

Delegated Decisions by Deputy Leader of the Council Thursday, 7 June 2012

ADDENDA

3. Petitions and Public Address

<i>Name</i>	<i>Item</i>
Councillor Alan Armitage (Shadow Cabinet)	4. Community Asset Transfer Policy
Angela MacKeith	5. North Hinksey lane (West), Botley, Oxford – Proposed Prohibition of Right Turn onto West Way and Revocation of No-entry Restriction
Councillor Alan Armitage (Shadow Cabinet)	5. Proposed Zebra Crossing – Denchworth Road, Grove

5. **North Hinksey Lane (West), Botley, Oxford - Proposed Prohibition of Right Turn onto West Way & Revocation of No-Entry Restriction**

Councillor Janet Godden (Local Member) is unable to attend but has submitted the following:

“I’m not free to attend on Thursday afternoon but would like this letter to be considered as a formal representation.

We’ve discussed this informally, but I’d like to put on paper the concerns of my constituents living in Old Botley, i.e the small number of houses directly affected by this proposal, mainly behind McDonalds. The opening of the west entrance to North Hinksey Lane to two-way traffic will have a deleterious effect on the quality of life of the residents of Old Botley, some of whom will find themselves living on a large traffic island. I realise that the number of houses is small, but then the amount of traffic using North Hinksey Lane is not large, and it is particularly hard to think that the number of vehicles coming down the A34 slip-road and wanting to turn into North Hinksey Lane is large either: traffic wanting the school, the church or the pub would carry on down the A34 and enter N Hinksey Lane from the other end.

We are told that the reason is to speed up traffic flow at the lights by the slip road, but any regular user of Botley Road / West Way will agree that the major hold ups are at the preceding lights, by the entrance/exit to the Seacourt Park and Ride, as well as further back down Botley Road at the junction with Ferry Hinksey Road.

Cyclists also feel that the new road layout won't be to their advantage, although providing there is a cycle track marked on the pavement that goes across in front of McDonalds I don't entirely understand their problem. Certainly clear road markings will be needed to prevent the cars you are anticipating from swerving across from the A34 into N Hinksey Lane across cars coming out of McDonalds, and indeed cyclists and pedestrians.

It is a pity that North Hinksey Parish Council was not a party to the consultation. I think it is likely that somebody thought that this area was within the City boundary.

I know that you'll think long and hard about whether this alteration to North Hinksey Lane is really necessary. It seems like a sledgehammer cracking a nut to me. The necessity hasn't been fully explained, especially in view of the fact that nothing, apparently, is being done about problems of earlier sets of lights. It also seems odd that the County Council is putting its weight behind a move of the station further south, yet carrying on with the Frideswide scheme which would have to be entirely different if the station is moved. But that leads into other issues..."

Councillor Janet Godden (County Councillor, North Hinksey & Wytham)

6. Proposed Zebra Crossing - Denchworth Road, Grove

Councillor Zoe Patrick (County Councillor, Grove & Wantage) is unable to attend but has submitted additional documentation in support of the proposed zebra crossing at the Denchworth Road in Grove. She points out the history of road safety issues which have identified this crossing as important to help to encourage parents and children to walk to school. *Two of the items of documentation that she has sent in have not been produced with this addenda as they are newsletters from the school and contain images of pupils. They will, however, be available for the Deputy Leader of the Council to consider at the meeting.*

Councillor Jenny Hannaby (County Councillor, Grove & Wantage) is also unable to attend but as the other local member she supports the Denchworth crossing, which Councillor Patrick is putting forward as a project from the Area Stewardship fund.

Mr and Mrs Martin, Local Residents, The Green, Grove are also unable to attend but have submitted the attached documents expressing their concerns regarding the proposal and opposing implementation in its current form.

Email from David Early. 30 May 2012

Dear Sarah,

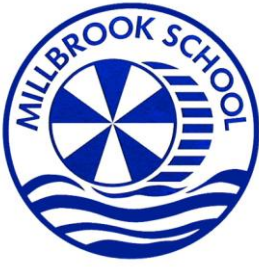
Thank you for your call – it was very nice to speak with you again. Looking back at my written notes for the school walkability audits in 2009, I can confirm that I noted the crossing issue as a key outcome, so it would be fine to state that it was one of the main concerns identified by the group. The other main concern was speeding in Brereton Drive and Denchworth Road, which was an issue in terms of possibly expanding the walking bus scheme. We subsequently monitored the speed of traffic on these two roads, but it was not excessive in relative terms at the time – most drivers breaking of the speed limit were travelling at approximately 35mph.

I hope this is helpful. I cannot locate a written report of the audit, so it may well be that the outcome was a written summary of actions.

With best wishes,
David Early
Travel Choices
Oxfordshire County Council
Highways & Transport
Environment & Economy

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Head Teacher: Sarah Weston, M.Ed.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Zebra Crossing on Denchworth Road

I am aware of the current proposal to place a zebra crossing on Denchworth Road in Grove. This issue has not been discussed recently by the Governing Body, however in 2008/9 the school updated its Travel Plan with David Early. As part of this process we organised a Walkability Audit on Tuesday 30th June 2009. This was promoted in the School Newsletter although only one parent joined myself, David Early (Travel Plan Team, OCC) and a small group of governors.

During our walk around the area near to the school the group identified a number of possible improvements to make walking to school safer for families. These included widening paths to provide safe routes for young children cycling and building a path in front of the Day Centre in the Millbrook car park. We noted that some parents crossed Denchworth Road and a safe place to cross would be important for them.

I hope this information is useful in resolving the current issue.

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Weston
Head Teacher

To the Deputy Leader of the Council

We are writing to you in response to the report submitted by Mr Lee Turner and Cllr Zoe Patrick in relation to the proposed zebra crossing in Denchworth Road. Unfortunately we are unable to be present in person but would like you to consider our views on the matter recorded in this document.

Mr Turner has selected certain parts of our original letter and we would like you to read it in its entirety to see that we have suggested viable alternatives. We do have concerns about a number of issues, and we will consider the points selected by Mr Turner. Firstly, the Belisha beacons may be situated 14 metres from our property but we will have a clear view of them from our sitting room window. By offering to put covers on them this will only lead to the light being directed down the road towards our property. When we met with Mr Turner and Cllr Zoe Patrick we pointed this out to them, and we were told that we wouldn't be able to see them. We have offered for all parties to come and see but this has not been taken up. The owners of the property next to the beacons are unhappy about the light pollution even though according to Cllr Zoe Patrick, she said they were happy. They had tried to object but could not get through to the right department at the council in time.

Secondly, the zig zag lines currently pass across our drive on the plans, and this would mean that we would not be able to exit and enter our drive without stopping on them. When we referred to not being able to park outside our house this was in relation to any deliveries being made etc which would not be able to happen with the zig zag lines. During our meeting with Mr Turner and Cllr Zoe Patrick, Mr Turner agreed to shorten the zig zag lines so they did not encroach across our driveway – if the crossing is approved we would like this to be honoured.

Thirdly, the speeds we refer to in our letter were quoted from an article written by Cllr Zoe Patrick in the Grove Parish newsletter. We do have a concern about the speed of the cars travelling along the road, and dread there being a serious accident when a child steps out on a zebra crossing when they think they are safe, and a car is unable to stop in time. We therefore support some form of traffic calming such as chicanes rather than speed humps to make the whole journey along the road safer.

Mr Turner refers to seeing forty eight people crossing the road between 2.30 and 3.30pm on a Friday. When we met he said that this was not the actual figure of crossings but the number of people who walked up and down the road. He had made an assumption that they would cross. We have watched the road at a similar time, and during the school run approx two adults cross in the direction of Oxford Avenue, and four adults cross in the direction of Millbrook School.

Cllr Zoe Patrick refers to the Headteacher of Millbrook, Sarah Weston, supporting the decision to install the crossing when this is not the case. She did take part in a road survey in 2009 when it was identified that a safer way to cross Denchworth Road would be useful but she has not supported the implementation of the location of the crossing. You will see this from her letter to you, of which we have a copy. The

proposal was entered in the school newsletter but took up an area 2.5cm x 2.5cm square where it just referred to a crossing in Denchworth Road – this road extends from Grove to Wantage and so did not allow for any specific concerns to be raised when it was published in October 2011. The crossing has not been an agenda in any Governors meeting for Millbrook School over the last three years, nor has it been raised as a concern by any parents in that time for consideration by the Governors (Mrs Martin is a Parent Governor).

Finally the issue of crossing Denchworth Road was raised by one parent ten years ago – there have been no consultations with any residents in that time since 2002. When we asked Mr Turner how many residents had received letters he replied that four householders had received them – Us, the landlord of the Baytree, the house next to the Baytree Public House and the house in Westbrook affected by the proposed crossing. Our neighbours in Orchard Cottage were unaware of the proposal as are the other members of the community. There was only one sign notifying of the proposal, which was on the opposite side of the road to the Baytree Public House. Many residents will not have read the notification in the local press, and would therefore have missed the deadline to object. Letters to all residents or a questionnaire to see if there is a genuine need for the proposal would have been a much better way to proceed rather than presuming the need on the basis of one view from ten years ago.

We would like you to take into consideration our genuine concerns about the placing of the proposed zebra crossing. If a crossing is to be implemented we would ask that you consider a different location possibly further towards the Churchward Close end of Denchworth Road, where the properties are set further back from the road, and where the road does not have as many junctions. Our concerns do include personal ones about light pollution and access to our property but there are safety concerns too.

Yours Sincerely
Mr and Mrs Martin

To Mr. L. Turner

We are writing to inform you of our concern regarding the proposed zebra crossing for Denchworth Road, Grove. We are residents of a property which will be affected by this proposal, and there are several areas which we would like to raise, and we want them to be seriously considered before any agreement is made before the implementation of this zebra crossing is agreed.

We have lived in our property for over four years, and we have never experienced any problems crossing the road, neither have we heard of anybody else having concerns about crossing the road. The first we heard about the zebra crossing proposal was when your letter dated 8th February 2012 came through the post, we would have thought that residents would have been approached and actively involved at the initial proposal stages rather than at this later stage.

The Belisha beacons which would be in position at either side of the crossing are a concern, as the light pollution they will emit will affect our street view and encroach on our property. We accept the lighting from the Public House sign as it was in position when we purchased our property but implementing a further light source is not acceptable particularly when you consider the flashing nature. Our property is located in a conservation area, as are many of the surrounding properties; therefore there are extremely constrictive guidelines which have to be followed by residents to ensure that the street view is not altered, by implementing this proposal that street view will most definitely be altered in an inappropriate fashion for the setting.

The proposed plan for the zebra crossing shows the accompanying zig zag lines extending across our driveway, again, this is not an acceptable situation. We bought our property with the possibility of parking outside across our driveway if required, and this would no longer be possible.

We were aware that a man had been parked on Denchworth Road observing who used the road but only because we overheard a conversation he was having with a pedestrian. He did not inform us that his presence was part of the proposed zebra crossing implementation. He had been parked outside our house without making himself or his purpose known. His vehicle was causing an obstruction to the road view required to enter or exit our drive, causing a danger in itself. This forms another part of our concern as vehicles stopping at the proposed crossing would cause obstruction to our driveway and that of the Baytree Publicans, as their drive is adjacent to ours, as well as to both our views of the road in both directions when driving onto Denchworth Road.

In the Grove Parish Newsletter Councillor Zoe Patrick refers to the proposal by commenting on a speed survey being completed on Denchworth Road, again, no residents were aware of this being implemented. The average speeds reported were 33.4mph average Eastbound and 31.7mph westbound, both of which are above the speed limit for the road. By the fact that averages were provided this suggests that much higher speeds were also recorded during the survey, and this is an area that should be being addressed rather than putting in a zebra crossing. By making the road safer it would make it safer to cross the road. There is no reference to how many times the speed survey was carried out, what day/days it was carried out and at what times? The traffic speeds are often high along Denchworth Road, and by introducing some form of traffic calming this would be a much more acceptable and a more far reaching solution. This reduction in speed could be achieved through chicanes such as though used through Mayfield Avenue, and/or the possible use of speed bumps. The chicanes would provide a dual purpose in also providing safe crossing points at the same time as slowing down the traffic. If a zebra crossing was

put in and the speeds of the traffic remained at this higher level, there would be a high possibility of there being a serious accident.

We have observed how many people need to cross the road, and on an average school day at 3pm, there were four adults walking from Denchworth Road direction towards Millbrook School, only one of which had to cross the road (they were able to cross immediately). After school, one adult and one child needed to cross the road, and again they were able to do this immediately. The Funarami walking school bus was also observed at 3.25pm, two adults and eight children were able to cross the road with more than adequate time to walk along towards the roundabout near Oxford Lane where they checked the road, and were able to cross the road immediately before any traffic proceeded towards their position.

As parents of a young child, we are extremely concerned about the speeds of vehicles along Denchworth Road rather than crossing the road. If a zebra crossing were to be implemented it would increase the risk of a serious accident whilst the traffic is still able to proceed along the road at speeds higher than the speed limit (which is appropriate for the area when adhered to). There would be an increased risk to car owners of properties located in the immediate area due to stationary vehicles blocking the view of the road, or physically blocking access to the road. There would be reduced access to properties in the immediate area due to the accompanying road markings. The light pollution would be a factor directly affecting residents in the immediate area.

We urge you to reconsider the zebra crossing proposal in its current form and physical position, and we oppose its implementation in its current planned form for the reasons stated above. Do consider the alternatives we have suggested.

Yours Sincerely

Mr P. Martin and Mrs A.M. Martin

(A paper version of this letter has been posted to you too)