

RISK ASSESSMENT

WESTBEDHAMPTON RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION



REPORT DETAILS



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BRIEF

ELAS were contacted by Mr David Webb after concerns had been raised over the current and ongoing general safety of local residents when accessing the local bus stop (eastbound on Havant Road) and also when using the public footpath to travel either by foot or bicycle towards the local amenities via Rusty Cutter roundabout.

Accompanying this concern was also the maintenance or lack thereof of these public footpaths, and crossing points.

There were further concerns raised over the addition of a new development and the increase in foot/cycle traffic increasing the potential numbers of persons at risk.

INSPECTION DETAILS

This inspection was undertaken on the 10th July 2014, from 10.45 through to 12.15. The weather conditions were dry, warm and sunny.

The inspection of the route was undertaken by Paul Brooks (ELAS), David Webb (Chairman) and Norman Brookhouse (Secretary) both of the Westbedhampton Residents Association.

Paul Brooks (ELAS) was provided with copies of documentation from The Richard Parker Consultancy for record purposes.

During the inspection it was noted the traffic flowed well with no incidents taking place.

REPORT DETAILS

For the purposes of clarity I have broken the report down into 3 areas those being;

1. The bus stop on the Westbound side of the A2030 Havant Road.
2. The pedestrian and bicycle crossing of the Northbound entry slip road of the A3(M).
3. The pedestrian crossing of the southbound exit slip road of the A3(M).

OBSERVATIONS

A site inspection and report was undertaken for the purposes of developing an assessment of the risk(s) posed to local residents and others whilst accessing the Westbound bus stop and accessing the local amenities.

The first part of the site observed was the bus stop area. To access this location a pedestrian must first cross a dual carriageway to a central reservation area, and then proceed to cross a carriageway exactly at a pinch point where a dual carriageway becomes a single carriageway.

The report documentation from The Richard Parker Consultancy identifies that at peak times there are between 727 and 747 vehicles using the dual carriageway (Eastbound), and this figure is expected to rise in the future.

Taking an average of the two figures, 737 vehicles pass this area in an hour this equates to one vehicle every 5 seconds travelling at 40 miles per hour that pedestrians need to allow for. As the average person walks at a pace of 3.1 miles per hour (1.39 m/sec) and the distance from the footpath to a relative place of safety (central area) is 7.3m, this would take the average person 10.15 seconds to achieve this. As we have already stated in this time two vehicles have also required use of the same space.

It should further be noted that these figures are freely available and are based on average users, this does not include vulnerable users (elderly persons or families with young children).

The second part of the crossing is from the central area to the footpath on the Westbound side of the road. As identified above this area is where there is a reduction in carriageway width from dual carriageway to single carriageway. Although this does reduce the time required to cross, the pedestrians are now crossing an area where merging traffic is taking place.

Furthermore, although the carriageway is currently in a reasonable condition the pedestrian paved "slabbed" areas were poorly maintained with vegetation such as weed growth evident and the debris from recent grass cutting left to accumulate on these areas. This leaves a potential for a slip or trip being caused.

Photographs taken while attempting to cross the road to access the bus stop, showing a constant flow of traffic and the use of the dual carriageway.



Photographs showing lack of maintenance observed at the crossing points.



Photograph highlighting crossing point, the dual carriageway shown on the right and the merging point shown on the left.



The second area observed was the pedestrian and cycle crossing at the bottom of the Northbound A3(M) entry slip road.

This crossing point is currently used by pedestrians and cyclists to access the local amenities, in the not too distant future there is reportedly to be an increase of approximately 1000 employment opportunities and thus will increase the quantities of people using this crossing.

At present there are again no practical safety measures in place to assist pedestrians or cyclists when crossing this busy area of carriageway.

The same issues presents here as the previous dual carriageway crossing (above), but this time pedestrians and cyclists need to also account for traffic speeding (travelling in excess of the 40mph limit), vehicles lane changing without indication and also a very poor road condition (potholes, cracks, uneven surfaces etc.).

During the inspection the three persons involved in the inspection crossed this area twice, once in each direction and on neither crossing did anyone feel confident or safe doing so. You were not able to walk across at a reasonable pace due to the flow of vehicles. And when increasing the footspeed when crossing the poor road conditions became more of a risk. Further risks would also arise when using this area with pushchairs, young children, walking aids.

Photographs showing the poor road condition, increasing the risks for pedestrians and cyclists attempting to use the crossing point.



The third area observed was the crossing at the bottom of the Southbound A3(M) exit slip road.

This area is traffic light controlling the traffic flow from the A3(M) onto the Rusty Cutter roundabout and as such should make the crossing on this location a good deal safer than the previous areas, however it is not without its faults.

The traffic light system controls the vehicle flow onto the roundabout, and stops vehicles just before the crossing point, this would be ideal if there were pedestrian indicators in place to show when it was safe to cross and when not (green man & red man crossing lights).

Photographs of the Southbound exit sliproad, showing the crossing point but no indicators to assist pedestrians.



Photograph showing the only traffic signal visible to pedestrians as an indicator of whether it is safe to cross three lanes of traffic.



Photographs showing poor maintenance generally of the footpaths, this continues on to the crossing points as detailed previously.



Photograph showing the route followed was the as directed footpath direction.



CONCLUSION

From the observations seen during the inspection and the documented information and accompanying photographs, it is clear that there are a number risks some of which are:

- Slips, trips or falls from poorly maintained footpaths and crossing areas, this in turn could lead to serious musculoskeletal injuries to persons, damage to property and also impact with a vehicle.
- Collision with vehicles when crossing the designated routes caused by a lack of practical safety systems when crossing carriageways leading to serious injuries and possibly death to pedestrians.
- Slips, trips and falls from badly maintained road surfaces, leading to injuries to persons, possible death from collision with vehicles.

The above is applicable to ALL users of these areas, with an increase in risk to the particularly vulnerable.

There appears to be very little in the way of safety precautions in place to assist pedestrians in crossing any of these areas, despite this being a designated pedestrian route.

It is a foreseeable likelihood that an incident will occur in one or more of the areas highlighted in the report and the severity of this to a pedestrian or cyclist would be very serious if not fatal.

Whilst carrying out the site visit I witnessed two near miss incidents and the root cause of this was vehicles travelling at speed, vehicles not indicating and pedestrians do not have enough time to cross the carriageway.

It is worth noting that my visit also took place at what is considered a quiet period, and therefore as the flow of traffic increases and the concentration of pedestrians is greater at peak times the likelihood of an incident occurring increases as well.

In short, from an assessment of risk perspective the current arrangements cannot be considered neither suitable nor sufficient to adequately protect pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles. The current arrangements in place are not seen to be fit for purpose. And furthermore it is highly likely an incident will occur and this will lead to a serious if not fatal injury.