian crossing in Feltham Hill Road near Poplar Road or Chessholme Road. This petition was organised by two Bishop Wand School pupils.
- 1.8 The opportunity to reconsider the original scheme, and to provide a new Zebra Crossing on Feltham Hill Road, has arisen out of an agreement in 2009 under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act (s106 agreement), relating to the development of land at the former British Telecom Site in Poplar Road. The s106 agreement provided for monies to be contributed by the developer for “the design and construction of a pedestrian crossing on Feltham Hill Road, Ashford”.
- 1.9 Therefore a detailed design was commissioned, and in October 2012 the Local Committee was asked to authorise the advertisement of a Legal Notice for the introduction of a new Zebra Crossing in Feltham Hill Road, in more or less the same location as the original scheme.
- 1.10 In anticipation of the Legal Notice, officers wrote to local residents on 2nd April 2013, and provided a copy of the detailed design drawing. Residents were invited to contact the County Council to express their views about the proposed scheme.
- 1.11 A number of residents were opposed to the proposed crossing, and therefore the project (including the Legal Notice) was put on hold until after the Local Elections to avoid any breach of Purdah regulations.
- 1.12 Since the election the scheme has been reviewed with the Divisional Member, and the detailed design for the new crossing has been modified slightly in response to the representations received. Local residents have been updated with the modified detailed design, and have been informed that their representations would be considered formally by Committee at this meeting.
- 1.13 The consultation with residents in Spring 2013 and the reporting of the representations to this Committee meeting for consideration discharges the recommendation arising out of the original scheme from 2005 / 2006, to include consultation with local residents in the development of any reconsidered scheme.

2. ANALYSIS:

- 2.1 The representations made by local residents have been reproduced in Annexe A, together with officer comments. Among the representations are residents who support the proposed crossing and those that are opposed. Members are also reminded of the supportive and opposing petitions that were received in 2006, and that a further petition was received in 2010 requesting a new pedestrian crossing facility nearby.
- 2.2 The concerns raised include:
- Safety concerns over the location of the new crossing, and the ambient speed of traffic;

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- The justification for the new crossing, its anticipated usage, whether another location would be more beneficial, and the detrimental effect on parking;
- The suitability of the proposed new location for the bus stop, including its proximity to Park Road, its distance from Metcalf Road, and the detrimental effect on adjacent house values;
- Detailed concerns of the lengths and heights of kerbs adjacent to the proposed new crossing, and the locations of utility inspection covers.

2.3 Members are encouraged to read the representations in detail, together with the officer comments, which are presented in Annexe A.

2.4 Nothing raised in any of the representations amounts to a compelling technical reason not to proceed with the scheme. However Members should be aware that the concerns held by those that made representations are strongly held, and should be given due consideration.

2.5 Surrey Police were asked to provide formal comments on the proposed scheme. Comments were received from Graham Cannon, Road Safety & Traffic Management Officer: *“Surrey Police have no objection to the proposed new Zebra Crossing. I am mindful of the concern that the proposed new location of the bus stop may compromise forward visibility of vehicles exiting Park Road. I agree with this comment to some degree although it would be no worse than the current location of the bus stop. In addition if the bus stop was located close to the crossing, pedestrians would be more likely to use the crossing to cross the road.”*

2.6 The Governors of Echelford School commented on the proposed scheme as follows:

Dear Sir/Madam,
The Governors of Echelford Primary School fully support the proposal for a pedestrian crossing in Feltham Hill Road near the top of Park Road. This crossing will address a long overdue safety issue not only for the children and parents of Echelford School but also at least 3 other local Primary Schools.
Thank you for your consideration of this matter.
Yours faithfully,
Wendy Kislingbury (Mrs)
Chair of Governors
Echelford Primary School

2.7 The detailed design for the proposed new Zebra Crossing is now complete, and is included in Annexe B. The design has been modified slightly in response to representations raised: the crossing itself has been moved slightly to the west, and ‘SLOW’ markings have been included on the approaches.

2.8 The next step would be to advertise the Legal Notice required before introduction of a new Zebra Crossing and consider any new concerns raised in representations to the Legal Notice. A number of residents have already submitted detailed concerns in response to the consultation in Spring 2013, and these have been answered as detailed in Annexe A. It is recommended

that if no new concerns are raised in representations to the Legal Notice, that officers proceed directly to construction of the crossing.

2.9 If new concerns are raised in representations to the Legal Notice, it is recommended that these be considered by the Area Team Manager in consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and relevant Divisional Member, and that any decision take account of the new concerns raised. Officers would not anticipate any new significant matters to be raised, given the very sincere and thorough responses to the consultation in Spring 2013.

2.10 It is recommended that if any new concerns are raised, that the impact of these concerns and their influence on the decision making be reported back to a future Committee meeting for information.

2.11 It is now for Committee to decide, in the light of the representations made by local residents, whether or not to proceed with the proposed new Zebra Crossing in Feltham Hill Road.

3. OPTIONS:

3.1 Committee may decide to proceed with the proposed Zebra Crossing in Feltham Hill Road, in accordance with the officer recommendation, or not to proceed with the scheme at the present time. Members could also consider whether a different location should be considered as an alternative to the current scheme, or in addition to the current scheme, subject to funding being made available for an additional crossing.

3.2 Members should note that any decision made today does not prejudice the reconsideration of a similar scheme at the same site in the future.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

4.1 As detailed above.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 There is a sum of approximately £28,000 arising out of the s106 agreement mentioned above to deliver this scheme.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

6.1 It is an objective of Surrey Highways to treat all users of the public highway equally and with understanding.

7. LOCALISM:

7.1 The Local Committee is encouraged to decide whether or not to proceed with this scheme taking into account the advantages and disadvantages to the local community.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

8.1 A well-managed highway network can contribute to reduction in crime and disorder as well as improve peoples' perception of crime.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

9.1 The proposed new Zebra Crossing is considered by some to be a highly beneficial addition to the local Highway infrastructure, providing a much needed pedestrian crossing facility. Conversely the proposed new Zebra Crossing is considered by others to be poorly justified, dangerous and detrimental to the local community.

9.2 From a technical point of view the scheme is feasible. It has been subject to the normal scrutiny of Road Safety Audit, and there are no significant technical or safety concerns. Therefore the officer recommendation is to proceed with the proposed scheme.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

10.1 If the recommendations were to be approved by Committee the Area Team Manager would advertise the Legal Notice for the proposed new Zebra Crossing.

Contact Officer: Nick Healey, Area Team Manager (NE)

Consulted: Residents near the site of the proposed crossing, Surrey Police.

Annexes: Two.

Sources/background papers: Various historical reports to this Committee, together with various correspondence dating from the time of the previous proposal for a crossing in this location.
