

Individual Decision

Title of Report:	A4 Charnham Street, Hungerford – Pedestrian Crossing		
Report to be considered by:	Portfolio Member for Planning and Highways Cllr. Keith Chopping	on:	4th May 2006
Forward Plan Ref:	ID1179		

Purpose of Report:

To report the results of a public consultation on the provision of a pedestrian crossing at the above location.

Recommended Action:

That a Zebra crossing as illustrated on drawing no. LJT/81282/02 be installed subject to formal consultation and any amendments resulting from safety audit and detail design.

Reason for decision to be taken:

To progress the scheme as detailed in the body of the report.

List of other options considered:

Not applicable

Key background documentation:

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Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 A4 Charnham Street forms part of the main east/west route between Hungerford and Newbury. Following new development in Charnham Park to the north of Hungerford concern has been expressed by local Ward Members and the Town Council about the difficulty encountered by the growing number of pedestrians wishing to cross the A4 to the east of the Bridge Street mini-roundabout.
- 1.2 The section of Charnham Street between Charnham Park and Bridge Street is currently subject to a 24 hour Main Carriageway Clearway Order indicated by a central double white line system, which prohibits stopping along its entire length. The restriction does however allow vehicles to stop in order to load/unload.
- 1.3 The recently undertaken Hungerford Parking Study queries the need for this type of restriction in Charnham Street as it is unlikely that the speed/distance related criteria is met. This type of restriction is normally provided in a more rural location to prevent overtaking in areas of limited forward visibility. The Study therefore recommends the removal of the Carriageway Clearway and replacement of the restriction with suitable waiting and loading restrictions (it is anticipated that this will take the form of a no waiting at any time restriction, along with a restriction on loading during the peak hours). This will be subject to a separate consultation exercise for the introduction/revision of various parking restrictions to be undertaken later this year.
- 1.4 Traffic flow and pedestrian crossing counts were undertaken in June 2005 at the following locations:
- 1) Location 1 (Option 1) – to the east of the Bridge Street junction.
 - 2) Location 2 (Option 2) – to the west of the Charnham Park junction.
- 1.5 The following peak hour results were observed:

	Option 1	Option 2
No. of Pedestrians Crossing	23	8
Two Way Traffic Flow	1195	1203

- 1.6 In applying the normal DfT guidance it is recommended that a minimum of 50 pedestrians during the peak hour be observed to cross for the provision of a formal crossing point. Based on the criteria neither of the above locations would qualify. However it is considered that the high traffic flows along this section of the A4 acts as a barrier to pedestrian movements and discourages residents from walking into the town centre, and the provision of a pedestrian crossing would act as a safe focal point for pedestrian movements.
- 1.7 As part of the design a number of locations were considered, and options were taken forward for consultation. These are to the east of the Bridge Street junction (Option 1) and to the west of the Charnham Park junction (Option 2). The drawing in Appendix 2 illustrates the option locations.
- 1.8 Option 1 is the most appropriate location in terms of the pedestrian desire line and the number of residents it will benefit, however it is considered that Option 2, whilst benefiting a smaller number of residents, will impact less on frontages.

- 1.9 Adjacent residents and businesses were consulted for both locations along with local Ward Members and the Town Council. Other Stakeholders were also invited to comment including West Berkshire Disability Alliance and Spokes.
- 1.10 In total thirteen responses were received to option 1, with eight for the scheme and five against. Three responses were received concerning option 2, with two for and one against. A summary of the consultation responses along with an Officer's comments can be seen in Appendix 1.
- 1.11 Although option 1 is the preferred location in terms of the pedestrian desire line, it is difficult to recommend this due to the weight of objection from adjacent residents and businesses concerning the detrimental impact the crossing will have on their ability to load and unload adjacent to their property.
- 1.12 Although the section of Charnham Street adjacent to Option 2 at present has a limited number of pedestrians crossing, the provision of a crossing here would still provide a safe route from the Charnham Park area to the town centre. The pedestrians that currently use this route and cross at the Bridge Street junction will be able to use the formal crossing point adjacent to Charnham Park as a safe alternative.
- 1.13 In light of the objections to option 1, and the relatively low pedestrian flows adjacent to option 2 it is recommended that a low cost solution be applied in the form of a zebra crossing as opposed to a puffin or toucan, along with appropriate signing, lining and coloured surfacing to reduce vehicle speeds on the approaches to the crossing. This scheme is illustrated in Appendix 3, and will allow safe access to the town centre and Texaco garage from Charnham Park, and the signing and lining will act as a gateway to the town centre to reduce vehicle speeds and change driver behaviour.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that a zebra crossing and associated signing and lining be implemented at the location (option 2) illustrated on drawing no.81282/02 in appendix 3.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Consultation responses.

Appendix 2 – Consultation options

Appendix 3 – Proposed scheme

Implications

Policy:	These proposals will contribute to the corporate priorities of: (i) SP5 - Ensuring the street environment is clean, well maintained and safe (ii) SP8 - Improving transportation
Financial:	The proposed scheme is estimated at £25,000 and can be funded from the Council's approved 2006/07 Transport Capital Programme, as detailed in the Capital Strategy and Programme 2006/07 – 20010/11.
Personnel:	None arising from this report.
Legal:	None arising from this report
Environmental:	These proposals will improve the environment by encouraging sustainable travel.

Equalities:	None arising from this report.
Partnering:	None arising from this report.
Property:	None arising from this report.
Risk Management:	The scheme will be managed in accordance with the West Berkshire Council's Project Management methodology, and a full risk register will be maintained throughout the project.
Community Safety:	None arising from this report.

Consultation Responses

Members:

Leader of Council:	Councillor Graham Jones has raised no objection to this report.
Select Committee Chairman:	Councillor Quentin Webb has raised no objections to this report.
Ward Members:	Both Local Ward Members (Councillors Denise Gaines and James Mole) are in favour of the recommendation.
Opposition Spokesperson:	Councillor Owen Jeffery has been consulted and has raised no objection to this report.

Local Stakeholders: Hungerford Town Council, Chamber of Commerce, Locals Residents/Businesses, West Berks Disability Alliance, Spokes, Emergency Services.

Officers Consulted: Derek Crouch, Andy Garratt, Phil Frost, Jenny Noble, Mark Edwards.

Trade Union: Not applicable

Appendix 1

Option 1

Comments from those in favour of the scheme

No.	Consultee	Comment	Officers Response
1.	Local resident and shop proprietor	In addition to a crossing on the A4, would like to see all through traffic on the A4 diverted via Charnham Park trading estate to further improve pedestrian safety on the A4. Would also like to see a zebra crossing instead of a signal controlled to reduce congestion.	Diversion of the A4 via Charnham Park is an aspiration of Hungerford Town Council. This would be subject to design and environmental assessment of the proposal.
2.	Local Resident	Considers this an excellent idea, and would like to see the crossing installed before a serious accident occurs.	Noted
3.	Local Resident	Welcomes the proposals and believes it will be of great benefit. Is however concerned about the proximity of the crossing to the residential property no.2, and access to no.s 2a and no.1.	The position of the crossing will not affect access to properties. However it will restrict loading and unloading within the constraints of the zigzag markings.
4.	Local Resident	This resident cannot stress enough how much a crossing is needed at this location and is fully supportive of the proposal.	Noted
5.	Local Resident	Fully supportive of the proposed crossing. Would also like to see pedestrian improvements on Bridge Street (particularly for wheelchair users) in the vicinity of the canal bridge.	Noted. West Berkshire District Council is also considering pedestrian improvements to Hungerford Canal Bridge. Option assessments for bridge improvements are currently being undertaken by the Council's consultants.
6.	Local Resident	Considers the proposal an extremely good idea, and will considerably improve pedestrian safety. Would have liked to have seen this done earlier.	Noted
7.	Local Business	Considers the proposed site to be suitable for the new property development and well situated generally.	Noted
8.	Hungerford Chamber of Commerce	Agrees that a safe crossing facility is required to the east of the Bear Lane junction. Is also concerned that the existing congestion on the A4 at the Bridge street junction is not exacerbated.	It is not considered that the provision of a crossing at this location will exacerbate the existing traffic conditions.

Comments from those against the scheme.

No.	Consultee	Comment	Officers Response
9.	Local Resident	Does not feel that there will be sufficient demand to justify the provision of a crossing on the A4.	The provision of a crossing at this location is in line with the Council's Corporate Priorities and the aims of the Local Transport Plan to improve transport, provide safe street environment and encourage sustainable travel.
10.	Local Business and Resident	<p>Expresses strong objection to the location and necessity for the proposed scheme.</p> <p>Considers the crossing too close to the roundabout, and inconsiderately positioned adjacent to the property that is nearest to the road, which will cause the homeowner intolerable noise and light pollution.</p> <p>Considers the scheme a complete waste of taxpayer's money.</p>	<p>Proximity to the junction.</p> <p>The audible signal on the crossing can be controlled and turned off if considered a nuisance. The traffic lights will incorporate hoods and be directed along the road and not into resident's windows.</p>
11.	Local Business	<p>Considers the position of the crossing to be unsatisfactory, and yet another impediment to successful trading.</p> <p>Also that the zigzag markings on the approach to the crossing will make deliveries more difficult, and considers that having motorists stop/start at the crossing will further pollute the environment, and will increase noise.</p> <p>Considers that a more appropriate location would be closer to the Charnham Park roundabout junction.</p>	<p>Loading and unloading will be restricted within the length of the zigzag markings.</p> <p>The provision of a crossing point to the west of the A4 Charnham Street crossing is also being considered.</p>
12.	Local Resident	<p>Concerned about a number of issues:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="379 1507 885 1697">1) The loss of the ability to load and unload outside their property. Particularly concerned as they have a young child and elderly parents that visit. <li data-bbox="379 1709 885 1899">2) Concerned about the proximity of the crossing to their property and that the provision of the crossing would have a detrimental effect on their property price. <li data-bbox="379 1910 885 2056">3) Their property is listed and is concerned about provision of the crossing from an aesthetic point of view. 	<p>Loading/unloading would be restricted directly adjacent to this resident's property.</p> <p>We do not anticipate that the provision of a pedestrian crossing in a town centre environment such as this will have a detrimental effect on house prices.</p> <p>The proposal does not require planning permission and is a common and acceptable feature in a town centre environment.</p>

13.	Local Resident	<p>Concerned about the location of the crossing for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) That the noise generated from the signals will cause a nuisance to residents 2) The crossing will exacerbate congestion at the A4/Charnham Street junction. 3) Consider that more pedestrians tend to cross the A4 further towards the Charnham Park crossing. 	<p>As detailed earlier the audible signal from the crossing can be controlled.</p> <p>It is not considered that the crossing will have a significant effect on congestion.</p> <p>The pedestrian crossing surveys undertaken indicate that more pedestrians tend to cross at this location than at the Charnham Street junction.</p>
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Option 2

Comments for those in favour the proposal.

No.	Consultee	Comment	Officers Response
1.	Local Resident	Considers this proposal to be a fantastic idea.	Noted
2.	Local Resident	Considers this proposal a good idea, and prefers it to Location 1 as it will provide more 'stacking' space from the A4 Bridge Street junction.	Noted

Comments for those against the proposal

No.	Consultee	Comment	Officers Response
1.	Local Resident	<p>Opposed to the provision of a crossing at this location for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Considers that a crossing in this location will make it more difficult to access their driveway, and in accessing the driveway they will obscure the crossing from on-coming vehicles. 2) Concerned that stationary HGV's and other large vehicles will create additional noise pollution, and the effect this will have on the price of their property. Also concerned that the crossing itself will detrimentally affect adjacent property prices. 3) Considers that the previous adjacent location to the Bridge Street junction would be of far more benefit to local businesses, residents and pedestrians in general. 	<p>The crossing will in no way restrict access to adjacent residential properties. The crossing will be sufficiently visible to approaching vehicles.</p> <p>It is not considered that the provision of a crossing on the A4 in a town centre location will detrimentally affect adjacent property prices.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that more pedestrians have been observed to cross at location 1, and more residents would benefit from a location at this position.</p>