

Individual Executive Member Decision

Title of Report:	A343 Andover Road, Newbury - Relocation of Pedestrian Crossing
Report to be considered by:	Individual Executive Member Decision
Date on which Decision is to be taken:	22 nd October 2012
Forward Plan Ref:	ID2521

Purpose of Report: To inform the Executive Member for Highways and Transport of the results of the consultation of a proposal to relocate a pedestrian crossing and allow a decision to be made as to whether to proceed with the proposal.

Recommended Action: That the pedestrian crossing on Andover Road, Newbury be renewed and relocated to a new position as per Option 1.

Reason for decision to be taken: To consider the responses to the consultation of the above scheme and make a decision as to how to proceed.

Other options considered: As detailed in the report

Key background documentation: Traffic Survey Results

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Keith Chopping - (0118) 983 2057
E-mail Address:	kchopping@westberks.gov.uk

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Neil Stacey
Job Title:	Principal Engineer (Projects)
Tel. No.:	01635 519113
E-mail Address:	nstacey@westberks.gov.uk

Implications

Policy:	None
Financial:	If implemented, the scheme will be funded as part of the approved Capital Programme. The scheme would be funded using Section 106 money from the nearby development at St. Bartholomew's School.
Personnel:	None
Legal/Procurement:	If the scheme is implemented, it could either be procured via existing term contracts or subject to a separate procurement process.
Environmental:	None
Property:	None
Risk Management:	Should the project be implemented, a risk register will be compiled to document financial and other risks associated with the construction/implementation phase. Should the project not be implemented there is a risk that the life-expired pedestrian crossing will cease to function.
Equalities Impact Assessment:	See Appendix A. It is not considered that this issue needs to proceed to a Stage 2 Equalities Impact Assessment.

Consultation Responses

Members:

Leader of Council: Councillor Gordon Lundie did not make any comments.

Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman: Councillor Brian Bedwell did not make any comments.

Ward Members: Councillor Mike Johnston made the following comments:
"Residents of Caernarvon place have raised their concerns with me and while I recognise them, the surveys clearly show that a crossing closer to the Post Office would benefit many more people including elderly people. Further with a large number of young children crossing to attend St Johns School, there is a strong case to improve this route to school.

Of those using the existing crossing, some will be going to the Post Office and will not be disadvantaged, therefore on balance the benefit of a new crossing nearer the Post office exceeds any disadvantages.

I support the recommendation."

Councillor Ieuan Tuck did not make any comments.

Opposition Councillor Keith Woodhams did not make any comments.

Spokesperson:

Local Stakeholders: Consulted in July/August 2012 via a letter drop, direct emails and the "Consultation Finder" website. See Appendix B for a summary of the responses.

Officers Consulted: Jon Winstanley, Mark Edwards, Andrew Garratt, Cheryl Evans, Clive Tombs, Valerie Witton

Trade Union: Not applicable

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Item is Urgent Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Report is to note only	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 A project to relocate a pedestrian crossing on the A343 Andover Road, Newbury has been investigated by officers with a view to including it in the Highways Capital Programme. The project would involve the decommissioning of the existing Pelican crossing outside Carnarvon Place and installing a new crossing approximately 80 metres nearer to the St Johns Road roundabout, close to the Post Office.
- 1.2 This report explains the proposals in detail and summarises the responses to the consultation of the scheme.

2. Project details

- 2.1 The locations of the existing and proposed pedestrian crossings are shown in Appendix C.
- 2.2 Further to requests from local residents, officers were asked by Councillor Mike Johnston to examine ways of assisting pedestrians crossing Andover Road near the St Johns Road Roundabout. Many pedestrians cross the road in this area as part of their walking route to and from Newbury Town Centre, to walk to and from nearby schools and to access the post office, located on Old Newton Road immediately adjacent to the roundabout.
- 2.3 Pedestrians crossing Andover Road by the Post Office currently benefit from dropped kerbs and tactile paving, and are able to use the roundabout splitter island as a central refuge to cross the road in two halves. Despite this, the volume of traffic at busy times and the unpredictable speed of vehicles exiting the roundabout make it difficult to cross. Although a new controlled crossing at this location would be a great assistance to pedestrians, this would mean that there would be two crossings within less than 100 metres of each other.
- 2.4 The existing Pelican crossing, located outside Carnarvon Place, was installed in the 1990's and due to its age is in a poor state of repair, with its poles rusting and many electronic components obsolete. It is considered that the crossing will need to be completely replaced within the next two years, sooner if a major component were to fail.
- 2.5 Carnarvon Place was constructed on the former hospital site and is now a development of homes for elderly people. Across the road is a similar development, Willow Close. Residents of both these developments use the pedestrian crossing to access local amenities including the adjacent bus stops and the Post Office. However, it is considered that use of this crossing has declined since the hospital closed and it has been observed that many more pedestrians cross the road closer to the roundabout, by the Post Office.
- 2.6 Pedestrian and vehicle surveys were undertaken between 7am and 7pm on Thursday 19th April, which showed that 112 pedestrians (77 adults and 35 children) crossed Andover Road at the Pelican crossing, and 489 pedestrians (408 adults and 81 children) crossed in the vicinity of the Post Office.

- 2.7 In view of the above, Officers considered that the existing crossing was not in the optimum location to cater for the majority of pedestrians. The upcoming need to replace the life-expired crossing gives an opportunity to remove it, and install a new crossing at the location where significantly more pedestrians cross. Following discussions with ward member Councillor Mike Johnston and the (then) Executive member for Highways and Transport, Councillor David Betts, Officers proceeded to consult local stakeholders on this option.

3. Accident History

- 3.1 In the most recent three year monitoring period (August 2009 to July 2012), no injury accidents have been recorded at either the existing or proposed pedestrian crossing points.

4. Consultation responses and officer comments

- 4.1 Letters explaining the proposal were sent to residential and business properties in the area and to other local stakeholders. The proposal was also publicised on the Council's "Consultation Finder" website. A total of 19 responses to the consultation were received of which 10 express support of the proposals, 7 express opposition or objection and a further 2 are neutral.
- 4.2 A petition signed by 106 people (mainly residents of Carnarvon Place and Willow Close) was also received which asks that the pedestrian crossing is retained in its current location.
- 4.3 Appendix B contains a summary of all the responses received, and Officers' responses. The most significant concerns are summarised below.

Loss of a valuable facility for residents of Carnarvon Place and Willow Close

- 4.4 An alternative location to cross Andover Road is being provided, which will still cater for the vast majority of users of the current crossing. The surveys show that more elderly people cross Andover Road at the roundabout, therefore the proposed crossing will assist a greater number of vulnerable pedestrians than the current crossing;

Lack of a crossing facility at Old Newtown Road junction

- 4.5 If the crossing is relocated, some pedestrians would have to walk along the southern footway of Andover Road and across the junction with a side road, Old Newtown Road. Although this is not a formal pedestrian crossing, dropped kerbs and tactile paving are provided for the benefit of less mobile pedestrians. It should be noted that Old Newtown Road is not especially busy and inter-visibility between pedestrians and drivers is good.

Removing the crossing could encourage higher vehicle speeds

- 4.6 The presence of the crossing may have a marginal effect on vehicle speeds, but due to the relatively low numbers of pedestrians using it, it remains on "green" for vehicles for the vast majority of the time. It is considered that this would be outweighed by the benefit to pedestrians of relocating it.

Increased congestion on the "St Johns" roundabout

- 4.7 Some queuing may result, but this is a “trade off” against the benefit to pedestrians. Any queues will quickly disperse as the settings of the crossing will not allow traffic to be stopped twice in quick succession.

Traffic surveys were undertaken before Willow Close was fully occupied

- 4.8 At the time of the initial surveys, Willow Close was still under construction and it was suggested that the pedestrian crossing would be more intensively used once Willow Close was occupied. A further survey was therefore undertaken between 7am and 7pm on Friday 7th September 2012, which specifically counted elderly people (estimated age of 65 or over), as well as adults and children. This survey showed that 189 pedestrians (27 elderly people, 73 adults and 89 children) crossed Andover Road at the Pelican crossing, and 1,041 pedestrians (106 elderly people, 628 adults and 307 children) crossed in the vicinity of the Post Office.
- 4.9 The overall numbers of pedestrians crossing at both sites was significantly higher than in the April survey, but the data shows that more elderly people cross Andover Road by the Post Office than at the existing crossing.

5. Options for consideration

- 5.1 The following paragraphs summarise 3 options, their advantages and disadvantages:

Option 1 – Proceed with the proposals unaltered
(approximate cost £30,000)

- 5.2 Advantages:

- i) Pedestrians crossing at the Post Office gain a controlled crossing.
- ii) The ageing pedestrian crossing equipment is replaced with a modern system;
- iii) Most people benefit from the investment in the new infrastructure.

- 5.3 Disadvantage:

Some pedestrians from Carnarvon Place and Willow Close may be inconvenienced by the relocation of the Pelican Crossing.

Option 2 – Replace the current Pelican Crossing in the same location
(approximate cost £15,000)

- 5.4 Advantages:

- i) Residents of Carnarvon Place and Willow Close retain a more convenient crossing;
- ii) The ageing pedestrian crossing equipment is replaced with a modern system;
- iii) Lowest cost.

- 5.5 Disadvantages:

- i) The high numbers of pedestrians crossing Andover Road adjacent to the Post Office do not have a conveniently located controlled pedestrian crossing.
- ii) Relatively few people benefit from the investment in the new crossing.

Option 3 – Install a new crossing by the Post Office AND replace the current Pelican Crossing
(approximate cost £42,000)

5.6 Advantages:

- i) Residents of Carnarvon Place and Willow Close retain a more convenient crossing point;
- ii) Pedestrians crossing at the Post Office also gain a controlled crossing.

5.7 Disadvantages:

- i) Two pedestrian crossings within such close proximity would be detrimental to road safety. An independent Road Safety Audit examined this option and recommended against it, noting that “The existing crossing is within 100 metres. The controlled areas will almost meet. It is inevitable that, at peak periods, traffic will queue back from the new crossing to the existing one, resulting in vehicle/pedestrian conflict. There is also the possibility of drivers confusing the traffic signals as they are so close together which will present a serious risk of collision.”
- ii) High cost.

6. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 6.1 If a new pedestrian crossing is constructed, specific facilities for pedestrians with impaired vision or mobility will be included. This will assist them in crossing Andover Road.
- 6.2 Elderly people living in Carnarvon Place and Willow Close may have to walk further to access a safe crossing point. However, a greater number of elderly people will benefit from the pedestrian crossing in the proposed location.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The existing pedestrian crossing on Andover Road is life expired and needs to be replaced. Traffic surveys show that more people would use the crossing if it were to be relocated to a new position closer to the “St. Johns” roundabout. Although several consultees have raised concerns that the proposed crossing location is less convenient for some local residents, most journeys made by these residents could use the crossing at the proposed location without a significantly longer walk.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 In view of the above it is recommended that the pedestrian crossing be renewed and relocated to a new position as per Option 1.

Appendices

Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment – Stage 1

Appendix B – Summary of responses to consultation and Officer comments

Appendix C – Plan of proposed new crossing location

Equality Impact Assessment – Stage One

Name of item being assessed:	A343 Andover Road, Newbury - Relocation of Pedestrian Crossing
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	ID 2512
Owner of item being assessed:	Neil Stacey
Name of assessor:	Neil Stacey
Date of assessment:	24 th September 2012

1. What are the main aims of the item?
To ensure that pedestrian crossing facilities are located in the most appropriate location.

2. Note which groups may be affected by the item, consider how they may be affected and what sources of information have been used to determine this. (Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation)

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this.
Disabled people (people with impaired vision or mobility)	If a new pedestrian crossing is constructed, specific facilities for pedestrians with impaired vision or mobility will be included. This will assist them in crossing Andover Road.	Dropped kerbs, tactile paving and rotating cones will guide disabled pedestrians to the appropriate crossing point and indicate where and when it is safe to cross.
Elderly people	Elderly people living in Carnarvon Place and Willow Close may have to walk further to access a safe crossing point. However, a greater number of elderly people will benefit from the pedestrian crossing in the proposed location.	Traffic Survey results (see paragraph 3.1 of the main report).
All other groups	No effect.	N/A

Further comments relating to the item:
None.

3. Result (please tick by double-clicking on relevant box and click on 'checked')	
<input type="checkbox"/>	High Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Low Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No Relevance - This does not need to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment

For items requiring a Stage 2 equality impact assessment, begin the planning of this now, referring to the equality impact assessment guidance and Stage 2 template.

4. Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	
Stage Two not required:	√

Name: Neil Stacey

Date: 24th September 2012