

Proposed decision to be made by the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning on or after 15 March 2019

Objections to Proposed Traffic Signals with Pedestrian Crossing Facilities at C11 Higham Lane, Nuneaton

Recommendation

That the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning approves the installation of pedestrian crossings as part of a traffic signal controlled junction at Higham Lane / Development Access, Nuneaton, as advertised pursuant to Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, conditional upon the necessary Highways Act 1980, Section 278 agreement being in place.

1.0 Key Issues

- 1.1 A planning application (034076) was submitted to Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council for the development of a site off C11 Higham Lane, Nuneaton, for the erection of up to 453 dwellings and associated infrastructure. Planning permission was granted on 10 August 2018. The permitted scheme requires the Developer to install a traffic signal junction at the site access on Higham Lane.
- 1.2 Public notice was given of the intention to install a traffic signal controlled junction here and objections have been received to the proposal.
- 1.3 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. There is a procedure for seeking to vary a planning permission so as to remove requirements imposed by conditions, and it is possible to seek a new planning permission entirely, but this would require a further planning application by the developer and approval from Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (which would be guided but not bound by the advice of the highway / traffic authority).
- 1.4 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 traffic signal controlled junction and associated works will be fully funded by the Developer.
- 1.5 Traffic signal controlled junctions with pedestrian and cycling facilities contribute to an integrated pedestrian and cycling network and help to reduce conflict between traffic, pedestrians and cyclist, 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.

2.0 Proposed Scheme

- 2.1 The site of the proposed traffic signal controlled junction at Higham Lane / Development Access is indicated on the plan in **Appendix A**. Higham Lane connects A47 Hinckley Road to A5 Watling Street. The development site is to the north of Milby Drive and to the south of the A5.
- 2.2 The design has been subjected to a Stage 2 Road Safety Audit. No departures from standard have been identified.

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. Although Section 23 specifically relates to the installation of pedestrian crossings, it is acknowledged that representations received from consultees often relate to the installation of traffic signals of which the crossings are an integral part and thus these are reported here.

During the consultation period between 11 January and 08 February 2019 objections were received from two members of the public. An objection was also received from County Councillor Kondakor. The following paragraphs summarise the points made in respect of the traffic signals and gives responses. Some points were made by more than one objector.

3.2 Congestion on Higham Lane

Two objections were received from members of the public regarding the congestion which will arise by restricting the ability of traffic to flow freely on Higham Lane and concerns about tailbacks to the A5.

Response:

A Transport Assessment was undertaken on behalf of the Developer which concluded that the proposed traffic signal controlled junction would provide a safe and suitable access for residents of the development to access and egress the site. Traffic signal junction modelling was carried out and no concerns were raised about the length of the southbound queue. The traffic signal equipment will include vehicle detectors which will allow the 'green time' on each approach to be balanced so as to minimise the overall delay to vehicles using the junction.

3.3 Facilities for cyclists

One objection was received from a member of the public and an objection was also received from Cllr Kondakor regarding the facilities for cyclists. The concerns expressed related to:

- (1) Difficulties which may be experienced by cyclists leaving Milby Drive due to the speed of vehicles leaving the traffic signal controlled junction;
- (2) The lack of cycleway to the north of the Development Access junction;
- (3) The lack of provision for cyclists on Higham Lane to turn onto the cycleway;
- (4) The lack of cycling facilities elsewhere on Higham Lane.

Response:

The Milby Drive junction is approximately 150m south of the proposed traffic signal junction. Currently there is free-flowing traffic on Higham Lane and cyclists (and other road users) need to wait for gaps in the traffic to be able to turn into or out of Milby Drive. The introduction of traffic signals will mean that traffic will either continue to free-flow when there is a green signal, or to be slowing if the traffic is approaching a red light or accelerating if leaving the junction having been stopped. It is not anticipated that the current situation will be worsened by the introduction of traffic signals at the Development Access.

The proposed scheme includes widening the existing footway to provide a cycleway to the frontage of the site and a staggered Toucan crossing arrangement at the Development Access arm. There are no proposals from the Developer to provide any additional cycling facilities beyond those to the frontage and access to the site. However, Warwickshire County Council is aware of the demand for additional cycling facilities on Higham Lane and it is possible that planning conditions on other development sites may assist in delivering this. In the meantime, it is the case that cyclists on Higham Lane will not have any specific facilities for accessing the new section of cycleway.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 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 has been recommended to the Deputy Leader (Finance and Property) for his decision making meeting on 15 March 2019. However, this is 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.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 The requirement for the installation of a traffic signal controlled junction at Higham Lane / Development Access was identified during the planning process. The costs associated with the introduction of the junction improvements and all related features will be funded by the Developer.

- 5.2 It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning approves the installation of the traffic signal controlled junction at C11 Higham Lane / Development Access, Nuneaton.

Background papers

Letters of objections to the proposals

Appendix A – C11 Higham Lane / Development Access scheme plan

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

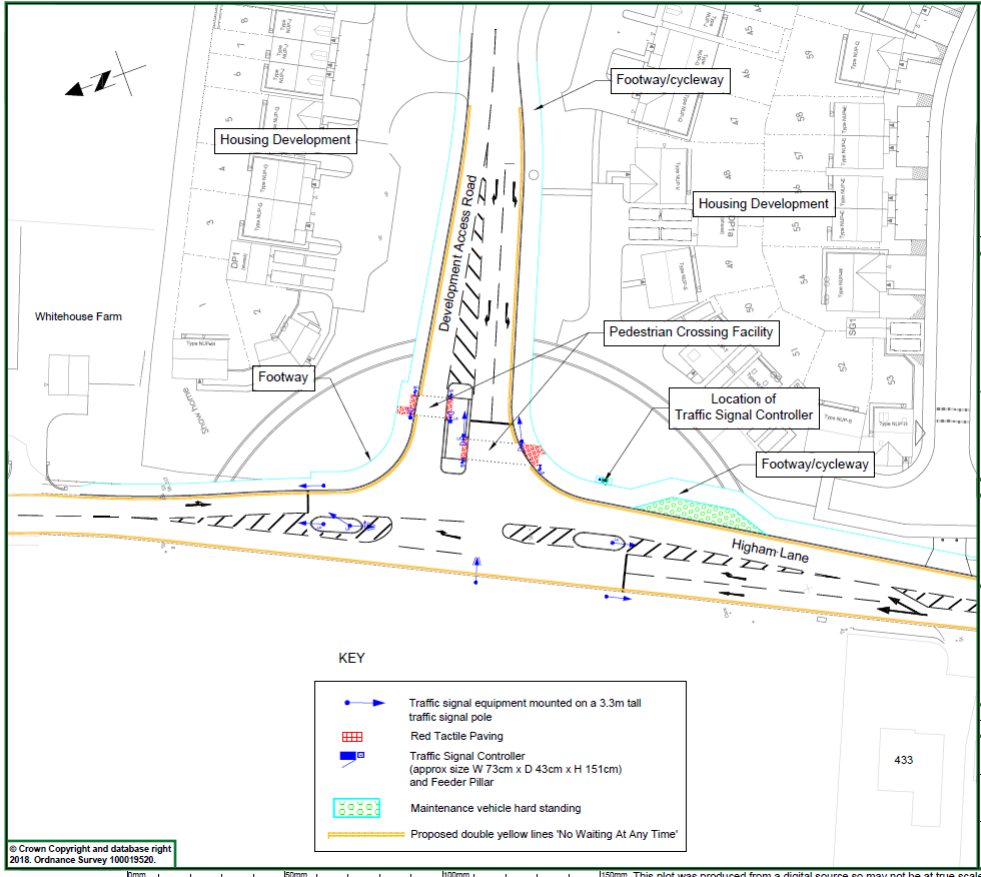
Local Members:

Cllr Kondakor - Weddington

Other Members:

Cllr Chattaway; Cllr Chilvers; Cllr Cockburn; Cllr Fradgley; Cllr Phillips;
Cllr Roodhouse; Cllr Shilton

Appendix A



S278 scheme:
C11 Higham Lane, Nuneaton