

Forward Plan reference number: Not Applicable

Report title: Proposed Toucan Crossing & 40mph Speed Limit, B1018 Limebrook Way, Maldon	
Report to: Councillor Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure	
Report author: Andrew Cook, Director for Highways and Transport	
Date: 16 October 2019	For: Decision
Enquiries to: Vicky Presland, Head of Design, Essex Highways Chloe Livingstone, Chloe.Livingstone@essexhighways.org	
County Division affected: Maldon	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Essex County Council (the Council) has formally advertised its intention to implement a 40mph Speed Limit and a Toucan Crossing on B1018 Limebrook Way, Maldon (the Proposal). Objections to the Proposal have been received as set out in this Report.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To agree to implement the Toucan Crossing and 40mph Speed Limit on B1018 Limebrook Way, as formally advertised and set out in Appendix 1 and 2 of this report.

3. Summary of issue

- 3.1 A residential development is currently being constructed adjacent to the B1018 Limebrook Way by Taylor Wimpey. The development will have up to 1000 residential properties, a primary school and 2 nursery schools in addition to other amenities. The masterplan for this development, which will be known as the South Maldon Garden Suburb, can be seen on the map below (the yellow colouring on the plan shows the approximate location of the proposed 40mph Speed Limit while the blue circle shows the approximate location of the proposed Toucan Crossing):



- 3.2 Planning consent was granted by the Local Planning Authority for the development on 1 December 2016 under reference OUT/MAL/14/01103. The Planning Permission contained planning conditions including that, prior to occupation of the development, the developer, Taylor Wimpey shall be responsible for instigating a speed review strategy throughout the highway network of the South Maldon Garden Suburb with a view of regulating the speed to a more appropriate level for the development.
- 3.3 Road Safety Audits were carried out by Taylor Wimpey, which recommended that the speed limit on B1018 Limebrook Way should be reduced from its current National Speed Limit to 40mph. As a result of this, the entrances to Meeson Meadows and Keeble Park are also proposed to be included within the 40mph limit leading up to the start of their 30mph speed limits. These are the two roads leading directly into small cul-de-sac residential areas directly adjacent to the north of B1018 Limebrook Way. This is also the case for Fambridge Road, between its existing 30mph and 40mph at either side of the B1018 Limebrook Way/B1010 Fambridge Road roundabout (the plan can be found in Appendix 1).
- 3.4 As part of the development works, a new roundabout will be constructed on B1018 Limebrook Way as shown on the plan in Appendix 1 (to the west of the existing Meeson Meadows junction). This roundabout will provide a key access point to the South Maldon Garden Suburb development and should aid overall speed compliance within the proposed 40mph speed limit.

- 3.5 Within the Planning Conditions, Taylor Wimpey is also required to provide a toucan crossing. In addition to this, a shared Segregated Footway/Cycleway has also been proposed to accompany the Toucan Crossing (as shown in the plan in Appendix 2). This will ensure crossing points on the B1018 Limebrook Way are provided for pedestrians and cyclists to allow for linkage between the development and the existing areas of Maldon. This will provide benefits for of all occupiers and users in the local vicinity in accordance with the Maldon District Approved Local Development Plan 2014-2029.
- 3.6 Additionally, with the installation of the Toucan Crossing and Cycleway, sustainable modes of transport will be promoted. Provisions will also be made for the future Cycle Path development on the northern side of B1018 Limebrook Way and the western side of B1010 Fambridge Road, due to designed and constructed at a later date.

Informal Consultation

- 3.7 As a result of these proposed changes an informal consultation was carried out from the 2 April to the 23 April 2019. The following stakeholders made comments on the proposal:
- Essex Police were in support of the Toucan Crossing, however commented the following in relation to the 40mph Speed Limit, 'This was removed from previous proposals about 4 years ago, due to several objections being received. I appreciate that some changes are now being made in the area, but the concerns from that time remain. I believe that it is essential that a speed survey is carried out to investigate whether this is achievable, otherwise it is going to be very difficult for me to support this on behalf of Essex Police.' In response to Essex Police, it was felt that at the time of informal consultation it would not be beneficial to carry out a speed survey, as the character of the area around B1018 Limebrook Way is due to undergo a substantial amount of changes in the coming years with the amount of current and planned development taking place and it would therefore not be representative once the development is finished. It is felt that these changes, particularly that of a planned roundabout and the Proposed Toucan Crossing on B1018 Limebrook Way, will help contribute to a compliance in driver behaviour which will justify the speed limit reduction. Subsequently Essex Highways however, will still investigate carrying out a speed survey post implementation of these features and the 40mph Speed Limit in order to determine if further traffic calming is needed.
 - Councillor Shaughnessy of Maldon West Ward commented the following 'I think that, on behalf of my Ward members, the speed restrictions that you mentioned make perfect sense. Cycle ways are quickly becoming standard and are a safe way that, particularly, young people can travel.'
 - Maldon Town Council stated, 'Maldon Town Council supports the proposal to implement the Toucan Crossing on the Eastern end of B1018 Limebrook Way and the proposed cycle path'.

- Local walking group Maldon Ramblers stated, 'Proposals look good. Crossing very important and welcome speed limit reduction'.

Informal Objections

3.8 During the informal consultation 4 objections were received from members of the public:

- The first objection (objector 1) was on the basis that they wished for the proposed 40mph Speed Limit to be extended east, to reach the existing 40mph Speed Limit at the B1018 Limebrook Way/Mundon Road roundabout with the aim to reduce the impacts of acceleration and deceleration between two 40mph Speed Limits, something that could cause noise pollution and greater CO2 emissions. The 40mph speed limit has not been proposed to be extended as there is a strong possibility that vehicles approaching from the west would not adhere to this as the road does not hold the usual characteristics of a 40mph due to its rural nature on the southern side. Essex Highways believe it would be more appropriate for this section of road to remain as national speed with the possibility of it being lowered should the southern parcel of land be developed in the future. It is also important to note that there have been no reported personal injury collisions on the eastern section of B1018 Limebrook Way in the past five years, whereas there have been multiple on the western section on which the 40mph is proposed.
- The second objector (objector 2) also wished for the 40mph to be extended eastwards past the B1018 Limebrook Way/Mundon Road roundabout, to a point 'after the pedestrian pavement disappears'. Directly after the roundabout, Limebrook Way has a short section of pedestrian footway adjacent to the carriageway on the north side of the road for a distance of approximately 58 metres. The objector felt that having the proposed 40mph extended eastwards so that it would be incorporate this section of pedestrian footway would provide a better degree of 'safety' for pedestrians, as opposed to the current speed limit on the given section of Limebrook Way of 60mph. Due to the close proximity of the B1018 Limebrook Way/B1010 Fambridge Road roundabout, it is unlikely that vehicles approaching from the east will reach speeds of up to 60mph and potentially even 40mph on the section of B1018 Limebrook Way adjacent to the said footway, as many vehicles may only just be starting to accelerate upon exiting the roundabout. In addition, within the developers planning conditions they are only legally obliged to address the speeds on the South Maldon Garden Suburb networks, further east of the B1018 Limebrook Way/B1010 Fambridge road roundabout is outside of the scope of their development and planning conditions and therefore the developers are under no obligation to fund further highway changes.
- The final 2 objectors (objector 3&4), objected to the location of the proposed Toucan Crossing on the basis that when it is in use traffic will accumulate round the B1018 Limebrook Way/B1010 Fambridge Road roundabout, blocking Fambridge Road. The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) states that non-staggered signal controlled crossings should be sited either at 20 metres or more than 60 metres from the roundabout give way line and should be located to suit pedestrian desire lines. The proposed crossing location is 20 metres from

roundabout give way line and is therefore in compliance with this, if the crossing was sited further away and outside of the desire lines, it may not be used appropriately resulting in people crossing at non-formal locations which could increase risk of collisions involving pedestrians. One of these 2 objectors (objector 4) also stated that the additional of the Toucan Crossing on B1018 Limebrook Way will make drivers opt to cut through Maldon town centre in order to reach Langford Road which leads to the A12, adding to congestion within the centre. Despite the Toucan Crossing acting as a form of traffic calming, it is believed that installing a pedestrian crossing at this location will not further encourage vehicles to travel through the town centre in order to reach Langford Road. The centre contains many features which may slow traffic including mini roundabouts, zebra crossings and vehicles parked on the highway. Subsequently, travelling through the town centre to reach Langford Road, as opposed to going via B1018 Limebrook Way/A414 Spital road which goes around the town, is not seen as a preferable route.

3.9 A full objection report can be found in Appendix 3.

Formal Consultation

3.10 From the 18 July to 9 August 2019, Essex Highways formally advertised the Proposal.

3.11 The Proposal was advertised on the Essex Highways website and in the Maldon & Burnham Standard. Public notices were also displayed along the stretch of B1018 Limebrook Way in which the changes are being proposed on.

3.12 During the formal consultation, no further objections were received to the Proposal.

4. Options

4.1 Option A – Continue with the scheme as advertised

This is the recommended option. This option would follow the requests that have come from the Maldon District Council and their planning teams, however, may not satisfy the objectors.

This option would ensure an efficient crossing point is provided for all members of public, with additional benefits for those who may not be able to cross the road with ease due to their age and travelling pace as they will be able to take their time when crossing. Considering those who may fall under the vulnerable pedestrian criteria due to their age in relation to this crossing, is particularly important as a result of the planned primary school and 2 nurseries within the development.

Those who would not be able to cross the road usually due to sensory impairment will be able to as there will be tactile pavement in place indicating a crossing. In addition, the pedestrian crossing will include audible signals and a tactile rotating cone indicating when it is appropriate to cross the road. (These audible signals will be active from 7am – 10pm every day.)

If these are not installed then those who need the crossing/speed reduction may not be able to cross B1018 Limebrook Way at all or be at risk of collision if they choose to do so unsafely.

Vehicles will also have more time to become aware of pedestrians crossing due to the 40mph Speed Limit, adjusting their speeds accordingly and so the risk of collision is expected to reduce. A reduced speed limit will also allow residents of roads adjoining B1018 Limebrook Way more time to exit onto and off.

Despite the Proposal's benefits, the proposed location of the crossing will inevitably cause temporary delays during the signalled crossing timings when they are activated by pedestrians and cyclists. This may be more prevalent during peak times, if multiple vehicles wish to leave the roundabout onto the western section of B1018 Limebrook Way. As the development reached higher levels of occupancy, the frequency of the signalled crossing timings is also expected to increase.

4.2 Option B – Abandon the scheme

This option would provide no additional benefits to the current situation on B1018 Limebrook Way and Essex County Council would not be proceeding in the direction of the wishes contained within the planning conditions set out by Maldon District Council. This option may however satisfy objectors 3 and 4, as there would not be a Toucan Crossing causing additional delays to traffic in this area.

Pedestrians and cyclists exiting/wishing to access the development via B1010 Fambridge Road would not have a nearby crossing to use, which could then result in reckless crossing of the highway and present a risk of collision. By not lowering the speed limit vehicles may travel at speeds not deemed suitable, when taking into consideration the expected increase in the level of pedestrian and cycle traffic in the area as a result of the development.

4.3 Option C – Investigate alternative locations for the proposed Toucan Crossing/alternative lengths for the 40mph Speed Limit

Relocating the Toucan Crossing could potentially satisfy Objectors 3 and 4. In addition the implementation of an alternative scheme would mean additional surveys and consultations being carried out – bearing additional time and monetary costs which would likely be unfavourable by both the developer and Maldon District Council. Consequently this would greatly delay any changes to improve the pedestrian and cycling environment and potentially putting vulnerable pedestrians in the area at risk longer than needed.

Additionally, Essex Highways Officers have already deemed this to be the most suitable location for the crossing and therefore if other locations were explored these may be less suitable and more problematic. The proposed location of the Toucan Crossing will be located in a position that directly facilitates pedestrian and cyclist movement to and from the rest of Maldon, including the town centre, with the new residential development. If the Crossing is relocated and a less convenient location then unsafe crossing of B1018 Limebrook Way may be encouraged.

If the 40mph Speed Limit is moved eastbound on Limebrook Way after the Fambridge Road roundabout to a point where the road stops being directly adjacent to the footway, then this would satisfy objector 2. If the 40mph Speed Limit is instead extended to cover Limebrook Way up to its junction with the Mundon Road roundabout, then this would satisfy objector 1.

With both of the above alternative options for relocating the extent of the 40mph speed limit, there will be a strong possibility that this speed limit would not be complied with due to the rural nature on the south side of the road, and the clear and open surroundings throughout.

Essex Highways believe it would be more appropriate for this section of road to remain as national speed with the possibility of it being lowered should the southern parcel of land be developed in the future.

5. Issues for consideration

5.1 Financial implications

5.1.1 The Proposal and associated works are being funded by the developer.

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.

5.2.2 This proposal will lead to an improvement in the pedestrian/cyclist environment at no detriment to pedestrian/cyclist safety. Whilst there appears to be no real legislative requirement to hold a public inquiry in view of the objections received the decision to make the order may be subject to judicial review, whilst judicial review is a risk, there have been clear and reasoned considerations put forward by ECC as to why it is still going to make the order. These clear and reasoned considerations ought to have alleviated objector concerns

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).

6.2.1 The proposed Toucan Crossing may provide benefits to those affected by age and disability as it will provide a more efficient crossing point and lower risk of collision when crossing the road, particularly for those who may need to take their time in doing so. Those pedestrians who may have difficulties crossing roads caused by sensory impairment will be benefitted as there will be tactile pavement in place, physically indicating a crossing. In addition, the pedestrian crossing will provide and/or a beeping noise/ a tactile rotating cone indicating when it is appropriate to cross the road. If these are not installed those who need the crossing/speed reduction in order to improve their ability to cross the road efficiently would be at a higher risk of collision.

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. The Proposal will have no negative effects on any of the characteristics protected by the Equality Act.

7. List of appendices

Appendix 1 – 40mph Speed Limit Plan
Appendix 2 – Toucan Crossing & Segregated Shared Footway + Cycleway Plan
Appendix 3 – Objection Report
Appendix 4 – Site Photos
Appendix 5 – Equality Impact Assessment

8. List of Background papers

Full consultation responses
Maldon District Approved Local Development Plan 2014-2029
South Maldon Garden Suburb Strategic Masterplan Framework
Planning Conditions

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	17/10/2019
Andrew Cook (S151 Officer)	Consent Not Needed
Nicole Wood	
Director, Legal and Assurance (Monitoring Officer)	16/10/2019
Katie Bray on behalf of Paul Turner	30/08/2019
Head of Design, Essex Highways	
Vicky Presland	05/09/2019
Head of Network and Safety/Traffic Manager	
Liz Burr	