

Report of the Director of City and Environmental Services

Petition – “Safer Road Crossing for Bishopthorpe Road”

Summary

1. This report presents a petition signed by around 350 people requesting safer road crossing facilities for Bishopthorpe Road at its junction with Campleshon Road. The Executive Member is asked to consider the petition and approve the continuation of work on a scheme already included in the School Safety Engineering Programme 2016/17 for this location.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that the Executive Member approves Option (i):
 - For Officers to continue developing proposals as part of this year’s School Safety programme with a view to implementing an appropriate scheme this financial year.

Reason: To improve pedestrian crossing facilities on Bishopthorpe Road at its junction with Campleshon Road.

Background

3. A pedestrian refuge has been in place on Bishopthorpe Road just north of the Campleshon Road junction since at least 2002. This is part of a well used route to school for many local residents, and its location is shown on **Annex A**.

4. In April 2015 a site meeting was held with the Head of Knavesmire Primary School during which several road safety issues were discussed, one of which was difficulties experienced by parents and children crossing Bishopthorpe Road near the junction with Campleshon Road. The Head was advised that these issues would be investigated and a feasibility study for Knavesmire Primary School was included in the School Safety block of the Transport Capital Programme 2015/16. Following preliminary investigations, it was considered that improvements could be made to benefit pedestrians, and consequently proposals are currently being developed using School Safety funding from the Transport Capital Programme 2016/17.
5. In January 2016 correspondence was entered into with a local resident, Ward Councillors and the area's MP regarding this issue. An article was also published in the York Press in February 2016.
6. A petition with around 350 signatures requesting a safer road crossing, and specifically a pelican crossing, on Bishopthorpe Road was received by the Council on 12 May 2016. The front page is shown as **Annex B**.

Traffic Survey and Accident Data

7. North Yorkshire Police records show one injury accident in the vicinity of this junction in the three years 2013 to 2015. A northbound cyclist on Bishopthorpe Road was hit by a vehicle turning left into Campleshon Road thereby sustaining serious injuries. There are no recorded injury accidents involving pedestrians in the last fifteen years.
8. A 20mph speed limit was introduced on Bishopthorpe Road in September 2012 starting just south of the Campleshon Road junction. The most recent vehicle speed surveys were taken in July 2015 between Balmoral Terrace and Rectory Gardens (about 200 metres north of the refuge). Mean speeds were found to be 25mph in both directions and 85th percentile speeds 29mph southbound and 30mph northbound.
9. A pedestrian crossing survey in March 2016 recorded 292 pedestrian crossing movements between 7am and 7pm. The busiest hours were 8 to 9am (79 pedestrians of which 30 were children under 11 years old) and 3 to 4pm (72 pedestrians of which 30 were children under 11 years

old) which concurs with school start and finish times. A total of 19 pedestrian movements were undertaken by someone elderly or with a mobility issue. 23 pedestrians crossed to the north of the site and 32 to the south of the site. The same survey recorded 5852 vehicles in this 12 hour period.

10. The average waiting time to cross the road on that day was found to be 6 seconds between 8 and 9am and 4 seconds between 3 and 4pm.

Feasibility Study Findings

11. The petition specifically requests a pelican crossing, however there are several safety factors that suggests a pelican crossing would not be appropriate:

- There are relatively low numbers of pedestrians (particularly off-peak). Pedestrians have a tendency to take less care at controlled crossings, which becomes increasingly risky when combined with drivers becoming accustomed to the signals remaining at green. There are also similar issues for zebra crossings which are little used at quieter times of the day.
- The average waiting time to cross is not lengthy. There is typically a delay from a pedestrian pushing the button to the green man to allow time for safe braking. If the road is believed to be clear pedestrians will typically cross straight away, when any approaching vehicles may not be expecting to stop or be speeding up as the lights change.
- There is a good pedestrian safety record. National research has found that sites with no or low accident numbers often have an increase in accidents following the implementation of a crossing.

12. There are also practical reasons that would make a pelican crossing difficult to implement, which are:

- The proximity to the Campleshon Road junction. National guidance recommends a minimum distance of 20 metres between a side road and a signalised crossing to give drivers an adequate opportunity to appreciate the existence of a crossing and brake safely. A complete signalisation of the junction (estimated cost of at least £100,000) or installing crossing over 20 metres from the junction would be required to ensure that this

could be overcome. Guidance on siting zebra crossings close to junctions is more relaxed but the following issues still apply.

- It is considered that a crossing 20 metres north of the junction would not be acceptable to residents. They have no off-street parking and as a consequence park on-street. To meet visibility requirements 25 metres of parking would not be permitted on both sides of the crossing.
- This parking issue does not exist south of the junction but it is further away from the pedestrian desire line and as a consequence pedestrians are unlikely to walk this far to cross when waiting a few seconds would allow them to cross at a more convenient location. Drivers typically focus on the crossing rather than on its approaches, so there is an increased risk of conflict in this manoeuvre.

13. However, it is considered that there are improvements that could be made which would be appropriate to the numbers crossing, practical to the location and safer. At the time of writing, the proposals have not been finalised, but work is focussing on:

- Widening the refuge to increase the distance between pedestrians waiting to cross and passing traffic;
- Reviewing parking restrictions around the junction;
- Tightening up the radius of the Campleshon Road junction to reduce the crossing distance of the west half of Bishopthorpe Road, and;
- Possibly traffic calming the approaches to the refuge.

These measures would make use of the refuge safer, improve visibility and bring better compliance with the 20mph speed limit.

Consultation

14. Consultation with the Emergency Services, Knavesmire Primary School, road user groups, relevant Councillors and the local community will be carried out when a scheme design is developed. The outcome of this consultation will be reported back to the September Decision Session at the earliest.

Options

15. The available options are:

- Option (i) – Continue with developing proposals as part of this year's School Safety programme with a view to implementing a scheme this financial year to provide a safer means of crossing.
- Option (ii) – Do nothing, and reallocate the funding to other programmes of work.

Analysis

16. Option (i) Although accident records and traffic surveys do not indicate a significant problem, improvements to the crossing facilities at this location would address the concerns of residents and be beneficial for pedestrians. There also appears to be strong public support for improvements. This option is therefore recommended.

17. Option (ii) Failure to address the concerns raised in the petition would result in pedestrians continuing to feel at risk, and in the light of strong public opinion, taking no action could be considered inappropriate.

Council Plan

18. The potential implications for the priorities in the Council Plan are:

- **A Council That Listens To Residents**

Concerns for safety at this location have generated a large amount of correspondence, a petition and media interest. Investigating these concerns with a view to improving pedestrian facilities demonstrates that the Council is listening to residents.

Implications

19. Financial – The current allocation for School Safety in the 2016/17 Transport Capital Programme is £100k of which £10k is shown for a scheme at this location. This is however based on very early investigatory work and is likely to rise.

- 20. Human Resources - None.
- 21. Equalities - None.
- 22. Legal – None.
- 23. Crime and Disorder – None.
- 24. Information Technology (*IT*) - None
- 25. Property - None.

Risk Management

- 26. In compliance with the Council’s risk management strategy, the following risks associated with the recommendations in this report have been identified and described in the following points, and set out in the table below:
- 27. Authority reputation – this risk is in connection with public perception of the Council if work is not undertaken in the light of a campaign for action. This risk has been given a score of 10.

Risk Category	Impact	Likelihood	Score
Organisation/ Reputation	Minor	Probable	10

- 28. This risk score, falls into the 6-10 category and means the risk has been assessed as being “Low”. This level of risk requires regular monitoring.

Contact Details

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Neil Ferris, Director of City and Environmental Services

Report
Approved



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Specialist Implication Officer(s)

There are no specialist implications.

Wards Affected: Micklegate

For further information please contact the author of the report.

Annexes

Annex A: Location plan

Annex B: Copy of front page of the petition