

Eastern Area Planning Committee

Dorchester Road, Upton – Proposed Zebra
Crossing

Date of Meeting: 4 December 2019
Portfolio Holder: Cllr R Bryan, Highways, Travel and Environment
Local Members: Cllr Brenton, Cllr Pipe & Cllr Starr
Director: John Sellgren, Executive Director of Place

Executive Summary:

The main B3067, Dorchester Road, divides Upton in half which can lead to community severance with pedestrians having difficulty crossing the road safely.

A proposal for a crossing scheme was originally requested by Upton & Lytchett Minster Town Council to improve safety and accessibility and to encourage more walking to local schools. The site was subsequently assessed by way of traffic and pedestrian surveys, which concluded that the location met the crossing criteria and added to the future programme.

The proposal is also supported by the 3 Dorset Councillors for Lytchett and Upton.

The proposed location of the crossing is adjacent to Upton Methodist Church, which houses a pre-school and nursery facility and is on an established walking route to Upton Infant and Junior Schools which are located nearby. The proposed crossing location meets criteria following pedestrian and traffic surveys carried out in the vicinity.

The zebra crossing proposal was formally advertised by way of a Public Notice in February 2018. Three objections were received and therefore a report was considered by the Dorset County Council Regulatory Committee of 12 July 2018. It was recommended that officers review the scheme in light of concerns raised by residents.

Officers have now carried out a project review taking in to account the points raised by residents and at the committee. It also takes in to account the original objections and representations and whether the proposed Zebra crossing should be implemented as advertised.

Equalities Impact Assessment:

An Equalities Impact Assessment for overall scheme was carried out in February 2017. This concluded that there will be no discriminatory or negative consequences

for any sector of the community on the grounds of gender, race or ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation or other socially excluded groups.

Budget:

The Zebra Crossing is estimated to cost £60,000 and is allocated from the Local Transport Plan budget for 2019/20.

Risk Assessment:

Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the Council's approved risk management methodology, it is the officer's opinion that there are no High risks that need to be reported. The level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: MEDIUM
Residual Risk MEDIUM

Climate implications:

There are no Climate Change implications.

Other Implications:

The proposed crossing will provide a safe and sustainable travel choice for pupils and parents attending nearby schools. This will also increase walking and provide additional physical activity.

Recommendation:

That having considered the community support, objections received and officers scheme appraisal following the DCC Regulatory Committee recommendation, this committee recommends to executive that the provision of a Zebra crossing as per the scheme plan in Appendix 4 is approved.

Reason for Recommendation:

The proposals will allow for the provision of a Zebra crossing facility on Dorchester Road, Upton which will provide a safe crossing point for local school pupils, parents and the wider community across a busy 'B' class road.

The proposed zebra crossing will not adversely affect the amenity of adjacent properties and the church.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Extract of
Appendix 2 – Location Plan
Appendix 3 – Pedestrian Desire Lines
Appendix 4 – Zebra Crossing Scheme Plan

Background Papers:

1. DCC Regulatory Committee Report 12 July 2018
2. Minutes for 12 July 2018 Dorset County Council, Regulatory Committee
3. Primary consultation responses from the Town Council, Dorset Police and the local Dorset Councillors are held on file in the Environment and the Economy Directorate.

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1. Background

- 1.1 The scheme was originally requested by Upton and Lytchett Minster Town Council in support of the Local Member for the Division at that time. The Town Council have recently re-iterated their support for the proposal.
- 1.2 A pre-feasibility study was undertaken which investigated three options; a pedestrian refuge to the east of Sea View Road junction, a zebra crossing to the east of the Sea View Road junction and a zebra crossing to west of the Sea View Road junction. The final option was discounted as it was away from the natural desire line. Of the first and second options, the zebra crossing was preferred and was taken forward.
- 1.3 Dorchester Road is within the town 30mph restriction. Peak flows of traffic are typically between the times of 08:00-09:00 and 15:00-16:00 which correlates with school hours when the crossing would be used the most.
- 1.4 A 12-hour usage survey was undertaken in November 2015 between the hours of 07:00 and 19:00 within a 50m range either side of the Sea View Road Junction, the results have shown an ADPV² of 0.62 which meets the requirements for a pedestrian crossing which is 0.40. This is an index-based formula based on traffic and pedestrian flow which determines the suitability of a site for a pedestrian crossing.
- 1.5 Over the latest three-year period there have been no reported collisions within 50 metres of the junction of Sea View Road.
- 1.6 The proposed crossing meets with council policy and has been prioritised in the Local Transport Plan where it met criteria for funding.
- 1.7 The zebra crossing proposal was formally advertised by way of a Public Notice in February 2018 Three objections were received and therefore a report was considered by the Dorset County Council Regulatory Committee of 12 July 2018 with the following recommendation:

Resolved

1. *That a decision to recommend the Cabinet to approve the provision of a zebra crossing as advertised be deferred.*
2. *That officers provide a further report taking into consideration the parking situation with regard to the use of zig zag lines, car parking for the hearse, and amelioration measures for light pollution and the possible inclusion of a pelican or zebra crossing.*

2. Law

2.1 Under Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 the Zebra crossing Public Notice was advertised in February 2018 as part of the public consultation process. Copies of the Public Notice were placed on lighting columns at the proposed site and sent, together with a scheme plan, to residential properties in the immediate vicinity.

3. Review

3.1 Following committee resolution, the scheme was reviewed to take account of the points raised. The proposed zebra crossing was re-assessed along with a further look at the possible implementation of a traffic signal-controlled puffin crossing with push buttons, red/green man etc.

3.2 Both zebra and puffin crossing options are on the same foot print providing a crossing point with associated zig zag markings on the approaches that prohibit parking in the area. The southern side of Dorchester Road has existing parking restrictions in front of the Methodist Church.

3.3 The proposed Zebra Crossing is located on the pedestrian desire line, especially for children and parents going to/from the estates north of Dorchester Road to Upton Junior School located off Seaview Road to the south. It is hoped that this will encourage walking and cycling to/from the school thereby improving health and wellbeing.

3.4 During the original design stage, the Methodist Chapel had raised an objection due to them being unable to park a hearse on zig zag lines for funerals. It is understood that the church on average has 6 funerals a year normally outside of school entry/exit times. Some of the zig zag lines on the exit side of the crossing were subsequently changed to double yellow lines to facilitate this. The remaining zig zag lines meet the statutory requirements. No further objection had been received from them.

3.5 Objections received in the original advert include the following themes:

- Loss of parking on the north side due the crossing and associated zig zag markings

- Potential for increased noise pollution with vehicles braking then accelerating away
- Light pollution from the flashing belisha beacons
- Street furniture clutter outside houses
- The crossing is closely located to the Seaview Road junction
- Loss of amenity and devalue property

3.6 In review when considering installation of a zebra or a push button 'puffin' crossing it is considered that a zebra crossing is the most appropriate crossing type in this location. A puffin crossing would require more street furniture including a controller box which is not required for a zebra. The belisha beacons are also less intrusive to local residents than puffin crossing signal heads. As raised at the DCC Regulatory Committee and to ensure that light pollution to adjoining properties is kept to minimum, hoods will be installed on the belisha beacons.

3.7 The distance of the proposed crossing from the Seaview Road junction is greater than 5 metres, which complies with national design guidance.

3.8 The overall level of traffic noise at adjacent properties is unlikely to change significantly as a result of the crossing. The noise characteristics of individual vehicles may be different if they are slowing down for or pulling away from the crossing. Consideration has also been given to the potential for noise disturbance from the crossing itself. A zebra crossing has the advantage over a push button Puffin crossing that it produces no audible sound while pedestrians are crossing, which could otherwise be intrusive to adjacent residents.

3.9 Although there will be a loss of on-street parking on the northern side, it is noted that all the adjoining properties have substantial off-street driveway parking. The Methodist Chapel also has a car park accessed from Seaview Road for those attending services.

3.10 Concerns over the devaluation of a property following the installation of a new crossing are subjective and difficult to quantify. Officers are not aware of evidence that would support this assertion.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

4.1 The Zebra Crossing will provide a safe crossing point and in particular for children on their route to/from local schools. It is on the desire line being located near the footpaths that lead to housing estates on the north side of Dorchester Road.

4.2 Following the design review, it is the officer's opinion that the Zebra Crossing is the most appropriate crossing facility to be installed in this location. The design has been amended to take account of issues raised previously including the installation of hoods on the belisha beacons to

reduce light pollution to adjacent properties and a reduction in the zig zag markings on the church side to allow hearses to park safely.

4.3 The proposed scheme was requested and supported by Upton and Lychett Minster Town Council and is well supported by the local wider community, although it is noted that there are local objections in the vicinity.

4.4 Having considered the objections submitted as part of the consultation process, officers feel that the position of the crossing, in relation to the properties, will have negligible impact on residents' amenity value.

4.5 That having considered the community support, objections received and officers scheme appraisal following the DCC Regulatory Committee recommendation, this committee recommends to executive that the provision of a Zebra crossing as per the scheme plan in Appendix 4 is approved.

Appendix 1

Extract of Minutes and Recommendation 12 July 2018 DCC Regulatory Committee

Proposed Zebra Crossing, Dorchester Road, Upton

33 The Committee considered a report by the Service Director Highways and Emergency Planning on a proposed zebra crossing on Dorchester Road, Upton.

The Project Engineer (Democratic) provided a presentation and detailed introduction to the proposal, including photographs of all aspects of its location. The crossing had been requested by the Town Council and Local County Councillor because of concerns for the safety of pedestrians and particularly of children going to the Infant and Junior Schools. The site did meet the County Council's policy for a zebra crossing and was supported by all primary consultees. During the design stage the Methodist Chapel had raised an objection due to them being unable to park a hearse on zig zag lines for funerals. The zig zag lines were subsequently changed to double yellow lines to facilitate this. No further objection had been received from them. The proposal had been advertised and there had been three objections from residents living in the immediate vicinity relating to them not being able to park outside their houses and light pollution. Photographs illustrated the off-road parking available for residents, the short walking distance to available on road parking and that light pollution could be addressed retrospectively by the fitting of hoods if necessary. In summary the crossing would provide a safe crossing point, particularly for children walking to and from school, there was negligible impact on residents' amenity, and the crossing should be implemented as advertised.

A statement from Mr Baker, owner of a property adjacent to the proposed location of the zebra crossing, setting out his concerns was read out. This is attached in Annexure 1 to these minutes.

A statement from the Local Member for Lychett Minster and Upton, Councillor Bill Pipe, in support of the proposal was read out. This is attached in Annexure 1 to these minutes.

In response to members' questions it was explained that the zebra crossing was off centre from the passageway in order to reduce the risk of children running out onto the crossing; the parking of a hearse on the double yellow lines met statutory guidance and would be infrequent and mostly not at school start and end times; drivers approaching the crossing would be at low speed and taking due care; because the crossing was uncontrolled drivers needed to be alerted to its position; it was not national practice for crossing lights to be intermittent or only when someone was waiting to cross; the hearse could be unloaded and loaded on double yellow lines but would be expected to move to a safe distance after unloading and before returning later; double yellow lines would not restrict access; a "no loading or unloading"

restriction could be considered at a later date if it were to become a problem; the disabled would be able to park on the double yellow lines and there was ample on street parking nearby on Dorchester Road; normally in lower speed areas a zebra crossing was preferred to a controlled crossing; and the fitting of hoods to reduce light pollution could be considered at a later date if appropriate.

Members then discussed the proposal in detail. Whilst recognising that a zebra crossing would increase safety in some respects, there was still concern for pedestrian safety during times when a hearse was parked on the double yellow lines. Members also remained concerned about light pollution when other types of crossing would reduce this and they suggested that the hoods should be there from the outset. They asked whether cost had played any part in proposing a zebra crossing and whether all avenues had been explored. In view of the concerns, it was proposed and seconded that a decision be deferred.

The Project Team Manager addressed members' concerns: a zebra crossing was considered far more appropriate in an urban situation as this gave pedestrians the immediate right to cross the road without waiting for a signal controlled crossing; the hearse was currently parking on the road for funerals; the hearse would be parked to the west of the zebra crossing on the downstream side and not affect driver visibility of people crossing the road; hoods could be fitted from the outset but this was not standard practice; and there had been no recorded accidents in the area over the last five years. Any change to the proposed design would mean a re-negotiation with the Methodist Chapel.

The Chairman's view was that under normal circumstances a zebra crossing was perfectly adequate: unless a funeral coincided with school opening or closing times there was no cause for concern about child safety; the hearse currently parked outside the Methodist Chapel for funerals; lights to be fitted could only be seen clearly on the crossing's approach and assurance was given that hoods could be fitted if necessary at a later date to ameliorate light pollution; and the proposal would enhance the safety of children. Whilst understanding the concerns raised, he could see no reason for the proposal to be refused and he did not support deferral.

Having discussed the proposal various opinions were expressed both in favour and against. On putting the deferral to the vote members

Resolved

1. That a decision to recommend the Cabinet to approve the provision of a zebra crossing as advertised be deferred.
2. That officers provide a further report taking into consideration the parking situation with regard to the use of zig zag lines, car parking for the hearse, and amelioration measures for light pollution and the possible inclusion of a pelican or zebra crossing.

Appendix 4 – Zebra Crossing Scheme Plan

