

Report to Assistant Director (Highways, Transport and Planning)

August 2022

Proposed Implementation of Pedestrian Crossing with Cycle Facilities and Speed Limit reduction

Report by Project Manager, Highway Improvements

Electoral division: Shoreham South

Summary

As part of West Sussex County Council's Phase 2 Active Travel Fund (ATF) submission to the Department for Transport (DfT), a proposal was put forth to implement a permanent crossing solution, with cycling improvements, on the A283 Steyning Road near St Nicholas Lane, Shoreham-by-Sea.

The proposals will offer a long-term solution improving the safety for pedestrians and cyclist crossing this highly trafficked route to gain access to the shared use footway/cycleway known as the Downs Link (National Cycle Network, Route 223).

Following technical investigations, a proposed design was drafted ([Appendix A PDF, 2MB](#)) and sent for formal Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) consultation in May/June 2022. The proposal was supported by Councillor Kevin Boram, Area Manager Adam Bazley and Sussex Police who were all consulted and expressed no concerns or objections to the proposal.

Recommendations

That the Assistant Director (Highways, Transport and Planning), having considered the objections, approves the proposals for a signal-controlled toucan crossing and the proposed speed limit reduction as advertised in May/June 2022, under reference (ADR-9012-MM), with a view of commencing construction 27 September 2022 for an approximate duration of 8 weeks.

Proposal

1 Background and context

- 1.1 The implementation of a crossing at this location has long been long desired. The existing ramped access on the western side provides a key connection onto the NCN223 Downs Link shared use route providing commuting and leisure opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists. The proximity of the ramped access also links to the Shoreham toll bridge which connects pedestrian west of the river to Shoreham.

- 1.2 Previous assessments of this site's suitability for a crossing had concluded difficulties in overcoming visibility issues due to the location of the desire line and horizontal alignment of the carriageway. With primary concerns highlighting the reduced forward visibility. With advances in traffic signals technology and the widening of the scope of the project, a proposal has been delivered which satisfies these requirements.

2 Proposal details

- 2.1 The proposal as detailed in [Appendix B](#) (PDF, 82KB) is to provide a signal-controlled crossing (toucan) primarily for pedestrians and cyclists to access the Downs Link path along the riverbank.
- 2.2 The crossing will be 3.2m wide and will incorporate dropped kerbs and tactile paving. There will be four poles each with a pushbutton which incorporates rotating tactile cones and beepers that will activate during the hours of 7am to 10pm daily. The crossing equipment includes sensors to prevent traffic being stopped when a pedestrian has moved away and to vary the operating time of the crossing depending on how quickly pedestrians are able to cross. The two traffic signal poles on the western side (River Side) will be 6m in height to allow signals heads to be placed above the level of Northbound traffic ensuring adequate forward visibility is achieved.
- 2.3 The proposal includes provision to install a 2.5m wide, two-way ramped cycle lane access to guide cyclists away from the crossing on the eastern side and along St Nicholas Lane. Pedestrians will retain access on the footway along the frontage of the Red Lion Public House. The existing lowered kerb access adjacent to the flint wall shall be narrowed to encourage cyclist to use the new cycle lane access. The position of the ramp has been located to provide adequate deflection to slow cyclists within the shared use space and prevent fast approaching cyclist laterally onto the back of the crossing. The location of the ramp will also benefit the visibility for cyclists re-joining the carriageway, placing them more central to the carriageway providing greater forward visibility when observing for approaching traffic.
- 2.4 The existing footways on both sides of the carriageway shall be widened, removing sections of grass verge and some vegetation to ensure there is adequate space for the introduction of pedestrians and cyclist sharing the space in proximity to the crossing.
- 2.5 During construction, the opportunity to improve the infrastructure at the bus shelter is also being undertaken, with the hard standing space increased and a new electronic real time passenger information board being installed to enhance user experience.
- 2.6 A service area will be added for the use of maintenance vehicles maintaining the traffic signals, as well as supporting access for environment agency and public rights of way vehicles.
- 2.7 The speed limit on the A283 from the A27 interchange roundabout and the existing 30mph speed limit which starts in proximity to St Nicholas Church, shall be lowered from National Speed Limit to 50mph to support the installation of the crossing and help reduce approaching traffic speeds into the residential 30mph limit.

3 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)

- 3.1 The placement of the ramped access from the Downs Link and the known location of the desire line makes the implementation of any other variation of crossing in this location unsuitable. Only with the implementation of a signal-controlled crossing can the additional visibility be gained by installing traffic signal heads at 6m from ground level to mitigate the know issues for visibility in this location.
- 3.2 During the informal public consultation held in October 2021 and through liaison with key stakeholders, it was identified that there is significant local desire and support in lowering the aforementioned speed limit from the A27 interchange roundabout to the existing 30mph. Requests for various speed limits the County Council has received, from an extension of the 30mph limit through to a 50mph limit, with the majority of the correspondence requesting a 40mph limit. Unfortunately, under the current County Council speed limit policy, confirmed by the data collected during the design stage, only the introduction of a 50mph limit at this time will meet the criterion of the policy. Post speed limit reduction surveys will be undertaken at which point average speeds can be reviewed. Future applications may result in the 50mph limit being able to be reduced to 40mph. A 30mph limit would not meet the criterion based on the existing infrastructure.

4 Consultation, engagement, and advice

- 4.1 In October 2021 an informal public consultation was held, in which the initial feasibility design was shared seeking comments from key stakeholders and members of the public.
- 4.2 A formal consultation period was held between 12 May 2022 and 9 June 2022. This was advertised by site notices, advertisement on the West Sussex Traffic Regulation Order [webpages](#) and hand delivered letters to all residents in the immediate frontage area of the proposed crossing site.
- 4.3 Local County Councillor, Kevin Boram was consulted and supported the proposals.
- 4.4 Sussex Police were consulted on the design and raised no objections to the proposals.
- 4.5 Local Area Highways Manager, Adam Bazely was also contacted and expressed no concerns.
- 4.6 No formal objections were received in principle to installing the signal-controlled crossing. Five formal objections were received from members of the public to the proposed speed limit reduction, as well as twelve additional comments received all in support of the crossing. Some comments wishing for a lower speed limit but not objecting to the proposals put forward. All objections and additional comments of support are summarised, with related officer comments, in [Appendix B](#) (PDF, 82KB).

5 Finance

- 5.1 The proposed improvement is in the £34.460m Highways and Transport Delivery Programme 2022/23 approved in February 2022. Of which £237,000.00 of Active Travel Funding secured through the council's successful

ATF2 bid to the Department for Transport has been identified to facilitate the construction of this project.

- 5.2 The Highways Maintenance Revenue budget for 2022/23 is £12.855m. An annual revenue commitment of circa £1,500 will need to be met within the allocation of the existing budget. This commitment is likely to increase revenue pressure within the asset team’s existing budget allocation. Costings associated for the maintenance of a signal-controlled crossing include, routine maintenance, energy costs and annual inspections.
- 5.3 Once constructed, the pedestrian crossing will be adopted into the NEC3 Traffic Signals Term Maintenance Contract.
- 5.4 The estimated service life of a signalised pedestrian crossing is approximately 20-25 years, after which capital investment to refurbish the site would be required, which currently is estimated around £50,000.

6 Risk implications and mitigations

Risk	Mitigating Action (in place or planned)
Business and Community dissatisfaction	<p>If WSCC were to cancel the proposal, some members of the community and representatives from the local area would be disappointed that the opportunity to improve safety in this area had not been addressed.</p> <p>In mitigation, it may well be possible to implement a lower speed limit at a later stage thereby addressing the majority of the objections should the expected average speed reduction be realised.</p> <p>Key stakeholders are in support of the proposals progressing.</p>
Political risk to the authority opening up to public criticism, implicated by DfT and wider community objections to the scheme not progressing	<p>If WSCC were to cancel the proposed scheme, it is likely to result in significant objection from the DfT, and the wider community.</p> <p>The resulting outcome will be that vulnerable pedestrians including school children will be required to continue crossing this major road without a controlled facility to do so. To mitigate, it is recommended the scheme is progressed to ensure the most vulnerable and highest priority class of users has improved facilities.</p>

Risk	Mitigating Action (in place or planned)
Significant risk to future funding applications	<p>These proposals are part of WSCC's ATF2 programme reportable to the DfT and utilising ATF grant monies to facilitate the construction.</p> <p>Failure to deliver schemes reportable to the DfT may result in difficulties securing future ATF funding. Which will impede widespread investment across the county. To mitigate, it is recommended that the proposal is progressed as planned.</p>

7 Policy alignment and compliance

- 7.1 Legal Implications - Throughout the course of this project, from design, contract tendering and public consultation all decisions are being made in accordance with any guidance and legal requirements to ensure compliance.
- 7.2 Equality – During the preparation of this proposal, no implications with the County Council's Public Sector Equality Duty set out by the Equalities Act have been identified.
- 7.3 Climate Change – The crossing will be of benefit to people accessing local shops, amenities, places of work and will provide a strategic link to the NCN223 route. The proposals will further enhance the provision and safety in the area for pedestrians and cyclists and will hope to promote and encourage modal shift to more sustainable methods of travel. When operational, the crossing will cause vehicles to be stationary while pedestrians cross, but emissions associated with this are likely to be minimal and any disbenefit outweighed by providing a useful facility that encourages walking and cycling. The crossing equipment includes sensors to prevent traffic being stopped when a pedestrian has moved away and to vary the operating time of the crossing depending on how quickly pedestrians are able to cross. This will prevent cars being held for longer than necessary. The traffic signals run at extra low voltage to minimise the power required to operate the crossing and dimming of the aspects along with traffic signals hoods help to in keep with national policies promoting darker skies.
- 7.4 Crime and Disorder – Sussex Police raised no concerns during consultation.
- 7.5 Public Health –the installation of the toucan crossing will encourage people to walk and cycle and provide a strategic link to the NCN223 route across the A283.

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Appendices:

[Appendix A – Scheme Overview Plans](#) (PDF, 2MB)

[Appendix B –Summary of Comments & Objections](#) (PDF, 82KB)

Background Papers: None