

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Regeneration and Environment
2.	Date:	15 November 2010
3.	Title:	Proposed Puffin Crossing, Wortley Road Report of Petition Objecting to the Proposal
4.	Directorate:	Environment and Regeneration Services

5. Summary

To report receipt of a 23 signature petition and a further 3 objections from residents affected by a proposal for a new Puffin Crossing outside St Bede's school, Wortley Road, Kimberworth.

6. Recommendations

Cabinet Member resolve that:

- i) No further work is undertaken on the proposal to introduce a Puffin signal controlled pedestrian crossing at this time and that further investigation is undertaken into alternatives to help pedestrians cross the road in this area**
- ii) The lead petitioner is informed of the outcome of the meeting**

7. Proposals and Details

A request for a controlled pedestrian crossing was made by parents of children attending St Bede's Primary School in 2005. As a consequence of this request a pedestrian crossing survey was undertaken and results showed that the site met the criteria for a controlled pedestrian crossing (Puffin Crossing). The site was then added to a list of sites meeting the criteria for a controlled crossing and in 2009 St Bede's became the next site on the list for consideration of delivery.

The original Puffin Crossing proposal (shown as appendix A) was identified for construction between properties 526 and 528 Wortley Road and included:

- Removal of the existing school keep clear zig zag markings
- Widening of the northern kerb line to give a minimum 1.2 metre wide footway clearance for pedestrians between the property boundary wall and the proposed traffic signal pole
- Resurfacing of the carriageway within the controlled area
- Installation of a 3 metre wide Puffin Crossing and associated white zig zag markings
- Installation of high friction surfacing on the approaches to the crossing

Consultation was undertaken by letter with affected residents on 29th June 2010.

As a result of this consultation a 23 signature petition objecting to the scheme was received by the council on 20th July 2010, a further three letters objecting to the scheme were also received within the consultation period. (Pages 1 & 2 of the petition are attached as appendix B)

There were a number of grounds of objection received, these were;

- A School Crossing Patrol is currently in operation during the peak hours with an unblemished safety record.
- The crossing will not benefit parents of nursery level children as the gates near the proposed crossing are locked except for school start and end times.
- The red signal time for vehicles is too long (90 seconds) and will cause temporary queues of traffic including Heavy Goods Vehicles. (*Note. the maximum vehicle red period would be 57 seconds if pedestrians remain on the crossing for a full 30 seconds after the invitation to cross*).
- Parking will not be allowed 365 days a year outside the affected properties.
- The general positioning of the crossing; residents feel the crossing will have more benefit to the local community if it is positioned near building number 500 Wortley Road.

In light of the objections the Transportation Unit has re-visited the initial assessment of the crossing undertaken in 2005 and re-assessed the location against new criteria which was approved at the 6th February 2006 Cabinet

Member for Economic, Regeneration and Development Services Meeting
(minute 182 refers).

The new criteria assesses the crossing location based on an average of the 4 peak hour periods of pedestrians crossing instead of the highest 2 peak periods used prior to the 2006 revision.

A simple analysis of pedestrian flows and traffic flows using the latest method identified that the proposed crossing still meets the required criteria, however closer analysis of the data shows a skew in the results. The majority of pedestrians crossing at this location cross during two short time periods; these are at the start and end of the school day. At other times of the day the number of pedestrians crossing is low and a crossing for these low numbers would not be justified.

A School Crossing Patrol is currently in operation at the peak periods with no reported road safety or traffic related concerns. In the event that a controlled crossing is installed outside St Bede's there is the potential that the current School Crossing Patrol post would be removed. Discussions have taken place with Children and Young People Services regarding this crossing patrol. It is agreed that a crossing patrol is currently the best form of crossing facility at this location given there are only two times of day when there is a demand for a crossing.

As a result of the above it is recommended that work on the proposal for a controlled pedestrian crossing outside properties 526 and 528 is halted and a feasibility study is undertaken to identify other potential crossing improvements. Site observations suggest that even though traffic islands are present nearby at the junction of Great Park Road, pedestrians are still having difficulty crossing the A629. Further improvements at the Great Park Road junction along with minor improvements around St Bede's could help to reduce vehicle speeds on the section of the A629 thereby assisting pedestrians to cross the road. It is anticipated that with reduced funding available from the 2011/12 financial year integrated transport budget allocation that improvements at the Great Park Road junction as suggested would provide a greater benefit than a stand alone pedestrian crossing at St Bede's School.

8. Finance

The original scheme had a budget estimate of £132,450 and would have been funded from the RMBC Local Transport Plan budget 2010/11. It is now expected that only a small proportion of this funding will be used to investigate and develop further options to improve accessibility on this section of the A629.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

At present the level of funding for transportation projects in the 2011/12 financial year is uncertain and funding may not be available to undertake any recommended scheme.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Any proposed scheme would need to be in line with objectives set out in the South Yorkshire Local Transport Plan, and the associated Road Safety and Casualty Reduction Strategy for improving road safety.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

As per the details within section 7 of this report, consultation was undertaken with affected residents by letter dated 29th June 2010. A 23 signature petition was received on 20th July 2010.

Consultation with the Local Ward Members and South Yorkshire Police has been undertaken, no objections were received.

12. List of Appendices

- Appendix A – Plan of proposed Puffin Crossing location
- Appendix B – Pages 1&2 of the received petition

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