

Proposed decision to be made by the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning on or after 14 December 2018

Proposed Toucan Crossing – Dunchurch Road (Overslade Lane junction), Rugby

Recommendation

That the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning approves the installation of a Toucan crossing on Dunchurch Road (near Overslade Lane junction), Rugby, as consulted upon and pursuant to Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, conditional upon the necessary Highways Act 1980, Section 278 agreement being in place, along with the additional provision of an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing / refuge outside No.184 Dunchurch Road all as shown on the plan provided in Appendix B.

1.0 Key Issues

- 1.1 A planning application (RBC/16CC016) was submitted to the County Council for a redevelopment of the Rokeby School site to accommodate a Free School with a total intake of 1470 pupils. The Developer is the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). Warwickshire County Council was a joint applicant by virtue of being the Local Education Authority and landowner of the school site. Planning permission was granted on 21 December 2017 by Regulatory Committee. The permitted scheme requires the Developer to undertake a package of improvements to the surrounding highway network including the installation of a Toucan crossing on the A426 Dunchurch Road in proximity to the Overslade Lane junction, Rugby, to cater for the anticipated additional pedestrian and cyclist demand across Dunchurch Road in order to access Rokeby School.
- 1.2 Where a highway scheme is considered and approved as part of the planning process, the courts have made it clear that the highway / traffic authority is expected to co-operate in its implementation unless some exceptional or changed circumstances call for a different approach. The planning permission could be amended to remove the need for the Toucan crossing, but this would require a further planning application by the developer and the agreement of Regulatory Committee (which would be guided, but not bound by, the advice of the highway / traffic authority).
- 1.3 The County Council intends to enter into a Section 278 agreement with the Developer to undertake the works. Under that agreement the cost of the Toucan crossing and associated works will be fully funded by the Developer.
- 1.4 Toucan crossings contribute to an integrated pedestrian and cycling network and help to reduce conflict between traffic and pedestrians / cyclists, encouraging feelings of safety. These factors are important in encouraging

walking within a community. The design of these facilities takes into account the needs of people with physical and sensory disabilities to ensure equality of opportunity and access.

- 1.5 The crossing facility will also be of benefit to the wider local community and to other local schools in the immediate area, including Harris C of E Academy School which is in close proximity to the Dunchurch Road / Overslade Lane junction. Large numbers of Harris Academy pupils are observed to cross Dunchurch Road near Overslade Lane at school opening and closing times.

2.0 Proposed Scheme

- 2.1 The site of the proposed Toucan crossing is located on Dunchurch Road, directly to the south of the Overslade Lane junction, as indicated on the plan in **Appendix A**. Dunchurch Road is a primary route into Rugby town centre and has significant traffic flows at peak times. Dunchurch Road is a bus route and is subject to a 30mph speed limit by virtue of street lighting and frontage development, the speed limit changes to 40mph approximately 30 metres south of the Overslade Lane junction. The scheme includes a proposal to extend the 30mph speed limit to a point approximately 100m south of the junction and to include the immediate approach to the crossing, although this will be subject to the outcome of further statutory consultation planned to be carried out within the next 3 months.
- 2.2 The proposed location was identified at planning stage considering the layout of the road, existing features and constraints in the immediate vicinity including; the side road junction with Overslade Lane which incorporates a right turn lane for southbound traffic entering Overslade Lane, a bus stop / layby, on and off carriageway cycle routes and pedestrian footway links. The area is predominantly residential, with minimal frontage directly onto this section of Dunchurch Road. Harris Academy School is located directly to the northwest of the Overslade Lane junction. There are footway / bridleway links to an existing uncontrolled pedestrian crossing consisting of a central pedestrian refuge/island with dropped kerbs across Dunchurch Road, the crossing is sited immediately to the north of the Overslade Lane junction and is observed to be well used by school pupils of Harris Academy.
- 2.3 On an interim basis and as a condition of a separate planning permission granted on 08 June 2018 (ref: RBC/18CC003) for temporary additional classroom accommodation on Rokeby school site, a temporary portable signal controlled crossing has been installed. The crossing is south of Overslade Lane junction, in the location identified for the permanent crossing. The temporary crossing has been in place from the start of the 2018/19 school year. This facility is required to be maintained until such time that the new permanent crossing is available for use. The Developer is funding all associated costs.

2.4 Constraints on the siting of the Toucan crossing;

- Proximity to junction – there are design recommendations contained within The Design of Pedestrian Crossings - Local Transport Note (LTN) 2/95 published by the Department for Transport, The LTN recommends a minimum distance of 20m from non-signal controlled side road junctions, this is to allow drivers to appreciate the presence of the crossing and to have the opportunity to brake safely. The existing uncontrolled crossing is 10m from the junction and the start of the bus layby is 15m from the junction.
- Right turn lane – to help minimise congestion to through traffic a right turn lane has been provided on the Dunchurch Road southbound approach and to accommodate traffic turning right into Overslade Lane. It would be desirable to retain this feature, however, based on observed levels of use at peak times it would be possible to reduce its length.
- Bus stop / layby – the stop accommodates both school and scheduled bus services into Rugby town centre. The retention of a bus stop within a layby is desirable to again help minimise congestion and delay to through traffic on the Dunchurch Road (northbound). While the bus stop position could be relocated there are no alternative convenient locations in which to accommodate a bus lay-by.

3.0 Consultation on the Proposal

- 3.1 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, Section 23, requires that before establishing, altering or removing a pedestrian crossing facility, the authority shall consult with the Chief Officer of Police and give public notice of the proposal. A public notice was erected on site in the vicinity of the proposed crossing, information was also published on Warwickshire County Council's website. Details were also sent to statutory consultees (including the Chief Officer of Police) and to the residents in the immediate vicinity of the site and who are directly affected.

During the consultation period between 7th September and 29th September 2018 two objections were received relating to the proposed crossing.

3.2 Objections

Objection (1) – Harris Academy School

While Harris School supports the provision a signal controlled crossing facility in this general location, they have raised concerns over the location of the crossing which they feel should be located on the north side of the Overslade Lane junction, in a similar location to the existing uncontrolled crossing. They comment that the proposed location would require Harris School pupils to cross Overslade Lane to access the crossing, and that the majority of pupils are going in the opposite (northerly) direction towards the local shops on Kingsway and would therefore be unlikely to use the crossing because it is not

convenient. This was communicated via Warwickshire County Councillor Kam Kaur as one of two elected Members for the area.

Response:

- Location of crossing – The location identified by the Developer's highways consultant at planning stage was to the north of the junction. This was considered at that time but was deemed inappropriate through the planning application process due to local site constraints. The alternative location south of the junction was identified by highway development control officers to be more appropriate.
- It is accepted that the location for the new crossing is less convenient than the existing crossing for pupils of Harris School; however the provision of a signal controlled facility will be an upgrade to the existing facilities and offer a potential benefit in terms of safety. It is anticipated that many pedestrians, including Harris school pupils will migrate to the new location and this would be encouraged through the removal of the existing crossing immediately north of the junction.
- The new location is considered more appropriate and convenient for pupils of Rokeby School (the development with which this proposal is linked) as many are expected to use the bridleway to the south and east of the crossing, the bridleway provides a direct link to Long Furlong a short distance from the main Rokeby school entrance.
- Siting the crossing immediately to the north of Overslade Lane is problematic, due to the constraints described in para 2.4 above; namely the proximity of the junction, an existing right turn lane into Overslade Lane, and a bus stop sited within a layby.

Objection (2) local resident

The resident's main issue of concern and reason for objection is the location of the crossing. The resident asked a number (14) of related questions mainly concerned with any assessment used in the identification of the location and of the appropriate standards related to the design of a signal controlled crossing. This enquiry was identified and treated as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

A number of observations were also made within the letter, these include;

- the residents observes that a low number of pedestrians are using the temporary crossing provided when compared with the numbers using the existing uncontrolled crossing.
- Concern of the crossing being close to the start of the 40mph speed limit and associated concern over the safety of users of any crossing in this location.
- That the crossing is a poor use of public funds.

Response

- The location of the crossing has been identified considering the local constraints, requirements and recommendations of relevant design standards and to best accommodate existing and anticipated demand and desire lines for pedestrians and cyclists as outlined in the response to Objection 1 (above).
- Numbers using the temporary crossing – it is accepted that the vast majority of people use the existing uncontrolled crossing, this is mainly due to the crossing being in a convenient location for Harris Academy School and because Rokeby School is not yet fully occupied. The works to provide the new crossing would include the removal of the existing crossing to encourage use of the new facility.
- Close proximity to 40mph speed limit – the proposals include a change to the location of the start of the 30mph speed limit to include the northbound approach the crossing. An independent Stage 2 Road Safety Audit on the proposed design has been undertaken, the findings of the Audit have been considered and all issues identified have been addressed to the satisfaction of the Audit team.
- The ‘poor use of public funds’ – as noted in paragraph 1.3 (above) the crossing will be funded by the Developer. As the ESFA is a public body, the funding is from central government funds and no local council tax payers’ money is being used. It should also be noted that the crossing will provide benefit to not only the pupils of the new Rokeby School but also the wider local community and to other local schools in the immediate area, including Harris C of E Academy School.

3.3 Responses from Statutory Consultees and Warwickshire County Councillors

- 3.3.1 Warwickshire Police have been consulted. They have confirmed that in principle they do not have an objection to the introduction of the crossing; however, they have highlighted concern over the crossing being remote from existing footway links. They have stated that they appreciate some of the constraints in siting a signal controlled crossing and have suggested for road safety reasons the introduction of pedestrian guardrail to discourage pedestrians crossing at inappropriate locations.
- 3.3.2 Councillor Kaur has responded to forward on the communication from Harris Academy School.
- 3.3.3 Councillor O’Rourke has responded to confirm she supports the proposals as advertised.

4.0 Amended scheme

- 4.1 In considering the objections and concerns and issues raised during the consultation, Officers have undertaken a review of the proposals. The review has confirmed it would be possible to provide a modified scheme, with the incorporation of an uncontrolled crossing to the front of No.184 Dunchurch Road on the north side of Overslade Lane junction and to the north of the bus stop / layby.

This will provide an additional crossing and would potentially accommodate pedestrians, mainly Harris School pupils, crossing between Overslade Lane and Kingsway junctions. Being some 40 metres north of the Overslade Lane junction it is unlikely to attract Rokeby School pupils to cross here rather than using the Toucan crossing as this would be a less direct route into Overslade Lane. The provision of lengths of pedestrian guardrail is not deemed necessary at this stage, however, this will be reviewed on completion of the works and as part of a Stage 3 (post completion) Road Safety Audit.

- 4.2 An amended scheme plan is provided in Appendix B. The EFSA have confirmed their agreement to the proposal via their representative.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The County Council intends to enter into a Section 278 agreement with the Developer to undertake the works. Under that agreement the costs will be fully funded by the Developer. Approval to add this scheme to the capital programme was given by the Deputy Leader (Finance and Property) at his decision making meeting on 14 September 2018. However, this was a decision concerning financial and operational management and does not affect the responsibility of the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning to consider the merits of the proposed scheme.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 The requirement for the installation of a Toucan crossing was identified during the planning process and its general location has been specified in a planning condition. The design has been subjected to a Stage 2 Road Safety Audit and no departures from standard have been identified. The costs associated with the introduction of the Toucan crossing and all related features will be funded by the Developer.
- 6.2 It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning approves the installation of the Toucan crossing as advertised along with the additional provision of an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing / refuge outside No.184 Dunchurch Road all as shown on the plan provided in Appendix B.

Background papers

Letters of objections to the proposal
Appendix A - Consultation Scheme Plan
Appendix B – Amended scheme plan

| | Name | Contact Information |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| Report Authors | Chris Morton and Shirley Reynolds | chrismorton@warwickshire.gov.uk / shirleyreynolds@warwickshire.gov.uk Tel: 01926 412348 / 01926 412110 |
| Assistant Director (Environment Services) | Stuart Jackson | stuartjackson@warwickshire.gov.uk Tel: 01926 412422 |
| Joint Managing Director (Communities) | Monica Fogarty | monicafogarty@warwickshire.gov.uk Tel: 01926 412514 |
| Portfolio Holder for Transport and Environment | Jeff Clarke | cllrclarke@warwickshire.gov.uk |

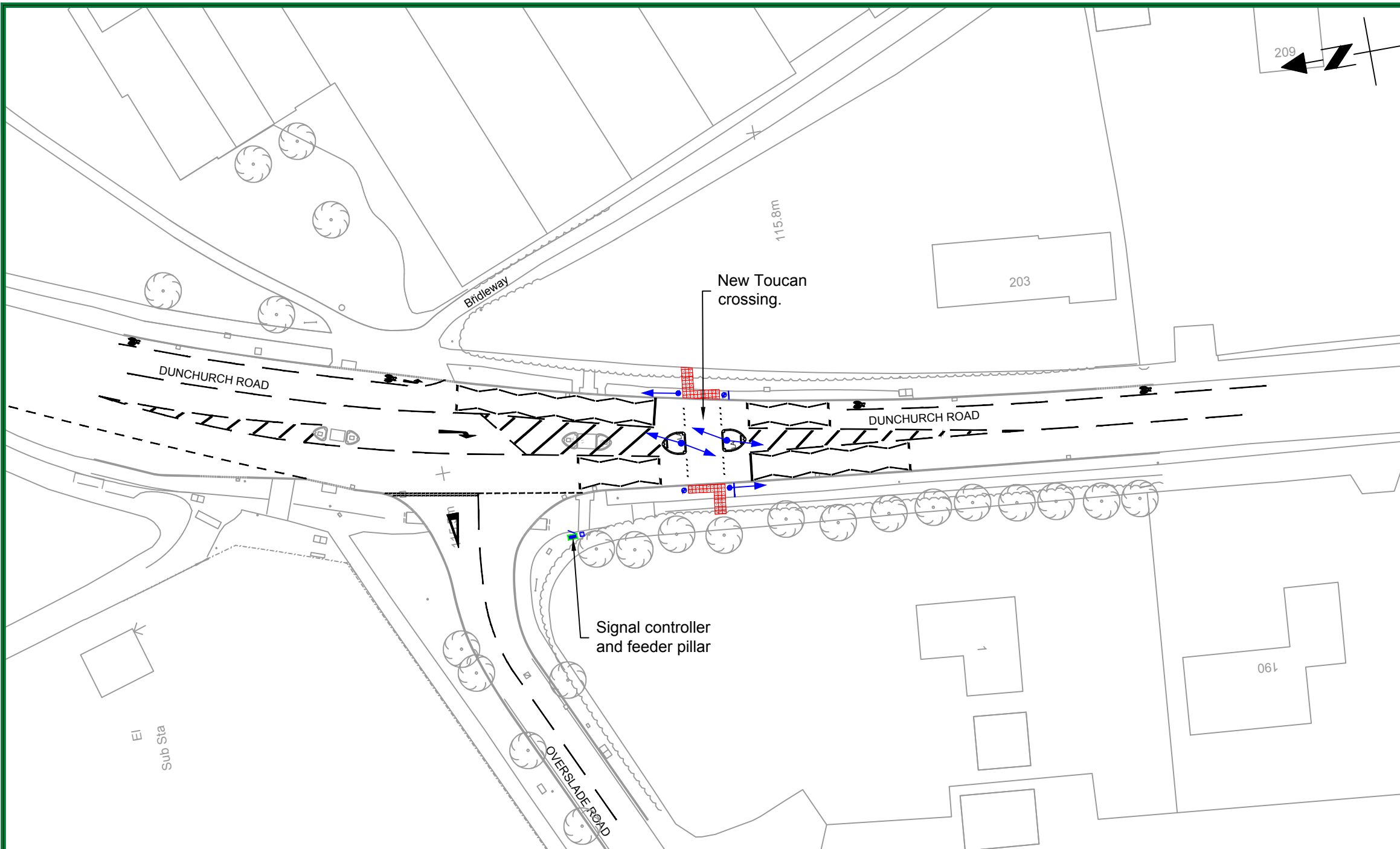
This report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Members:

Cllr Kaur – Bilton and Hillside
Cllr O'Rourke – New Bilton and Overslade

Other Members:

Cllr Cockburn, Cllr Fradgley, Cllr Phillips, Cllr Shilton



NOTES
 All traffic signal equipment and road markings shown are indicative and may be subject to change during detail design or during installation due to site constraints.

| REV | DRN | AMENDMENT | DATE |
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Design Services
 Communities
 Shire Hall Post Room
 Warwick
 CV34 4SP
 Tel : 01926 410410
 Web : www.warwickshire.gov.uk



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PROJECT
 A426 - Dunchurch Road near Overlade Rd
 Rugby - Proposed Toucan Crossing

TITLE
 Proposed Toucan Crossing

| Drn | EM | Ck'd | DAM | App'd | DAM |
|------|----------|------|----------|-------|----------|
| Date | 28-08-18 | Date | 29-08-18 | Date | 29-08-18 |

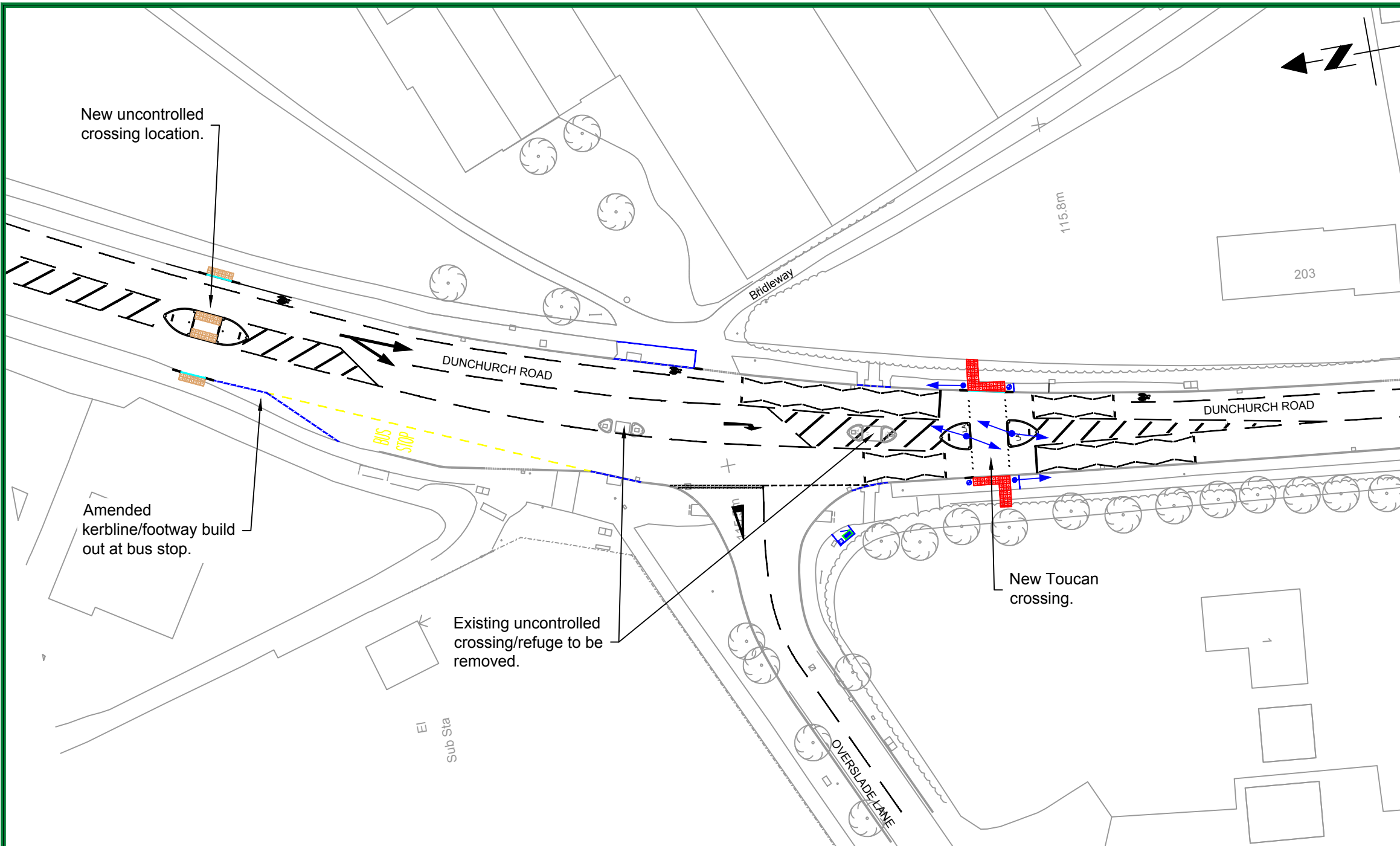
Status
 Approved (Level 3)

Scale 1:500 **Sheet size** A3

DRG. NO. 24.2---283-003 **Rev.** -

Key

- Traffic Signal Equipment.
- Traffic Signal Poles.
- Traffic Signal Controller Approximate dimensions: 73cm width x 43cm depth x 116cm height
- Traffic Signal Controller Feeder Pillar (FP) Approximate dimensions: 36cm width x 25cm depth x 60cm height
- Red Tactile Paving
- Zig-zag markings
- Cycle symbol



NOTES

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|-----|-----|----------------------------------|----------|
| C | EM | To include Uncontrolled crossing | 05/10/18 |
| B | EM | To include Proposed Shared Track | 05/10/18 |
| A | EM | To include comments from RSA2 | 31/08/18 |
| REV | DRN | AMENDMENT | DATE |



Design Services

Communities
Shire Hall Post Room
Warwick
CV34 4SP
Tel : 01926 410410
Web : www.warwickshire.gov.uk



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PROJECT

A426 - Dunchurch Road near Overlade Ln
Rugby - Proposed Toucan Crossing

TITLE

Public Notice Plan
Location of Proposed Shared use
Purpose of Drawing: Consultation

| | | | | | |
|------|----------|------|----------|-------|----------|
| Drm | EM | Ck'd | DAM | App'd | DAM |
| Date | 28-08-18 | Date | 14-11-18 | Date | 14-11-18 |

Status **Approved (Level 3)**

Scale **1:500** Sheet size **A3**

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