

Waterbeach Parish Council

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Sent: 12 October 2020 09:37
To: Bradnam Anna Cllr; TGent@waterbeach.cambs.sch.uk; Waterbeach Parish Council; Waterbeach Primary Headteacher; cllr.smithhm@scambs.gov.uk
Cc: Roberts Gaye; Rutherford Joshua
Subject: Way Lane Waterbeach Pedestrian Crossing Road Safety Audit

Dear All

I have received and reviewed the Road Safety Audits for the 2 schemes we discussed for Way Lane. They were similar in most aspects, and I agree with the majority of the problems identified. The recommendations made can easily be included in the scheme.

For the Safety Audit I conducted a brief controlled crossing assessment using the limited data I had available from the Transport plan. It was not possible, (and still won't be due to ongoing mitigations), to get a completely accurate picture of pedestrian and vehicle movements in the current climate. Therefore some assumptions were made using anticipated future figures; which were exaggerated/optimistic as it was obvious current figures would be very low relative to previous guidance for controlled crossings.

The current assessment consists of a number of criteria;

1. Site Survey- the main points from this are
 - (a) improvements to visibility required due to vegetation
 - (b) location of amenities - the only one here being the school.
2. Pedestrian Survey - flows and type (busiest hour optimistic figure of 150 all children).
3. Traffic Survey -flows, type and speed
 - (a) Figure given for busiest hour vehicle flow is 300 (which again is optimistic).
 - (b) 85%ile speed currently 30mph (but will be reduced with traffic calming).
4. Crossing difficulty - average gap in traffic 12 seconds (minimum figure using 300 veh/hour). In reality significantly higher than this figure, and probably above 20 seconds. An acceptable gap is usually 6 seconds in this type of residential environment.
5. Average crossing time - distance of 6.1m requires minimal crossing time not likely to have significant number of slower mobility/visually impaired users.
6. Road accidents - None recorded on Way Lane in previous 5 years.

The current assessment (from Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 6) highlights the need for adherence to relevant criteria such as crossing difficulty/opportunities.

- Crossing difficulty is especially relevant here as it would indicate how far a pedestrian would go out of their way to use the crossing and takes into account elements such as vehicle speeds, gaps in traffic, and visibility along the road. This would have a direct impact on how many pedestrians use the crossing. A controlled crossing would score particularly low in this situation as there are lots of opportunities to cross north of Spurgeons Avenue.
- The difficulties in crossing are found only in close proximity to the rear gate; where vehicles are currently parking close by and effecting visibility in the vicinity, (which will be removed with the proposed parking restrictions as part of this scheme). Outside of these times users are observed crossing everywhere except adjacent to the (locked) gate and lots appear very comfortable walking/running in the carriageway.

The addition of parking restrictions, traffic calming, and the uncontrolled crossing will make the required improvements that could be identified as needed in the assessment. We need to therefore highlight the fact that the only reason for installing a zebra at this location is use of the crossing to access the rear entrance of the school, which is locked for over 90% of the day, meaning there is very little justification for a controlled crossing of any sort. This is a problem we have encountered in other areas of the county, where zebra crossings have been installed and

are subsequently used very little. This has led to complaints about cars not stopping to give way, and speeding up in the vicinity of the crossing. This represents a significant risk to pedestrians using the zebra.

One option we did not consider that would seem appropriate taking into account the period around school start/finish times when there will be children crossing would be a wig-wag type sign active advisory 20mph speed limit active at school start/finish times. The benefit of these is it is time specific and covers a larger extent as it likely children may cross anywhere on the route north of Spurgeons Avenue.



Figure 8-12 Part-time advisory 20 mph speed limit at or near a school (S14-2-69)

The road safety audit did also highlighted the following problem that we had discussed was likely to come up, where there is a potential for adverse effects as a direct result of introducing a zebra crossing.

2.1 Problem:

Location: proposed zebra crossing

Summary: risk of on crossing collisions due to drivers becoming accustomed to the crossing patterns.

The proposed zebra crossing is to be located outside a school and consequently there will be a high number of crossing movements at those times where pedestrians are entering or leaving the school but it is unlikely that there will be crossing movements outside those times. This means that for the majority of the day, weekends and school holidays the crossing will see negligible usage. When the crossing is in use it is likely that there will be a high number of crossing movements over a very short time.

Drivers will become accustomed to the pattern of usage. This could have 2 effects:

- (a) Drivers may become less vigilant outside the normal hours of usage, being unused to pedestrians crossing at this point. This may lead to sudden/late braking and on crossing collisions.
- (b) Where there is a perception that the delay caused by the crossing is too long, such as when the school day finishes and a high number of pedestrians approach the crossing, drivers may be unwilling to stop or may try to move off before it is safe to do so. This could lead to on crossing collisions.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the type of crossing is reviewed in light of the likely pattern of crossing movements to ensure that the most appropriate type of crossing is installed.

Taking all of this into account I have recommended that we proceed with Option 1 Raised Table junction with informal pedestrian crossing with the following amendments;

- (a) increase waiting restriction further south along Way Lane to further improve viability and not to hide hump warning markings
- (b) add wig-wag type signs on both approaches with part time advisory 20mph speed limit

Please can the parish confirm they are happy to proceed on this basis at earliest convenience to ensure promptest delivery.

Regards

John O'Donnell

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Highway Projects
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