

Name of meeting: Cabinet Committee - Local Issues

Date: 17 August 2022

Title of report: Proposed Zebra Crossing, Knowl Road, Mirfield

Purpose of report: To consider objections received to the above proposals

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	No
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Colin Parr – 21/07/2022
Is it also signed off by the Service Director Finance?	Eamonn Croston – 19/07/2022
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	Julie Muscroft – 21/07/2022
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Naheed Mather – 27/07/2022

Electoral wards affected: Mirfield

Ward councillors consulted: Yes

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered: Yes

1. Summary

- 1.1 Highways Safety was approached by the Mirfield Ward Councillors and asked to assess the feasibility of providing a pedestrian crossing facility on Knowl Road to help assist pedestrians wanting to cross the road here and improve road safety at this location.
- 1.2 This request was assessed using the Council's approved matrix and the relevant funds identified within the Community Projects budget.
- 1.3 During the scheme's development, it was determined that a safe zebra crossing could be accommodated on Knowl Road as shown on the proposed layout on drawing number: TF.22.200.255.007.

2. Information Required to Take a Decision

- 2.1 Prior to the development of these proposals, a feasibility study was undertaken to determine a suitable location. Various legislation requirements were taken into consideration before a decision was taken on the only safe and suitable location available on the desired crossing line. The proposed location is sufficiently far enough away from the blind bend at 13a Knowl Road to ensure adequate forward visibility between the pedestrians waiting and using the crossing and of oncoming vehicles. Its proposed location does not impact on the many private driveways or access to off-street parking areas there are in this vicinity.
- 2.2 To provide a crossing facility where it is fit for purpose, it must be installed as close to the pedestrian desire lines as possible. Many school children use this area to cross Knowl Road as they approach from Huddersfield Road. Providing a facility too far north on Knowl Road would mean pedestrians would be less likely to use the crossing.
- 2.3 To ensure the legally required 50 metres of clear visibility is achieved on the approach to the crossing and its associated zigzag markings, it is necessary to remove the existing 26 metres of Limited Waiting '1 hr No return 1hr' Mon-Sat 8am – 6pm / Permit Holders Only' parking bay on the west side of the road outside No 3 - No 7 Knowl Road and relocate the bus stop after the end of the bay.
- 2.4 The proposed scheme was advertised from 27 January 2022 to 24 February 2022 and during that time two objections were received.
- 2.5 The accompanying proposals for the necessary changes to the lining to accommodate the zebra crossing were advertised from 16 June 2022 to 14 July 2022 and during that time no objections were received.

Objection 1

Several objections were raised by a local business owner on the proposed location for a zebra crossing here on the following grounds:

- The funds should be used for drainage improvements
- If the crossing is placed on a raised surface, it will cause flooding to local businesses
- The proposed crossing is too close to the junction of Town Hall Street,

- Businesses own a large proportion of the footway in front of their premises making the footpath too narrow for tactile paving
- The removal of the very limited parking in the area will have an adverse effect on their businesses
- Vehicles parked at this location slows traffic
- Removal of the parking bays after the crossing travelling up Knowl Road is unnecessary, and the crossing should be shortened here to continue to allow parking to take place at this location.
- Moving the bus stop closer to the blind bend would mean cars overtaking the bus parked here would be on the wrong side of the road
- They are not aware of any traffic collisions here 20 years.

In response:

Drainage was assessed as part of the scheme's design and these proposals do not affect the current surface levels here other than the installation of 2.4 metres of dropped kerbs to allow access to the crossing. The zebra crossing will not be installed on any raised surface so levels and surface run off will remain unchanged from the existing arrangements.

Design standards state that the minimum distance allowed for a zebra to a junction is 5 metres. This Zebra crossing will be approximately 12 metres from Town Hall Street, so more than the minimum distance allowed.

Highways Registry Team have confirmed that Kirklees Highways have responsibility over the carriageway from the back of the footway which is the building frontage. The Council assumes that these records are correct but would reconsider if the building owners could provide evidence showing that this is not the case. These proposals will not however disturb any property during the construction of the Zebra and any construction at the back of the footway would only be to install tactile blister paving at a total width of approximately 900mm.

Whilst the Objector's concerns around customer parking needs are understood as the crossing's extents will prevent parking in this vicinity, there is however a limited waiting parking bay on Town Hall Street and on Huddersfield Road nearby which their customers could use on a first come, first served basis as well as several other unrestricted parking areas on Huddersfield Road. Their customers will also have an opportunity to park after the permit parking bay on Knowl Road and at the top of St Paul's Road. It is however accepted that customers will be prevented from loading and unloading heavy goods to and from vehicles to the properties immediately behind the zebra crossing, but they will still be able to do so from the double yellow lines both above and below the zebra crossing.

The Council accepts that parking bays can be installed after crossings but only if the site is appropriate and safe to do so. The crossing facility suggested as an example of this layout on Huddersfield Road is a pelican crossing and therefore has a red-light phase forcing all vehicles under normal circumstances to stop and allow pedestrians to cross in relative safety. Zebra crossings however require clear visibility in both directions for both pedestrians and drivers. Any parking after the crossing would potentially block visibility of pedestrians waiting to cross for drivers travelling south down Knowl Road including smaller school children who will be encouraged to actively travel to school.

During the public consultation, West Yorkshire Combined Authority were contacted over the relocation of the bus stop and no issues were raised by them at that time.

These proposals have also undergone a Stage 1-2 combined Road Safety Audit and no safety concerns were raised at that time.

- 1.4 Although there have been traffic collisions recorded in this vicinity in previous years, there are no traffic collisions recorded on the Police Accident Database in the last 5 years in this area of Knowl Road up to October 2021. The scheme is however proposed as a community project to assist safe pedestrian movements to and from Crowlees school and to assist the safe passage of their walking bus as well for pedestrians using this route to access Mirfield Town centre.

Objection No 2

A second objection was received from another business owner on Knowl Road who is concerned that the installation of a zebra crossing here will remove the possibility of collections and deliveries to and from their premises including their weekly refuse collection affecting their livelihood and could ultimately result in them having to find alternate premises. They believe that they should be entitled to compensation if the proposals go ahead and the need for a crossing should be located higher up nearer No 7 Knowl Road. They are also not aware of any traffic accidents taking place in this vicinity here in the last 21 years to justify the installation of a zebra crossing.

In response:

It is accepted that within the controlled area of the proposed Zebra Crossing, loading and unloading is prohibited. However, the surrounding area directly adjacent to the terminal lines of the controlled area are covered by Double Yellow Lines. Loading and unloading on double yellow lines is still permitted including refuse collections and as stated previously another limited waiting / permit parking bay exists on Town Hall Street which could also be used if space was available.

It is accepted that removing the parking bay here may impact on the availability of parking for ('1 hour No return 1 hour Mon-Sat 8am-6pm) at this location, but unfortunately it is not possible to accommodate parking higher up the road. Local businesses who do not have access to off-street parking do not have a legal right to the availability of on-street parking in an area which would have an adverse impact on the safe use of a pedestrian crossing proposed for the benefit of the community.

Kirklees Council do not offer compensation for loss of business under these circumstances.

On this occasion, it is not suitable to relocate the zebra crossing higher up taking into considerations the legally required 50 metre visibility needed for both drivers and pedestrians and to avoid impacting on the location of private accesses/driveways.

The Council accepts that no traffic injury accidents are recorded on the Police injury accident database in the last 5 years at this location, however, as stated previously the zebra crossing here is a community projects scheme and is proposed for the safety and benefit of all pedestrians using this route.

3. Implications for the Council

- 3.1 **Working with people** - The scheme has been approved to help improve walking routes for pupils travelling to and from Crowlees School and all pedestrians travelling to and from the town centre using this route.
- 3.2 **Working with Partners** – The Kirklees Road Safety Team are already working with Crowlees School on the impact of home to school travel with the aim of reducing the reliance on travel by car, targeting related traffic congestion problems in the vicinity of the school. The pedestrian improvements being proposed under this scheme would support this work.
- 3.3 **Place based Working** – The changes to the current parking restrictions at this location are intended to prevent parking close to the proposed crossing point. Implementation of the orders would improve road safety, and they are considered essential to the safe operation of the proposed scheme.
- 3.4 **Climate Change and Air Quality** – The scheme would safely facilitate walking trips to the school encouraging increased sustainable travel, which would in turn, help improve Air Quality and reduce Climate Change
- 3.5 **Improving outcomes for children** - The measures would provide a safe crossing point and would reduce the future likelihood of children being injured in road traffic collisions when crossing the road here on the journeys to and from school. It would also benefit the very successful walking bus using this route which encourages active travel. The proposals could also increase the numbers of pupils walking to and from the school, yielding health benefits for children.
- 3.6 **Other implications** (HR/Legal/Financial etc) - The costs to the Council of the scheme are currently estimated to be £30,000 - £35,000 pending detailed design work and a commercial cost estimate. The costs would be covered by The Safer Roads (Community Traffic Schemes) Capital Budget 2022/23.

4. Consultees and their opinions

Statutory consultees were consulted, and no concerns were raised.

All affected residents were consulted and engaged with over a period of months during which time the original scheme was revised to try and alleviate concerns raised prior to the public advertisement of the proposals.

None of the Mirfield Ward Councillors have objected to the proposals.

5. Next steps and timelines

Cabinet Committee Local Issues to consider the objections raised during the formal advertising period and reach a decision on whether the scheme is to be implemented as advertised.

If Cabinet Committee Local Issues chooses to overrule the objections, the scheme will be implemented on site as per the plans provided, with works programmed to commence in November 2022.

If Cabinet Committee Local Issues choose to uphold the objections, the scheme will not be implemented, and the proposed benefits would not be realised.

6. Officer recommendations and reasons

The proposed scheme aims to improve the health and safety of all road users by encouraging walking, and in particular school pupils attending Crowlees School. The Officer recommends that the objections are overruled to enable the zebra crossing to be implemented as advertised, allowing the benefits to be realised.

7. Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations

That the objections to the proposed zebra crossing are overruled and the scheme implemented as advertised.

8. Contact officer

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9. Service Director responsible

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