

## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC REPRESENTATIONS PANEL

21 JANUARY 2013

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>OBJECTIONS: LOCAL AREA FORUM SCHEME: PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN REFUGE, KINGS ROAD, BEBINGTON.</b>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	<b>BEBINGTON WARD</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>INTERIM DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:</b>	<b>STREETSCENE AND TRANSPORT SERVICES COUNCILLOR HARRY SMITH</b>
<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	<b>NO</b>

#### 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report considers objections submitted against the proposal to introduce a pedestrian refuge island on Kings Road, Bebington near to its junction with Bentfield Gardens.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 On 17<sup>th</sup> March 2011 Cabinet considered and approved the provision of £20,000 funded from the 2011/12 Local Transport Capital Programme to each Area Forum to carry out schemes of a traffic management/road safety nature. As part of its £20,000 allocation the Bebington & Clatterbridge Area Forum selected the provision of a pedestrian refuge facility on Kings Road, Bebington near its junction with Bentfield Gardens.

2.2 Following detailed design, letters were delivered to residents of properties in the vicinity of the proposed scheme and Christ Church, informing them of the proposal. Party Spokespersons and Ward Members were also informed of the proposal.

2.3 During this consultation period, several calls/letters of support were received, however two objections were also received from local residents.

2.4 At the meeting of this Panel on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2012, a report was to be presented on the objections received however, prior to consideration of the item, it was reported that an e-mail had been received on the same day from the Canon of Christ Church raising concerns regarding the impact the proposals would have on traffic and parking. In view of the concerns raised the Panel were asked if consideration of this item could be deferred to allow Officers to investigate the points raised.

2.5 Since the Panel meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> September Officers have met with representatives of Christ Church on site to discuss the proposals in detail. As a result, the Church representatives have provided written confirmation that they do not now object to the scheme.

2.6 However, the two original objections received remain unresolved and are considered in detail by this report. The content of the objections from the residents of 116 and 118 Kings Road, along with a detailed response are as follows:-

2.4 The scheme is unnecessary as no one crosses at this location.

**The Local Area Forum identified and requested a pedestrian refuge be provided at this location. Several comments of support for the scheme have been received outlining the benefit of a pedestrian refuge at this location in relation to accessing the bus stops, the church and the newly constructed community centre. Site surveys confirm that many people cross Kings Road at this point throughout the day to access the adjacent bus stop, church and community centre.**

2.5 The proposals will result in the loss of a tree.

**No trees will be removed nor affected as a result of proposals.**

2.6 The relocation of the bus stop invades resident's privacy.

**In order to safely accommodate the proposed pedestrian refuge island, the southbound bus stop is to be moved approximately eight metres from its current location. Although the bus stop is on the side of the road that does not have any residential properties adjacent, it will be located facing house numbers 116 & 118 on the opposite side of the road. These properties are set back from the road with a front garden and are at an elevated position in relation to the road level. The length of time at which a bus is stationary at a bus stop is minimal and it is not used as a bus stop layover point.**

2.7 The refuge will cause queues of traffic when buses are stationary at the bus stop as cars will not be able to overtake the bus due to the position of the refuge.

**The proposed refuge and relocated southbound bus stop have been positioned so as to minimise any potential disruption to traffic should a bus be stationary at the bus stop. Computerised swept vehicle-paths confirm that a car will still be able to negotiate the refuge island and pass a stationary bus in either direction.**

2.8 The refuge will cause a loss of parking on Kings Road and cause cars to park at Bentfield Gardens.

**It is estimated that approximately four on-street parking car parking spaces will be lost as a result of the construction of the refuge. There is however, ample on-street parking in the vicinity of Christ Church in addition to the off-street Community Centre/Church car park.**

### **3.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 3.1 Failure to undertake the scheme will result in a lost opportunity to improve safety for pedestrians crossing Kings Road to access local shops, bus stops, the church and the newly constructed community centre.

### **4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 None identified.

### **5.0 CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 As part of the consultation exercise for this scheme letters were delivered to local residents in the vicinity of the scheme and Christ Church, informing them of the proposals. In addition, consultation was undertaken with Party Spokespersons, Ward Members, the Cycle Forum, the Pedestrian Forum, Local and National Walking Groups, the Emergency Services, the Freight Transport Association, the Road Haulage Association and Merseytravel.
- 5.2 Following the receipt of the objections, discussions between the objectors and Council Officers have taken place to try and resolve the objectors concerns. Those concerns have subsequently been carefully considered and are detailed in 2.1 - 2.8 above.
- 5.3 As requested by this Panel, further consultation has since been undertaken with the representatives of Christ Church following receipt of concerns raised by the Canon of Christ Church.
- 5.4 This scheme was identified by the Bebington & Clatterbridge Local Area Forum as a direct result of public feedback received following the Wirral wide Neighbourhood Plan consultation exercise.

### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS**

- 6.1 There are no specific implications under this heading arising from this report

### **7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS**

- 7.1 The scheme is estimated to cost in the region of £20,000 and will be financed from the 2011/12 Local Transport Capital Programme.
- 7.2 Existing staff resources will be utilised in the progression of this scheme.

### **8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no implications under this heading.

## **9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The proposed scheme is included within the 2012/13 Transport Capital Programme approved by Cabinet on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2012 for which an Equalities Impact assessment has already been undertaken.

## **10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The scheme will assist pedestrian movements and thereby support a reduction on reliance upon the private motor vehicle and therefore assist in reducing the overall carbon footprint – key aims within the Merseyside Local Transport Plan.

## **11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no implications under this heading arising from the recommendation of this report.

## **12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 12.1 The report recommends that the Panel note the objections and that the proposed scheme consisting of a pedestrian refuge island with associated tactile crossing points as shown on attached Drawing No. 3576 be recommended to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval and implementation.

## **13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 13.1 This scheme was identified by the Bebington & Clatterbridge Local Area Forum as a direct result of public feedback received following the Wirral wide Neighbourhood plan consultation exercise.
- 13.2 Following detailed assessment by Officers, it was agreed that this location and the existing environment was suitable for a pedestrian refuge and it would benefit from such a scheme.
- 13.3 The scheme reflects Wirral Council's ongoing commitment to encourage walking in the borough through providing better environments where it is safe and attractive to do so.
- 13.4 There are high flows of pedestrians in this area visiting both the church and community centre from both the Birkenhead and Bebington ends of Kings Road. Pedestrians cross the road in this vicinity to access the bus stops nearby.

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## **APPENDICES**

Drawing No. 3576 indicating the proposed layout of the Pedestrian Refuge Island.

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

Letters and emails from residents objecting to the scheme have been used in the preparation of this report.

## **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>