

A361 Tarka Holiday Park uncontrolled crossing, Ashford

Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

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

Recommendation: it is recommended that:

- (a) the proposed works for an uncontrolled crossing shown on the plan 20557/03A is approved for construction at an estimated cost of £93,031; and**
- (b) the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport be given delegated powers, in consultation with the Chair of HATOC and the local member, to make minor amendments to the scheme details.**

1. Summary

The report seeks approval to build an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing on the A361 between the Tarka Holiday Park and a bus stop on the opposite side of the road. The scheme aims to enable improved access to the bus stop for people accessing the holiday park.

2. Introduction

Tarka Holiday Park has no suitable access for pedestrians using nearby bus stops to access public transport. The only access is via the A361 dual carriageway and pedestrians using this road to walk to bus stops or elsewhere is considered dangerous. Buses travelling from Braunton towards Barnstaple stop in the entrance to the Holiday Park and buses travelling from Barnstaple towards Braunton use a bus layby opposite the Holiday Park. Pedestrians walking between the holiday park and the bus layby need to cross the 4-lane A361 dual carriageway in two stages or walk along the A361 for a short section.

In 2020, Devon County Council, in discussion with the bus operator, 'closed' the bus layby due to the above safety concerns; however, this led to people walking a considerably further distance along the A361 dual carriageway to access the bus stop at Ashford or in the other direction at Pottington Industrial Estate.

Following review, it was decided that it would be preferable for the bus stops to be reinstated immediately and a scheme be drawn up for pedestrian facilities to be installed to allow improved pedestrian access to the bus layby.

3. Proposal

Plan 20557/03A in Appendix 1 details the proposed scheme. It includes a 1.2m wide footway behind the bus layby, widening to 1.45m to the south with a 1.5m wide grass verge separating this path from the A361 carriageway. There will also be an uncontrolled crossing point of the westbound dual carriageway section, with a small section of 1.5m wide path in the central reservation and an uncontrolled crossing of the eastbound A361 carriageway. This then joins a 1.5m wide footway on land adjacent to Tarka Holiday Park. This land is owned by Tarka Holiday Park and agreement will be needed with them for this to proceed; however initial discussions have indicated their willingness for this land to be dedicated as public highway.

The proposal has been subject to road safety audit and amendments were made to reach the current design. Those amendments included vegetation clearance and changes to kerbs, tactile paving and drainage.

Subject to HATOC approval it is proposed to construct this crossing this financial year.

4. Options/Alternatives

There are two alternative options, the first of which is to do nothing and to continue with the current existing situation which has been acknowledged to be dangerous for pedestrians accessing the bus stop. The second option is a larger scheme building a footway on the northern side of the A361 all the way back to the bus stop near to Strand Lane, approximately 500m away from the holiday park. This would be significantly more expensive and has challenges to overcome before delivery including possible use of third party land.

5. Consultations

Tarka Holiday Park, who are the main affected business have been consulted and considered the proposal to be “great news”, with strong support for the details.

No further consultation is planned as the proposal formalises and improves an existing situation.

6. Financial Considerations

The scheme has been estimated to cost £93,031 using the latest framework contract prices and includes an increase for inflation.

£38,000 was originally included in the Local Transport Plan 2022/23 Transport Capital Programme for a very minor scheme, however, as a result of amendments to include more footway the cost has risen. This will still be met using Local Transport Plan 2022/23 Transport Capital Programme funding.

7. Legal Considerations

Legal agreement shall be required with the Tarka Holiday Park for the dedication of land required for works as public highway.

8. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)

The current arrangement for pedestrians to access bus stops to use public transport is considered dangerous, however closing the bus stops and forcing people to walk along the A361 to other bus stops is considered worse and likely to discourage people from travelling sustainably, increasing their reliance on car use. The scheme is therefore expected to have a small but positive impact on public transport use, enabling people to have improved access to public transport.

9. Equality Considerations

Where relevant to the decision, the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision makers to give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

Taking account of age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), gender and gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women/new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage/civil partnership status in coming to a decision, a decision maker may also consider other relevant factors such as caring responsibilities, rural isolation or socio-economic disadvantage.

The proposal helps to improve access to bus services (as laid out in Devon County Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan). The people affected by the proposal will be those using the existing bus services to access the Tarka Holiday Park. Based on the information below the scheme is considered to have a positive impact for younger people and older people, females, Black and Asian people, disabled people and people with low incomes.

According to 2019 National Travel Survey data bus use is highest amongst people aged 17-20, and is also significantly above the national average for those aged 70+. Older people tend to make a higher proportion of trips by private vehicles, such as cars, vans and motorcycles, than younger people.

According to 2019 National Travel Survey data, on average, females make fewer trips in total than males, at 734 per person per year versus 878 per person per year. The modal splits for these trips are mostly similar between the genders, except for local buses (outside London), which are used for 7% of females' trips, compared to just 4% for males.

According to 2019 National Travel Survey data, people from minority ethnic backgrounds, particularly Black people, are more likely to live in households without access to a car than White people. Black and Asian people and those with mixed/other ethnicities all make a lower proportion of trips by car and a higher proportion of trips by active travel (walking/cycling) than White people.

According to National Travel Survey data, on average, disabled people make considerably fewer trips by all modes (approximately 840 per annum) than non-disabled people (1,014 per annum). The proportion of trips by each mode is broadly similar for disabled and non-disabled people, except for cycle (non-disabled people make a greater proportion of trips) and local bus (disabled people make a greater proportion of trips).

According to National Travel Survey data, those in lower income groups typically make a greater proportion of trips by active travel (walking and cycling) and bus, and a lower proportion of trips by car, than higher income groups.

10. Risk Management Considerations

The proposed scheme includes use of private land owned by the Tarka Holiday Park; however, the business owners are supportive of the scheme.

The A361 contains significant utility apparatus which could result in unexpected increased costs.

Significant traffic management will be required to keep workers safe during the construction of the works. If the construction is delayed, continued use of traffic management will result in increased cost to the scheme.

The estimated scheme cost includes £12,862 of contingency.

11. Public Health Impact

There will be a small benefit to public health as a result of providing better pedestrian access to public transport services. Travelling actively to and from bus stops can improve physical and mental health.

12. Reasons for Recommendations

The proposed scheme aims to provide an improved pedestrian connection to the existing bus stop opposite the Tarka Holiday Park on the A361. This is expected to address existing issues of pedestrians crossing the A361 without any facilities or walking along the A361, either of which are considered dangerous.

Meg Booth
Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Electoral Division: Braunton Rural

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Contact for Enquiries: Matt Collins

Tel No: 01392 388510 Room: Taw View, Barnstaple

Background Paper	Date	File Reference
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Nil

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