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Owner

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15 July 2020

Dear Resident/Business Owner,

Emergency Covid 19 Active Travel Measures – Ewell Village High Street

Following the government's recent announcements, we have been working to identify potential Active Travel schemes across the county. The government has given councils the authority to introduce emergency measures during the coronavirus pandemic to support social distancing within towns and to promote alternative ways to travel such as walking and cycling.

We have been working with our partners to identify potential locations where improved spaces for walkers and cyclists would help residents to get out and about as lockdown is gradually lifted. One site that has been chosen to introduce these temporary measures is Ewell Village High Street. This site has been chosen because there are shops and businesses in the High Street, but the footways are narrow in places so there isn't enough space for pedestrians to circulate and maintain social distancing.

We will be introducing a 'Bus Gate' feature on the High Street – between Cheam Road and West Street / Church Street. This will remove all through traffic from Ewell Village except for buses and cyclists. While the space would not be allocated uniquely to pedestrians, with much reduced traffic levels this will encourage shoppers to return and support the shops and businesses like yourselves.

Access for both residents and businesses will remain at all times throughout the duration of the scheme but not through the bus gate. Road access will be via the Reigate Road or East Street Junctions. The car parks at Dorset House and the Green Man can be accessed via the Cheam Road.

Only buses and cyclists will be permitted to pass through the Bus Gate. Access for pedestrians will not be affected. All other vehicles will have to use alternate routes to access either Ewell West / Ewell East and Stoneleigh.

What are we hoping to achieve?

It's vital that people are able to stay safe when cycling and walking, and to have the space they need to pass each other safely. This is particularly necessary in response to the Government's strategic objective:

"Local authorities in areas with high levels of public transport use should take measures to reallocate road space to people walking and cycling, both to encourage active travel and to enable social distancing during restart (social distancing in this context primarily refers to the need for people to stay 2 metres apart where possible when outdoors). Local authorities where public transport use is low should be considering all possible measures. Measures should be taken as swiftly as possible, and in any event within weeks, given the urgent need to change travel habits before the restart takes full effect"

Funding

Surrey was granted £848,000 by the government to support the roll out of active travel schemes. We are therefore the money received from the government, to provide a total budget of £1.69M.

Is this temporary?

These are temporary emergency active travel schemes and are intended to be for 3 months. There is a second tranche of longer term strategic active travel measures that will be prioritised and developed.

Why has there been no consultation?

These are temporary emergency active travel measures to meet the challenge of being able to stay safe when cycling and walking, and to have the space needed to pass each other safely, as we recover from the COVID 19 restrictions. This is in response to the reduced capacity on public transport and to build on the changes in travel choices that have seen a marked increase in active travel.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to consult with all affected residents about these temporary emergency active travel schemes due to the tight timescales set by the Government. However, the views of residents will be noted and taken into consideration with any tweaks to the current pilot schemes. These will help inform any changes of approach for emergency active travel measures in other locations.

What if it is not successful will the measures be kept in place for the entire trial?

Sometimes schemes operate in practice differently to how they were designed, and safety assessed, even after the initial change has had time to settle. These temporary measures will be continuously monitored to assess both for ongoing road safety and effectiveness at supporting cycling and walking.

Feedback from residents and businesses is vital throughout the duration of the scheme to ensure a successful outcome for Ewell Village. Comments can be by sent to us via email highways@surreycc.gov.uk or by phone on 0300 200 1003.

Further Information

The Bus Gate is scheduled to installed within the next 6 weeks. Advanced Warning Signs detailing the start date of the restrictions will be placed around Ewell Village and surrounding roads to give motorists, businesses and residents warning of when the changes will start.

Up to date information on details of any works in progress, or planned to take place can be found on the Surrey County Council website here; <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roadworks-and-maintenance/maintenance/roads/department-for-transport-capital-funding/roads-and-pavements>

Yours Sincerely,

Nick Healey

NE Area Team Manager

Surrey Highways



