

Appendix A

Correspondence and petition to improve pedestrian safety at Sim Balk Lane Crossing, Bishopthorpe.



Travel Action Group  
C/o 37 Lang Road  
Bishopthorpe  
York  
YO22 2QJ



14 July 2014

**BY HAND**

City of York Council  
City & Environmental Services  
West Offices  
Station Rise  
York YO1 6GA

**Attention: Tony Clarke, Head of Transport**

Dear Sirs

**Petition to Improve Pedestrian Safety at Sim Balk Lane Crossing, Bishopthorpe  
Submission by the Travel Action Group**

The Travel Action Group (TAG) is formed of parents and carers of children who attend Bishopthorpe Infant School and Archbishop of York's Junior School in Bishopthorpe. The Group works alongside both schools to promote child road safety, encourage more walking, cycling and scooting to school and discourage parent on-street parking outside the schools.

TAG has been actively campaigning for improvements at the desired crossing point at the speed table on Sim Balk Lane, located near the shops and Methodist chapel and on the main walking route between the two village schools (see maps at **Attachments 1a and 1b**). There have been various incidents at this crossing point caused by a lack of pedestrian visibility, illegal parking and confusion over the status of the speed table, i.e. whether pedestrians or cars have right of way. Photographs are enclosed (at **Attachment 2**) which give a small insight into the problems experienced at the location, on a daily basis by families and older members of the community.

An initial assessment by CYC in October 2010 concluded that a School Crossing Patrol (SCP) could not be justified, but opinions canvassed from parents, via the school website, indicated that a significant number of people considered that improvements to safety were required.

The crossing was then assessed again by CYC on 7 January 2013. The conclusion of the assessment was that the crossing point did not accrue a sufficient rating as to merit further investigation. TAG considered the results further and determined that the assessment had failed to take into account additional weighting factors contained in the School Crossing Patrol national guidelines. Our observations were set out in our letter to CYC dated 18 June 2013, please refer to **Attachment 3**. In response to that letter CYC agreed that the crossing point did merit further investigation and arranged to attend the site. Trish Hurst (Road Safety Officer) and Steve Burrell (North Yorkshire Police) attended the site on 3 July 2013, and assessed various matters including whether the site was a safe workplace for a School Crossing Patrol (SCP). The conclusions of this visit are detailed in two emails from Trish Hurst dated 11 July and 6 August 2013, enclosed at **Attachments 4a and 4b**.

CYC concluded that although the site satisfied the national criteria for an SCP (in terms of traffic volume/pedestrian footfall) it would be an unsafe working environment for a Patroller due to poor visibility. No alternative proposals to improve safety were made. CYC has implied that alternative locations should be considered for the siting of an SCP. However, it should be noted that this is the natural pedestrian 'desire line' and therefore the logical site for any installation.

At this point CYC handed the problem back to the community to resolve. TAG were disappointed to note that CYC omitted to make any alternative practical proposals. CYC implied in their email of 11 July 2013, please see **Attachment 4a**, that TAG should resolve the parking issue by using the land in front of the shops on Sim Balk Lane as an alternative to the current on street parking. It is clearly not practical to make any changes to current parking due to ambiguity over ownership of the land in front of the shops and local business objections.

In the absence of any alternative practical solution to the issue, TAG sent a further letter to CYC dated 30 January 2014, please see **Attachment 5**. The letter enquired about the possibility of a kerb build-out as a solution to the visibility problem and requested any alternative solutions as CYC may deem suitable. In its reply of 11 March 2014, please see **Attachment 6**, it was stated that the site may be suitable for a feasibility study but this would have to be part of the following year's budget. No further communication has been forthcoming from CYC.

TAG decided to canvas the strength of feeling relating to this issue within the local community and as a result launched a paper petition on 31 January 2014 and collected signatures from the local community, concluding on 30 April 2014. The petition attracted significant interest, please see press cuttings, **Attachment 8**, and secured in excess of 1,000 signatures. The original signed petition pages are enclosed at **Attachment 7**.

The petition demonstrates that this is an issue that the Council ought to address. We trust that the issue will now be debated by Full Council. Please notify us of the date of any meeting at which the matter will be discussed as we wish to attend and make appropriate representations.

Yours faithfully

**Mr Martin Waller**  
Travel Action Group

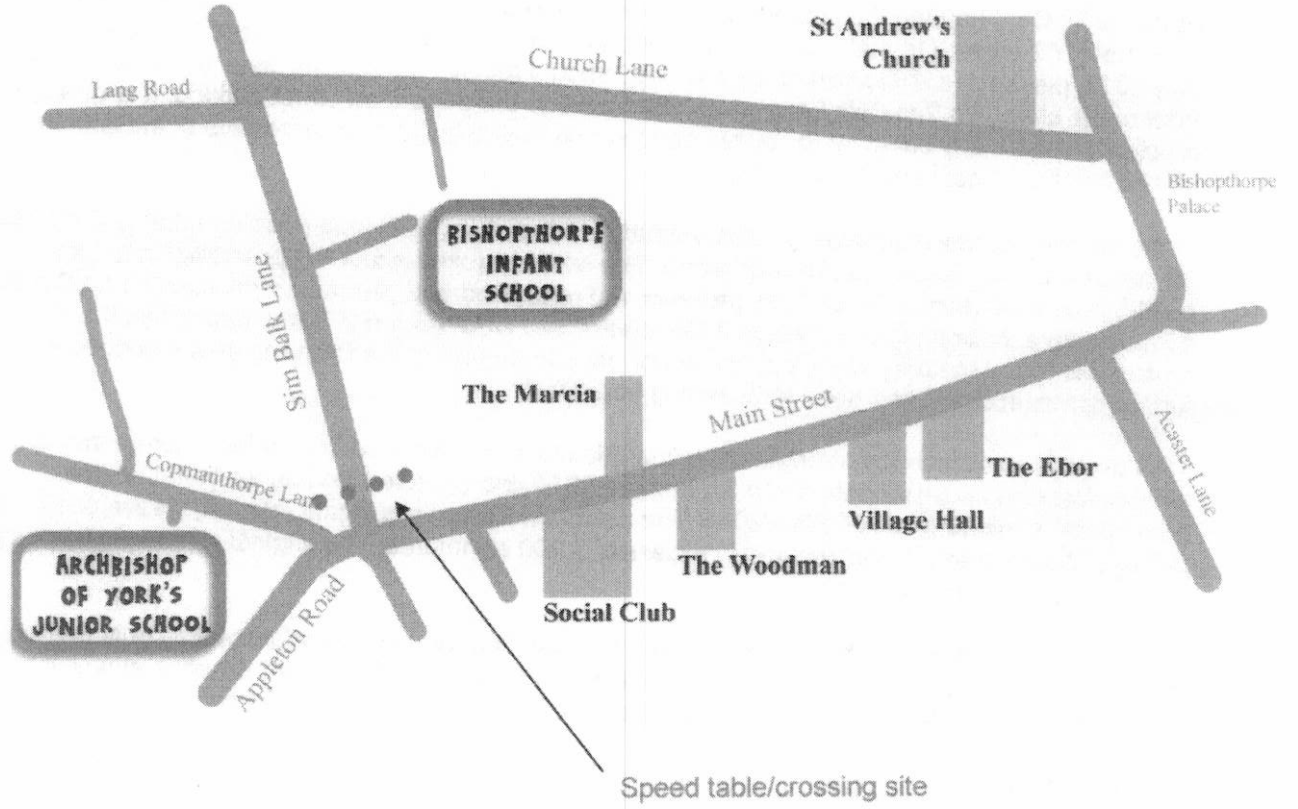
**Mrs Alison Rutter**

**Ms Jenny Eason**

List of Attachments:

- Attachment 1a & 1b: Maps
- Attachment 2: Photographs
- Attachment 3: TAG letter to CYC dated 18 June 2013
- Attachment 4a & 4b: Emails from CYC (Trish Hurst) dated 11 July 2013 and 6 August 2013
- Attachment 5: TAG letter to CYC dated 30 January 2014
- Attachment 6: CYC letter to TAG dated 11 March 2014
- Attachment 7: Press cuttings
- Attachment 8: Petition

Attachment 1a: Map



39.62012 1.12111

# Attachment 5

Alison Rutter

1, Coggan Way  
Bishopthorpe  
York  
YO23 2QX

Tony Clarke  
Head of Transport  
City of York Council  
West Offices  
Station Rise  
York  
YO1 6GA

CC: David Mercer  
Principal Engineer  
Transport Projects.

Dear Mr. Clarke,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Bishopthorpe Schools Travel Action Group which has been actively campaigning for an improvement to the pedestrian crossing point on Sim Balk Lane, Bishopthorpe, for nearly two years. This crossing is a major part of the walking route between the two village schools.

Although the site has been assessed and proven to satisfy the national criteria for the provision of a School Crossing Patrol, the Council has deemed it an unsafe environment for a School Crossing Patroller to operate due to poor visibility. No alternative proposals to improve safety have been made.

The site assessment was carried out by members of Louise Robinson's team at CYC, namely Trish Hirst and Jayne Ward. In Louise's absence due to maternity leave, I spoke to David Mercer who advised me to contact you on this matter as we seem to have reached something of an impasse.

The major difficulty with the site of the crossing point is reduced visibility due to vehicles parked outside the parade of shops on Sim Balk Lane. It is highly unlikely that these parking spaces could be taken away as they are in constant use and their removal would be detrimental to local businesses.

As an alternative, we wondered whether it would be possible for the Council to provide a curb build-out on the shops side of the road at the site of the present speed table. This would give pedestrians a safe place to wait and improve their view of on-coming traffic down the off-side of the parked cars. ( There is a similar build-out at the crossing-point outside Dringhouses Primary School.)

## Attachment 4b

-----Forwarded Message-----

From: [trish.hirst@york.gov.uk](mailto:trish.hirst@york.gov.uk)  
To: [alison.rutter1@btinternet.com](mailto:alison.rutter1@btinternet.com)  
Cc: [Jayne.ward@york.gov.uk](mailto:Jayne.ward@york.gov.uk), [Steve.Burrell@northyorkshire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Steve.Burrell@northyorkshire.pnn.police.uk)  
Sent: Tue, Aug 6, 2013 9:52 AM BST  
Subject: RE: Sim Balk Lane SCP assessment

Dear Alison,

I just thought I would update you on the results of our meeting members of the Travel Action Group, when we looked at the potential site for a School Crossing Patrol at the bottom of Sim Balk Lane.

There are currently sight line issues on both sides of the road, at this location which would need to be resolved before we would consider this site as a working environment.

The issue on the Junior school side is caused by a slight road curve and overhanging shrubbery. This can not be overcome as the patroller has to be able to work from both sides of the road and would need to be able to guarantee a minimum sight line, which currently does not exist.

However, there are bigger issues concerning the sight line on the shop side of the road. There are issues at this side, which would need to be agreed on and resolved by the local community:-

1. On road parking would need to be reduced, so that the sight lines of both the patroller and approaching traffic gave both enough time to react. While we were there we were actually approached by a member of the Parish Council, who said this would be objected to. I also understand that the post office is due to move onto that parade of shops which could cause more opposition to reducing on road parking at this location.

2. The frontage of the shops, which is private land (the highway comes up to the back edge of the pavement, which is marked) can be used for parking. This involves traffic (as we observed on our visit) cutting across the pavement, in roughly the area the patrol would be working to access and exit this area in front of the shops. This is a perfectly legal manoeuvre, to access private frontage - but along with the issue of the on road parking does cause issues for establishment of a patroller.

If these issues can be resolved, and agreement reached by the community at Bishopthorpe, then please do come back to me.

I would also like to point out that although it appears that the criteria is very strict for the setting of a crossing site, this is because we are considering a 'work site' for a Council Employee formally crossing school children and not just looking for somewhere to 'cross a road' on an ad-hoc basis. CYC have a duty of care to provide a safe working environment for staff and the community.

As I may have said before, while, currently we do what we can in provision of safe routes to school, we hold no statutory duty to provide any School Crossing facilities at all. The guidance is very clear, that under all circumstances, it is a parental duty to get children to and from school safely.

I am sorry that at this time I can be of no assistance, but do come back to me if agreement can be reached within the community on parking issues at this location.

Yours sincerely,

Trish

Trish Hirst | Road Safety Officer  
t: 01904 551331 | e: [trish.hirst@york.gov.uk](mailto:trish.hirst@york.gov.uk)

City of York Council | Sustainable Transport Service

## Attachment 4a

-----Forwarded Message-----

From: [trish.hirst@york.gov.uk](mailto:trish.hirst@york.gov.uk)  
To: [john.zimmerlight@internet.com](mailto:john.zimmerlight@internet.com)  
Cc: [trish.hirst@york.gov.uk](mailto:trish.hirst@york.gov.uk), [steve.burrell@northyorkshire.gov.uk](mailto:steve.burrell@northyorkshire.gov.uk)  
Sent: Thu, Jul 11, 2013 3:39 PM BST  
Subject: RE: Sim Balk Lane SCP assessment

Dear Alison,

Just a very quick follow up to our visit to look at the potential crossing site at the bottom of Sim Balk Lane.  
My colleague from North Yorkshire Police, Steve Burrell attended with me, and we met representatives from your group.

Both Steve and I spent from 8.15am - 9.00am at site.

As a conclusion - we would not be prepared to consider the site suitable for a patroller to stand on the shop/parade side of the road, unless parking was removed for some distance to ensure adequate sight lines for both traffic and the patroller. We also identified potential issues with traffic crossing the pavement to access the hard standing outside the shops.

I have checked on the system here and can confirm that the council only own the section of road and footpath up to the edging stone which separates the area of footpath from the parking area at the shop frontage. Presumably the parking area belongs to the owner of the shops.

There were also issues with foliage on the Junior School side of the road, which were of concern.

From discussions on the morning, it would appear that the issue of parking (and the removal of it) would be very controversial. This parking would not be removed without consultation, and if at this point there were a high number of objections, from within the community, then the parking would not be removed.

I therefore have no plans to take this forward at the present time.

Should in the future, the parking issues be resolved within the community, we will of course re-consider this decision.

Regards,

Trish

Trish Hirst | Road Safety Officer  
t: 01904 551331 | e: [trish.hirst@york.gov.uk](mailto:trish.hirst@york.gov.uk)

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TOTAL:

Factor +9

Using the table at 2.9.10 of the guidelines we note that a factor of +9 provides a multiplier of 2.358. Applying this multiplier to the figures achieved in the count of 7 January 2013 provides a rating of:

$$2,573,894 \times 2.358 = 6,069,342$$

The figure above provides the crossing point with a rating well in excess of the guideline threshold of 4,000,000 and would thus merit the consideration of the provision of a SCP at the site.

Even if it is possible to argue that not all of the above factors apply to this case, it seems clear that the factor relating to the age of children using the crossing is definitely relevant. This factor on its own provides a rating which justifies the provision of a SCP and we are surprised that this was not even taken into account within your initial assessment.

Please confirm whether you agree with our interpretation of the SCP guidelines and if not, why not. Assuming that you do agree with our contentions please confirm the procedure for progressing this matter further.

We wait to hear from you.

Yours sincerely

Mrs A Rutter



# Attachment 3

Mrs A Rutter  
1 Coggan Way  
Bishopthorpe  
York  
YO23 2QX

18.6.13

Dear Sirs,

Re: School Crossing Patrol on Sim Balk Lane, Bishopthorpe, York

I refer to the above matter.

I am a member of the Bishopthorpe Schools Travel Action Group. We are a group of parents, teachers, and local parish councillors who have taken an active interest in the issue of the safety of school children when travelling to and from school each day.

One of the issues that we have looked at recently is the provision of safe places to cross the busy roads near to each school. We are fortunate enough to already have a School Crossing Patrol (SCP) in place on Appleton Road, near to the junction with Sim Balk Lane. This SCP mainly serves the junior school.

We consider that there is another crossing point which merits consideration by the council for the provision of a SCP. The crossing point in question is on Sim Balk Lane close to the mouth of the junction with Main Street/Appleton Road. A raised hump has been placed on the road surface at this point and this seems to be a favourite place to cross for many parents.

We understand that this crossing point has previously been assessed by the council to see if it meets the tests set out in the SCP national guidelines. We understand that this most recent assessment took place on 7 January 2013 and that the result of the assessment was that the crossing point did not accrue a sufficient rating as to merit further investigation.

We have also considered the SCP national guidelines ourselves and submit that, in this case, there are additional factors to consider.

The rating achieved by the crossing point on the day in question was:

**2,573,894** [(173 PCU)<sup>2</sup> x 86 children].

This rating would place the crossing point within area B of the graph contained within the guidelines. Sites falling within area B merit further investigation under the guidelines. We would like to draw your attention to the adjustment factors contained within part 4 of the guidelines.

We consider that the following factors are relevant in this case:

2.7.1	Carriageway width (measured at approximately 8.8 metres):	Factor +1
2.7.1	Width of footpath on one side of the crossing (approximately 1.8 metres):	Factor +1
2.7.4	Visibility obstructed by parked vehicles (< 12 metres away):	Factor +1
2.7.6	Distance from junction on a minor road (approximately 15.5 metres):	Factor +1
2.7.9	Use of crossing by children up to the age of 11 years:	Factor +5



Parked vehicles obscure pedestrians



Parked vehicles obscure pedestrians



Courier van parked on pavement/double yellow lines

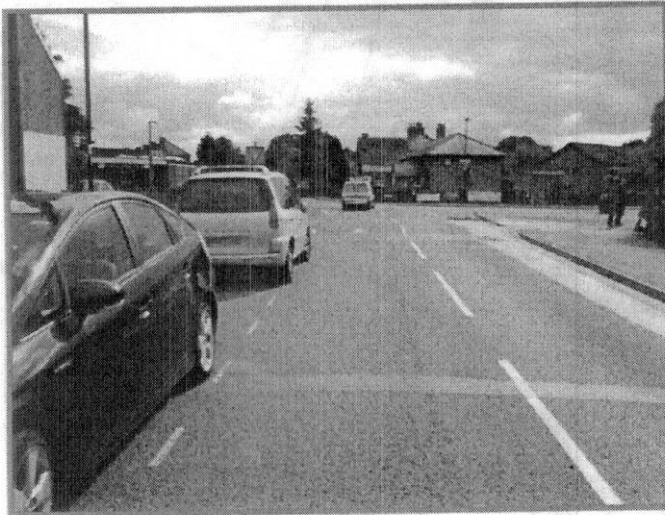


Contractor's van parked on pavement outside Methodist Chapel obscures pedestrians; van also obscures view on opposite side

**Attachment 2: Photos**



View of Sim Balk Lane crossing from Main Street



View of Sim Balk Lane crossing showing restricted drivers' view of crossing caused by parked vehicles



Car and caravan parked on pavement/double yellow lines on crossing

**Attachment 1b: Map**

A 2.7.4. Distance from parked vehicles < 12M.

B 2.7.1. Width of carriageway 8.8M.

C 2.7.1. Width of pavement 1.8M.

D 2.7.6. Distance to junction 15.5M.

↑ Infant school  
Sim Balk Lane

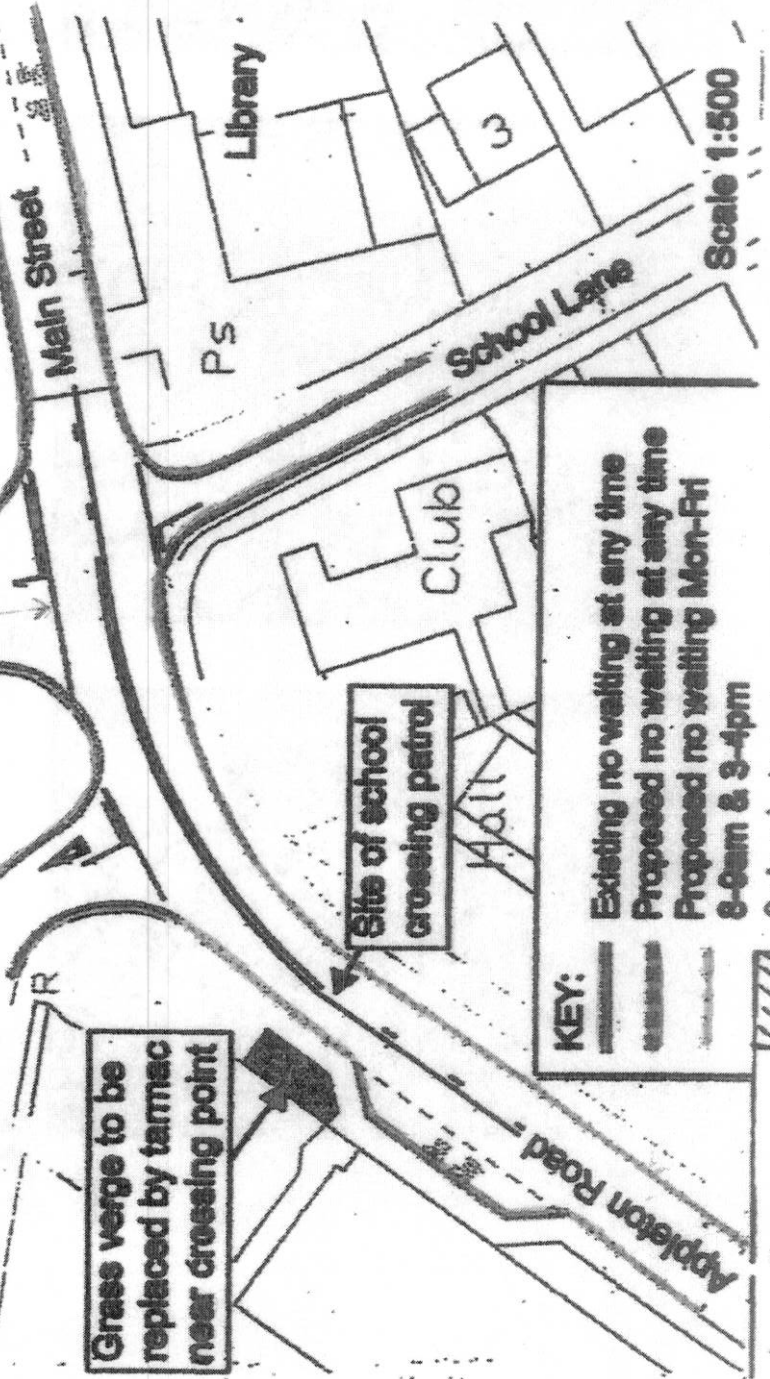
Possible adjustment factors relating to crossing-point on Sim Balk Lane

Methodist Church

Copmanthorpe Lane

Grass verge to be replaced by tarmac near crossing point

Junior school



KEY:

- Existing no waiting at any time
- Proposed no waiting at any time
- Proposed no waiting Mon-Fri 8-9am & 3-4pm
- Raised hump - crossing point

Scale 1:500

If this type of improvement could be carried out, it would have the dual benefit of creating a safe working environment for a SCP and, in addition, make the crossing safer for all pedestrians at other times of day.

We would be very grateful if you could investigate the possibility of implementing our suggested improvement or perhaps suggest some other way to make this crossing safer for everyone.

I am enclosing copies of the correspondence we have had with the Sustainable Transport Service at CYC, for your information.

We are currently canvassing the strength of opinion locally on the issue of the necessity to improve safety at this crossing point, by way of a petition. The results should be available shortly and we will communicate these to you, if appropriate.

Thanking you in anticipation

Alison Rutter

On behalf of the Bishopthorpe Schools Travel Action Group

## Bishophorpe Schools Travel Action Group

Copies of correspondence with the Sustainable Transport Group CYC, relating to the provision of a safe crossing-point on Sim Balk Lane, Bishophorpe, between the two village schools.

1. Results of a traffic count carried out at the site on Monday, Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> 2013 by Jayne Ward concluding that the figures did not justify the provision of an SCP.
2. Review of the above data by Bishophorpe TAG, demonstrating that, by applying the adjustment factors relevant to this site, the numbers generated did justify the provision of a SCP.
3. Letter from Trish Hirst to arrange a reassessment of the site, in terms of the provision of a safe working environment for a Council employee.
- 4 and 5. Letters from Trish Hirst explaining that visibility issues with the site, in particular the presence of the adjacent car parking spaces, precluded the provision of a SCP on staff safety grounds. Other than the removal of parking spaces, no other suggestions for the means to establish a safe crossing place were proffered.
6. Sketch map of the site of the crossing point on Sim Balk Lane.



Alison Rutter

1, Coggan Way  
Bishopthorpe  
York  
YO23 2OX

30.01.2014

Dear Mr. Mercer,

I spoke to you recently about the issue of the provision of a safe crossing-point on Sim Balk Lane, Bishopthorpe, between the two village schools, and enquired about the possibility of having a curb build-out at the crossing point to aid visibility down the road, past the line of parked cars outside the village shops.

You suggested that I get in touch with Tony Clarke, Head of Transport, CYC, on this issue and copy you into the correspondence. I enclose a copy of my letter and the correspondence which the Bishopthorpe Schools Travel Action Group have had with Louise Ward's team.

The Action Group are very anxious to resolve the safe-crossing issue before there is a serious accident at this site. Hopefully, we will be able to find a solution in the not-too-distant future.

Yours sincerely

Alison Rutter

On behalf of the Bishopthorpe Schools Travel Action Group.

**Attachment 5a: Example of Kerb Build-Out**



**Kerb build-out outside Dringhouses Infant School**





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1, Coggan Way  
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York  
YO23 2QX

City & Environmental Services

Address  
West Offices  
Station Rise  
York  
YO1 6GA  
11<sup>th</sup> March 2014

Dear Ms Rutter

**Sim Balk Lane**

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Bishophorpe Schools Action Group requesting that we investigate the possibility of implementing your suggested improvements at the raised speed table near to the shops on SimBalk Lane.

No doubt you are aware that the speed table is a speed reduction measure and as such speed tables do not necessarily provide a safe place to cross. However these structures are often popular with pedestrians as crossing points as they are level with pavements and make access easier for those with buggies etc.

We can certainly put into next year's budget for safe routes to school a feasibility study to investigate whether a crossing at this point would be possible and provide a safe place to cross. A brief, initial desk top study highlighted several issues of conflict that may impact on the safety of a crossing point here. It suggests that if a crossing were to be placed here, the speed table would need to be removed to make way for the build out and a speed table installed a little further north where the car parking currently is. The table may need to be narrower than it is now thus increasing it's severity, which as the route is a main access route for emergency vehicles and buses is likely to be objected to by these services. Removal of the speed table may also potentially increase traffic speeds of vehicles entering the Sim Balk Lane from Appleton Road. Even though a build out would be wide enough to see past parked vehicles it is thought even this would have limited visibility and it is possible that at least some of the parking near to the build out would need to be removed. There is also concern that as any potential build out is around 15 m (Bishophorpe TAG measurements) from a busy junction and adjacent to the entrance/exit to shops this would place children in a potentially dangerous position for crossing.

As mentioned above, a feasibility study for the scheme can be put forward into the safe routes to school budget for next year although this does not guarantee that the study will find that a safe place to cross can be provided.

Yours sincerely

Tony Clarke  
Head of Transport

News

# Crossing 'danger' anger

by HAYDN LEWIS

Education reporter

COUNCIL bosses have refused to allow a crossing patrol close to a York primary school because it is too dangerous for a lollipop person. Martin Waller, of Lang Road, Bishopthorpe, a parent governor at Bishopthorpe Infant School, has criticised City of York Council over the decision.

Mr Waller, who has two daughters, Chloe, six, at the infants, and Jessica, eight, at nearby Archbishop of York CE Juniors, and is on a travel committee mainly consisting of parents who have children at both schools, said the junior school had a crossing patrol but the infant school also needed one in Sim Balk Lane.

The council said because the point in the road the group had chosen was on a bend and there were overhanging trees, there were not clear sight lines for a crossing warden, making it the wrong place for a crossing.

Mr Waller said: "No alternative

proposals to tackle the problem have been made by the council.

"The site remains a very dangerous place to cross and is, in my view, an accident waiting to happen, that's why it needs to be manned.

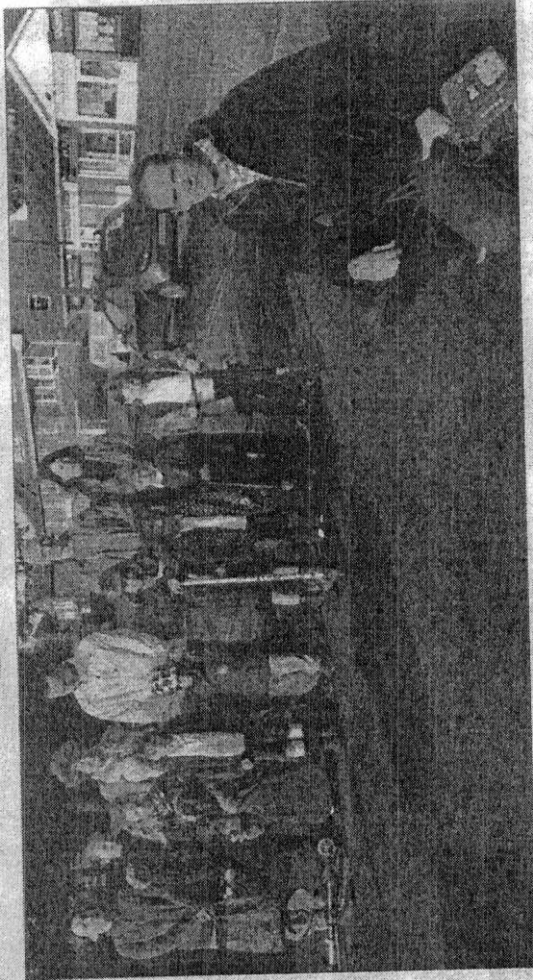
"There have been several near misses and parents at both schools are concerned about it.

"I am disappointed because when the council sent us a letter saying it was too dangerous for somebody to work there, parents just looked at it with disbelief.

"If it's too dangerous for an adult then what do they think it's going to be like for children with their parents trying to cross?"

"I'm no highways expert, but it shouldn't be down to members of the public to resolve something like this. That is surely what the council is for.

A council spokeswoman said the community of Bishopthorpe would need to put forward their proposals for future crossing points to the parish council for consideration, saying it was not up to York council or North Yorkshire Police.



**LOLLIPOP ROW:** Martin Waller with parents and children who are campaigning for a second school patrol crossing at Sim Balk Lane in Bishopthorpe

Picture: Nigel Holland

Richard Wood, assistant director of city and environmental services at the council, said: "This may be a favourite place for parents to cross, but it's not safe to have a patroller working at this location due to sight line issues on both sides of the road. A patroller spends a large proportion of their time at the side of and in the road and must be highly visible to drivers, who need to be able to anticipate and react

in good time to any indication made by a patroller. It would be irresponsible for the authority to not only put our patroller at risk, but children wishing to cross the road with the patroller at risk too."

## Personal announcements

To place an announcement phone 01904 676767



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## The road too risky for lollipop patrol

IF anywhere needs a lollipop patrol, then it's a dangerous road outside a school. But parents are furious after a council refused to provide one for elf 'n' safety reasons.

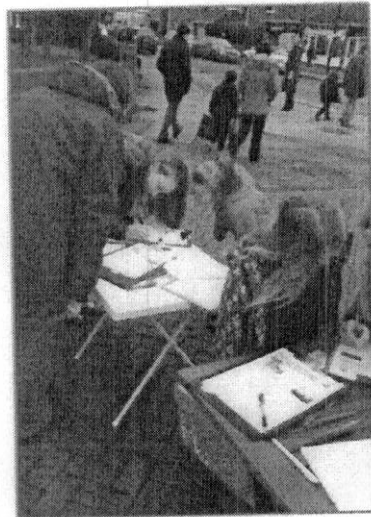
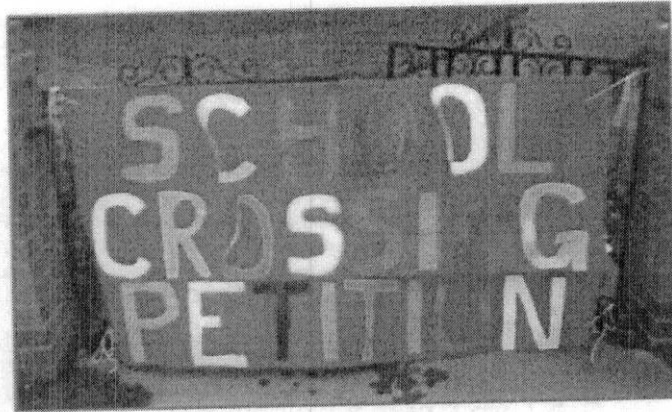
City of York Council said the road outside the primary school in the small village of Bishopthorpe breached its workplace safety rules, as a poor view along the street meant patrollers risked being hit by a car.

However parents have raised a petition, saying: 'If it is unsafe for a school crossing patrol, then surely it is unsafe for children.'

They added the road meets the national criteria for a crossing warden. York Council said it would be 'irresponsible' to put a worker at risk and that it is ultimately up to parents to get their children to school safely.

Full story online at [www.dailymail.co.uk](http://www.dailymail.co.uk)

**Attachment 8: Petition**





# ***Petition to improve safety at Sim Balk Lane crossing***



**"Better road safety for Bishophorpe schoolchildren"**



The schools' Travel Action Group has been actively campaigning for an improvement to the crossing point on Sim Balk Lane for nearly two years.

In July 2013, the City of York Council concluded that although the site satisfied the national criteria for a School Crossing Patrol (in terms of traffic volume/pedestrian footfall), it would be an unsafe environment for a Patroller due to poor visibility. No alternative proposals to improve safety have been made.

**"We the undersigned request that the Council improves safety at the crossing point on Sim Balk Lane (speed table opposite Methodist Church) in order to establish a safe walking route between the Infant and Junior Schools and a safe crossing point for the local community."**

