

Pedestrian Crossing, A386 Churchill Way, Northam

Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Please note that the following recommendation is subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the scheme shown on plan DCCP16841-EDG-HGN-40900531-DR-C-001-P1 included in Appendix I, is approved for construction at an estimated cost of £64,000.

1. Introduction

The report seeks scheme approval to introduce a new signal controlled pedestrian crossing adjacent to Torridge Swimming Pool on the A386, Churchill Way Northam.

Regular requests have been raised by the community over the last ten years for pedestrian improvements to be introduced on Churchill Way. The area is well used by pedestrians crossing from residential areas towards the pool and from Benson Drive towards the town centre facilities. It is well used by children and parents for travel to school and by staff and pupils using the pool facilities during the school day. Although not reflected by the accident records, concerns have been raised about the safety of crossing at the current pedestrian refuge which requires pedestrians to walk through the bus layby between pavements and concerns about the pedestrian refuges location after a bend in the road.

On 6 June 2016 the Committee considered a report into establishing a new formal pedestrian crossing. After considering the report and the written representation presented on behalf of the local schools, the Committee resolved that officers conduct an assessment and corresponding road safety audit for a formal crossing outside the swimming pool to the north of Benson Drive and that officers negotiate with developers for funding towards a scheme.

2. Proposal

Following further detailed design work, Plan DCCP16841-EDG-HGN-40900531-DR-C-001-P1 included in Appendix I outlines the recommended scheme proposal for a “puffin” signal controlled pedestrian crossing. The proposed puffin crossing is located on Churchill Way, 20 metres south of its junction with Windmill Lane and between the northbound and southbound bus laybys. The proposed scheme meets current design standards and has been subject to safety audit.

A narrow section of footpath located opposite the swimming pool and adjacent to the boundary of No. 65 Cross Street is being widened to 1.8m in order to accommodate the crossing facility. The width of the road will be reduced to a minimum of 6.7m to accommodate the footpath widening and the existing dropped crossing and pedestrian refuge north of Benson Drive will be removed. The reduction in road width will have minimal impact on A386 traffic and the removal of the existing pedestrian crossing will increase width for cyclists or vulnerable road users.

3. Options/Alternatives

Two potential crossing locations were considered as part of initial feasibility design. Benson Drive and the swimming pool car park entrance is located between a series of sweeping bends. Two sites were investigated based on the preliminary visibility requirements for a controlled crossing and the location of accesses and other obstructions. The first to the south of Benson Drive would replace the existing pedestrian refuge near to the Jehovah Witnesses Hall and the second to the north located between bus laybys.

Following consideration by the Committee in June, the site to the north of Benson Drive was selected for further detailed design based on the pedestrian desire lines and the connectivity it would offer for the pool, town centre, schools and public transport.

An alternative Zebra controlled crossing was not considered appropriate due to the sight stopping distance required from the north of the crossing. A signalised puffin crossing with far side signal head meets the design and safety audit requirements for this site.

4. Consultations

To introduce a new crossing, the scheme will need to be advertised by public notice. Prior to advertisement the scheme proposal has been considered by Northam Town Council members on 31 August 2016. The Town Council proposed that members wait until public consultation has taken place but expressed a preference for an alternative crossing site to south of Benson Drive and adjacent to the Jehovah Witnesses Hall. Further written representation has been received from both schools supporting the proposed scheme to the north of Benson Drive. And a written representation has been received from a Town Council member identifying concerns on behalf of several local residents. Concerns were expressed regarding the speed of traffic, the visibility and safety of the proposed crossing. The obstruction to a rear entrance for No. 65 Cross Street. And also making a suggestion that traffic calming would be more appropriate.

5. Financial Considerations

The estimated scheme cost for the crossing is £64,000. A developer contribution of £40,000 has been secured through Section 106 for the provision of a puffin controlled crossing. Forward funding of this developer contribution and £24,000 Integrated block funding has been identified within the current Transport Capital Programme for 2016/17. Other funding sources will be considered if made available to reduce the Integrated Block element. No funding contribution towards future maintenance has been agreed and any maintenance costs will need to be funded by revenue budgets.

6. Environmental Impact Considerations

By promoting sustainable alternatives to travel by car, the proposal will have a minor but positive effect on vehicle emissions and the environment

7. Equality Considerations

An Equality Impact and Needs Assessment (EINA) was undertaken for the Local Transport Plan. No negative impacts were identified. No new policies are being recommended in this report and therefore an individual Equality Impact and Needs Assessment for the scheme is not considered necessary.

8. Legal Considerations

To introduce a new or amended pedestrian crossing a public notice will be required to be advertised in accordance with Section 23 of The Road Traffic Regulation Act.

9. Risk Management Considerations

A controlled crossing will introduce delays to traffic on the A386 at peak times. No commuted sum to cover future maintenance has been identified for this scheme.

10. Public Health Impact

Improved pedestrian crossing facilities will enhance walking links between leisure facilities, education and residential areas. This will have a positive effect on promoting healthy and sustainable travel within the community.

11. Reasons for Recommendations

Concerns about visibility, safety and vehicle speeds have been assessed and considered as part of the design process. Pavement widening is being incorporated as part of the scheme to improve pedestrian access for the crossing and will not obstruct access to adjacent properties. It is recommended that the scheme can be approved for construction in order to support pedestrian safety for the community and improve access to leisure and education facilities.

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Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper

None

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Appendix I To PTE/16/45

