

Report title: Proposed Crossing Renewal, B1007 High Street, Billericay	
Report to: Councillor Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure	
Report author: Andrew Cook, Director for Highways and Transport	
Date: 18/10/2019	For: Decision
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County Division affected: Billericay and Burstead	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Essex County Council (the Council) has formally advertised the renewal of a pedestrian crossing point on B1007 High Street, Billericay (the Proposal). As a negative representation to the Proposal has been received, the Cabinet Member is now asked to decide as to whether the proposal should be implemented.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet Member approves the crossing upgrade as formally advertised (as set out in section 4.1 of this report).

3. Summary of issue

- 3.1 B1007 High Street is a main route through Billericay and provides a link between Basildon and Chelmsford. There are several sets of traffic signals along this through route through Billericay, both signalised junctions and dedicated pedestrian crossing points. The entire High Street area has high levels of foot traffic due to nearby shops, restaurants and close proximity of Billericay train station; hence these crossing points are used by pedestrians with varying abilities.
- 3.2 The Proposal is located on B1007 High Street in the vicinity of its junctions with Lion Lane and Alma Link. An existing Pelican Crossing is already in operation at this location.
- 3.3 As part of an annual refurbishment programme of traffic signal equipment across Essex this site has been identified as one which that is in need of upgrade as the current equipment is life expired. This is due to its age and equipment becoming obsolete. The proposed upgrade will ensure that the crossing continues to operate reliably.
- 3.4 The proposed upgrade will bring the controlled crossing point in line with current standards and is proposed to be a Puffin Crossing with near sided pedestrian

indicators, as current standards no longer permit the installation of Pelican pedestrian crossings.

- 3.5 By relocating the 'green man', those with sensory disabilities such as mild visual impairment will be able to see clearly when it is appropriate to cross. In addition, all crossing users when looking at the green man display, will be facing towards oncoming traffic and have a heightened awareness of oncoming traffic.
- 3.6 The proposed Puffin Crossing is proposed to be in the same location as the existing Pelican Crossing on B1007 High Street, Billericay. The crossing location and layout can be found in Appendix 1.
- 3.7 The renewal will also provide the opportunity to install Extra Low Voltage technology to provide power savings and maximum efficiency. This replaces equipment at the end of its serviceable life, but it also follows current "best practice" design standards aimed at improved reliability, reduced carbon emissions, and improving efficiency wherever practical.

Consultation

- 3.8 As required under Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, before altering a pedestrian crossing the Council are required to consult the Chief Officer of Police and notify the public of the proposal. As a result, a formal consultation took place between the 4 July and 26 July 2019, in which notices were placed on site, along with adverts being placed in the Basildon Standard, and documents for public viewing were held at Billericay Library, The Basildon Centre and available on the Essex Highways website.
- 3.9 The following stakeholders made comment on the Proposal:
 - Essex Police wished to make no formal comment on the Proposal
 - County Councillor Hedley and County Councillor Moore were consulted but did not respond.
- 3.10 Following the consultation one negative representation from a member of public was received on the basis that they believe the crossing design regardless of whether it is a Pelican or Puffin is unsuitable and causes conflict with vehicles entering and exiting a car park access situated in the length of B1007 High Street where the crossing zigzags are located. They stated that due to current issues with vehicles parking on the zigzags without proper enforcement, means that vehicles leaving the car park have to emerge onto B1007 High Street without adequate visibility. The individual suggested installation of pedestrian guard railings or widening of the footway instead of the crossing upgrade.
- 3.11 Parking on the zigzags is not something that is enforced by the Council, and as such these comments have been passed on to Essex Police and the South Essex Parking Partnership for further enforcement measures to be considered.
- 3.12 The Council do not disagree that there may be other suitable solutions for additional improvements at this location. However, it is important to note that the

Proposal is part of the signal renewal programme and is focussed on upgrading existing pedestrian crossings and bringing them in line with current standards. Therefore additional changes or reassessments of this crossing point would fall outside of the scope of this scheme.

- 3.13 Any requests for additional local improvements or overall reassessments of the crossing point would need to be considered via the Basildon Local Highway Panel.

4. Options

Option A – Continue with the scheme as advertised

- 4.1 This is the recommended option. This will see an existing crossing point be upgraded in line with current standards. As a result of this energy efficiency will be improved and costs used for providing energy to the signals will be saved. Additionally, accessibility for those with disabilities wishing to cross the road will be improved, providing a more universal and accommodating environment that is efficient for all highway users.
- 4.2 This option would not satisfy the member of the public who made the representation, however if further enforcement action against vehicles parking on the zigzags could be taken then the member of the public may be in support of the crossing point.

Option B – Abandon the scheme

- 4.3 This option would bring no benefits to the current pedestrian environment. The traffic signals at this junction have been identified as requiring renewal in order to ensure reliability and maintainability of the asset in the future as the current equipment is life expired. Should the traffic signals not be renewed at this time, it is highly likely that this will lead to the asset being out of service for extended periods which will lead to unnecessary risk of collisions for pedestrians.

5. Issues for consideration

5.1 Financial implications:

The funding for this scheme has been previously approved and is to be funded by the Task Order 37 budget which is Essex County Council's under their signal renewal programme budget.

5.2 Legal implications:

- 5.2.1 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 gives the Council a statutory duty to exercise its traffic functions to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic of all kinds, including pedestrians and to provide suitable

and adequate parking facilities. So far as practical the council is also required to have regard to

- (a) the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises;
- (b) the effect on the amenities of any locality affected so as to preserve or improve the amenities of the areas through which the roads run;
- (c) the importance of facilitating the passage of buses and their passengers.

Justifiable parking restrictions assist with the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic and pedestrians. This proposal will lead to an improvement in the pedestrian environment at no detriment to pedestrian safety and is in accordance with Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1980.

6. Equality and Diversity implications

6.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

6.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

6.3 The equality impact assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic. This scheme will have no negative effects on any of the characteristics protected by the Equality Act. The Equality Impact Assessment can be found in Appendix 2.

7. List of appendices

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – Proposal Drawing
- 7.2 Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment
- 7.3 Appendix 3 – Site Photos

8. List of Background papers

- 8.1 Full consultation responses
- 8.2 Highways Practice Note 033 – Pedestrian Crossings

I approve the above recommendations set out above for the reasons set out in the report.	Date
Councillor Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure	23/10/2019

In consultation with:

Role	Date
Director, Highways and Transport	18/10/2019
Andrew Cook	
S151 Officer	Consent Not Needed
Nicole Wood	
Monitoring Officer	Consent Not Needed
Paul Turner	
Head of Design, Essex Highways	17/10/2019
Vicky Duff on behalf of Vicky Presland	
Head of Network and Safety/Traffic Manager	17/10/2019
Liz Burr	