

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

Proposed Puffin Crossing - Murray Road near Railway Terrace, Rugby

Recommendation

That the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning approves the installation of a Puffin Crossing on Murray Road near Railway Terrace, Rugby, in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, Section 23 and removal of the existing raised table road hump, in accordance with The Highways (Traffic Calming) Regulations 1999.

1.0 Key Issues

- 1.1 A request has been received from Councillor Webb, for the installation of a safe crossing point on Murray Road near Railway Terrace, Rugby.

The primary purpose of the proposed Puffin Crossing is to cater for the various pedestrian demands to cross Murray Road in order to access local primary and secondary schools, and the FE College situated in Technology Drive. This crossing is to be delivered from the School Safety Zones and Routes programme.

2.0 Proposed Scheme

- 2.1 The site of the proposed Puffin crossing is located on Murray Road near Railway Terrace, Rugby. Murray Road is one of the main arterial routes into Rugby and is heavily trafficked at peak times of the day. It is also used by local bus services and rail commuters and is busy with all types of traffic throughout the day. It is subject to a 20mph speed limit zone.
- 2.2 The proposed site for the Puffin crossing will be between the junction of Railway Terrace and Abbey Street, as shown on the plan in the Appendix. The area is predominantly residential, with the main Rugby Railway Station to the north of the site.
- 2.3 The need for a Puffin crossing on Murray Road near Railway Terrace is to accommodate the various demands for pedestrian movements across the road, including:
- East-west links to access schools within the area, including links to access to St Andrew's Benn Primary School in Chester Street, and the secondary schools of Avon Valley School in Newbold and Lawrence Sheriff School in Clifton Road. Additionally, links to the College of FE in Technology Drive will be served by this facility.

- The main Railway Station serving Rugby Town is situated approx. 100m from this crossing, which will assist commuters on their journeys, and link to car parks and bus stops for onward journeys.
- Local Tesco Metro shop in close proximity, as are a number of other small retail outlets.

2.4 When considering the justification for a controlled crossing, standard criteria based on the numbers of vehicles and pedestrians using a location are calculated. This calculation is known as the PV² value and should exceed 0.9 x 10⁸. In this location the PV² value is 1.31 x 10⁸ which fully meets these criteria.

3.0 Objections

3.1 A formal consultation for the proposed Puffin crossing was carried out between 29th November 2018 and 11th January 2019. Advertisements were placed in the Rugby Observer newspaper, on street notices were erected, and information was published on Warwickshire County Council's website. This is the normal procedure for any proposed puffin crossing, and goes beyond the legal obligation for this type of facility.

During this period, two objections have been received relating to the proposed crossing.

3.2 Objections

3.21 Objection (1) Rugby Rail Users Group (RRUG)

The RRUG has objections to the planned puffin crossing and associated changes as it adversely affects rail passengers who use buses to access the station and it also impacts car users who use the Rugby Station No 2 Car Park.

At present, rail passengers who leave the station to catch a bus to town have a marked crossing to cross the station approach road and a raised walkway with a centre refuge to cross Murray Road, followed by a short walk to the bus stop.

If the WCC plan is implemented, the passengers would have to walk up Murray Road, and cross it using a new puffin crossing and then cross Abbey Street to reach the new bus stop, a longer walk than now. This is the opposite of the integrated transport system which we would all like to see.

Judging from the extensive use of the puffin crossing in Church Street, there is usually quite a long interval between pressing the button and the signal to cross the road.

Rail users arriving by bus through the tunnel from the North and who at present use the raised roadway and centre refuge to reach the station would face a similar longer walk if the WCC plan is implemented.

The pedestrian access steps to the No 2 car park is aligned directly with the raised roadway and centre refuge in Murray Road providing a direct walking route between the Car Park and the Station.

If the WCC plan is implemented, car owners leaving the Car park would have to turn left along Murray Road and use the new puffin crossing to cross Murray Road and then a longer walk to the Station – it seems unlikely that they will do this.

Safety Issue – Car Park Users

It is considered that, if the WCC plan is implemented, many drivers leaving their cars in No 2 Car Park will not use the steps onto Murray Road, walk up Murray Road and use the puffin crossing to reach the station. Some might use the road entrance to the Car Park instead of the steps to reach the puffin crossing, thereby risking a collision with a car. Other drivers will use the steps, as now, and cross Murray Road without the safety of the existing raised platform in Murray Road.

Further concerns from RRUG with the proposed changes are:-

- There is no mention of any co-ordination between the proposed puffin crossing and the traffic lights in the Mill Road tunnel. If the two sets of lights are not coordinated, the traffic could seize up completely.
- Better bus shelters with three sides of protection from the elements should be used for any new/replacement shelters.
- A pedestrian refuge at the current location of the raised table should be provided, or it will be much more difficult, not to say unsafe, to get across Murray Road at peak times.
- There should be no new railings installed as part of any changes – these really impede progress and would also reduce the pavement to an unacceptable width.
- The placement of the outbound bus stop leaves very little room for people to cross in front of a stopped bus without walking in the path of cars turning into the station approach road.

Finally, RRUG is disappointed at the lack of vision shown by this proposal. There remains a great opportunity to make transport more integrated at Rugby Station, perhaps by routing buses across the station front so that there is a clear connection between buses and trains. Instead of making small changes which seem to inconvenience bus and rail users, we would like to see something more strategic and future focussed.

Response

This proposed puffin crossing has been requested by the Local Member, to assist children crossing Murray Road on their way to and from schools and the FE College in the local area.

It is accepted that users of Car Park No2, will have a greater distance to walk from the car park to the Station, if they choose to use the puffin crossing. The removal of the refuge island and raised platform are necessary to facilitate the relocation of the bus stop, nearer to Railway Terrace. It is not possible to retain the raised platform and refuge island and relocate the bus stop, due to design constraints. Murray Road is too narrow to accommodate a standard refuge. The existing refuge was installed many years ago (in the mid 1990's); standards have changed during this time. The existing refuge is less than 1.0m wide which is too narrow to afford pedestrians enough room to stand and wait between streams of traffic in safety.

The location of the proposed Puffin crossing is as near to the desire line as it is possible to locate. The bus stops must be relocated, so that the buses do not stop within the zig-zag marked area each side of the puffin crossing. This is to ensure the puffin crossing is safe to use, and that drivers using Murray Road can negotiate a parked or waiting bus. The additional walking distance is approximately 25-30m, which equates to an average of 1-2 minutes. Given that buses in the area are frequent (Stagecoach No 4 service, every 15 minutes) it should not increase the overall journey time excessively.

The pedestrian access to Car Park No 2 is served by steps and a ramp, and is located on the northern side of the vehicular access into the car park. It is accepted that some drivers may choose to use the vehicular access for pedestrian movements, to walk towards the puffin crossing, instead of exiting the car park directly in line with a raised platform and refuge island. Able bodied people may also choose to cross the road towards the Station wherever they choose. The installation of the puffin crossing is primarily to facilitate safe movements across this busy road for children, parents and young people. Anyone wishing to cross at an alternative location does so at their own risk.

The proposed Puffin crossing will be designed so that the phasing does not conflict with the signal control under the tunnel. This should ensure that the two sets of traffic signals are not in conflict and will not delay traffic unduly.

New bus shelters will be provided as part of this scheme. The design of the new shelters will largely depend on the highway boundary constraints. Wherever possible, new bus shelters will be provided that give greater protection from the elements.

The concerns raised about the coordination of integrated transport in the Rugby area is not something that can be dealt with through this report. Bus routing is a matter for the bus companies, and should be part of a wider strategy for the whole of the Rugby town centre.

3.22 Objection (2) Resident

I am writing to object to the removal of the uncontrolled crossing and the raised platform. This crossing is used by people crossing Murray Road, in both directions, between the No 2 Car Park and the Station and also by people walking, in both directions, between the Station and the Southbound Bus Stop in Murray Road.

I can see no justification for WCC to remove this crossing which is very convenient for train passengers and has been in use for many years by thousands of people.

If WCC removed the crossing, people walking to and from the bus stop would have a longer walk and have to cross Abbey Street in addition to Murray Road. Elderly and infirm people would be greatly inconvenienced by having a longer walk.

People walking from the No2 Car Park to the Station would also have a longer walk by having to walk up Murray Road to a new crossing and then down Murray Road to the Station. It is considered that many motorists would avoid this longer walk and cross Murray Road towards the tunnel and removal of the crossing will remove this safety feature and make the junction more dangerous.

This raised crossing should not be removed by WCC. I use this crossing much less than in the past as I now have difficulty walking. However, my objection to the removal of this crossing is not only on my behalf but also on behalf of many future users of the crossing who are unaware of the WCC closure proposal.

Response

As previously stated; the existing raised platform and central refuge cannot be retained as they no longer meet the necessary design standards. The introduction of a puffin crossing will allow all pedestrians a safe place to cross this busy road. The additional distance for pedestrians to walk is minimal, (around 25-30m) which equates to an additional journey time of around 1-2 minutes.

4.0 Support

- 4.1 Local County Councillor Alan Webb fully supports the installation of a puffin crossing at this location.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 Capital funding for School Safety Zones and Routes was originally agreed at the full council meeting in February 2015 and was re-approved by Council

when it set the 2018/19 budget in 2018. This scheme will be fully funded from this budget at an approximate cost of £65,000

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposed Puffin crossing will not only benefit parents and pupils who cross to and from school, it will benefit the whole community throughout the day.
- 6.2 Pedestrian surveys have shown that over 1291 people cross this road during the day, of which around 122 are children attending nearby schools. Puffin crossings contribute to an integrated pedestrian network and help reduce conflict between traffic and pedestrians, encouraging feeling of pedestrian safety. These factors are important in the encouragement of walking within a community and the maintenance of a healthy weight environment.
- 6.3 The overall benefits in terms of pedestrian safety for the community, especially school children outweigh the negative impacts of a puffin crossing and minor increased walking time and distance.
- 6.4 The proposed puffin crossing will be constructed in accordance with LTN1/95 Assessment of Pedestrian Crossings, and the design complies with the Design Note 2/95 Design of Pedestrian Crossings, published by the Department for Transport.
- 6.5 It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning approves the installation of a Puffin Crossing, funded by the School Safety Zones and Routes capital allocation.

Background papers

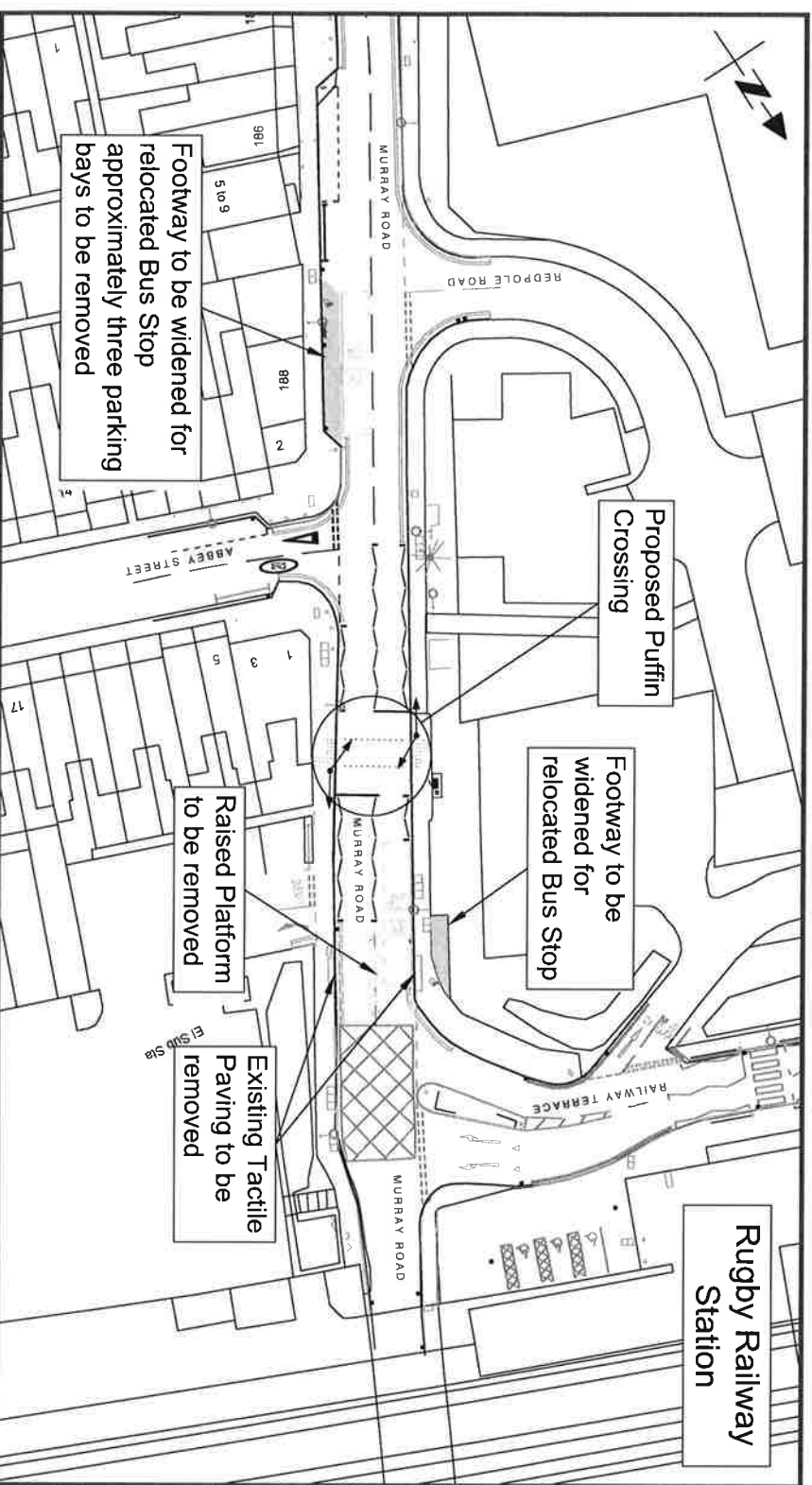
Letters of Objection

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

Local Member: Cllr Alan Webb

APPENDIX A



Key

-  Zig-Zag markings
-  Traffic signal equipment mounted on pole
-  Red Tactile Paving
-  Traffic Signal Controller: Approximate dimensions: 73cm width x 43cm depth x 116cm height
-  Traffic Signal Controller Feeder Pillar: Approximate dimensions: 36cm width x 25cm depth x 80cm height
-  New footway construction
-  Existing road markings shown grey

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0m 50m 100m 150m This plot was produced from a digital source so may not be at true scale. It is the recipient's responsibility to confirm its accuracy.

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



Design Services

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PROJECT
Murray Road near Railway Terrace, Rugby

Proposed Puffin Crossing

TITLE
School Safety Zones and Routes Programme

Purpose of Drawing: Consultation

Drn	LM	CK'd	DAM	App'd	DAM
Date	12-11-18	Date	22-11-18	Date	22-11-18

Status
Approved (Level 3)

Scale
1:500
Sheet size
A3

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Rev.