

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 19 DECEMBER 2019
ARDLEY: B430 STATION ROAD – PROPOSED PUFFIN CROSSING

Report by Interim Director for Community Operations

Recommendation

1. The Cabinet Member for Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve the proposed introduction of a puffin crossing (a signalled crossing for pedestrians) on the B430 Station Road at Ardley.

Executive summary

2. 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 Standards.

Introduction

3. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation to introduce a puffin crossing on the B430 Station Road.

Background

4. The above 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 11 October and 8 November 2019. A notice was placed in the Bicester Advertiser newspaper and notices placed in the vicinity of the proposed crossing and an email sent to statutory consultees including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, Cherwell District Council, Ardley with Fewcott Parish Council and the local County Councillor. Letters were sent to 34 properties in the immediate vicinity adjacent to the proposals.
6. Five responses were received. 2 objections, 2 in support and 1 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 did not object to the proposal.
8. Ardley with Fewcott Parish Council support the proposal, noting that their preferred option of providing a pedestrian link on the east side of the B430 Station Road northwards to tie in with the existing footway and signalled crossing (thereby avoiding the need for the proposed crossing) was found not to be viable.
9. Two objections were received from members of the public, both local residents, citing concerns over the proximity of the proposed crossing to the existing signalled crossing approximately 75 metres to the north; the adverse visual impact of the proposed crossing and associated street lighting very close to the church; noise associated with lorries braking for the crossing; the limited use of the crossing given the relatively small scale of development (17 houses) and also safety taking account of the speed of traffic with the current 40mph speed limit in place. These responses also requested consideration of measures to avoid the need for the crossing including construction of a pedestrian link on the east side of the road northwards to connect to the existing footway and signalled crossing and a 30mph speed limit enforced by speed cameras and if these were not viable, measures to mitigate the impact of the crossing, including provision of street lighting minimising light pollution and crossing equipment and lighting that only switches on when pedestrians approach to use it.
10. Noting the above concerns, the scope for providing a pedestrian link on the east side of the B430 to tie into the existing pedestrian provision was exhaustively explored as part of the planning approval process but found not to be viable. Given that it is essential that occupants of the new residential development have a safe and convenient means of accessing the village on foot, a signalled crossing is considered the only viable means of achieving this. While not ruling out consideration of reducing the speed limit to 30mph at some point in the future, this would not achieve the required level of safety in the absence of a crossing. The signals and street lighting will be designed to minimise environmental impact while acknowledging that they must nevertheless be designed to the appropriate standards and also noting that it is not feasible at present to install equipment that only switches on when pedestrians wish to cross.
11. An expression of support was received from, a member of the public not resident in the village.

How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives

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

Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)

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

JASON RUSSELL
Interim Director for Community Operations

Background papers: Plan of proposed puffin crossing
 Consultation responses

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December 2019

ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED BY CONTRACTOR



NOTE:
THIS DRAWING IS PRELIMINARY AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. ANY DIMENSIONS SHOWN ARE APPROXIMATE AND SHOULD BE CHECKED ON SITE. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR VERIFYING ALL DIMENSIONS AND CONDITIONS ON SITE.

PI	Revised following comments from Oxfordshire County Council	WD	10/01/18
PD	Final Issue	WD	21/02/18
REV	AMENDMENT	BY	DATE

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PRELIMINARY

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DRAWING FILE: S278 WORKS

SHEET NO.	SCALE	DATE	ORIGIN	CHECKED	ENTERED
A1	AS SHOWN	DEC 2017	WD	CCE	-
7397	DRAWING NO.	104	REV	P1	

RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	No objection.
(2) Ardley with Fewcott Parish Council	<p>Support – fully support this application for a pedestrian crossing as an integral part of the Rural Affordable housing scheme on Station Road.</p> <p>The Parish Council would have preferred to have a footpath on the same side of the road as the development but this was ruled out by OCC Highways.</p>
(3) Local Resident, (Ardley)	<p>Object - There is already a crossing within 200m of the proposed site, together with four lighting posts which runs 24 hours a day. To construct two crossing this close, with the addition of further lighting posts will affect the environment in which we live in two ways.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By creating further light pollution. 2. By surrounding our ancient church with two sets of crossings, traffic lights and street lighting. <p>I would hope that this substantial work would be unnecessary given the small number of houses it will support - and I do speak as someone who occasionally uses the current crossing. It is worth noting that the requirement to use the present crossing is greatly diminished due to the Fox and Hounds Pub no longer trading - which was one of the primary reasons for building it.</p> <p>I do however understand the need for safe crossing and would ask that the following be taken into consideration.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Would it be possible to construct the new crossing with a sensor which turns on the lights when the crossing is approached by a pedestrian? This seems to be in place in many other rural areas we visit and reduces the energy costs and light pollution. 2. If streetlights have to be constructed could they please be the low light pollution versions we can see used in Bicester, rather than the very bright light pollution versions we currently have.

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	<p>3. Could the speed limit be reduced to 30mph? It seems unusual to have two crossings serving 17 houses in 200 metres and on a 40mph road. If it was 30mph could a lower cost alternative crossing be used?</p>
<p>(4) Local Resident, (Ardley)</p>	<p>Object – The reasons for our objection are below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The new crossing will be within 60 metres of the current pedestrian crossing outside The Fox and Hounds Pub. Surely having 2 crossings so close together will look very unsightly and cause a very cluttered landscape.- We don't believe the crossing will have adequate use to justify its place. Although we understand that the new housing development has some affordable properties within it, the residents will be unlikely to choose to live somewhere like Ardley unless they have a car. The village doesn't have lots of amenities and any that are available could be driven to.- If the residents were on foot/bicycle it would make much more sense for them to use the current crossing. As there is currently no footpath to this crossing on the main road, could a cycle/footpath not be created that runs behind the development and joins up to where the path starts for the current crossing?- The road is a main road and traffic travels very fast (much faster than the 40mph set speed limit) so it's not a nice road to walk along.- As a resident living on the road it is already difficult to turn onto and off of. Adding another complication to this will only cause it to be more problematic.- As cars do not adhere to the current speed limit (as we have stressed multiple times already) the new proposed splay for the crossing may not be long enough. Vehicles travelling at 50mph require a minimum of 85m to stop in wet conditions so if the crossing is not seen immediately, they may not physically be able to stop in time.- Lorries having to brake for an additional crossing will add to the traffic noise pollution. The B430 can at times be a very busy road which may make it tricky to cross, however the real problem is when it's not busy as that it when drivers are likely to be driving through the village way above the current speed limit of 40mph. If the speed limit was changed to 30mph and this was enforced with a speed camera, the new residents would be able to safely cross the road as in any other village or town. We are aware that this idea has previously been rejected by the council and that they are not keen to amend the speed limit until a fatality has occurred, but to us this seems like the most obvious solution. Adding more pedestrians walking along and vehicles turning on and off of the road with its current regular

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	<p>speeding visitors is quite frankly an accident waiting to happen. This would be our preference as it would also lessen the road noise and be less disruptive at busy periods than an additional crossing as during these times there are often queues anyway so it would not add to people's travel times.</p>
<p>(5) Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p>Support – <i>No comments.</i></p>