

Bath & North East Somerset Council

DECISION MAKER:	Cllr Anthony Clarke, Cabinet Member for Transport	
DECISION DATE:	On 31st January 2016	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2815
TITLE:	Pedestrian Crossing, Bathwick Hill, Bathwick and (Various Roads, South East Outer Area, Bath) (Prohibition and Restriction of Parking and Loading) (No Stopping on Entrance Markings) (Authorised and Designated Parking Places) (Variation No. 1) Order 201-	
WARD:	Bathwick	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Appendix 1 – TC4057/TRO “Pedestrian Crossing Location”. Appendix 2 - INFORMAL Consultation Response Details and meeting notes. Appendix 3 - FORMAL Consultation Response Details. Appendix 4 - Equality Impact Assessment / Equality Analysis. Appendix 5 - Pedestrian/cycle and vehicle surveys Appendix 6 - Plan TC4057-111 –revision C Appendix 7 - Road Safety Audit, stage 2		

1. THE ISSUE

- 1.1. Consideration of the responses to the consultation for the Notice to install a zebra crossing and prohibition of parking in Bathwick Hill to accommodate the proposed pedestrian crossing, bus stop and changes to the road layout.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Cabinet Member is asked to either:

Agree to the proposed zebra crossing and prohibition of parking in Bathwick Hill to accommodate the proposed pedestrian crossing, bus stop and changes to the road layout as recommended by the officer.

or

Reject the scheme based on the number of objections received from the respondees and the local ward members.

3. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

3.1. The cost of carrying out the works to implement this scheme is estimated to be £115,000. The cost of this work is funded from within the approved 2015/16 Transport Improvement capital programme and a section 106 contribution of £20,000 from Bath University. The Section 106 relates to the planning application 12/02626/FUL and is a specific contribution for this Bathwick Hill Crossing.

3.2. Lines have a life expectancy of between 7 and 10 years. The consultation process included Highways and no concerns were raised regarding on-going maintenance costs and these works can be incorporated within the existing revenue budget. However, continued adoption of new highways assets and infrastructure within existing resources will likely lead to increasing prioritisation and rationing of existing highways maintenance budgets. The highways maintenance budget is prioritised for road safety issues in the first instance; however parking restrictions do need to be maintained to ensure enforcement can be undertaken.

4. STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR THE ZEBRA CROSSING AND ALTERATION TO THE PROHIBITION OF PARKING RESTRICTIONS

4.1. The proposal is intended to:

- Avoid danger to persons or other traffic using the road or to prevent the likelihood of any such danger arising and
- To facilitate the passage on the road or any other road of any class or traffic (including pedestrians).

4.2. The following objectives apply:

- Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live;
- Building a stronger economy

4.3. An Equalities Impact Assessment / Equality Analysis has been carried out. No discriminatory factors have been identified. The Equalities Impact Assessment is included as Appendix 5.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 The proposed pedestrian crossing was requested by former ward Councillors and the need was recognised by Council officers in relation to the number of pedestrians and cyclists who cross the road and the difficulty of crossing this road at peak hours because of the volume of traffic and poor visibility on the south side. This facility will assist pedestrians with mobility difficulties who currently could find it difficult to cross the road.

5.2 On 14th November 2014 a traffic flows survey was carried out: North Road 3,140 two way daily, Oakley 9,980 two way daily, Copseland 756 two way daily showing a high number of vehicles on this road. See appendix 5.

5.3 A cycle /pedestrian 12 hour count was carried out on 5/11/14 (Wednesday) of 4 movements. The details of this are in appendix 5. The total number of cyclists and pedestrians crossing in the vicinity of the proposed crossing were 916: north

bound 346 pedestrians and 81 cyclists; 426 pedestrians and 63 cyclists. This count was carried out on a Wednesday which is a half day at the University and data from the University for a count carried out 25.11.14 total was 1190 showing that there are a large number of pedestrians/cyclists crossing Bathwick Hill at this location.

- 5.4 Over a number of years a cycle/pedestrian route has been developed from the Combe Down area to improve connectivity for cyclists and pedestrians in the area by providing a mainly off road route between Combe Down and Bath University. The alternative route to this for cyclists is Claverton Road which is a much longer route than the Claverton Down Restricted Byway, heavily trafficked and undulating on some sections. This road crossing point on Bathwick Hill was recognised as one section for improvement on this route between the Combe Down area and University by Council officers, Bath University and previous local Councillors as it can be difficult to cross the road at peak times.
- 5.5 There is no record of any major accidents. The reason for the proposed crossing is the large number of pedestrians/cyclists and the high volume of traffic at peak hours with the added difficulty of crossing from the south side because of limited visibility due to a high wall on a bend in the road. This facility will assist pedestrians with mobility difficulties who currently could find it difficult to cross the road.
- 5.6 A Stage 2 safety audit carried out on the option as shown on Plan TC4057-111 – revision C, Appendix 6. This option was developed following informal consultation. The safety audit did not highlight any particular problems and the only issues raised are the recommendation to provide dropped kerbs for cyclists to leave and re-join the highway on Bathwick Hill and a recommendation to extend the tactile slabs at the zebra crossing on the north eastern side to the back of the footway. The audit did not raise any issues on whether the proposed zebra crossing would have a negative impact on Oakley if traffic queues.
- 5.7 This crossing would primarily serve the University as students/university staff cross the road at this location to access the University campus; however there have also been requests for a crossing from local residents, for example, Quarry Rock Gardens
- 5.8 Two consultation meetings were held on 29.05.15 and 22.07.15 with local stakeholders and residents to develop the design and a further meeting with the local Councillor Steve Jefferies to agree a way forward. At the first meeting 5 options were presented. It was concluded that although there were strong objections to the proposed Toucan crossing by some local residents it was realised by the end of the consultation meeting that some type of crossing facility is required. The original proposal was for a Toucan crossing, however, after discussion a compromise was agreed that a zebra crossing would be less intrusive visually and is possible to locate the crossing closer to the pedestrian desire line.
- 5.9 The final 2 zebra crossing options considered: one with the bus stop and layby adjacent to the crossing (location 9) and the other with the bus stop below the North Road junction (location 8). It was agreed that the preferred option is 9 maintaining the Right Turn lane facility for traffic entering North Road if possible. However, the proposal to shorten the bus layby to facilitate a Right Turn lane was explored but Public Transport confirmed that there are no short or medium term plans by First to replace the bendy buses along this route. This being the

case the option of shortening the bus stop to accommodate the Right Turn lane as suggested cannot be progressed as a bendy bus would block the exit of North Road. Without the Right Hand turn lane it could cause traffic queues at peak times.

- 5.10 Advantages of location 9 compared to location 8 are that the bus stop relates better to the University (its main destination in terms of passengers dropped off), and secondly it means that students and staff do not have to cross North Road to reach the University entrance. It also means that eastbound traffic will not be held up when a bus is letting passengers off, which given numbers can be a slow process.
- 5.11 The Council did take into account comments made at the informal consultation stage and modified the design as much as possible within the remit of the proposal.
- 5.12 The formal consultation results are summarised in appendix 3. This proposal was presented at the Council Cycle Forum and received general support. Bath University also support this scheme. However, objections have been received.

The objections below with an officer response are the main ones which relate the advertising of the zebra crossing and the Traffic Regulation Order relating to the parking restrictions to accommodate the proposed pedestrian crossing, bus stop and changes to the road layout.

The need for the zebra crossing and whether it will be used.

Council response: the zebra crossing is close to where pedestrians/cyclists currently cross the road i.e. the desire line so will give a safe convenient place to cross. There may be some pedestrians/cyclists who do not use the crossing if there is gap in the traffic to cross.

The removal of the Right Hand Turn lane on Bathwick Hill.

Council response: the current situation has been observed at peak hours between 8.00 and 9.00 and a traffic queue can form in the Right Hand turn lane as vehicles aren't able to turn into North Road. This happens because the junction of North Road is obstructed if a slow moving bus is travelling up Bathwick Hill with vehicles following behind it. If the bus does not stop at the bus stop there is not the opportunity for vehicles to turn right into North Road as the cars continue to follow the bus. However, if the bus does stop, vehicles travelling up the hill have to stop and generally leave a gap for vehicles to turn right. During the monitoring this occurred 3 times. It is anticipated that the removal of the right hand lane may lead to more vehicles queuing at peak times but the impact of this will be minimal as there will be opportunity for people to turn right when vehicles stop to allow people to cross at the zebra crossing. In order to improve traffic flow a yellow box marking could be provided on the road at the junction of North Road and Bathwick Hill to allow vehicles to turn right.

In addition, traffic queues can occur at peak hours when buses waiting at the bus stop prevent vehicles from continuing up Bathwick Hill. This situation will be improved with the proposed re-alignment of the existing carriageway and the relocation of the bus stop in a lay-by. This will allow traffic to get past a stationary bus. So overall, it is anticipated that the reduction of traffic queuing resulting from

the relocation of the bus stop in the lay-by will counteract any traffic queuing that may result from the removal of the Right Turn lane.

Limited visibility for vehicles exiting North Road onto Bathwick Hill and road safety in the vicinity of this junction and the proposed zebra location

Council response: The North Road exit has been designed to highway standards. The existing junction of North Road is very wide and currently there is problem with vehicles cutting across the junction on the wrong side of the road when entering North Road from Bathwick Hill. The new design will prevent this and will slow vehicles down entering and exiting North Road, therefore improving safety. For vehicles turning left out of North Road the visibility will be improved because the junction has been squared and the bus will stop in a layby therefore giving more road space. If no traffic is coming from the right, drivers will be able to pull forward into the eastbound traffic lane to check traffic coming from the left. The sight lines for vehicles exiting North Road onto Bathwick Hill were not highlighted as a safety issue in the safety audit.

The zebra crossing has been designed to highway standards and appropriate safety audits carried out. The highway is being realigned to improve visibility to ensure it will meet highway standards.

Increase in light, noise and air pollution.

Council response: Tunnel hoods can be fitted to bellisa beacons to prevent any light intruding on adjacent properties. Currently at peak times when buses stop and passengers alight it is difficult for vehicles to overtake the stationary bus. This causes congestion and stopping/ starting of vehicles. The bus layby will prevent this from happening. With a zebra crossing there is likely to be more stopping and starting at peak times but on balance this will be an improved pedestrian/cycling environment by providing a facility to cross the road.

The need for the uphill bus stop

This bus stop is primarily used by students but is also serves local residents to provide good public transport as proposed in the Bath Transport Strategy.

Consultation process

The Council have followed the required statutory consultation process. As well as Notices on site, this has also been advertised in the local newspaper. There has also been extensive consultation prior to the statutory consultation. The Notice for the zebra crossing has been advertised as soon as possible after the informal consultation. If the consultation had been carried out early 2016 it would have made the timescales to allow construction this financial year.

6. RATIONALE

- 6.1 There are a substantial number of pedestrians and cyclists who cross this busy road and at peak times this can be difficult (See appendix 5). This proposal will improve the pedestrian/cyclist environment, improve the North Road junction and improve the uphill bus stop by providing a bus lay-by.

- 6.2 The Council' Joint Local Transport Plan gives highest priority to pedestrians and so this scheme fits well with this.
- 6.3 The project will also provide important support for the Core Strategy in promoting less use of the car.

7. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1. Initially 5 options were presented at the first meeting with the local stakeholders for discussion.
- 7.2. There are number of local residents who do not feel a pedestrian crossing is required and so this option has been considered above in the section 5.
- 7.3. An alternative route between Widcombe Hill, Claverton Down Road and Norwood Avenue has been suggested. A feasibility study for alternative route option with crossing on Claverton Down Road will be explored in due course. This route is circuitous and not direct for cyclists and pedestrians so it is very likely that it would not be used and people would continue to cross at Copseland.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1. Ward Members; Internal transport colleagues; Other B&NES Services; Local Residents; Emergency Services.
- 8.2. Two consultation meetings were held on 29.05.15 and 22.07.15 with local stakeholders and neighbours to develop the design and a further meeting with the local Councillor Steve Jefferies to agree a way forward. At the first meeting 5 options were presented. The original proposal was for a Toucan crossing, however, after discussion a compromise was agreed that a zebra crossing would be less intrusive visually.
- 8.3. Consultation was carried out by e-mailing internal and external contacts. Notices were also advertised in the local press and erected on site for a 21 day period from 3rd December to 24th December 2015. All affected people had the opportunity to participate in the TRO consultation process, and to make their opinions known.
- 8.4. A responses breakdown to the informal consultation is included as Appendix 2.
- 8.5. A responses breakdown to the formal consultation is included as Appendix 3.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 9.1. A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

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Background papers	
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