

Regulatory Committee

Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	6 December 2018
Officer	Matthew Piles, Service Director – Environment, Infrastructure and Economy
Subject of Report	Proposed Puffin Crossing, Broad Street, Lyme Regis
Executive Summary	<p>The A3052, Broad Street, is the main road and high street through Lyme Regis.</p> <p>The proposed Puffin crossing was requested and supported by the Town Council following a local campaign to install a safe crossing point, particularly for less able pedestrians.</p> <p>Following advertisement of a Public Notice in July 2018, with the intention to install a Puffin crossing, 57 representations were received. This report considers the representations and whether the proposed Puffin crossing should be implemented as advertised.</p>
Impact Assessment:	<p>Equalities Impact Assessment:</p> <p>An Equalities Impact Assessment concluded that there will be neutral impact on any sector of the community on the grounds of gender, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, sex, married or civil partnerships or other socially excluded groups.</p> <p>It was, however, unclear how the proposal would impact on the sectors of age, disability and pregnancy and maternity. It is considered that whilst a Puffin crossing would provide benefits for these sectors it would be in part balanced by the loss of on-street parking and ease of access to the shops.</p>
	Use of Evidence:

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	<p>Pedestrian and traffic surveys which shows the Puffin crossing meets Dorset County Council's policy.</p> <p>Budget:</p> <p>Currently £7,500.00 to cover the design and consultation stage phase. The design budget is allocated from the Local Transport Plan for 2018/19 and there is currently no budget allocation for 2019/20 for the construction pending the outcome of the Cabinet resolution. The total cost of the scheme is estimated at £82,500.00</p> <p>Risk Assessment:</p> <p>The current risks faced by the authority at this location in terms of safety are low, due to the generally low vehicle speeds. If a crossing is not provided, there is a potential for complaint from less physically able people that their needs are not catered for.</p> <p>If a crossing is provided, the residual safety risks are likely to be similar as a high proportion of people wishing to cross the road are likely to do so at points away from the crossing. The risks in terms of reputational damage from the loss of on-street parking and its effects of the local businesses are difficult to quantify but there may be some medium-term adverse impact on public memory.</p> <p>Overall the level of risk has been identified as:</p> <p>Current Risk: LOW Residual Risk LOW</p> <p>Other implications:</p> <p>None</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That having considered the representations received, that Cabinet be recommended not to support the provision of a Puffin Crossing as advertised due to the loss of on-street parking which would increase air pollution and could adversely affect businesses.</p>
<p>Reason for Recommendation</p>	<p>It is considered that the risk of potential impacts on local businesses, from the loss of parking and loading provision, outweigh the benefits of providing a crossing.</p>
<p>Appendices</p>	<p>Appendix 1 - Location Plan Appendix 2 - Scheme Plan Appendix 3 – Summary of Public Notice Responses</p>

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Background Papers	Primary consultation responses from the District and Town Councils, Dorset Police, the local County Councillor and the public consultation responses are held on file in the Environment and the Economy Directorate.
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1. Background

- 1.1 Lyme Regis is a small seaside town and a popular holiday destination. The town itself is served by the A3052 which is effectively a spur off the A35 Trunk Road, 2 miles to the north, serving the coastal communities between Lyme Regis and Exeter to the west.
- 1.2 The A3052, Broad Street, is the only principal route through the town centre. This being the case it supports the vast majority of the traffic in, around, and through the town. It is also the main shopping street and a short distance from the sea, beaches, harbour and other attractions.
- 1.3 People tend to cross the road at will using convenient points but are constrained somewhat by the high pavements in places. The traffic is slow moving, at around 20mph, which does mean that crossing the road is not generally arduous. There are no signalised pedestrian crossing facilities in the town including at the signals at the junction of Bridge Street and Coombe Street.
- 1.4 There have been 6 personal injury collisions in Broad Street, in the latest 5 year period up to June 2018, between Cobb Gate Car Park and its junction with Silver Street, of which 5 were recorded as slight and one as serious. Two of the collisions involved young children on foot, including the one serious collision, but the road layout and lack of a crossing were not cited as causation factors, in common with the other collisions.
- 1.5 A signal controlled Puffin crossing point in Broad Street was requested by Lyme Regis Town Council in 2016. Alternatives to a formal Puffin crossing were considered as part of the design process but the Puffin option was considered, in principle, the most appropriate for the context. The proposed crossing meets with council policy and has been prioritised in the Local Transport Plan as it meets the criteria for funding.
- 1.6 Officers carried out an assessment of suitable locations for a crossing and concluded the most practical location was to site it in the environs of the Pug and Puffin shop (No. 20) Broad Street.
- 1.7 Designs were progressed and drawings were sent to the Town Council for approval, in particular because the design would entail the removal of between 7 to 8 (1hr - No return) on-street parking bays. This was necessary to accommodate the footprint of the crossing and the Zig-Zag markings either side of the crossing which is a legal requirement to keep sight lights clear of parked vehicles.

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- 1.8 The council's Town Management and Highways Committee considered the Puffin crossing on 8 October 2017 and following a recommendation from this committee on 1 November 2017 the Full Council resolved:

'to support in principle a puffin crossing in Broad Street but to ask Dorset County Council's highways' department if the crossing could be installed elsewhere in Broad Street, possibly higher up the street near the post office, with an additional request that the bus stop outside Co-op is also moved up Broad Street near the junction with Silver Street to accommodate the puffin crossing.'

- 1.9 DCC responded that following further consideration of the potential position of the crossing the proposed site was the only practical location. This was due to the presence of vehicular accesses to private properties and car parks and a disabled bay outside the chemist. It was noted that the bus stop [and shelter] were already situated at the junction with Silver Street.

- 1.10 However officers suggested a possible concession in that the lengths of Zig-Zag markings on the downside (north eastern side) could be relaxed thus reducing the loss of parking to between 4 and 5 parking spaces (from 7 to 8 originally).

- 1.11 The puffin crossing with suggested concession was further considered at the Town Councils' Full Council on 14 February 2018 and members supported the scheme, resolving to:

'..support Dorset County Council's proposal for a puffin crossing in Broad Street.'

- 1.12 The design was amended to take account of the reduced zig-zags and the Scheme Plan is attached at Appendix 2.

2. Law

- 2.1 Under Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 the Puffin crossing Public Notice was advertised in July 2018. The advert included necessary changes to parking restrictions to accommodate the footprint of the crossing. Copies of the Public Notice were deposited with the Town Council and also sent, together with a scheme plan, to residential properties and businesses in the immediate vicinity of the proposed crossing.

3. Consultation Responses

- 3.1 Under Dorset County Council's procedure, primary consultation was carried out on the proposed scheme with the Local Member, West Dorset District Council, Lyme Regis Town Council and the Police. All primary consultees agreed that the proposals should proceed to Public Notice.

- 3.2 As a consequence of the Public Notice 57 representations were received:

	Number	%
Objections	43	75
Support	9	16

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Comments	5	9
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TOTALS	57	100

3.3 The representations in support were in favour of the proposal as they recognised the:

(a) The need for a safe crossing point to aid, in particular, the young, elderly and disabled users.

3.4 The main points raised in objection were:

(a) The potential for traffic congestion (due to traffic waiting on a red light) and possible tailbacks through the exiting signals at the Coombe Street junction

(b) The loss of on-street parking and the knock-on negative effect on businesses, and;

(c) The perception that it is easy to cross the road at present.

3.5 Officer comment (a)

The road is extremely busy in the summer periods and many out-of-season weekends and the crossing would only be a relatively short break (a maximum of 36 seconds on the pedestrian green phase and a 40 seconds of vehicle red) in what is slow moving traffic.

The signals would have radar detection fitted to the signal poles which would detect when the crossing has cleared and release the traffic early if necessary. The signals to the east, controlling the narrow one-lane section, are approximately 180m distant and calculations show that they would not be influenced by the proposed Puffin crossing, in terms of traffic backing up and causing tailbacks through the junction causing.

3.6 Officer comment (b)

Parking in the town is at a premium and in the summer all the main car parks can be full which puts pressure on residential streets and adds to pollution with vehicles circulating for spaces. It is difficult quantify potential impact on businesses but the proposal will entail loss of short stay parking in a prime location.

3.7 Officer comment (c)

It is true to say that for the majority of able-bodied people, crossing the road in Broad Street is largely not an issue given the low vehicle speeds. From observation there are often enough gaps to cross safely, with drivers giving way on establishing eye contact with pedestrians. However for the less physically able, for example, those who are registered blind, the road can act as a potential barrier to free movement with people potentially relying on the kindness of others to help them cross the road.

3.8 Of the "comments only" representations received four out of the five did not think a crossing was required whilst one thought it would be beneficial.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The proposed Puffin crossing would provide a safe crossing point for all pedestrians and in particular those less physically able in crossing Broad Street.
- 4.2 Having considered the objections submitted as part of the consultation process officers feel that the benefits brought by the crossing are outweighed by the potential disbenefits. These disbenefits are the loss of on-street parking which
- 4.3 It is recommended that the Committee recommend to Cabinet not to support the provision of a Puffin Crossing as advertised due to the strength of objections as outlined in this report.

Mike Harries
Corporate Director for Environment and the Economy
November 2018

Appendix 3 – Summary of Public Notice Responses

Type	Public Notice - Breakdown of Main Points Raised	No. of mentions	Totals	%
Support	Representations:		9	16
	required on safety grounds for young/old/disabled	6		
	support crossing the road is difficult to cross	5		
	supports crossing but in wrong place as it impacts on the parking	1		
Object	Representations:		43	75
	will cause congestion	28		
	loss of car parking spaces/affects on businesses	27		
	easy to cross the road already	17		
	will cause pollution	2		
	displace traffic to residential roads (e.g. Anning Rd)	4		
	negative visual impact on Conservation Area	3		
	loss of parking would impact disabled drivers	2		
	make crossing elsewhere unsafe (drivers focussed on crossing)	3		
	unnecessary cost	4		
	make access to properties difficult (people queuing)	1		
	make deliveries difficult as zig-zags stop loading	1		
	loading vehicles will block crossing	2		
	noise and light pollution from signals	1		
	Introduce 20mph limit instead	1		
	needs parking to unload shopping (has restricted mobility)	1		
Comment	Representations:		5	9
	not required	4		
	will cause congestion	1		
	hinder deliveries	1		
	will cause pollution	1		
	crossing beneficial	1		
	suggesting 20mph limit instead	1		
	TOTAL REPRESENTATIONS		57	100