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Enterprise, Tourism and the Environment
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SOUTHEND-ON-SEA
BOROUGH COUNCIL

29 SEP 2009

SUPPORT SERVICES DIRECTORATE
REVENUES & BENEFITS

20 Highlands Boulevard
Leigh on Sea
Essex
SS9 3QN

27 September 2009

Dear Mr Lewis

Re-positioning of Zebra Crossing in Highlands Boulevard, Leigh on Sea

I am a resident of 20 Highlands Boulevard, Leigh on Sea and I am writing in response to the public notice currently displayed on the lamp post outside 18 Highlands Boulevard regarding the re-positioning of the zebra crossing. I came to your offices on 8 September to view the plans and to discuss a number of concerns. Unfortunately it was very difficult to obtain sufficient information and detail from the small plan provided during this visit and so a number of questions were put to Martin Warren. I have commented below on part of this discussion because I feel it raised a number of risks and safety issues in addition to those already identified.

I am currently seeking advice about any claims I may reasonably have under the Land Compensation Act 1973 in respect of the Belfairs re-build and re-positioning of the zebra crossing but this letter specifically addresses my concerns over the dangers to the public and the increased awareness required from me and my family to ensure the safety of others if the zebra crossing is moved to the stated position.

As mentioned above, it was very difficult to get a sense of scale from the small plans provided during my visit to your offices, so I have used the measurements provided on the Public notice and put temporary markings on the road/pavement in order to accurately assess the impact. My findings are listed below:

1. I explained to Martin Warren that there was insufficient turning space on my drive meaning that I have to reverse onto Highlands Boulevard. The re-positioning of the crossing does not change this but it raises a number of safety issues:
 - a. If I need to turn left out of my drive I will have to reverse over the zebra crossing.
 - b. When reversing out of my drive the blind spot is exactly where a pedestrian would be standing at the zebra crossing on the opposite side of the road. It will therefore be very difficult to ensure, at all times during the manoeuvring of my car off the drive, that no-one is standing at the zebra crossing.
2. Martin's response to the problems associated with reversing onto Highlands Boulevard, was that I should reverse onto my drive. I cannot believe that the Police would accept this as a suitable solution as I would have to drive on the wrong side of

the road to swing the car into my drive and on such a busy road, where traffic often exceeds the speed limit, I would not put myself or the public in such danger.

- 3: Positioning the zebra crossing at the apex of the bend in the road means that there is not a clear view of on-coming traffic for the public. Martin explained that visibility will be improved on the school side of the road because there was an intention to change the line of the road. However, the real problem with visibility is on the opposite side of the road to the school:
 - a. There is a tree immediately to the right of the proposed positioning of the zebra crossing (which Martin confirmed will not be cut down)
 - b. I assume that the current zigzags will be removed and consequently local residents and parents taking and collecting their children from school, will park in these places.
 - c. The bend in the road does not give a clear view of the on-coming traffic.
4. I asked why the zebra crossing had to be so close to my drive. Martin explained that it had to be next to the new entrance to the school. This does not seem logical as children, teachers and parents will congregate around the entrance making it very difficult for drivers to establish if they want to use the zebra crossing. This will cause an unnecessary build up of traffic on an already congested road – especially during school start and finish times. This will impact further when night school commences and the late night café opens.
5. My family leave home each morning for school/work at the time when Belfairs' children arrive for school. Regular use of the zebra crossing, so close to our drive, with traffic building up along Highlands Boulevard, is going to make it very difficult and time-consuming to reverse our car out of the drive safely. This also applies when I arrive home from work each day as I come home as children finish school for the day.

I am sure you will appreciate that positioning a zebra crossing on a bend, next to a local resident's drive does not provide a safe crossing place for the public – particularly children, who often have less safety awareness than adults and re-position it where there is less risk of an accident. I would hate there to be an incident, bearing in mind there has already been a serious accident on the current zebra crossing where the visibility is better, because I would feel it my duty to let the public know that my concerns had been raised with you.

I look forward to hearing from you and hope that you will re-consider a different position for the crossing.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Clark