

Bath & North East Somerset Council

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| DECISION MAKER: | Cllr Caroline Roberts, Cabinet Member for Transport | | |
| DECISION DATE: | On or after 4th October 2014 | EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE: | |
| | | E | 2679 |
| TITLE: | A4 Globe Roundabout – Toucan Crossings TRO | | |
| WARD: | Bathavon West | | |
| AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM | | | |
| List of attachments to this report: Appendix A: Drawing No TC4029-TRO-02B Appendix B: Drawing No TC4029-400-GA Appendix C: Summary of Formal Objections and Officer Response Appendix D: Equalities Impact Assessment Appendix E: Drawing No TC4029-1002 | | | |

1. THE ISSUE

1.1. This report considers the responses to the formal advertisement to propose the introduction of:-

- A pedestrian/ cyclist crossing facility ('Toucan') on the eastbound carriageway of the A4;
- A pedestrian/ cyclist crossing facility ('Toucan') on the westbound carriageway of the A4;
- A reduction in the speed limit on the A4 between the Globe roundabout and the Twerton Fork junction.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet member is asked to agree that both crossings and the speed limit reduction are approved in accordance with the advertised scheme.

3. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 3.1. The cost of these works is estimated to be £271,000. This is provided within the Council's approved 2014/15 capital Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) budget funded by Department of Transport (DfT) grant. It forms a section of the LSTF funded cycle/pedestrian route linking Bath Spa University with the Bristol-Bath cycle path with the off-road path between Twerton Fork and the University entrance, completed last year and a new access point to the Bristol – Bath path, to be constructed later this year.
- 3.2. In addition to the capital costs, the revenue maintenance costs associated with the project, consisting of additional signs and road markings will be incorporated within the existing highways maintenance revenue budget.

4. CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone.
- Improving transport and the public realm. The proposal will encourage people to walk and cycle more, and give more independent mobility for children and the elderly.
- This new sustainable transport infrastructure will contribute to leading Bath and North East Somerset to an environmentally sustainable, low carbon and climate resilient future by increasing the use of sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport and reducing car journeys to Bath Spa University. This encompasses transport, peak oil and air pollution.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The proposal to provide formal crossings to safely navigate the dual carriageway section of the A4 is Phase 2 of a 3-phase programme to provide an off-road cycle path to link the NCN4 Bristol and Bath Railway path and Bath city centre with Bath Spa University.

Phase 1, the provision of a shared-use pedestrian cycle path along the northern side of the A4 dual carriageway between the Twerton Fork junction and the Globe roundabout, where it meets Pennyquick Hill and the A39, was completed in 2013. The third phase comprises a ramp from the shared-use cycle path, near Twerton Fork down to the Bristol-Bath network, which is due for delivery 2014/15.

The completed scheme will realise the Council's aspiration to provide a majority off-road link to the University. It has been a long term aspiration to provide a mainly off road route between Bath Spa University and Bath city centre as described in the Bath and North East Somerset Council strategic cycle routes 2002.

The new signal controlled crossing will also provide a safe crossing point for bus passengers travelling from locations to the west of the university such as Saltford, Keynsham and Bristol. These passengers need to cross the busy dual

carriageway at this point to change buses to complete their journey to the university.

5.2. Informal consultation was carried out with the Parish Councils of Newton St Loe, Corston and Saltford, as well as Council Members of immediate and adjacent wards, in January/ February 2014 in the form of correspondence and on-site meetings to take account of their concerns. The points below summarise these, together with officer response:-

Concern - Not enough stacking length on the northern crossing, with possible stacking back into the roundabout creating a safety issue.

Officer Response – The new design has moved the northern crossing and bus layby further east, to alleviate concerns and provide greater stacking length for vehicles, which help prevent vehicles queuing back into the roundabout and potential shunts. This has also meant longer staggered length between the two crossings.

Concern - Vehicle speeds around the roundabout and existing laybys is already a general problem and introduction of the crossings is likely to create a further hazards.

Officer Response – The design includes a reduction of the speed limit along the dual carriageway from National Speed Limit (70mph) down to 60mph on both sides. On the western approach to the southern crossing, the proposal is to reduce the speed limit further to 50mph. Buff anti-skid material will be provided, as well as speed detection loops, which will prevent pedestrians from crossing if the vehicle approach speeds are measured as 'too high'.

Concern - No access facility onto the shared-use footpath in an eastbound direction for cyclists from Saltford.

Officer Response - a level access to allow smooth transition from c'way onto the path has been included as part of the design.

Concern – Will gantry arm signal be used, similar to those at Hicks Gate?

Officer Comment - No traffic signal gantry is to be provided, but instead high 6m poles for improved forward visibility.

Concern – Insufficient protection for cyclists and pedestrians on the central reserve.

Officer Comment - The central reserve will have vehicles restraint barrier either side of the central reserve to protect pedestrians and cyclists, but have an adequate width of footway between crossing points.

Concern – Provision of lights will cause stacking back on the A4, impacting on Saltford, which is already sensitive to heavy traffic at peak periods.

Officer Comment - The two staggered crossings will be demand led, to reduce delay of traffic and will only be safe to cross when all traffic is safely at a stop.

5.4. The proposals for both the Toucan crossings and speed limit changes were publically advertised between 23rd July 2014 and 21st August 2014. Seven representations of objection were received. Appendix C of this report summarises these, together with officer comments.

5.5. It is recommended that the scheme is implemented as advertised.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

The report author and Cabinet member have fully reviewed the risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7. EQUALITIES

The EqIA is attached to this report (Appendix D).

8. RATIONALE

The provision of Toucan crossings and associated speed limit reduction will benefit the environment, and encourage more walking and cycling in accordance with the Council's Walking and Cycling Strategies.

9. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

As part of the feasibility for the scheme, the Council were asked to consider an option to site a Toucan crossing on the A4 in advance of the roundabout from the Saltford direction. This would mean that cyclists would not be required to cross the dual carriageway section of the A4 and at the uncontrolled section of roundabout to Pennyquick Hill.

The optional route from the crossing would take pedestrians/ cyclists along the unadopted historic road, which comes out opposite the Bath Spa University (see drawing no. TC4029-1002 in Appendix E). This option was not considered for the following reasons:-

- Design standards require visibility for approaching drivers to the back of footway, so they can see/ anticipate in advance pedestrians/ cyclists waiting to cross. Visibility splays for a crossing at the location suggested on the northern side of the roundabout, are considered inadequate, as a result of earth embankments on one side and a slight bend in the road to the other. In the case of the Council proposal, the clearing of the vegetation and trees, provides the appropriate visibility splay to the crossing as drivers enter the roundabout from the Saltford direction.

- A further crossing would be required across the A39, where the non-adopted path comes out opposite the University entrance. Design standards recommend positioning of crossings away from junctions. In the case of a zebra, it is between 5 and 20m and in the case of Puffin/ Toucan it is between 20 and 60m. Cyclists and pedestrians are unsighted by approaching drivers on the e/b direction coming out of this path and vice versa.
- The historical road is currently non-adopted. Even if adopted, it would require regular maintenance to ensure the path is clear of leaf debris, at a time when Council budgets are limited.
- The route takes pedestrians/ bus passengers away from the natural desire line to the University and was proposed in combination with a suggestion of a longitudinal route from the field entrance within the roundabout to the Bristol/ Bath cycleway. This route has also been considered by Council officers, but not appropriate on the basis of future maintenance requirements, land liable to flooding, farm access problems and personal safety.

10. CONSULTATION

10.1 Ward Councillors; Cabinet members; Staff; Other B&NES Services; Local Residents; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer.

10.2 Informal consultation was carried out with the Parish Councils of Newton St Loe, Corston and Saltford, as well as Council Members of immediate and adjacent wards, in January/ February 2014 in the form of correspondence and on-site meetings. Formal consultation of the Statutory Consultees was carried out by public advertisement of the proposals for 21 days and circulation of this report.

11. ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

Social Inclusion; Customer Focus; Sustainability; Young People; Human Rights; Corporate; Health & Safety.

12. ADVICE SOUGHT

The Council's Monitoring Officer (Divisional Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

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| Contact person | Simon Thomas – 01225 395160 |
| Background papers | None |
| Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format | |