

LOCAL COMMITTEE (SURREY HEATH)

DATE: 24 FEBRUARY 2022

LEAD OFFICER: ZENA CURRY, HIGHWAY ENGAGEMENT & COMMISSIONING MANAGER

SUBJECT: SAFETY ASSESSMENT FOR ROADS AROUND RAVENSCOTE, TOMLINSCOTE AND ST AUGUSTINE'S SCHOOLS

DIVISION: HEATHERSIDE & PARKSIDE/FRIMLEY GREEN & MYTCHETT

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

In response to concerns raised by parents, a safety assessment has been undertaken for the roads around the Ravenscote, Tomlinscote and St Augustine's schools.

This report details the findings and recommendations of the assessment.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Surrey Heath) is asked to note:

- (i) The findings and recommendations of the safety assessment.
- (ii) That the following items have been added to Surrey Heath scheme list and will be assessed, alongside other proposals on the list, for inclusion in future Surrey Heath Local Committee programmes of work.
 - a proposal to introduce a signal-controlled pedestrian crossing at the existing speed table adjacent to the Ravenscote school gate in Upper Chobham Road.
 - a feasibility study into the provision of improved pedestrian crossing facilities in Old Bisley Road (near its junction with Upper Chobham Road and Chobham Road).
 - a feasibility study into the introduction of a 20mph zone in the area around the schools (with appropriate supporting features such as traffic calming and parking management measures)
- (iii) The above proposals have also been added to the Road Safety Outside Schools scheme list to be considered for inclusion in works programmes promoted by the county council's road safety team.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The highway measures recommended by the assessment would help to reduce vehicle speeds and make it safer and easier for parents and children to walk, cycle and scoot to school. Encouraging an increase in these sustainable modes of transport would help contribute towards a reduction in car journeys and congestion.

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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 A petition was presented to the Surrey Heath Local Committee at its meeting held on 1 October 2018 by parents of pupils at Ravenscote Junior School requesting the introduction of either a pelican crossing or a Zebra crossing in Upper Chobham Road (at the location of the existing uncontrolled pedestrian crossing point near the school gate).
- 1.2 The response to the petition indicated there were no proposals to introduce either a Zebra or signal controlled crossing at the time, and highlighted that a significant number of measures had previously been introduced in Upper Chobham Road to help improve road safety and accessibility for pedestrians. It also explained that the following additional road safety improvements were proposed:
 - The introduction of a speed table at the uncontrolled crossing point near the school gate together with speed cushions on either approach.
 - The introduction of speed cushions on either approach to the pedestrian island in Old Bisley Road near its junction with Upper Chobham Road and Chobham Road.
- 1.3 The above measures were installed during the 2019 school summer holiday. Following their introduction, parents have continued to campaign for the introduction of either a signal-controlled crossing or a Zebra crossing.
- 1.4 In a further response presented to the Local Committee on 25 February 2021, it was advised that a detailed assessment of the impacts of the traffic calming measures installed would need to be undertaken before determining whether the introduction of further measures should be considered. This assessment was expected to be undertaken later in the year.
- 1.5 Prior to the assessment being completed, a distressing incident occurred in which a pupil walking to Tomlinscote School was seriously injured after being struck by a car in Old Bisley Road.
- 1.6 Understandably, the incident resulted in significant concerns being raised about safety. As a result, it was decided that the proposed assessment should be expanded to consider safety more generally in the roads around the Ravenscote, Tomlinscote and St Augustine's schools (which are located close to each other).
- 1.7 This assessment has now been completed, and the following were undertaken as part of it:
 - Officers met with representatives from the schools to identify the specific concerns they had about safety.
 - Specialist road safety officers from Surrey County Council and Surrey Police carried out site observations in Upper Chobham Road, Old Bisley Road, Chobham Road and Tomlinscote Way.
 - Speed surveys were carried out in Upper Chobham Road, Old Bisley Road and Chobham Road.

- Collision data for the roads around the schools was reviewed.

1.8 The purpose of this report, which is being presented for information, is to provide an update on the findings and recommendations of the assessment.

2. ANALYSIS:

Vehicle Speeds

2.1 Speed surveys were carried out at 6 locations in Upper Chobham Road, Old Bisley Road and Chobham Road over the 7 days from 2 to 7 November 2021. Over this period, the surveys recorded the speed of all vehicles travelling in both directions.

2.2 The locations of the surveys (which are all subject to a 30mph speed limit) are shown on the plan attached as Annex 1, whilst the findings of the surveys are detailed in table 1 below:

Location	7-day average daily 2-way flow (vehicles)	7-day average 85%ile speed (mph)	7-day 24-hour average mean speed (mph)	5-day (school days only) average mean speed from 9am to 10am (mph)	5-day (school days only) average mean speed from 3pm to 4pm (mph)
Site1 (Old Bisley Rd)	4,376	40	34	31	26
Site 2 (Old Bisley Rd)	4,607	36	29	22	23
Site 3 (Chobham Rd)	9,786	28	23	17	19
Site 4 (Upper Chobham Rd)	6570	29	23	17	17
Site 5 (Upper Chobham Rd)	6,351	30	25	18	18
6 (Upper Chobham Rd)	6,301	41	33	26	22

Table 1 – Speed survey results

2.3 (The 85th percentile speed is the speed at which 85 percent of vehicles are travelling at or below).

2.4 Points to note in response to the results of the speed surveys:

- The speeds at sites 4 and 5 in Upper Chobham Road (in the traffic calmed area near the Ravenscote school gate) are significantly lower than at site 6

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(outside the traffic calmed area), suggesting the traffic calming measures introduced in 2019 are effective in helping to reduce vehicle speeds both at the uncontrolled pedestrian crossing point (near the school gate) and on its immediate approaches.

- A speed survey previously undertaken near the school gate in Upper Chobham Road in 2014 recorded an average mean speed of 35mph and an 85%ile speed of 42mph. In comparison, the latest survey near the school gate (site 4) recorded an average mean speed of 23mph and an 85%ile speed of 29mph. This represents a very significant reduction in vehicles speeds at the location and further indicates the effectiveness of the traffic calming measures.
- At all survey sites speeds are significantly lower at school drop off and pick up times, as would be expected due to the increased levels of activity and parking.

Collision History

2.5 Table 2 below provides a summary of personal injury collisions recorded by the police over the 3-year period from 1 October 2018 to 30 September 2021 (latest available data). The information does not include collisions resulting in damage only since these are not systematically reported to, or recorded by, the police.

Road	Collisions			
	Slight	Serious	Fatal	Total
Upper Chobham Road (Chobham Road to Prior Road)	1	2	0	3
Old Bisley Road (Chobham Road to Edgemoor Road)	1	1	0	2
Chobham Road	3	0	0	3
Tomlinscote Way	1	0	0	1

Table 2 – Personal Injury Collisions in roads near Ravenscote, Tomlinscote and St Augustine’s Schools from 1 October 2018 to 30 September 2021

2.6 The above collisions resulted in injuries to 9 casualties, 2 of these were children under the age of 16. The child casualties and circumstances of these are summarised below:

- Collision between eastbound car and female pedestrian aged 12 in Old Bisley Road near the Ravenscote school at 08.23, Wednesday 9 June 2021, leading to serious injury to the pedestrian. It is understood that the pedestrian was a Tomlinscote school pupil.
- Collision between a car and female pedestrian aged 8 crossing Tomlinscote Way with a parent at the traffic island (at the junction with Chobham Road) at 09.15, Wednesday 16 October 2019, leading to slight injury to the pedestrian.

- 2.7 Although any one collision resulting in road casualties is regrettable, the collision history around the schools does not represent a concentrated pattern of collisions compared to many other sites across Surrey.
- 2.8 However, one child pedestrian has received serious injuries and another child pedestrian has received slight injuries in collisions that have occurred near the schools during school journey times. As well as the effect on the individuals involved and their families, this increases the fear of road danger which may deter more parents and pupils from walking, cycling and scooting to the schools.

Summary of site observations

- 2.9 The following provides a summary of observations recorded during school journey times. (The observations in Upper Chobham Road, Old Bisley Road and Chobham Road were carried during the morning school journey time on the same day. The observations in Tomlinscote Way were made separately at the end of the school day at the request of the school, due problems being perceived to be greater at this time).

Upper Chobham Road

- 2.10 At the start of the observation period, pedestrian flows mainly consisted of Tomlinscote pupils travelling to school.
- 2.11 Parents started parking on eastern side (school side) of road shortly after 8am. Prior to any parking taking place, some drivers (predominantly in the downhill direction) did not appear to be slowing down to pass over traffic calming features as much as expected. As soon as parking started, vehicle speeds reduced noticeably and remained relatively low near the crossing point throughout the period when Ravenscote parents and children were wanting to cross. The only parking on the western side of the road was a delivery vehicle. Parents also parked in the church car park until this was full.
- 2.12 The double yellow lines and School Keep Clear markings were generally well respected, with parking starting immediately beyond them. At its peak, parking extended to a point approximately midway between The Fairway and Robin Hill Drive. Vehicles were parked with two wheels on the footway reducing its available width. However, pedestrians were still generally able to walk along the footway without any significant difficulty.
- 2.13 On the day observations were carried out a parent volunteer school crossing patrol officer helped parents and children to cross at the uncontrolled crossing point near the school gate from 8.20am, and remained in place until there was no longer a demand for pedestrians to cross.
- 2.14 Prior to the school crossing patrol officer starting their duties, pedestrians were observed to cross at the uncontrolled crossing point on the speed table without significant difficulties. Drivers were generally stopping to allow pedestrian to cross, and pedestrians were generally crossing with care.
- 2.15 Although Ravenscote parents/pupils started arriving shortly after 8am, the school gates did not open until 8.35am (and then remained open for just over 10 minutes). This resulted in a significant number of parked vehicles and a large build-up of pedestrians waiting on the footways on both sides – with

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children/parents waiting immediately at the road edge with significant safety risks (i.e. possibility of being hit by wing mirrors and anyone moving back or any pushing/jostling could potentially result in a pedestrian(s) stepping into the road). The waiting parents/children also obstructed the footways making it difficult for anyone wanting to walk along them.

- 2.16 A very large number of children and parents crossed Upper Chobham Road during the observation period and the vast majority crossed at the uncontrolled pedestrian crossing point near the school gate.

Old Bisley Road

- 2.17 From 8am to about 8.25am the pedestrians on the footway outside the Ravenscote school were predominantly Tomlinscote pupils on route to school and included larger groups that occupied the full width of the footway even after spreading out over a longer length. If pedestrians were approaching in the opposite direction it would have made it difficult to pass.
- 2.18 Most Tomlinscote pupils stayed on the footway until they reached the pedestrian island (near the junction with Upper Chobham Road and Chobham Road) and then crossed at the island. A large number of pedestrians therefore crossed at the island, which is relatively small and does not provide sufficient space for pupils to wait when crossing in groups.
- 2.19 Two pupils were observed crossing Old Bisley Road in advance of the island and then walking along the southern side with their backs to traffic. There was no apparent reason for them needing to do this.
- 2.20 All parking to the west of the school entrance took place in the informal laybys opposite the school. Cars pulled in from both directions, but most pupils got out on the side away from traffic. Parents/children did not appear to have any problems crossing the road – some took advantage of gaps in queuing traffic or were beckoned across by those queuing drivers.
- 2.21 Several Tomlincote pupils were observed cycling to school along Old Bisley Road (none had any lights or reflective clothing on).
- 2.22 Significant congestion was caused by parking that took place between driveways over a significant length to the east of the school entrance. Whilst the driveways provided some short passing places, they only offered enough space for cars. Any large vehicles, including buses, had to pass the entire length of parking in one go. The parking and congestion helped restrain vehicle speeds.
- 2.23 Approaching the time that the Ravenscote school gate opens, a large number of parents and children had accumulated on the footway near the gate obstructing passage for anyone wishing to walk along the footway (the staggered school opening times meant that Tomlinscote pupils had all passed by this time). Parents and pupils were also standing very close to the edge of the road.

Chobham Road

- 2.24 The behaviour of pupils walking to Tomlinscote was generally good. They used the Zebra crossings either side of Tomlinscote Way to cross Chobham Road in most instances and were not taking risks.
- 2.25 Vehicles speeds generally appeared to be relatively low due to a combination of factors (including the presence of traffic calming measures, congestion, and the high level of use of the Zebra crossings).
- 2.26 Some parents were observed dropping off outside the school that could have parked a little further away to make it safer.
- 2.27 Vehicles were observed blocking the designated crossing point in Tomlinscote Way near the entrance to St Augustine's despite there already being double yellow lines in place to protect the crossing point.

Tomlinscote Way

- 2.28 Most pupils exited the school and remained on the eastern shared use footway walking towards Chobham Road.
- 2.29 The uncontrolled pedestrian crossing point in Tomlinscote Way near the entrance to St Augustine's was obstructed by a parked vehicle for a significant period. As a result, several students crossed Tomlinscote Way between parked cars.
- 2.30 On the eastern side of Tomlinscote Way there is a sports facility owned by Tomlinscote School. Parents of pupils from both Tomlinscote and St Augustine's schools are permitted to park in the facility. This helps reduce the demand for parking in Tomlinscote Way. The vehicular access to the facility is used by some pupils to cross over Tomlinscote Way.
- 2.31 Parking takes place along the western side of Tomlinscote Way, including in a layby near the Tomlinscote entrance. The combined width of the lay-by and carriageway encourages double parking to take place. Some parents also use the parking bays located beyond (south of) the entrance to Tomlinscote.

Assessment Findings

- 2.32 Outlined below are the key findings of the assessment having considered collisions data, vehicle speeds, site observations and concerns raised by parents:
- Measures introduced at the crossing point in Upper Chobham Road have been effective in reducing vehicle speeds. However, a very large number of parents and pupils cross at the location and concerns continue to be raised about safety when using the crossing point. Whilst a group of parent volunteers currently operate a school crossing patrol on a rota basis, there is no guarantee this arrangement will continue longer term and the school has previously struggled to recruit to the role.
 - Speed cushions have previously been introduced on either approach to the pedestrian island in Old Bisley Road (near its junction with Chobham Road and Upper Chobham Road) to help reduce vehicle speeds and improve

safety for pedestrians. However, a significant number of Tomlinscote pupils cross at the location (often in groups) and the small existing island offers limited space for pedestrians to wait safely in centre of road.

- Generally, there is a good level of compliance with the existing 30mph speed limit in the lengths of roads near the schools and speeds are significantly reduced at school journey times due to the high levels of pedestrian activity and on-street parking. In addition, the collision history around the schools does not represent a poor safety record compared to many other sites across Surrey. However, there is some variation in vehicle speeds at different locations near the schools and collisions have occurred which have resulted in school children being injured (including seriously).
- Parking at school drop off and pick up times continues to be an issue in roads near the schools (as it does outside most schools across Surrey). However, some improvements have been made especially in Upper Chobham Road where the previous introduction of parking controls has helped to regulate the parking. The introduction of further parking management measures may help to further improve the situation especially in Old Bisley Road where parking causes significant congestion.
- Site observations indicate that a significant number of parents and children accumulate on the footways outside the Ravenscote school gates in Old Bisley Road and Upper Chobham Road in advance of the gates opening. The congested footways result in pedestrian waiting close to the edge of the road with the risk that they may step into the carriageway. It also causes an obstruction for pedestrians wishing to walk along the footways, meaning they may have to step out into the road to pass. Concern over the situation has been raised with the school so they can consider options to help reduce the congestion.

3. OPTIONS:

- 3.1 The following measures have been proposed in response to the key findings of the assessment outlined above. These measures could potentially be delivered in phases with funding being allocated in separate stages.

Upper Chobham Road

- 3.2 Introducing a signal-controlled crossing (at the location of the existing uncontrolled pedestrian crossing near the Ravenscote school gate) would address parents' continued concerns by providing a permanent controlled crossing facility that would help make it easier and safer to cross.
- 3.3 Some parents have suggested a Zebra crossing should be introduced rather than a signal-controlled crossing. However, large numbers of parents and children cross Upper Chobham Road over a short period of time (with crossing movements especially concentrated in the afternoon when children exit the school at the same time). With a Zebra crossing, once priority has been established, pedestrians may cross in long continuous flows causing lengthy delays for motorists. This may lead to frustration and result in poor driver compliance with the crossing, leading to further concerns being raised by parents about safety. A signal-controlled pedestrian crossing would give a better balance between pedestrian and vehicle flows, reducing the risk of driver frustration.

Old Bisley Road

- 3.4 Introducing improved pedestrian crossing facilities at the location of the existing small pedestrian island would help make it easier and safer for pupils to cross Old Bisley Road when walking to and from Tomlinscote school.
- 3.5 Further feasibility and assessment work would need to be undertaken to determine the most appropriate option for providing improved crossing facilities at the location.

Area Wide

- 3.6 Introducing a 20mph zone around the schools with appropriate supporting features, where required, would help encourage consistent lower speeds across the whole zone. This would help to reduce the risk of collisions and improve the feeling of safety for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 3.7 Further feasibility and assessment work would need to be undertaken to determine the extents of the zone and identify appropriate supporting measures. These may include traffic calming features and parking management measures.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 The Divisional Member, Local Committee Chair, Local Committee Vice-Chair and School Leaderships' have been consulted on the findings and recommendations of the assessment.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The total cost of installing a signal-controlled crossing in Upper Chobham Road is approximately £110,000.
- 5.2 Further feasibility and assessment work will be required to identify the most appropriate options, and their associated costs, for introducing improved pedestrian crossing facilities in Old Bisley Road and a 20mph speed limit zone in the area around the schools.
- 5.3 The proposed measures would need to be assessed and prioritised alongside other proposals on the Surrey Heath and Road Safety Outside Schools scheme lists to ensure value for money.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 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 consider the needs of all road users including those with mobility impairment.

7. LOCALISM:

- 7.1 The measures recommended by the assessment would help improve road safety and encourage more walking, cycling, and scooting to school. This

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would help reduce car journeys and congestion which have a negative impact on the local community.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	Set out below.
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report.
Public Health	Set out below.

8.1 Sustainability implications

8.2 The measures recommended by the assessment would help encourage more sustainable modes of travel.

8.3 Public Health implications

8.4 The measures recommended by the assessment would help encourage active travel which improves the health of the participants and can help lower air pollution through reducing congestion.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

9.1 A detailed investigation of safety in roads around the Ravenscote, Tomlinscote and St. Augustine's school has been undertaken. This has included an assessment of the history of road traffic collisions, vehicle speeds and site observations.

9.2 Having considered the findings of the assessment, it has been recommended that the highway improvement measures described in this report are considered for introduction. These measures have therefore been added to the list of schemes to be considered for inclusion in future Surrey Heath Local Committee programmes of work.

9.3 In addition, the proposed measures have been added to the Road Safety Outside Schools scheme list so they will also be considered for inclusion in works programmes promoted by the county council's road safety team.

9.4 The proposal to introduce a signal-controlled pedestrian crossing in Upper Chobham Road would help address ongoing concerns raised by parents about safety at the existing uncontrolled pedestrian crossing point. The further measures proposed would also help to reduce vehicle speeds and make it safer and easier for parents and children to walk, cycle and scoot to school. A successful increase in these sustainable modes of transport would help contribute towards a reduction in car journeys and congestion.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 The proposals recommended by the safety assessment will be considered for inclusion in future programmes of work promoted by both the Local Committee and the county council's road safety team.
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Contact Officer:

Jason Gosden, Senior Traffic Engineer, tel: 0300 200 1003.

Consulted:

School representatives

Annexes:

Annex 1 – Traffic Survey Locations

Sources/background papers:

Road Safety Outside Schools Report – Ravenscote School - Presented at Surrey Heath Local Committee meeting held on 11 December 2014.

Upper Chobham Petition Response – Presented at Surrey Heath Local Committee meeting held on 4 October 2018.

Upper Chobham Road – Request For Controlled Pedestrian Crossing – Update - Presented at Surrey Heath Local Committee meeting held on 21 February 2021.

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