

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 7 SEPTEMBER 2017

PROPOSED PUFFIN CROSSING THORNEY LEYS WITNEY

Report by Director for Infrastructure Delivery

Introduction

1. This report presents responses received in the course of a statutory consultation to install a puffin crossing on Thorney Leys, Witney.

Background

2. Due to development on the east side of the A4095 Curbridge Road, Witney, it is proposed to install a puffin crossing (a signalled crossing for pedestrians) on Thorney Leys just to the east of its roundabout junction with the A4095 Curbridge Road, as shown at Annex 1. If approved, the full costs of the scheme would be met by the developers.

Consultation

3. Formal consultation on the proposal was carried out between 12 July and 11 August 2017. A public notice was placed in the Witney Gazette newspaper and sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, Witney Town Council and the local County Councillor.
4. 20 responses were received as summarised at Annex 2. Copies of the full responses are available for inspection in the Members' Resource Centre.
5. The responses comprised six objections, ten expressions of support, and four expressing no adverse comment.
6. Thames Valley Police noted that the proposed crossing is sited fairly close to the roundabout, but while the potential for shunt type and other collisions was noted, this was not considered to constitute a serious safety concern.
7. Witney Town Council and West Oxfordshire District Council expressed no objection, with the later commenting that the proposal was appropriate and should increase road safety.
8. Six objections were received from members of the public. These included concerns that the siting of the crossing close to the roundabout would lead to safety and congestion problems; the proposed crossing was not on an

established pedestrian crossing desire line and would therefore be a waste of money, with it also being noted that a crossing on Deer Park Road on the north west side of the roundabout would be preferable. One response was received from a resident adjacent to the crossing on the grounds of noise disturbance as vehicles braked for the crossing and then accelerated.

9. One response from a member of the public expressed no objection, but suggested that the crossing be sited further away from the roundabout.
10. Ten expressions of support were received, mainly from residents of Richmond Village. However, the latter were concerned that adequate linking footways be provided between the crossing and Richmond Village.

Review of responses

11. The responses of the police, Witney Town Council and West Oxfordshire District Council are noted. In respect of the police observation on the proximity of the crossing to the roundabout – and the objections to the crossing on these grounds received from members of the public - other signalled crossings in the county have been provided at similar distances from roundabouts and operate with good levels of safety and without causing undue delay.
12. The objections and other representations on the need for a signalled crossing on Deer Park Road near the roundabout to improve the safety and amenity of pedestrians and cyclists crossing here is noted. It is agreed that such provision would be helpful, noting the current crossing demand here, but the source of the funding for the proposed crossing (Richmond Village) could not be used for a crossing. However it is agreed that this matter should be reviewed in the context of further development in the area.
13. The objection from a resident adjacent to the crossing on the grounds of noise is noted, but such crossings are routinely sited on roads of a similar character and it is not considered that this would in practice prove to be a significant issue.
14. The expressions of support from residents of Richmond Village are noted and it is confirmed that as part of the scheme, linking footways will be provided.

How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives

15. The proposals would help facilitate the safe movement of traffic.

Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)

16. The full costs of the proposed waiting restrictions will be met by the developer of Richmond Village.

RECOMMENDATION

- 17. The Cabinet Member for Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve the proposal as advertised.**

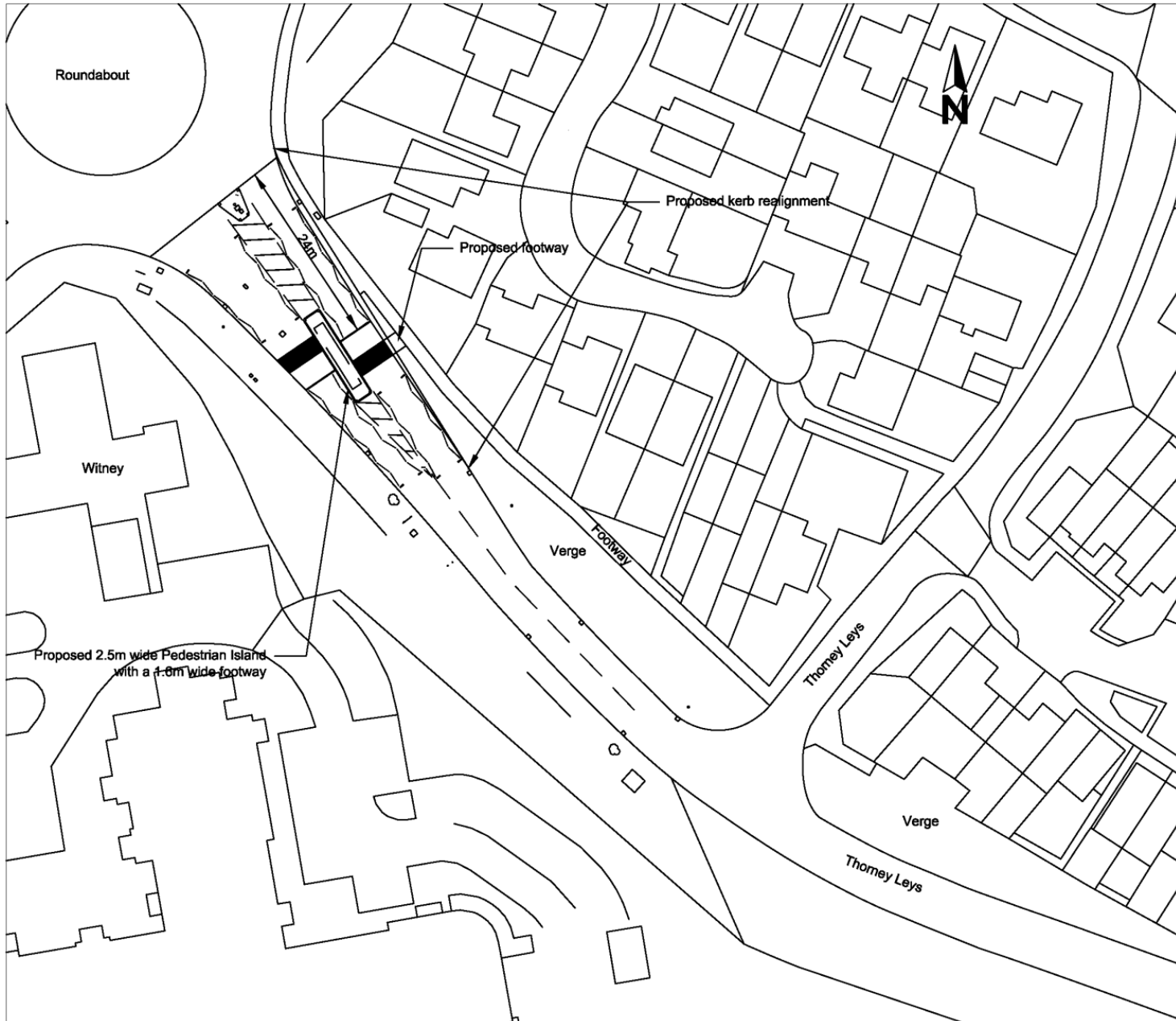
OWEN JENKINS
Director for Infrastructure Delivery

Background papers: Plan of proposed restrictions
 Consultation responses

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September 2017

Drawing No. Revision 0



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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved



Project title
**Witney
Thomey Leys
Proposed Puffin Crossing**

Drawing title
Consultation

Drawing Status			
Consultation			
Scale @ A3	Drawn by RG	Checked by MW	Approved by MW
	Date drawn June 17	Date checked June 17	Date approved MW

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RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS
(1) Thames Valley Police	No objection – while the crossing is sited close to the roundabout which may lead to a risk of restart / rear shunt collisions, this is not considered a serious safety risk. The crossing will serve an established desire line due to the construction of new build on the western side of the carriageway. The design has a central island with pedestrian protective fencing which given the road width should improve safety for vulnerable users.
(2) Witney Town Council	No objection - Witney Town Council has no objection to the proposal.
(3) West Oxfordshire District Council	No objection - There are no conditions associated with the planning approval for the new residential care home that would affect this proposal. The Council believe that this will increase highway safety for those looking to cross in the vicinity of the new residential care home, and feel that it is appropriate that this has been proposed.
(4) Local Resident, (Thorney Leys, Witney)	Object – The proposed crossing is too near the roundabout and the entrances to Thorney Leys, and will cause congestion and delays for residents and congestion at the roundabout. Would have been preferable to construct a footway link and provide a puffin crossing nearer Burwell Meadow.
(5) Local Resident, (Spring Meadow, Witney)	Object - While an additional crossing is welcome, the bulk of pedestrians cross the road from Richmond Village first at Curbridge road, using the new island THEN cross Deer Park Road to the bus stops. I would strongly recommend an on the ground survey of footfall so this is not an expensive error. Other measures that could be considered include (1) the provision of bus stops on the south side of the roundabout on Curbridge road (2) An additional Puffin or Zebra crossing across the Curbridge road on the north side of roundabout, to help pedestrians crossing to / from the bus stops (3) Better footway provision on the south side of the roundabout (4) Consider the supplementary need from the additional 1000 homes being erected off Curbridge Road - a crossing on Deer Park Road will be required.
(6) Local Resident, (Cotswold Meadow, Witney)	Object - This will cause even more traffic congestion especially at peak times.
(7) Local Resident, (Thorney Leys, Witney)	Object - The entrance to Richmond Village is on the Curbridge Road and most people cross Curbridge Road to the North then cross over on the Deer Park side of the roundabout.. Also this proposed crossing appears to be far too close to the roundabout for traffic exiting the roundabout. Especially given the number of HGV's that use this road. If you have two exiting the roundabout when the puffin lights are on red the 2nd one will have its rear end sticking out on the roundabout which would be extremely dangerous.

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<p>(8) Local Resident, (Thorney Leys, Witney)</p>	<p>Object - The back garden of our house is very close to the proposed Puffin crossing and noise from traffic on Thorney Leys is already a major disturbance to the enjoyment of our garden. The crossing will increase the braking and accelerating of vehicles and therefore further increase the noise. It would seem sensible to site the crossing on Deer Park Rd where houses are set further from the Road.</p>
<p>(9) Local Resident, (Harvest Way, Witney)</p>	<p>Support - It would be ideal. That road is difficult to cross, especially for the less mobile. However the existing crossing for access to the Leys should be retained as it is needed too. That does mean that 2 crossings would be within a short distance of each other. A possible solution would be to put the puffin crossing half way between the 2 and remove the existing crossing. Not just the elderly but people with young children need a puffin crossing.</p>
<p>(10) Local Resident, (Spring Meadow, Witney)</p>	<p>Support - though requests that the crossing is sited on the other side of the roundabout on Deer Park Road or a second one put in to assist the people living on Spring Meadow, including parents with children walking to and from school at West Witney Primary School - it is dangerous crossing over Deer Park Road and there has been numerous near misses.</p>
<p>(11) Email Response, (unknown)</p>	<p>Object – it is sited too close to the roundabout, leading to a risk of that vehicles will be unable to stop in time leading to accidents. Also the crossing will be expensive and little used - the money could be better used for other things including maintenance of the road surface and signs. Also queries the footway provision in the area.</p>
<p>(12) Local Resident, (Coral Springs Way, Witney)</p>	<p>Neither – suggests that the crossing is sited further away from the Curbridge roundabout, perhaps closer to the Richmond Village “kissing gate” entrance and the public footpath, which runs along the Village boundary. I realise there is no pavement on that side as yet, as this would be a shorter distance for those using the bus service and dog walkers from the Thorney Leys housing estate cross that road to use the public footpath.</p>
<p>(13) Local Resident, (Tuckers Court, Witney)</p>	<p>Support - Please record my support for this proposal access to the nearest bus stop is at present dangerous for the residents of this retirement village involving as it does the crossing of busy roads. As to siting, since there are no asphalt footpaths adjoining either of the villages two frontages and as the kissing gate access to Thorney Leys is convenient for all residents, a crossing as close as possible to this point would be appropriate.</p>
<p>(14) Local Resident, (Tuckers Court, Witney)</p>	<p>Support - Like all other residents of the Richmond Village in Witney who currently risk their lives getting to and from the Si bus stops, I am delighted to hear of the proposed puffin crossing on Thorney Leys Road. For it to be useful to the residents of the Richmond Village, it will of course also require a pavement on the south side of Thorney Leys Road between the puffin crossing and the Richmond Village gate.</p>
<p>(15) Local Resident, (Tuckers Court, Witney)</p>	<p>Support - The proposal for a new signalled pedestrian crossing in Thorney Leys to help people who need to cross the road to get to and from Richmond Village is very welcome. I</p>
<p>(16) Local Resident, (Tuckers Court, Witney)</p>	<p>Support - this would seem to be a good idea not least for bus passengers. However, it would be little use unless there was a footpath from our Village entrance to Thorney Leys which is just a strip of grass at the moment. Also there would need to be a path along Thorney Leys as far as the crossing.</p>

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<p>(17) Local Resident, (Tuckers Court, Witney)</p>	<p>Support - The proposed crossing would be most welcome, but will require suitable linking footway provision - the Richmond Village site has no external pavements, but only uneven grass verges between the property and both Thorney Leys and Curbridge Road. This is particularly troublesome to residents with walking difficulties and those using walkers or mechanical or electric wheelchairs. We would urge your planning department to rectify this situation as a matter of urgency, along with the installation of the proposed Puffin Crossing.</p>
<p>(18) Local Resident, (Tuckers Court, Witney)</p>	<p>Support - we are very much in favour of having a crossing across Thorney Leys as it would be safer for us and all the residents to cross the road for the bus stop required to go into Witney to do our shopping or visit the Doctors, Hospital or Dentist.</p>
<p>(19) Local Resident, (Tuckers Court, Witney)</p>	<p>Support - Please support this proposal as the traffic is very fast on Curbridge Road outside the main entrance to the Village and there is no indication that elderly people may be crossing as drivers approach the Thorney Leys roundabout, and as a frequent bus user find crossing here very difficult.</p>
<p>(20) Local Resident, (Tuckers Court, Witney)</p>	<p>Support - As a resident of Richmond Village, I write in support of a signalled pedestrian crossing in Thorney Leys to help people from the Village to get to and from the Si bus stops safely. It would also help those who wish to walk into Witney or are just out for a stroll. Walking is one of the healthiest activities especially for the elderly, but we need to be able to cross the busy roads safely. The bus route is very helpful, providing a good way for residents to maintain a healthy and independent lifestyle for as long as possible. I use it regularly but do find difficulty in crossing the roads to get to the bus stops. I also walk into town sometimes, but have the same problems with the closest roads.</p>