

TO: SWALE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD
DATE: 25 June 2007
SUBJECT: B2008 AT MILL HILL, MINSTER, ISLE OF SHEPPEY
BY: Divisional Manager – Kent Highway Services, Mid Kent
Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report informs Members of the planned highway improvement measures that are planned at (B2008) Mill Hill.

Decision Required: For information only .

Introduction

1. A site meeting was held at Mill Hill on B2208 in Minster (refer to the location plan in Annex A) on 2 March 2007 at the behest of local residents and local Councillor Bowden. The meeting was attended by a number of local residents, Councillor Bowden and a senior KHS officer. At the meeting a number of very specific highway safety concerns were raised and discussed.
2. B2008 in Minster is an important road linking Eastchurch at B2231 Lower Road to the east of Sheppey, to Halfway Houses at the junction of A250 Queenborough Road / Halfway Road to the west. The road carries between 7000 and 11,000 vehicles per day and is of varying standard. At 'Mill Hill' the road narrows in width to less than 5.0 metres and rises and drops significantly over 100 metres which limits the available forward visibility between drivers approaching from Minster to the west and Eastchurch from the east. Along this particular section of B2008, the footway on the northern side of the road is elevated above road level and separated by a steep bank which is covered in shrub type vegetation, consequently the effect is that the highway environment is perceived to be even narrower and enclosed than it actually is, causing drivers to manoeuvre their vehicles further away from the edge of carriageway than is necessary.
3. As an important part of the road system serving the island, the B2008 carries vehicles of all classes and is part of the bus route network.

Discussion

4. The following action plan with respect to the highway issues discussed at the site meeting were agreed to be taken forward into a programme of work.

A) Highway safety works to be programmed as priority Highway Maintenance items for implementation within current budget allocation:-

- Installation of advanced warning signs on both approaches to Mill Hill warning drivers that the road narrows ahead;
- Installation of advanced warning signs on both approaches to the Elm Lane/Oak Lane cross-roads junction warning drivers of the cross roads junction ahead;
- Removal of any illegal obstructions on the highway verges i.e. large boulders;
- Installation of 100mm edge of carriageway road markings through the narrow section of highway at Mill Hill;
- Recovery of all other carriageway markings at the junction of Oak Lane/Elm Lane and any other carriageway markings in the general vicinity;

- Repair of the fencing separating pedestrians and road traffic along the northern section of Mill Hill.

B) Highway safety improvements to be funded from Local Transport Plan mechanism or other funding means and included in a future programme of work:-

- Removal of vegetation along the highway verges on both sides of Mill Hill;
- Installation of improved highway lighting at Mill Hill to improve lighting for pedestrians;
- Installation of footway lighting on the footpath linking Chequers Road and Cliff Gardens;
- Assessment of a pedestrian crossing facility on Chequers Road in the vicinity of St Georges C of E Middle School;
- Assessment of improvement to the layout of the Oak Lane/Chequers Road junction.

C) Other Highway Maintenance matters:-

- Assessment of the highway drainage along B2008 Chequers Road/Mill Hill including Oak Lane and Oak Avenue.

D) Other matters to be considered and dealt with by Swale Borough Council

- Clearance of the area of unmanaged land which has gone to shrub between the highway and the built up edge of properties along Windmill Rise. This parcel land is owned by SBC and liaison is in progress.

Progress

5. The priority maintenance items listed as 'A' items, are planned to be completed by the end of August this year. The 'B' listed items will be submitted as one package of work as an LTP Bid for implementation in 2008/09. 'C' and 'D' listed items will be progressed as quickly as possible, with the 'C' listed item being reviewed this year for potential future programming within the five year maintenance plan. Item 'D' needs to be progressed by Swale Borough Council and programmed.

Decision Required

6. This report is for information purposes only.

Contact Officer: Michael Sammut, michael.sammut@kent.gov.uk 01622 - 798379

Background documents: None