

<p>REPORT TO: CLLR STUART WHITTINGHAM</p> <p>CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT</p>	<p>CABINET MEMBER REPORT 10TH JANUARY 2018</p> <p>UPTON ROAD, CLAUGHTON AND BIDSTON & ST JAMES WARDS – PROPOSED ROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS</p>
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REPORT SUMMARY

This report considers an objection relating to the proposal to relocate the position of the existing zebra crossing in Upton Road, Noctorum as shown on plan DC/0305/100. These proposals have been prioritised as part of the 2017/18 Transport for Growth Programme agreed by Cabinet on 27th February 2017.

This matter affects Claughton & Bidston & St James Wards.

This decision (reporting a single objection) is being made under the updated Cabinet Member Scheme of Delegation (Objections to Highways schemes) agreed by Council dated 14th December 2015 [Minute 83 refers].

This matter does not require a Key Decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport is requested to:

- (1) Note the objection received and the Officers' responses; and
- (2) Approve the proposal as shown on attached drawing no. DC/0305/100 for implementation.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To support the priorities of the Liverpool City Region Transport Plan for Growth and the Council's existing Corporate Goals and Objectives.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Other measures to manage pedestrian movements have been considered including the removal of the Zebra crossing and the construction of uncontrolled pedestrian dropped crossings around the roundabout at Upton Road / Wirral Way. However, to remove the crossing entirely would significantly disadvantage pedestrians in Upton Road. It is considered that the existing Zebra crossing cannot remain in its current location on road safety grounds. In addition, as part of the proposals consideration was also given to upgrading the crossing to a Puffin crossing.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 On the 3rd February 2017, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority awarded £1,160,000 of Integrated Transport Block funding to Wirral Council, to support the delivery of the Liverpool City Region Transport Plan for Growth.
- 3.2 The proposed scheme forms part of the 2017/18 Transport Plan for Growth Capital Programme of Works (Integrated Transport Block - ITB) subsequently agreed by Cabinet at its meeting of 27th February 2017 [Minute 100 refers].
- 3.3 This decision (reporting a single objection) is being made under the updated Cabinet Member Scheme of Delegation (objections to Highway schemes) agreed by Council dated 14th December 2015 [Minute 83 refers].
- 3.4 Analysis of the road safety history on this section of Upton Road during the 5 year study period 01/09/2012 to 16/9/2017 has revealed that there have been 4 recorded collisions involving injuries, of which 3 occurred at the Zebra crossing.

4.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 4.1 As part of the consultation exercise for this scheme letters were delivered to local residents in the vicinity of the scheme, informing them of the proposals. In addition, consultation has been undertaken with Party Spokespersons, Ward Members, Active Travel Forum, Emergency Services, Freight Transport Association, Road Haulage Association, and Merseytravel.
- 4.2 During the consultation exercise one objection was received against the proposals. Our records also show that Merseyside Cycling Campaign contacted the Council to support the proposals. The outstanding objections / concerns from the single objector are summarised as follows:-

- 4.2.1 The objector states that moving the existing zebra crossing up towards the existing bus stop will create a serious risk for pedestrians using the crossing.

In response; During the five year study period from 1/9/2012 to 16/9/2017 there were 4 recorded personal injury accidents within this section of Upton Road, of which 3 occurred at the Zebra crossing. Investigations have revealed that the existing position of the Zebra crossing in relation to vehicles exiting the roundabout was a contributory factor to the cause of the accidents. Officers consider that the location of the existing crossing is too close to the roundabout junction and also that there are currently mature trees immediately adjacent to the position where pedestrians stand at the kerb edge. From the collision history, Officers consider that the lack of prominence of the existing crossing is a significant contributory factor in the collision history. The introduction of a new central refuge which will have offside belisha beacons, keep left bollards and hatch markings will provide further indication of the presence of the pedestrian crossing for drivers approaching past the bus stop from the northeast. Officers consider that the proposed layout would also have a speed reduction effect, especially when a bus is present at the stop due to the provision of the refuge island.

- 4.2.2 The objector states that the current location of the Zebra crossing allows time for drivers to react when overtaking a parked bus in the event pedestrians are on the crossing. By reducing the gap between a parked bus and the crossing a driver will not have time to react and brake within the reduced distance. By installing a pedestrian refuge further raises the risk to pedestrians and a vehicle will have no option but to turn into the nearside kerb.

In response: The proposed relocated position of the Zebra crossing and the introduction of a pedestrian island with keep left bollards, zebra beacon posts together with advanced warning signs and carriageway markings will further highlight the crossing point for drivers. No concerns were raised by Merseytravel as part of the consultation exercise for this project.

- 4.2.3 The objector states that from the opposite direction vehicles will have reached a higher speed travelling uphill after leaving the roundabout. The objector, as a resident, is very conscious that the road is regularly travelled by speeding cars and motor bikes. Keeping the Zebra crossing in its current position ensures that vehicles are travelling at low speeds while negotiating the roundabout.

In response; It is considered that the existing Zebra crossing cannot remain in its current location on road safety grounds. It is proposed to move the crossing by approximately 12m and Officers consider that it is unlikely that significantly higher speeds will be generated over this distance. The calming effect of the Zebra crossing is such that it is linked to pedestrian demand, which is limited.

Merseyside Police and Wirral Council operate a joint voluntary service called 'Community Speedwatch', which allows residents concerned

about speeding in their local area to monitor the speed of motorists using radar guns. The scheme aims to tackle areas where the dangers of careless driving and speeding are a real concern to local people. Speeding motorists are sent warning letters, which also explain the problems their speeding causes for people living in the area. The presence of Speedwatch volunteers can encourage drivers to slow down, raise their awareness of speed as an issue and make the location safer. At present there are no Community Speedwatch volunteers operating in Upton Road, Noctorum.

- 4.2.4 The objector states that Upton Road is a major artery leading into central Birkenhead and as such is used regularly by emergency services vehicles. The reaction and braking of an ambulance or fire engine when travelling under blue lights will pose a serious risk to pedestrians and crews.

In response; The emergency services were consulted as part of the consultation exercise for this project and no concerns were raised by Merseyside Police, Northwest Ambulance Service or Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service.

- 4.2.5 The objector states that the existing position of the Zebra crossing provides a safe place to cross the road with good visibility to road users especially when overtaking a parked bus.

In response; It is considered that the existing Zebra crossing cannot remain in its current location on road safety grounds. To remove the crossing entirely would significantly disadvantage pedestrians in Upton Road. The collision records supplied by Merseyside Police indicate that there are accidents occurring that are associated to the existing position of the Zebra crossing.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The projected cost of implementing these works is approximately £50,000 which will be funded from the 2017/2018 Transport Plan for Growth Capital Programme of works.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no specific implications under this heading arising from the recommendation of this report.
- 6.2 The maintenance of highways, promotion of road safety and the management of traffic are statutory duties for the Council.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

- 7.1 Existing staff resources will be used to deliver this project

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 8.1 Failure to undertake the proposed scheme would result in a failure to support the priorities of the Liverpool City Region Transport Plan for Growth and the Council's existing Corporate Goals and Objectives.

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 9.1 As part of the consultation exercise for this scheme letters were delivered to local residents in the vicinity of the scheme, informing them of the proposals. In addition, consultation was undertaken with Party Spokespersons, Ward Members, Active Travel Forum, Emergency Services, Freight Transport Association, Road Haulage Association and Merseytravel.

10.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

- (a) Yes and impact review is attached

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2014-0#wgSM-0>

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APPENDICES

DRAWING REFERENCE DC/0305/100 – Casualty Reduction Scheme

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet - Transport Plan For Growth Programme 2017/18	27th February 2017
Council – Amendment to Scheme of Delegation – Objections to Highways Proposals	14th December 2015