

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 14 NOVEMBER 2019

BANBURY: A422 STRATFORD ROAD – PROPOSED PUFFIN CROSSING

Report for Community Operations (Interim)

Recommendation

1. The Cabinet Member for the Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve the proposed introduction of a puffin crossing (a signalled crossing for pedestrians) on the A422 Stratford Road near the North Oxfordshire Academy as advertised.

Executive summary

2. The provision for pedestrians is reviewed when there are changes to the road layout as a result of development, when requested by local councils as a result of road safety concerns and as part of the on-going monitoring of reports on road accidents. Specific proposals are assessed applying national regulations and guidance on the provision of pedestrian crossings and the Oxfordshire County Council Walking Design and Cycling Design Standards.

Introduction

3. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation to introduce a puffin crossing in place of a pedestrian refuge by Trinity Close and the North Oxfordshire Academy.

Background

4. The proposal as shown at Annex 1 has been put forward as a result of an adjacent residential development.

Consultation

5. Formal consultation on the proposal was carried out between 26 September and 25 October 2019. A notice was placed in the Banbury Guardian newspaper and notices placed in the vicinity of the proposed crossing. An email was sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, Cherwell District Council, Banbury Town Council and the local County Councillor. Letters were also sent to 56 properties in the immediate vicinity adjacent to the proposals.

6. Eleven responses were received. Four objections, five expressions of support and two neither objecting nor supporting. The responses are recorded at Annex 2 with copies of the full responses available for inspection by County Councillors.

Response to objections and other comments

7. Thames Valley Police expressed no objection to the proposal but noted that the existing pedestrian refuge appeared to operate well in respect of pedestrian and driver behaviour, noting also, though, a high proportion of goods vehicles using the road.
8. County Councillor Mark Cherry, the local member, expressed his full support for the scheme.
9. Cherwell District Council, while noting that the crossing appeared to have already been installed, albeit not yet in operation, at the time of the consultation, expressed no objection.
10. Banbury Town Council expressed support for the scheme.
11. Four objections were received from local residents, citing concerns over the use of the link via Trinity Close to the Stratford Road by school students and parents parking in the close at school journey times and the resulting disturbance and problems with litter and anti-social behaviour. Their objections noted that their understanding was that a fence/hedging – without a gap for pedestrians – was to be provided between Trinity Close and the Stratford Road.
12. The above objections also expressed concerns that the consultation was being carried out after the signal equipment for the puffin crossing had been installed (but not switched on) and that the nearby zebra crossing to the east of the North Oxfordshire Academy access already provided a controlled crossing, noting the already congested conditions at peak hours.
13. The above responses are noted and it is accepted that it was unfortunate that the consultation was carried out after the installation works had started, though noting also that the provision of the crossing was included in the plans submitted for planning approval for the development and, therefore, had already been in the public domain.
14. A principal concern of those objecting appears to be a result of the pedestrian movements – in particular school students – between Trinity Close and Stratford Road, including also the associated parking within Trinity Close at school journey times. Although this is noted, together with the statement that such a link was not to be provided under the original plans for the Trinity Close development, this matter is beyond the scope of the current proposal.
15. While there is a zebra crossing approximately 90 metres to the east of the proposed crossing, in practice, pedestrians will typically not divert from their

desire line by this amount and the new crossing will be far more convenient for pedestrians approaching the North Oxfordshire Academy from the west of its access onto the Stratford Road. As with any controlled crossing traffic will be stopped when pedestrians are crossing the road but the impact on traffic movements is proportionate to the need to provide safe and convenient crossings for pedestrians, noting the importance of encouraging walking as a healthy and sustainable mode of transport.

16. Three expressions of support were received from members of the public one of which also asked for the siting of the above existing zebra crossing to be relocated to the east to be closer to an existing pedestrian alleyway link from the housing to the south of the Stratford Road. Although the latter will be reviewed, at present there is no funding for a further scheme here.

How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives

17. The proposals would help facilitate the safe movement of pedestrians.

Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)

18. Funding for the proposed measures has been provided by the developers of land adjacent to the proposal.

JASON RUSSELL

Director for Community Operations (Interim)

Background papers: Plan of proposed puffin crossing
 Consultation responses

Contact Officers: Hugh Potter 07766 998704
 Paul Dear 07557 082569

November 2019

| RESPONDENT | SUMMARISED COMMENTS |
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| (1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police) | <p>No objection - I have visited the location and noted the visibility and use of the facility that is well used at material times. I did note that users appear to be disciplined and drivers aware and give way currently. I am not sure what the motivation is for the change where drivers may be looking at the signal rather than pedestrians crossing in future where now they look for the pedestrians as they must give way? I am unaware of any incidents or other safety concerns posed by the current design.</p> <p>I did re-visit the location and noted the layout and crossing design. A high volume of Quarry HGV noted with a mix of children and young adults.</p> |
| (2) Local County Councillor, (Banbury Ruscote Division) | <p>Support - note my full support as local member for Ruscote for the placement of the puffin crossing.</p> |
| (3) Cherwell District Council, (Developments Planning Team) | <p>No comment - it is noted that the crossing appears to have already been installed, albeit not yet in operation, at the time of the consultation.</p> |
| (4) Banbury Town Council | <p>Support – No comments.</p> |
| (5) Local Resident, (Banbury) | <p>Object – We here in Trinity close have around 100 students pass by our homes with bad language and litter dropping. Then at 3.10 we have around 25 cars arriving to pick the children up. Yes, we are hoping for a car accident as some drive in dangerously. Parents have also been seen to throw their litter from the cars.</p> <p>Trinity Close was parcels of land purchased from Cherwell district council with no plans for the school to be built. But my title Deeds state that the hedge was to be restated to a height of 6 ft all the way up Trinity Close closing all access to Trinity by foot closing this road entrance till the new road linking through to Bretch Hill.</p> |

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| <p>(6) Local Resident, (Banbury)</p> | <p>Object – you ask for our opinion when you already have the puffin crossing up and ready for use. You have now brought around 100 students through our private resident area, which comes with their bad language and dropping of litter.</p> <p>On top of that around 25 cars are coming into our middle close picking up their children. We are looking forward to an accident from speed, hoping that no one gets hurt then we might get some help.</p> <p>On our Tittle Deeds for Trinity Close the hedge was to be reinstated when the building work was finished to a height of 6 ft all the way up Trinity Close. When Bretch Hill was opened leaving us away from all this traffic and students.</p> <p>Do you not look to see what you have done, or maybe it is not up by your home so it's ok for us to try to tolerate it. The school has a u-shaped road and if they open their gates it could take the cars from our close when parents pick up the children. Our rates in Trinity are above most properties in Banbury yet we have this unbearable situation.</p> |
| <p>(7) Local Resident, (Banbury)</p> | <p>Object – I wish to point out that the crossing is already built and installed, so why are you asking for comments about something that is already built (just not switched on)!</p> <p>I object to this crossing. There is already a Zebra crossing installed and working approx. 100m East of the new proposed crossing. I do not know of anywhere else in Banbury where there are two pedestrian crossings within 100m of each other on the same road.</p> <p>Yes I appreciate road safety is important, but so is common sense and exercise. The crossing is outside a place of learning, so people should be taught/ encouraged to use the existing crossing, and for the sake of walking approx. an extra 200m there is no additional risk to pedestrians.</p> |
| <p>(8) Local Resident, (Banbury)</p> | <p>Object – With the Zebra crossing being so close I see traffic issues especially in the morning as children are continuously crossing at the zebra crossing causing a tail back past trinity close. thus blocking the path across the puffin crossing. As for traffic heading to Stratford they are going to have to stop at crossing so close to each other. Perhaps this crossing should have been nearer the school so as to be used by both the south and the north.</p> <p>I see no comment on the removal of the un controlled crossing whilst consultation takes place. I think the school needs to be told (and signs put up) that the Puffin Crossing is not in use as school children are treating it as an uncontrolled crossing and just walking or cycling across without due regard for traffic. A potential accident waiting to</p> |

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| | <p>happen.</p> |
| <p>(9) Local Resident, (Banbury)</p> | <p>Support – This has long been needed but become more urgent with the increase in heavy vehicles coming from the new housing developments. A child was knocked down by a van two weeks ago (unharmed) but there have been a number of near misses.</p> <p>I would also recommend that the zebra crossing further down towards the main junction with Warwick Rd is repositioned closer to the alley way which emerges from Bretch Hill. The crossing is not currently used well as it is poorly positioned.</p> |
| <p>(10) Local Resident, (Banbury)</p> | <p>Support – No comments.</p> |
| <p>(11) Resident, (Abingdon)</p> | <p>Support – No comments.</p> |