

FEBRUARY 2013		ITEM
Delegated Decision Report		
PUFFIN CROSSING- SOUTH ROAD , SOUTH OCKENDON		
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Andrew Smith – Regeneration, Highways & Transportation		
Wards and communities affected: Belhus & Ockendon	Key Decision: No	
Accountable Head of Service: Andrew Millard – Head of Planning and Transportation		
Accountable Director: David Bull, Director of Planning and Transportation		
This report is Public		
Purpose of Report: To consider an objection to a proposal to implement a Puffin crossing on South Road, South Ockendon.		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An objection was received by TfL (Transport for London) to a proposal to implement a Puffin crossing at South Road, South Ockendon.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1.1 It is recommended that the objection is over-ruled and the Puffin crossing is implemented on South Road, South Ockendon near to its junction with Oaklands Drive.
- 1.2 It is further recommended that the objector is notified accordingly.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 2.1 As part of the 2012/2013 Integrated Transport Programme, funding has been made available via the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) to implement a Puffin crossing in South Road, South Ockendon at a location approximately 30 metres North of its junction with Oaklands Drive, following requests from residents and Ward Members.
- 2.2 The Public Notice advertising the Council's intention to implement a Puffin Crossing was advertised on 26/11/2012 and placed on site. During the 21 day statutory consultation period, one objection was received.

- 2.3 The objection was from TfL (Transport for London). The objection was raised on the grounds that it is against TfL policy to provide a bus stop on the approach side to pedestrian crossing, for reasons of safety. The safety concern relates to the potential for pedestrians to be masked by a stationary bus, serving the existing bus stop, and vehicles hitting pedestrians on the crossing as they overtake the bus. The Road Safety Audit also raised concerns with this issue when a Zebra crossing was proposed in this location. The Puffin crossing was recommended by the Auditors to resolve this issue and the distance between the bus stop cage and the crossing has been increased to approximately 20 metres (approximately 4 vehicle lengths). The signal heads would be provided on both sides of the road, and thus vehicles would be required to stop by a red light even in the event that waiting pedestrians are masked temporarily by a stationary bus serving the existing bus stop, thereby resolving the concern raised in the objection.
- 2.4 Two locations for the crossing were investigated, but each had site-specific issues that would prevent the implementation of such a facility. One of the locations was to the south of Oaklands Drive, adjacent to the Knowlton Cottages, but the residents wanted the crossing to be relocated towards the garden centre as they didn't want it outside their houses. The other location was immediately south of the Thurrock Garden Centre access, but insufficient highway land is available in the eastern verge to provide the crossing infrastructure within the highway boundary as the land between the highway boundary and the garden centre boundary fencing is owned by the Garden Centre. In locating the crossing in this position, a footway would need to be constructed between this location and the point where the existing footway terminates at the existing bus stop. It was considered that this location would be too far from the existing pedestrian desire line.
- 2.5 The alternative would have been to relocate the existing bus stop and shelter, which is owned by Thurrock Council. However, planning approval would be required and the costs associated with the bus shelter relocation and footway construction are likely to be in the order of £14,000.

3. ISSUES AND/OR OPTIONS:

- 3.1 The current proposal seeks to position the crossing in close proximity to an existing bus stop, located in the eastern footway of South Road to the south of Thurrock Garden Centre. This location is considered most suitable as a pedestrian desire line was identified at this point to access the western footway of South Road following a pedestrian/vehicle volume survey (PV²) carried out in July 2012.
- 3.2 Currently, there is no crossing facility in the immediate area to serve this east to west desire line. However, traffic flows are considerable during busy periods on South Road and existing users are required to seek gaps in traffic which, during busy periods can be quite some time. The proposed Puffin crossing facility would mainly assist bus passengers and pupils accessing the bus stop that live in the area who attend the schools to the south.

- 3.3 Due to restrictions in land availability, the proposed position is the only location where the crossing can be installed. This signalised crossing is proposed following comments received from the Road Safety Auditors to a previous proposal for a Zebra crossing to be installed. The presence of the two signal heads would ensure that a signal head light aspect would be visible to approaching motorists when a bus is stationary at the bus stop.
- 3.4 One personal injury accident occurred at the location of the proposed crossing between 01/01/2008 and 31/12/2012. However, this accident did not involve a pedestrian.
- 3.5 The Puffin crossing scheme was subjected to a further Safety Audit in February 2013 due to some minor design changes to the bus stop following the concerns raised by TfL. The Auditors raised no safety comments towards the scheme or operation of the crossing in regard to the bus stop. The Police have also provided their support for the crossing on the basis that the scheme passed a satisfactory Road Safety Audit which, it now has.
- 3.6 The cost of implementing the Puffin crossing would be in the order of approximately £85,000. There are sufficient funds available within the Integrated Transport Programme LSTF allocation (E3003 9881) to fund these works.

4. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 4.1 Ward Members were consulted on the content of this report between 21st February 2013 and 28th February 2013. Cllr L Carr commented that the residents have wanted a crossing here for some time. The elderly would benefit and also some users of the buses travelling to and from schools. Aside from those commuting for business and leisure. Cllr B. Johnson and Cllr A J. Smith (Portfolio Holder) supports the recommendations.

5. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 5.1 These actions accord with the Council priorities to create a safer environment

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial

Implications verified by: Mark Terry
Telephone and email: 01375 652150 mterry@thurrock.gov.uk

There are funds within the Integrated Transport Programme allocation (E3003 9881) to fund these works.

6.2 **Legal**

Implications verified by: **Alison Stuart**
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alison.stuart@bdtlegal.org.uk

Pedestrian crossing facilities are provided under powers contained in Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, subject to Regulations made by the Secretary of State.

Before establishing, altering or removing a crossing a local traffic authority shall consult the chief officer of police about their proposal to do so; shall give public notice of that proposal; and shall inform the Secretary of State in writing.

It shall be the duty of a local traffic authority to execute any works (including the placing, erection, maintenance, alteration and removal of marks and traffic signs) required in connection with the establishment, alteration or removal of crossings in accordance with regulations having effect under section 25 of this Act, or in connection with the indication of crossings in accordance with such regulations.

The statutory notice of intention to implement a Puffin crossing was advertised on 26th November 2012 and the statutory consultation period has been followed. The objections raised by TfL were not as a statutory consultee and their objections have been considered and addressed by the Auditors. There are no other legal implications to consider.

6.3 **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: Samson DeAlyn
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sdealyn@thurrock.gov.uk

The Council has a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality of opportunity in the provision of services. A Puffin crossing would enable younger people, older people and disabled people to access the garden centre and the bus stop with greater ease, promoting accessibility for all to local services and infrastructure. The Council propose to install a Puffin crossing for reasons of safety, to increase pedestrian control and enable greater accessibility for visually impaired people.

6.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

None.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The request for the Puffin crossing to be implemented on South Road was received from residents and ward members.
- 7.2 The Puffin crossing will satisfy an identified desire line and this is the only suitable location for the reasons given in paragraphs 2.4 and 3.2.
- 7.3 It is therefore recommended that further funds be identified to provide a Puffin Crossing in replacement of the Puffin crossing.

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT:

- Email of objection

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

- None

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