



Report to Leader (Transport portfolio)

Decision Date: 6 May 2022

Reference number: TR16.22

Title: Hatters Lane, outside Highcrest Academy, High Wycombe – Proposed Signalised Crossing

Relevant Cabinet Member(s): Councillor Steven Broadbent, Cabinet Member for Transport

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Ward(s) affected: Totteridge & Bowerdean

Recommendations:

It is recommended that *the Leader*:

- A. **Authorises the implementation of this signalised crossing scheme as advertised.**
- B. **Acknowledges the correspondence received to the consultation.**
- C. **Approves that all correspondents to the statutory consultation are informed of the final Decision.**

Reason for decision: The introduction of a signalised crossing forms part of the Buckinghamshire Council Network Safety Fund for 2021/22 to mitigate the concerns of road safety and to provide a safe means of crossing Hatters Lane by students of the Highcrest Academy as well as facilitating movement for pedestrians. Collision analysis has identified a trend involving pedestrians being struck by vehicles whilst attempting to cross Hatters Lane. The project is promoted and supported by Buckinghamshire Council, Thames Valley Police and Elected Members.

Executive summary

- 1.1 The proposal forms part of the Buckinghamshire Council Network Safety funded programme for 2021-22.

- 1.2 Support has been received from the Network Safety team, who believe the installation of this crossing will provide a safe crossing point for local residents and in particular school children.
- 1.3 The proposals for the installation of a new signalised crossing will provide students and other pedestrians with a new and safe means of crossing Hatters Lane, particularly at peak times, to safeguard the most vulnerable users on foot.
- 1.4 To assist visually impaired users the crossing will incorporate dropped kerbs and tactile paving. The crossing will only operate by push buttons on the signal poles. An audible bleeper will sound to indicate that traffic has been signalled to stop. The bleeper may be switched off overnight to avoid disturbance to residents
- 1.5 It is recommended that the Leader approves the implementation of the proposed Puffin signalised pedestrian crossing.

Content of report

- 1.6 This report sets out the proposals to introduce a new signal-controlled crossing on Hatters Lane, High Wycombe, fronting the Highcrest Academy school.
- 1.7 Buckinghamshire Council is responsible for the highway network within its boundary.
- 1.8 The proposed pedestrian crossing will be sited outside of the school (Highcrest Academy), approximately 126m north of Windrush Drive.
- 1.9 This location will provide a formalised clear crossing place primarily for access to the school but will also offer wider community benefits in a busy road environment.
- 1.10 The crossing will be 3.6 metres wide. There will be four poles each with a push button unit which incorporates beepers that will be active during the hours of 7AM and 10PM.
- 1.11 This report documents the most common comments raised, and to note all responses received as “Not Sure” as not in full support for the scheme.
- 1.12 It is anticipated that there will be an increase in the number of students attending Highcrest Academy and that there will be an increase in footfall, particularly crossing Hatters Lane via school’s main entrance.
- 1.13 The proposal has been welcomed by the school, internal departments within Buckinghamshire Council, Thames Valley Police and Elected Members.
- 1.14 The proposal was subject to Statutory Public Consultation which was duly undertaken from 3rd to 24th September 2021.

- 1.15 The consultation response indicates a good level of support for implementing the signal-controlled crossing.
- 1.16 It is recommended that the Leader or cabinet member approves the implementation of the signal-controlled crossing.
- 1.17 However, many responses appear to comment upon the anticipated traffic congestion and loss of parking outside their homes due to the proposed crossing zigzags. The general public have voiced concerns in connection with access into and out of their driveways, and whether the council have any mitigation measures proposed to control the potential increase in air and noise pollution that would arise following its construction / implementation.
- 1.18 The signal-controlled crossing is supported by legislation which prohibits any vehicle parking on the associated zig-zag markings which will prohibit parking. However, these restrictions alone are insufficient to address the parking concerns raised and therefore, any proposal to address the parking concerns will need to be addressed as a separate project.
- 1.19 The proposals have been subject to a full public statutory consultation and the outcome of the consultation is recorded later in this report.
- 1.20 Copies of the Statutory Consultation documentation can be found on the Buckinghamshire Council website and are included as Appendices within this report.

Other options considered

- 1.21 It is considered this is the best location for the crossing. This will allow local residents and especially pupils from Highcrest Academy a safer passage across Hatters Lane to the opposite footway. The crossing will also provide gaps in the traffic allowing easier access/exiting of side roads and driveways.

Legal and financial implications

- 1.22 Section 122 of the Road Traffic Act 1984 places a duty on Buckinghamshire Council to secure the expeditious, convenient, and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway. Regulation 14 of the TRO Regulations state that an Order making authority may modify an Order. Whether in receipt of any objections or otherwise before it is made.
- 1.23 In accordance with Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act and The Zebra, Pelican and Puffin Pedestrian Crossings Regulations and General Directions 1997, TfB has undertaken a Statutory Consultation for the provision of installing a signal-controlled crossing on Hatters Lane, High Wycombe.

- 1.24 When the decision is taken and recommendations agreed, the scheme can progress to the construction stage. The responders to the consultation and persons likely to be affected will be informed of the decisions made and supplied with the BC Decision Web-site's on-line link to the decision report and appendices.

Corporate implications

1.25 Equality and Diversity Issues - Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 bans unfair treatment and seeks equal opportunities in the workplace and in wider society. It also imposes a Public Sector Equality Duty. The protected characteristics being considered are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex as well as sexual orientation.

This proposal will not have any disproportionate effect upon people with protected characteristics. Kerb heights will be lowered to enable all users to safely cross the road thus providing significant benefit for pedestrians using the crossing point. The scheme will introduce a safe crossing location on Hatters Lane which will improve pedestrian crossing facilities, including most vulnerable users in particular and contribute to a safer highway network for all.

1.26 Property implications

None have been identified.

1.27 Value for Money (VfM) Self Assessment

The scheme construction works will be tendered and carried out by an approved sub-contractor working on behalf of Transport for Buckinghamshire.

1.28 Resource Implications

Future maintenance of all assets will be through the Transport for Buckinghamshire general maintenance budgets.

The funding of the scheme is via Buckinghamshire Council Network Safety Fund.

Consultation and communication

1.29 A formal public consultation for the proposed crossing was undertaken between 3 September and 24 September 2021. Key stakeholders including the BCC Local Members and Thames Valley Police were consulted and a public consultation was carried consisting of:

- Copies of relevant documents made available at Buckinghamshire County Council Office [The Gateway | Gatehouse Road | Aylesbury]
- Documents were also made available on the BC “YourVoiceBucks” web page
- Notices were placed at prominent locations near the proposals.

1.30 Following consultation, the elected Members were contacted. Their responses are recorded below:

Consultee	Response
Cllr Julia Wassell	Councillors Guy, Hussain and Wassell are fully supporting this scheme. We would like the 20 mph lights and zone retained. We will promote the consultation
Cllr Steve Guy	Fully support
Cllr Imran Hussain	Fully support

1.31 Consultation Feedback was received by TfB either directly by email received by the “TFB Schemes Delivery Mailbox” or via the Council’s online consultation system, Citizen Space. In total, 18 responses were received; comprising 11 “In Support” of the scheme however, 1 was “Not Sure” of the proposals. Only one respondee had “No comments” on the proposals.

A summary of the consultation responses is recorded below.

Proposals	Unsure about the proposals	Objects to the proposals	Supports the proposals
Do you agree with the proposal to install a new signalised pedestrian crossing on Hatters Lane, High Wycombe, adjacent to Highcrest Academy?	1	6	11

1.32 Please refer to Appendix C for the Consultation Response Summary Report and TfB’s response to mitigate the concerns raised.

- 1.33 Thames Valley Police responded to the consultation and emailed their report on the crossing scheme, summarising that they have “no objections” to the proposals. This response was assigned as “support” in the context of the consultation process.
- 1.34 On balance it is believed that the benefit to the public of implementing this proposed crossing as advertised is greater than the disbenefits raised in objections received.
- 1.35 All consultees and respondents to the consultation will be contacted by either e-mail or letter and will be informed of the decision and where they can find the details of the statutory consultation as well as decision taken. This report will be published on the Council’s web page.

Next steps and review

- 1.36 If the recommendations within this report are approved, Transport for Buckinghamshire will inform all correspondents of the decision taken and then programme the implementation of this proposed signalised pedestrian crossing. We anticipate these features to be installed within the next six months.
- 1.37 TfB shall proceed to programme the works for the installation of a signal-controlled crossing in Hatters Lane.

Appendices to the Report

Appendix A – Consultation Letter; Statutory Consultation Detail

Appendix B – Scheme Plan (To implement once a decision has been made)

Appendix C – Consultation Summary and TfB Comments

Appendix D – Equality Impact Assessment.

Your questions and views (for key decisions)

If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report, please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider, please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by telephone 01296 382343 or email democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk