

Appendix 2 – Details of objections and Officer Comments

The first objector is concerned with the visibility at the junction of The Avenue and North Road. The concern is that the visibility is poor even though the Stop line was due to be moved forward when the objector wrote to the Council. This has now been moved forward by 2m as part of some resurfacing works in the area which has improved the situation. Visibility to the right is still limited because of a wall; however, the safety audit carried out by Mott MacDonald's did not highlight it as a problem.

The second objector raised several points.

These points are reproduced in italics below, followed in each case by Officer comments.

- No cost/benefit analysis is provided, i.e. what will be the cost of the proposal and what will be the benefits to the local community. And is this good value for money.

- Is The Avenue a "priority area", a "hotspot" or a "Blackspot"?

Within the Transportation Capital programme 2010-11 there is a budget specifically for cycling. This was highlighted as a possible scheme some years ago and more recently. The local cycle/pedestrian access groups were consulted and no objections were raised to this proposal.

The current Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is temporary because of the Stone Mine works. This needed to be amended and so as part of this there was an opportunity to include a cycle-contra flow.

The benefits to the local community are included in the Statement of Reasons as part of the TRO. The cost of the scheme is not a requirement of the TRO, however, the cost is estimated at approximately £6,000.

No consideration appears to have been given to "Do nothing" or "Do minimum" options

If the 'Do nothing' option was followed it is likely that cyclists would use this route illegally as evidence suggests that cyclists currently use the route for the entire length of the road. If the 'Do minimum' option was followed there is very little that can be eliminated from this scheme apart from the proposed pedestrian refuge which could be removed or reduced in size. The guidance recommends that 'segregation for cyclists at the entry and exit from a one way street should always be provided if there is sufficient space too do so'. There is space and it was agreed that if a pedestrian refuge is constructed it will assist pedestrians across this wide junction by reducing the crossing distance and improving visibility.

- There is no indications that there have been any requests from cyclists or the community to undertake the works.

This scheme has been requested by local cyclists recently and in the past and is supported by local cycle groups.

- The highway signage in The Avenue could be improved as it is "ambiguous". This might also lead to fewer signs and less clutter.

The proposal will remove all unnecessary/ambiguous signs and endeavour to keep new signs to a minimum.

- The Avenue does not appear to be wide enough to accommodate parking on the eastern side, buses and other larger vehicles in the centre and a cycle contra-flow on the western side. It appears there is likely to be conflict between vehicles and cycles. Who has Right of Way?

The Safety Audit does not highlight this issue as a problem. There will not be any formal right of way. It is proposed that cyclists and vehicles give way to one another if necessary as currently operates with the temporary Traffic Regulation Order. Visibility is good on this road. The road width available for cyclists and vehicles is approximately 4.8m to the edge of the parking bays. The Department for Transport Cycling England guidance states that a width of over 4.5m will allow heavy goods vehicles and buses with 1.05m clearance. There is a weight limit of 7.5T and so no HGV's would be using this route. Therefore, according to the guidance this road is wide enough for cyclists and vehicles up to 7.5T. Although there is currently an exception for public service vehicles to travel in both directions this is not used and the bus service is north to south. This proposal will remove the two way exception and so it will not be an issue with regard to road width.

- The contra-flow would appear to be dangerous to children using it. Currently they use the western pavement (with occasional adults also)

The cycle-contra flow will be signed and lined as recommended within Traffic Advisory Leaflet 6/98 which will make it clear to all road users that cyclists can travel in both directions.

- No evidence is given in support of the "Refuge" which isn't referred to in the public notice. What need has been put forward? It seems likely to be a hazard to vehicles using The Avenue whilst providing little benefit to pedestrians. It also represents more street clutter.

The pedestrian refuge was proposed to assist pedestrians. The guidance recommends that 'segregation for cyclists at the entry and exit from a one way street should always be provided if there is sufficient space too do so' At the north end there is sufficient space and it is proposed that a pedestrian refuge would also assist pedestrian cross this wide junction.

- When a bus is at the Hadley Arms bus stop, the refuge is likely to prevent vehicles from entering The Avenue, thereby leaving them in a vulnerable position at the road junction, or waiting at the top of Ralph Allen's Drive to enter The Avenue. Currently there is a free flow of traffic when a bus is at the bus stop.*

The proposed pedestrian refuge will not prevent vehicles from entering the Avenue. There is approximately 20m between the junction and the existing bus stop. This provides adequate room for several vehicles to stop behind a bus stopped at the bus stop and although the proposed pedestrian refuge may make it more difficult for the free flow of traffic when there is a bus at the bus stop, it should still be possible for vehicles to pass.