

Forward Plan reference number: N/A

Report title: Zebra Crossing, Ashdon Road, Saffron Walden	
Report to: Councillor Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure	
Report author: Andrew Cook, Director for Highways and Transportation	
Date: 09 December 2020	For: Decision
Enquiries to: Vicky Presland – Essex Highways Head of Design Mobile: 07977 167136 Email: vicky.presland@essexhighways.org Officer: - Rissa Long – Essex Highways Highway Liaison Officer Mobile: 07720 0953412 Email: rissa.long@essexhighways.org	
County Divisions affected: Saffron Walden	

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report is for the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure to consider the progression of a zebra crossing on Ashdon Road in Saffron Walden which is against the specifications laid out in Local Transport Note 1/95 for the Assessment of Pedestrian Crossings.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve the progression of the zebra crossing on Ashdon Road, Saffron Walden, notwithstanding that the PV^2 score is less than the 0.2×10^8 usually required.

3. Summary of Issue

- 3.1. Ashdon Road is a Priority 2 route within the Essex Functional Hierarchy. The main purpose of a Priority 2 route is the distribution of traffic and giving priority to motorised users. It is important to maintain free flowing traffic movement upon them due to the function they perform within the highway network. It is to the East of Saffron Walden which links several large residential estates with the town centre. There are also several primary schools and shopping amenities within walking distance of this location, including a private school on Ashdon Road itself.
- 3.2. Currently there are development works to construct at least 100 new houses on land to the East of the town which is anticipated will significantly increase the pedestrian movements. This has led local Councillors to seek improvements to the facilities available to pedestrians to both encourage them to walk and to provide a safer option for crossing the road.
- 3.3. As part of those improvements, a zebra crossing has been proposed at the location identified below to formalise a route which pedestrians are already, informally, using to cross the road. There is also evidence on site that the verge to the north side of the road is well used so the proposal also includes

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the installation of a short section of footpath to further highlight this as a designated crossing point all of which would be funded by Section 106 monies.



- 3.4. The specific need for a zebra crossing at this site was not included in the original Section 106 agreement relating to the developments in the area however the wording contained within in that agreement is broad enough so as to allow relevant improvements to be made.
- 3.5. When a request for a pedestrian crossing is made this necessitates a PV² assessment and accompanying speed survey to be undertaken. These were undertaken and the PV² returned a reading of 0.069×10^8 whereas the national criteria as referenced in LTN 1/95 to justify the introduction of a zebra crossing stands at 0.2×10^8 meaning that approval from the Cabinet Member is required in order for this proposal to progress.
- 3.6. The speed survey data indicated that the 85th percentile speeds were 25.3mph heading eastbound and 23.1mph heading westbound so both are well within the acceptable levels for a zebra crossing to be installed.
- 3.7. It is considered that although the guidelines on the PV² are not currently met the anticipated increase in the footfall upon the progression of the new housing developments together with the likely increase to the traffic volumes as a result, makes the proposal to install a zebra crossing is a sensible one.
- 3.8. There has been no statistical injury collisions recorded on this stretch of road whilst the recorded volumes are currently averaged at 5000 vehicular movements per day.

4. Options

Option 1 - Agree to the progression of the zebra crossing outside of guidance

- 4.1 This option would be the recommended option for the Town Council, District Councillors and the County Member and is supported by officers.

Although the PV² reading falls short of guidance it is not considered that the location of the proposed crossing would cause a safety concern as the visibility is very clear on both approaches. It is also expected that this reading would currently fall short without a surfaced path being present to encourage pedestrians to use this route.

Option 2 – Abandon the scheme

- 4.2 Through not introducing a zebra crossing it could be considered that Essex County Council (“ECC”) are missing an opportunity to promote a more sustainable method of transport, as opposed to taking the car.

Abandoning the scheme would also be met by objections from local Councillors who have sought to progress a pedestrian crossing facility at this location since the new developments in Saffron Walden were first considered.

The benefit to not agreeing to the scheme outside of guidance would be that we would not be setting a precedence for future installations which fall short of meeting the specified figures.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

5 Issues for consideration

5.1 Financial Implications

- 5.1.1 If it is agreed to progress with the installation of the zebra crossing as per option one above then the cost of the legal advertising and the installation works would be via Section 106 funding at an estimated cost of £80,000.

5.2 Legal Implications

- 5.2.1 There is no legal reason why the zebra crossing has to meet the PV2 standards but the Cabinet Member will need to take into account all the circumstances.
- 5.2.2 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 gives ECC 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.

The installation of a zebra crossing assists with the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of pedestrians but it may cause an interference with the flow of vehicular traffic (noting on average 5000 vehicular movements per day) and the Cabinet Member needs to ensure both aspects are considered.

- 5.2.3 Also there is a requirement to formally advertise the intent to install a pedestrian crossing prior to implementation as required by law and ECC Policy.

6 Equality and Diversity implications

- 6.1 The public sector equality duty applies to the council when it makes decisions and this is covered by the equality impact assessment dated .

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.

7. List of appendices – EQiA

8. **List of Background papers** - Scheme Request Forms and pertaining documentary evidence, Validation Reports, Proposal Scheme Lists

I approve the above recommendations set out above for the reasons set out in the report.	Date
Councillor Kevin Bentley, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure	06/02/2020

In consultation with:

Role	Date
ECC Director for Highways and Transportation Andrew Cook	29/01/2020
ECC Executive Director for Corporate and Customer Services (S151 Officer) Nicole Wood	CONSENT NOT REQUIRED
Laura Edwards on behalf of the Monitoring Officer Head of Network and Safety/Traffic Manager	29/01/2020
Liz Burr	12/12/2019
Essex Highways Head of Design Vicky Presland	09/12/2019