

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL



LOCAL COMMITTEE (MOLE VALLEY)

DATE: 9 DECEMBER 2020

SUBJECT: IMPROVE SAFETY OF THE NEWDIGATE ROAD FOR OUR SCHOOL AND CHILDREN

DIVISION: DORKING RURAL

PETITION DETAILS:

Mole Valley Local Committee Petition (9 December) Summary:

Improve safety on the Newdigate Road for our school and children.

We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to improve safety on The Newdigate Road. We need better signage, better parking facilities, traffic calming measures and a safe place for our children to cross the road. We do not want to risk another accident on the Newdigate Road.

RESPONSE:

School road safety is a frequently expressed concern. At school drop off and pick up times the roads in the immediate vicinity of schools, such as Newdigate Road, are especially busy. This is especially the case at this time when COVID19 restrictions have meant that passenger capacity on school buses has been reduced, and more children are being taken by car than at times when there are no COVID19 restrictions in place. During the school drop off and pick up times the added congestion can lead to frustration from motorists and residents.

Surrey County Council (SCC) has developed a policy which describes the process used for investigating and responding to concerns about school road safety. Our aim is to reduce the risk of collisions and make the road feel safer, to encourage more people to consider walking or cycling to and from school.

Surrey County Council's Safer Travel Team have investigated the concerns raised in the petition above using the Road Safety Outside Schools Policy. This process involved site visits which looked at the physical highway features outside The Weald Primary School. An internal audit was carried out with the school's management team to look at what the school does in order to promote road safety and sustainable travel to their pupils and wider school community.

Due to COVID19 restrictions on the number of people that can attend site visits, several site visits were carried out by individual officers separately, including members of SCC's Road Safety Team, SCC's Active Travel Team, SCC's South East Area Highways Team and Surrey Police. These visits were carried out both during the morning school drop off and afternoon school pick up.

During these site visits it was observed that immediately outside the school there are yellow school keep clear markings, there is a school warning sign to the west of the

school's pedestrian entrance, with a vehicle entrance to the east. The pedestrian entrance is protected by guard railing. Parents park on the same side as the school thus there is little to no crossing of Newdigate Road. There are school Zig Zags at the entrance to the school drive and white T bar markings across the mouth of a number of drives which are well respected by parents. This helps to provide unofficial priority give-ways, up to a point. However, when parents leave, the relaxed nature of the unofficial system is reduced and although speed was not excessive, it was seen at times, as inappropriate.

Following the site visits a Road Safety Outside Schools report was compiled, containing results of the road safety education assessment and any potential highway improvements following the observations carried out during the site visits. The report is attached in **Annex 1**. This report was sent to the Divisional Member, the District Councillor and the school head.

Recommendations for engineering measures, following the observations carried out during the site visit were as follows;

An additional parking restriction marking further east, to deter parking but allow a small section of carriageway to assist / facilitate the unofficial priority give way, to assist by creating an additional area to give way. This will slightly lengthen the parking queue length in Newdigate Rd but could act to assist visibility for parents / children crossing to access the park. This is to be investigated by the parking team.

Discuss with Kings Head public house to allow parking in rear car park.

The proposed engineering measures would improve the safety of pupils walking to and from The Weald Primary School and could provide extra parking provision. These measures would help to reduce antisocial parking and so would reduce risk of collisions. The school travel plan and road safety education improvements recommended within the attached Road Safety Outside Schools report would also help to improve road safety.

RECOMMENDATION

The Local Committee is asked to note:

1. Several site visits were carried out by officers from SCC's Road Safety Team, SCC's Active Travel Team, SCC's South East Area Highways Team and Surrey Police. These visits were carried out both during the morning school drop off and afternoon school pick up.
2. The recommendation within the Road Safety Outside Schools report regarding an additional parking restriction and that this will be further investigated by the parking team.
3. The Safer Travel Team will work with the school to introduce the recommended additional road safety education activities and school travel plan and assist with the negotiation of using the pubs car park as a park and stride location.

Contact Officer:

Anne-Marie Hannam, Senior Traffic Engineer
