

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 10 OCTOBER 2013

ABINGDON WOOTTON ROAD – CYCLE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Report by Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Commercial)

Introduction

1. In July 2012 the Department for Transport launched a £15million Cycle Safety Fund to provide funding for safety improvements at junctions identified as having a record of cyclists being killed or seriously injured.
2. Part of the launch material produced by the Department for Transport highlighted the Wootton Road/Dunmore Road roundabout in Abingdon as one of only four locations in Oxfordshire with more than three cyclists killed or seriously injured over the previous five years.
3. A successful bid was submitted to the Department for Transport to address these issues at the Wootton Road/Dunmore Road. The bid decision was announced in April 2013 and the scheme has to be delivered by the end of February 2014.
4. There are statutory and informal requirements to consult on some of the scheme elements. These are the installation of a toucan crossing, conversion of footway to shared-use path and creation of new shared use path.
5. Objections have been received and the Cabinet Member is asked to consider the issues.

The Proposed Scheme

6. The proposed scheme to address the safety issues at the Wootton Road roundabout is designed to benefit both confident cyclists, who tend to prefer to cycle on the carriageway, and less-confident cyclists who prefer to cycle off-road where possible.
7. The dominant accident type at the Wootton Road roundabout is failure to give way to cyclists by vehicles entering from Dunmore Road, although several other collision types are recorded. The accidents are predominantly in daylight and outside peak periods and involve adult cyclists. Accidents involving cyclists have been an issue since the roundabout was built in 1990. Hatch markings on the roundabout were added in the late 1990s to slow the speed of traffic along with improvements to shared-use paths and crossing points. These alterations resulted in a drop in accidents in the period 2000 to 2006.

However, the number of accidents has since returned to the levels occurring prior to 2000.

8. This scheme proposes to narrow the circulatory carriageway of the roundabout to further reduce vehicle speeds on the roundabout. This will be achieved by using an imprint surface around the centre of the roundabout.
9. Additional supporting features, largely for the benefit of cyclists who prefer to cycle off-road are to be provided including:
 - A toucan crossing on the Dunmore Road arm.
 - Widening and conversion of footway to shared use path to allow off-road cycling between Dunmore Road and Northcourt Road along the east side of Wootton Road.
 - Creation of new shared use path from Trendell Place northwards joining existing segregated path opposite Northcourt Road.

Consultation

10. There is a statutory requirement to consult on the conversion of footway to shared-use path and the creation of new shared use path and an informal requirement to consult on the installation of the new toucan crossing.
11. Consultation on the scheme was carried out between 24 June 2013 and 24 July 2014. 300 letters were mailed to local addressees, statutory consultees and other interested groups. The consultation was also advertised on posters in the local area and made available on the Council website.
12. Annex 1 contains the scheme plan used for consultation.
13. Annex 2 contains a summary of the consultation responses and officer comments in response.

Responses

14. There were nine responses to the consultation. It is not possible to accurately state how many of these responses can be considered as support or objecting, as a number of them made several points about individual elements of the scheme, some favourable and others critical. However, there were comments made clearly objecting to the scheme or certain elements of it.
15. The main headline concerns received were:
 - (a) Toucan crossing
 - Will be dangerous.
 - Is too close to the roundabout .
 - Will create noise.
 - (b) Conversion to and creation of shared use paths

- That they are not good for cyclists due to the loss of priority when crossing side roads.
 - The creation of conflict by mixing cyclists and pedestrians.
- (c) Other
- The scheme is waste of money.
 - The scheme does not achieve its objectives.
 - That road speed restrictions should be part of the scheme.

Conclusion

16. The proposed scheme elements are within regulations and have been used successfully at other locations. Therefore no modifications to the scheme are proposed. A more detailed consultation summary with officer comments can be found at Annex 2.
17. The Department for Transport funding is conditional that the scheme is delivered by February 2014. This is a very short timeframe which does not allow time for any significant alterations to the scheme.
18. Removing the toucan crossing and shared use paths from the scheme would result in the Department for Transport funding of £207,826 being withdrawn and the scheme would not be able to be delivered at this time.
19. Comments made concerning the specific design of elements of the scheme will be taken into consideration as part of the detailed design process.

Financial and Staff Implications

20. The total budget for this scheme is £320,000 comprising £207,852 Department for Transport Cycle Safety grant, £96,674 County Council corporate capital resources and £15,500 developer funding.

RECOMMENDATION

21. **The Cabinet Member for Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve:**
 - (a) **installation of a toucan crossing on Dunmore Road at the Wootton Road roundabout in Abingdon as set out in this report;**
 - (b) **conversion and creation of shared use paths as part of the Wootton Road Cycle Safety scheme as set out in this report.**

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