

Divisions affected: *Abingdon North*

**CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT
23 FEBRUARY 2023**

**ABINGDON: B4017 WOOTTON ROAD – PROPOSED TOUCAN
CROSSING**

Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet Member for Highway Management is RECOMMENDED to approve as advertised a toucan crossing on the B4017 Wootton Road at Abingdon as advertised

Executive summary

2. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposed installation of a toucan crossing on the B4017 Wootton Road at Abingdon as shown in **Annex 1**; the provision of this crossing was a planning condition in respect of the approved development of adjacent land for a food retail business (Aldi) .

Financial Implications

3. Funding for the proposals, including consultation will be met from the developers of adjacent land.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

4. No implications in respect of equalities or inclusion have been identified in respect of the proposals.

Sustainability Implications

5. The proposals would help facilitate walking and cycling and improve road safety in the vicinity.

Formal consultation

6. Formal consultation on the proposed was carried out between 09 December 2022 and 06 January 2023. An email was sent to statutory consultees & key stakeholders, including: Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, Bus operators, countywide transport, access & disabled peoples user groups, Abingdon Town Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, the local District Councillors, and the local County Councillor representing the Abingdon North division. Letters were also sent to approximately 45 adjacent properties, and public notices placed on site in the immediate vicinity of the proposals.
7. Seventeen responses were received during the formal consultation, comprising of: three objections, two raising concerns, eleven in support, and one non-objections.
8. The responses are shown at **Annex 2**, and copies of the original submissions are available for inspection by County Councillors.

Officer response to objections/concerns

9. Thames Valley Police expressed no objection providing the necessary speed monitoring had taken place with the results supporting this, and that the crossing fully meets all necessary design criteria. They also raised a query regarding the validity of the proposed road markings. Noting these comments, it is confirmed that the design meets the relevant national criteria and that the detailed design of the road markings will be checked and adjusted as required ahead of implementation should the scheme be approved, noting also that a post completion road safety audit will also be carried out.
10. The local member expressed support for the scheme but also emphasized the importance of adequate maintenance of the cycle provision noting the current overgrowth of vegetation which impedes users of these relatively narrow paths, and also the competition of approved cycle infrastructure funded by adjacent development that has yet to be delivered.
11. Responses were received from two local councillors, both expressing support for the toucan itself but raising also queries on the timing of the consultation on the toucan crossing, and also the design of the new vehicle access to the store. In respect of the first query, while the delivery of the crossing was included as a condition of the planning consent, there is still a requirement to consult on the crossing under national regulations on the provision of traffic control measures; the concerns on the design of the access are discussed below.
12. Abingdon Town Council expressed a concern noting that in their view the adjacent cycle path layout appears to differ from published plan and in their opinion does not fit well with this.

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<p>No objection – In principle I have no objections providing the necessary speed monitoring has taken place and the result support such a crossing point. And the crossing fully meets all necessary design criteria .</p> <p>Just one question from me regarding the road markers. The centre line through the crossing has been shortened to accommodate an arrow and there are other arrows within the controlled area is this permitted ?</p>
(2) Local County Cllr, (North Abingdon division)	<p>Support - Fundamentally I support this proposal which will be key to link up the Aldi site with King's Gate and the wider cycle connectivity across north Abingdon.</p> <p>However, it will only really compliment the north-south active travel routes on either side of Wootton road if the vegetation and overgrowth on both sides is maintained properly allowing for the already relatively narrow paths to not be impeded by the new poles added for this crossing.</p> <p>As a separate issue please could the promised cycle track on the east side of Wootton Road along the frontage of Kings gate (in the approved planning application drawings) actually be constructed too?</p>
(3) Abingdon Town Council	<p>Concerns – Related cycle path layout appears to differ from published plan and does not fit well with this.</p>
(4) Local Cllr, (Abingdon, Hillview Road)	<p>Support - I welcome this proposal. The new supermarket is already proving very popular with local residents, and a Toucan crossing will enable pedestrians and cyclists to access the store much more safely. This is in line with the agreed policies of the District and Town Councils to support active travel and see "15 minute neighbourhoods" in operation.</p>
(5) Local Cllr, (Abingdon, Ock Street)	<p>Support - The crossing is essential for the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. The Toucan crossing should already in place as per the planning decision made in Nov 21, P21/V0024/FUL, I Chaired that meeting and active travel and cyclist safety was the main point of discussion and debate. 'Prior to first occupation, the proposed TOUCAN crossing along Wootton Road adjacent to the site shall be provided and constructed in accordance with the highway authority's</p>

	<p>requirements and specifications. Reason: To provide appropriate pedestrian and cycle facilities that will serve the development and in interests of highway safety (Policy CP33 and CP35 of the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and DP16 of the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 2).' Committee were unanimously in favour of the Aldi, but the need for active travel and safe roads and convenience for residents should not be in conflict. I can not understand how the Toucan crossing is up for consultation when it is so clearly needed.</p> <p>The access to the Aldi car park has not been constructed in line with the plans submitted as part of P21/V0024/FUL. The give-way is now at the edge of the Wooton Rd not at where the cycle path and pedestrian footway cross the site entrance. The commentary in the planning report on which the planning committee made its decision says: 5.50 Following receipt of amended plans the access has been designed to give priority to users of the existing cycle path along Wootton Road with give way markings to be installed for vehicles at the access. The priority to cyclists will help to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport as supported by CP35 of LPP1.</p>
<p>(6) Local Cllr, (Abingdon, Oxford Road)</p>	<p>Support - The crossing is essential for the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>I would also like to know why the Toucan crossing is not already in place as per the planning decision made in Nov 21, P21/V0024/FUL?, extract as follows:</p> <p>'Prior to first occupation, the proposed TOUCAN crossing along Wootton Road adjacent to the site shall be provided and constructed in accordance with the highway authority's requirements and specifications. Reason: To provide appropriate pedestrian and cycle facilities that will serve the development and in interests of highway safety (Policy CP33 and CP35 of the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 1 and DP16 of the adopted Local Plan 2031 Part 2).'</p> <p>Why is this only being consulted on now?</p> <p>Also the access to the Aldi car park has not been constructed in line with the plans submitted as part of P21/V0024/FUL. The give-way is now at the edge of the Wooton Rd not at where the cycle path and pedestrian footway cross the site entrance. The commentary in the planning report on which the planning committee made its decision says:</p> <p>5.50 Following receipt of amended plans the access has been designed to give priority to users of the existing cycle path along Wootton Road with give way</p>

	<p>markings to be installed for vehicles at the access. The priority to cyclists will help to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport as supported by CP35 of LPP1.</p> <p>I would like the road markings at the entrance modified to prioritise pedestrian and cycle traffic in accordance with the planning decision and both Vale and County Active travel strategy.</p>
(7) Interim Managing Director, (Oxford Bus Company)	<p>Support</p>
(8) Local group/organisation, (Cycling UK Oxfordshire)	<p>Concerns – <u>Summary</u></p> <p>Good points: This is an important route, it should improve the most direct active travel route from Dalton Barracks to the primary school.</p> <p>Bad points: The toucan crossing is hampered by lost opportunities: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It should help improve the active travel route following the desire line (via the roundabout) from Wootton/Dalton Barracks to Fitzharries School/central Abingdon, but fails to follow this desire line • Widening of the segregated/shared use pedestrian/cycle track on the west side of the B4017 and replanting the hedge set back from the pedestrian/cycle track - even the consultation drawing shows at one point the track width measured to within the hedge. For most of the year the track width will be narrower than shown due to the hedge growth/inadequate frequency of cutting impinging onto the cycle/pedestrian track. This comment is based on experience throughout Oxfordshire. • The 3m track width is reduced by 0.45m due to the pole set in from the kerb. A vertical edge to a cycle track reduces the effective width by 0.5m (LTN 1/20 guidance). So with a hedge and a pole, the 3m width effectively becomes 2m width for shared use at a location where users will gather/wait at the crossing • As the land adjacent to the highway is being redeveloped (as opposed to a pre existing property), the above issues could easily have been resolved as part of the development. Why such a simple solution was not insisted upon by Oxfordshire Highways is of deep concern to us. <p>We formally object to the non compliant narrow width of the proposed track at and adjoining crossing.</p>

Detailed comments.

Good points.

- The toucan crossing links the new housing development to/from Aldi.
- Wootton Rd/Dalton Barracks to the development to Dunmore Primary School: - a quieter and similar distance if using the school side entry from Farm Rd compared to via the Dunmore Rd/B4017 roundabout and the Northcourt Rd. entrance.
- The toucan crossing looks good with a link to the new toucan crossing in Dunmore Rd.

Central right turn lanes before/after the toucan crossing:

There is a bit of a "3rd lane" in the centre of the road/crossing. The central section straddling the toucan crossing needs to be clearly marked as "not a running lane". There is not enough length/distance for hatching markings, some buff colour surface would be a good alternative. A traffic island would be much better. This should help deter impatient drivers from being tempted to overtake at this location.

It is the short section between these 2 right turn lanes that needs to be clearly marked as "not a running lane".

The area adjoining the toucan crossing:

General points adjoining the toucan crossing.

The proposed toucan crossing while fine in itself, is surrounded by poor design and lost opportunities for active travel. Unfortunately an all too common occurrence.

Where does the toucan crossing lead to?

The toucan crossing does little for connectivity from the wider area to Fitzharries School/central Abingdon. To avoid 3 sides of a rectangle on the new cycle track on the east side of the B4017 between the proposed Aldi toucan crossing and the roundabout, there needs to be a direct cycle/pedestrian route beside/set 1m back on the east side of the B 4017 to link up with the existing toucan crossing on Dunmore Rd adjacent to the roundabout. (Continuing on the west side of the B4017 towards Abingdon does lead to a toucan crossing on the B4017 south of the roundabout, but this requires an uncontrolled crossing of Copenhagen Drive - a toucan crossing is needed here as well).

Width of the segregated track near the toucan crossing:

The segregated track fails to meet LTN 1/20 guidance. Although nominally 3m wide, the hedge reduces the effective measured width to 2.5m (before allowing for hedge growth encroaching on the track). This is likely to be used to the school run, so should be designed to accommodate the busy school run.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The segregated use pedestrian/cycle track on the west side of the B4017 should have had the hedge replanted set back from the pedestrian/cycle track to allow for hedge growth - even the consultation drawing shows at one point the track width measured to within the hedge. For most of the year the track width will be narrower than shown due to the hedge growth impinging onto the cycle/pedestrian track. This comment is based on experience throughout Oxfordshire. • The 3m track width is reduced by 0.45m due to the pole set in from the kerb. A vertical edge to a cycle track reduced the effective width by 0.5m (LTN 1/20 guidance). So with a hedge and a pole, the 3m width effectively becomes 2m width for shared use at a location where users will gather/wait at the crossing. A pole set at the back of the shared use track with the traffic light head cantilevered out should be installed. • As the land adjacent to the highway is being redeveloped (as opposed to a pre existing established property), the above issues could easily have been resolved as part of the development. Why such a simple solution was not insisted upon by Oxfordshire Highways is a complete mystery. <p>Aldi side entry: The Aldi access offers no protection or priority for cyclists. It is in keeping with all the other inappropriate wide bell mouths wherever the new North Abingdon housing development meets the existing road network, all across "cycle tracks". All these turnings/entries must be LTN 1/20 compliant - options for cycle tracks crossing side roads/entries are given in Figure 10.13: "Priority crossings of cycle tracks at side roads" in LTN 1/20. In short, tighter kerb radii, narrower entrances, cycle pedestrian track priority across the entry with a raised cycle/pedestrian track across the entry.</p>
<p>(9) Local group/organisation, (Cycling UK Oxfordshire)</p>	<p>Object - The toucan crossing itself is ok, although it is important that it links coherently to the wider walking and cycling route network.</p> <p>We strongly object to the design of the entrance to Aldi, which is dangerous.</p> <p>The 8m radii encourage fast entry speeds across a walking and cycling route. According to Highway Code rule H2 pedestrians and cyclists have priority across a junction like this. This design makes 'left hook collisions' likely. Similar moving left-hooks recently caused the deaths of cyclists in Headington in November 2020 and at Oxford Parkway in February 2022.</p> <p>This design goes against the council's policies for a transport hierarchy that prioritises pedestrians and cyclists, and its commitment to 'Vision Zero' for serious traffic casualties.</p> <p>The junction should be redesigned for safety, the road user hierarchy, and to support drivers to obey the Highway</p>

	Code, with tight radii, a continuous raised shared path across the junction using 'Dutch entrance kerbs', and give way markings to reinforce priority.
(10) Local Resident/Member of public, (Kidlington, The Moors)	<p>Object - While I welcome the toucan crossing the TS pole will be on the cycle path without additional width given to the path at that point. This is dangerous and inconvenient.</p> <p>Entrance to Aldi. I object to the design of this entrance and the foot and cycle path crossing. It is yet another missed opportunity to start implementing continuous foot & cycle paths in Oxfordshire. Pedestrians and cyclists should have priority but this design will force them to wait for cars and create dangerous situations because the design contradicts the new Highway Code. It also doesn't encourage people to walk or cycle. The needs a redesign to include a raised table for walking and cycling and narrower radii to slow cars down.</p>
(11) Local Resident/Member of public, (Sunningwell, Sunningwell Road)	<p>Object - Showing astonishing negligence, the county council failed to secure the widening of the sub-standard ped/cycle track on the west side of Wootton Road in connection with the new Aldi development. Already reduced in width annually by spring/summer growth of the hedge that bounds it, this toucan crossing would now add some signal poles to further obstruct it, making it even less attractive for cyclists to use. They are also not being protected at the new access to the Aldi site. I like many other cyclists will not be using the track and attempting to negotiate this new access and standing pedestrians.</p> <p>The crossing would appear likely to be very little used and as yet there is no sign of the cycle track on the east side of Wootton Road along the frontage of the new development which was displayed on the approved planning application drawings and which would appear to be blocked by some brick walls that have been constructed at the entrance to the site.</p>
(12) Local Resident/Member of public, (Abingdon, Darrell Way)	<p>Support - I broadly support the proposal for a Toucan crossing as it will generally make it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to access the supermarket.</p> <p>I strongly object to the proposed design of the entrance which I consider dangerous. The junction must prioritise cyclists and pedestrians using the Wootton Road cycle path, in accordance with the hierarchy of road users given in the Highway Code. The proposed design is car-centric, and is likely to result in serious cyclist or pedestrian casualties.</p>

<p>(13) Local Resident/Member of public, (Abingdon, Morgan Vale)</p>	<p>Support - I think it makes a lot sense, now that the Aldi store is open and there eill be a lot of people trying to cross this road.</p>
<p>(14) Local Resident/Member of public, (Abingdon, Morgan Vale)</p>	<p>Support - It is safer for us to cross the Wootton Road, especially after the opening of ADLI.</p>
<p>(15) Local Resident/Member of public, (Abingdon, Oxford Road)</p>	<p>Support - The crossing is needed to ensure the safety of pedestrians and cyclists crossing Wootton Road between Aldi supermarket and the housing. The current arrangement of just having a centre refuge is unsafe and does not protect pedestrians and cyclists. I am suprised that the supermarket was allowed to open without the crossing in place.</p> <p>I am also confused about the point where the cycle lane and footpath cross the entrance to Aldi car park. This is extremely dangerous as it gives priority to car drivers. It is not clear if the marked crossing is for pedestrians or for both cyclists and pedestrians. As it is, it is not clear whether cyclists are intended to use the marked crossing or deviate onto the road. The vehicle give way marking for exiting the car park should inform car drivers to give way at the pedestrian/cycle crossing point and not at the road edge.</p> <p>Changing this entrance/exit and installing the toucan crossing will together make the whole area around the supermarket much safer and reduce the likelihood of accidents.</p>
<p>(16) Local Resident/Member of public, (Abingdon, Morgan Vale)</p>	<p>Support - As a resident of Kings Gate I can say that we do need a safe way to cross the road, especially now that Aldi is just opposite our development. The site is full of families with young children who will simply walk to the Aldi on a daily basis.</p>
<p>(17) Local Resident/Member of public, (Shippon, Rookery Close)</p>	<p>Support - Very busy road</p>