

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 23 NOVEMBER 2017

PROPOSED KERB BUILD-OUT A4095 BURFORD ROAD WITNEY

Report by Director for Infrastructure Delivery

Introduction

1. This report presents responses received in the course of a consultation on a proposal to install a kerb build-out in the layby on the north side of the A4095 Burford Road at Witney approximately 20 metres west of its junction with Moor Avenue to improve the safety and amenity for pedestrians using the existing uncontrolled pedestrian crossing point at this location.

Background

2. The proposal to install the build-out arises from the development of land for residential use at Springfield Oval (off the northern side of the Burford Road), which is anticipated to lead to additional pedestrian crossing movements to local amenities, including Tower Hill Primary School. A plan showing the proposal is shown at Annex 1.

Consultation

3. Formal consultation on the proposal was carried out between 7 September and 6 October 2017. Notices were placed in the vicinity of the proposal and an email sent to consultees including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, Witney Town Council and the local County Councillor. Letters were also sent to 21 nearby properties.
4. Fourteen responses were received. Eight objections – including from Cllr Laura Price, the local county councillor - primarily on the grounds that the proposal did not adequately provide a safe and convenient crossing point for pedestrians, but also with concerns being expressed by some respondents over the loss of parking spaces in the layby. A further three responses – while not expressed as formal objections – raised similar concerns to the above. The final three responses were from Thames Valley Police, West Oxfordshire District Council and Witney Town Council, all expressing no objection to the proposal.
5. The responses are summarised at Annex 2. Copies of the full responses are available for inspection by County Councillors.

Responses to objections and concerns

6. The concerns of the respondents (including that of the local County Councillor) that the current proposal does not adequately provide for safe pedestrian crossing movements- in particular for the many children being crossed here to and from the nearby primary school, and also taking account of the increased traffic flows and pedestrian crossing demand arising from residential development in the area – are noted.
7. It is accepted that a signal controlled crossing would be technically feasible at this location. Referring to Councillor Price's query (see Annex 1) about the background to the current proposal, she correctly notes that in the earlier stages of the discussions with the developer of the land off Springfield Oval, the County Council requested that a signalled crossing (specifically, a toucan crossing for pedestrians and cyclists) be provided across Burford Road to enable safe crossing for pedestrians and cyclists particularly towards Tower Hill Community Primary School. However, the applicant queried our justification for this request as there was already an alternative crossing facility reasonably nearby and, additionally, from an assessment of the scale and type of housing units being proposed, it was estimated by the County Council that the development would generate only 14 primary school-going pupils who would likely benefit from such a crossing.
8. In view of the above, and also taking account of the absence of any recorded pedestrian accidents in the vicinity, it was not considered that the request for a signalled crossing would pass the relevant legal test for a S106 obligations as set out in regulation 122 and 123 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 which are that the proposed works are:
 - a) Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.
 - b) Directly related to the development; and
 - c) Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

However, it was agreed that the development contributes towards the construction of the proposed build-out which offer several benefits for pedestrians using this uncontrolled crossing point, including reducing the crossing distance, improving visibility for pedestrians and ensuring that parked vehicles do not obstruct the crossing.

9. Concerns over the loss of parking due to the provision of the build-out are similarly noted. The build-out would extend over 7.6 metres, thereby removing space for approximately 1.5 vehicles, with the total length of the layby approximately 135 metres, although also noting that considerate drivers would in any case hopefully not be choosing to park over the approximately 2 metres length of the kerb directly adjacent to the existing uncontrolled crossing point. The build-out would be constructed immediately to the east of a disabled parking place and should not therefore present any obstruction to the use of this place.

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10. In respect of the above concerns, it should also be noted in respect of the loss of parking that if a signalled crossing point was to be provided at this location, there would still be a need to construct a build-out, and that this would require a longer feature to be provided as compared to the current proposal in order to accommodate the signal poles and crossing area in accordance with national guidance on the design of such crossings.
11. Some respondents expressed the view that the build-out would result in poorer visibility for both pedestrians, and for vehicles approaching the crossing point. This, however, would not be the case as pedestrians on the build-out would undoubtedly have a better view of and be more visible to approaching traffic by virtue of their not being masked by vehicles parked in the layby.
12. The responses of Thames Valley Police, West Oxfordshire District Council and Witney Town Council expressing no objection to the proposal are noted along with the comment from the police on the reduced width of the road that pedestrians will be required to cross as a result of the proposal.
13. It should also be noted that, as part of another consented development in the area, a toucan crossing is to be installed across Burford Road approximately 90 metres west of Springfield Park. That is due to be implemented - subject to a statutory consultation required for pedestrian crossings – when this development is occupied.

How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives

14. The proposals would help facilitate the safe crossing of the A4095 Burford Road by pedestrians at this point.

Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)

15. Funding for the installation of the kerb build-out has been provided by the developers of land at Springfield Oval, whilst the appraisal of the proposals and consultation has been undertaken by council officers as part of their normal duties.

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member for Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve proposals to install a kerb build-out in the layby on the north side of the A4095 Burford Road at Witney approximately 20 metres west of its junction with Moor Avenue to improve the safety and amenity for pedestrians using the existing uncontrolled pedestrian crossing point at this location as advertised.

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OWEN JENKINS
Director for Infrastructure Delivery

Background papers: Plan of proposed traffic calming build out
 Consultation responses

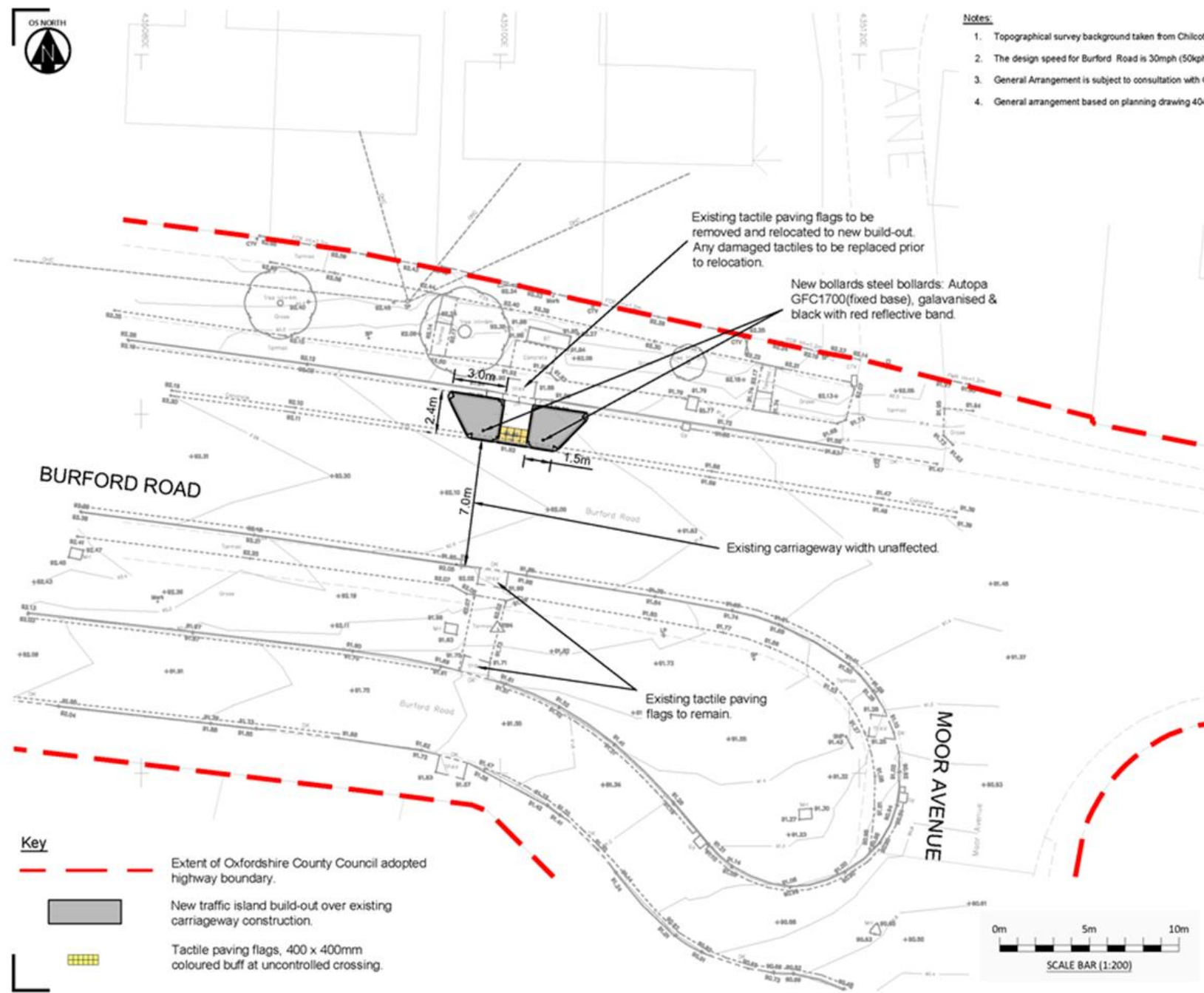
Contact Officers: Hugh Potter 07766 998704

November 2017



Notes:

1. Topographical survey background taken from Chilcote Engineering Services drawing number 14032017-01.
2. The design speed for Burford Road is 30mph (50kph).
3. General Arrangement is subject to consultation with Oxfordshire County Council.
4. General arrangement based on planning drawing 40457/055 BY RGP.



Existing tactile paving flags to be removed and relocated to new build-out. Any damaged tactiles to be replaced prior to relocation.

New bollards steel bollards: Autopa GFC1700 (fixed base), galvanised & black with red reflective band.

Existing carriageway width unaffected.

Existing tactile paving flags to remain.

Key

- Extent of Oxfordshire County Council adopted highway boundary.
- New traffic island build-out over existing carriageway construction.
- Tactile paving flags, 400 x 400mm coloured buff at uncontrolled crossing.



Rev	Date	Description	By	Ckd
P2	26/04/17	Note added: Damage tactile to be replaced (Bollard specification added)	NH	BP
P1	26/04/17	First Issue	NH	BP

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Client:

Partner

Project:

**SPRINGFIELD OVAL
WITNEY
OXFORDSHIRE**

Hydrock Project No: C-05285-C

Drawing Title:

**SECTION 278 WORKS
BURFORD ROAD
GENERAL ARRANGEMENT**

Status:	S2	Purpose of Issue:	INFORMATION
Drawn:	NH	Checked:	BP
Scale:	A3: 1:200	Drawn Date:	12/04/2017
First Issue:		Revision:	26/04/2017
Drawing No.:	WSO-HYD-XX-XX-DR-D-0200	Revision:	P2

RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS
(1) Thames Valley Police, (Traffic Management Unit)	No objection - I was previously aware of this proposal and have visited the location. The improvement facility will shorten road crossings for pedestrians and Thames Valley Police have no objection to the order.
(2) County Cllr Laura Price (Witney South and Central)	Object - I'm very disappointed to hear this (construction of build-out rather than full crossing) and will be challenging it - the community has long required this crossing and the Springfield development provided the perfect opportunity to create a safe crossing on this road. OCC Highways officers and TVP visited the site back in 2014 and concluded that a crossing would be desirable and do-able if funds were available. Did anyone revisit that when conceding to the developer?
(3) Witney Town Council	No objection - The Witney Traffic Advisory Committee considered this consultation on 19th September and has no concerns on this proposal.
(4) West Oxfordshire District Council	No objection - The District Council raise no objection to the proposal.
(5) Local Resident, (Corn Street, Witney)	Object - I can see no additional benefit to this proposal, it takes up valuable parking spaces and does not deliver any speed restriction measures. Installing a pelican or preferably a signalled crossing would create a safe point to cross.
(6) Local Resident, (Ashcombe Crescent, Witney)	Object - A Traffic Calming Build-Out feature seems insufficient to provide an adequately safe crossing for the many young families crossing the road; a controlled crossing (with signals, or a zebra crossing) or at the very least a pedestrian refuge is needed to ensure the road can be crossed in safety.
(7) Local Resident, (Weavers Close, Witney)	Object - This is not a traffic calming solution for such a busy road. It's a waste of time and tax payers money - when if there's money to be spent and it's on the doorstep of a primary school, there should be a pelican crossing at the very least.
(8) Local Resident, (Burford Road, Witney)	Object - Much of the traffic is speeding above the 30 mph limit, which makes it even harder to judge when is safe to cross with a child; a Zebra or signal controlled crossing is needed to make this safe for the residents and school children attending Tower Hill School, especially taking account of the increased traffic from the Springfield Oval and other developments in Witney and the wider area. Any money wasted in adding a small platform in the current lay-by, under the pretence that this will make crossing any safer, is a waste of budget. The council needs to look not only at

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	the safety issues on the road now, but needs to be offering solutions for the future.
(9) Local Resident, (Springfield Park, Witney)	Neither - The proposed measure does not go far enough - given the volume and speed of traffic and the many school children crossing here, a zebra crossing would be better.
(10) Local Resident, (Stenter lane, Witney)	Object – I cross this road every day with my child with special needs and find it very difficult and dangerous to cross – a controlled crossing is needed especially given the further demand being created by developments in the area.
(11) Email Response, (unknown)	Object - The visibility at the proposed crossing is severely hampered in both directions, & also taking account of the speed of approaching traffic, and proximity of the junction with Moor Avenue, pedestrian safety will not be improved by the proposal. The loss of two parking spaces is going to further restrict to visibility and cause severe inconvenience for nearby residents, who already have to park on the pathway to the side roads, potentially blocking emergency vehicles, and the grass land opposite. Many of the vehicles that park in that layby are vans, thereby further restricting visibility.
(12) Email Response, (unknown)	Object - it will take space out of the parking bay area but do nothing to slow traffic and will irritate drivers who will have to negotiate this island, noting that there will be increased traffic from the new development. A pelican crossing would be much more appropriate. Also considers that the Transport Assessment for the new development underestimated the likely increase in child pedestrian crossing movements here.
(13) Email Response, (unknown)	Neither - Whilst I recognise that the proposal would be an improvement, it goes not go far enough to reduce the danger present; the proposed island would not improve visibility problems for pedestrians crossing at this location due to parked cars and vans, and similarly the lack of visibility of crossing pedestrians to approaching traffic, noting that speeding is a problem here, and also that the nearby Moor Avenue junction adds to the difficulties for pedestrians.. There used to be a lollipop lady here to ensure the safety of the children but this has not been the case for some time and it's not a reliable safety measure; the number of people crossing is only likely to increase with the 73 homes planned for behind Springfield Oval and 270 homes further up the road. I suggest therefore the provision of a signal controlled crossing that would be more expensive but justified for the above reasons.
(14) Local Resident, (Burford Road, Witney)	Neither – Concerned about the impact of the proposal on the disabled parking space which I use which is extremely important for health and well-being given my restricted mobility, and also the loss of a parking space for my visitors, many of whom also have mobility problems. The loss of a parking space will also lead to cars parking on the main road causing congestion and further increasing risks to pedestrians and other road users.

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