

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Corporate Director Enterprise, Tourism & the
Environment

to

Traffic & Parking Working Party and Cabinet Committee

on

8 January 2009

Agenda
Item No.

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Coordinator

**Prittlewell Chase, Westcliff on Sea: Proposed Installation of Staggered Zebra
Pedestrian Crossings and Cycle Lanes in the Vicinity of
Southend High School for Boys
(part-funded by KeyMed Ltd)
Economic & Environmental Scrutiny Committee –
Executive Councillor: Councillor Waite
*A Part 1 Public Agenda Item***

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider the proposal to install two staggered, zebra pedestrian crossings in Prittlewell Chase, east of the access gates to Southend High School for Boys, and to seek approval to advertise the necessary Statutory Notices.
- 1.2 To consider the proposal to install advisory cycle lanes in Prittlewell Chase, between Hopleythick Lane and the Prittle Brook Greenway.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the following be supported:

- The detailed design for the installation of the zebra crossings and the advisory cycle lanes and associated carriageway works.
- The Cabinet Committee resolves that the Chief Executive and Town Clerk be authorised to advertise the relevant Notices for the zebra crossings and Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) in connection with the proposed parking restrictions and 'School Keep Clear' markings.
- Should no objections to the TROs/Notices be received, that proposals be implemented.

3. Background

- 3.1 Prittlewell Chase is a busy, 30mph distributor route, which links Leigh to central Southend. East of Hopleythick Lane, it forms the southerly boundary of Southend High School for Boys and the school's front, vehicular entrance opens onto its eastbound carriageway.

- 3.2 Bus stands have been provided on the eastbound carriageway of Prittlewell Chase, immediately east of this entrance and it is proposed that similar clearways will be installed, as part of this scheme on the westbound carriageway, between Gainsborough Drive and St George's Drive (adjacent to the existing stop outside No 84 Prittlewell Chase) and at the existing stop on the eastbound carriageway, opposite Gainsborough Drive.
- 3.3 To the west of Hobleythick Lane, the road forms the southern boundary to Southend Hospital and as a result provides parking for patients and staff both east and west of Hobleythick Lane.
- 3.4 The need for the proposed crossings has been highlighted in Southend High School's Travel Plan. At the start of the school day, students alight from buses at the stop outside No 84, Prittlewell Chase. They stand mid-carriageway, in front of the buses, in order to see oncoming traffic when attempting to cross to the central reserve.
- 3.5 At the end of the school day, there are a considerable number of students (170 were recorded in a half hour period 15:30 to 16:00 on the survey day) who exit via the school's vehicular and pedestrian accesses onto Prittlewell Chase, crossing the carriageways towards the above bus stop, to the south.
- 3.6 It is proposed that:
- The school's existing vehicular and pedestrian accesses are closed at the end of the school day and a new pedestrian exit/entrance with associated footway (inside the school boundary fence) be provided to guide students to the new zebra crossing on the eastbound carriageway.
 - A second crossing on the westbound track is placed on the pedestrian desire line, immediately north of the bus stop outside No 84 Prittlewell Chase.
 - At each crossing, the carriageway is narrowed to provide pedestrians with clear visibility of oncoming vehicles.
 - A new footway is provided linking the two crossings, with guard railing and tactile paving installed in accordance with DfT guidelines ("Guidance on the Use of Tactile Paving").

These proposals are fully supported by the school.

- 3.7 The installation of the two crossings will result in the loss of approximately 6 parking spaces on each carriageway.
- 3.8 Informal consultation has already been undertaken with parties directly affected by the above proposals.
- 3.9 At the end of the school day, parents can be seen parking on the existing 'School Keep Clear' markings and in the gap in the central reserve opposite the school's vehicular entrance.
- 3.10 As part of the scheme it is proposed that Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) are advertised to allow enforcement of the existing 'School Keep Clear' carriageway markings from 8am to 9.30am and 2.30 to 4.30pm Mon to Friday and the introduction of "at any time" waiting restrictions in this gap in the central reserve.

- 3.11 A plan showing the proposals appears in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.12 The proposed works offer the opportunity to install advisory cycle lanes, which will link those planned west of Hobbeythick Lane, to the Prittle Brook Greenway - any safety issues associated with the signalled junction at Hobbeythick Lane will be addressed at the detailed design stage.
- 3.13 The proposed cycle ways will complement other schemes currently being designed in connection with 'Cycling Southend'.
- 3.14 The carriageway narrowing proposed for the new zebra on the westbound carriageway, will facilitate the construction of build outs at the junctions of Cleveland Drive, St George's Drive and Gainsborough Drive, which will improve visibility of westbound vehicles for drivers emerging from these side turnings (currently, such visibility is often compromised by parked vehicles). In turn, this will allow the safer installation of the advisory cycle lane, by moving its alignment beyond the cars parked along the southerly kerb line of Prittlewell Chase (as advised in the DfT's Local Transport Note 2/08 'Cycle Infrastructure Design').
- 3.14 On the eastbound carriageway, it is proposed that a similar cycle lane is installed, with build outs provided at road junctions, if necessary.
- 3.15 The proposals offer reduced financial implications on the Council by virtue of the fact that KeyMed Ltd has agreed to fund the detailed design and implementation of the works associated with the zebra crossings, and the design and site supervision of those associated with the installation of the cycle lanes, together with the costs of advertising Statutory Notices, for which the company is thanked.
- 3.16 The cost to the Council of providing the cycle lanes and associated build outs is limited to the necessity to match fund monies available via 'Cycling Southend', which may be offset against KeyMed's contribution.

4. Other Options

4.1 The following alternatives were considered:

- Do nothing – not considered given the ongoing safety implications to students
- Install informal crossing points by narrowing the carriageways in Prittlewell Chase as proposed, without installing a zebra – rejected on the grounds that the provision of a formal crossing will provide additional safety benefits
- Provide a Puffin crossing instead of a zebra – rejected for two reasons:
 1. a Puffin on the westbound track might result in unnecessary congestion, with traffic queuing back to Hobbeythick Lane
 2. secondary school students tend not to respect this type of crossing, preferring to cross when there is a break in the traffic. A zebra therefore will offer the best solution in this instance
- Install mandatory, as opposed to advisory, cycle lanes – rejected on the grounds that the carriageways of Prittlewell Chase are insufficiently wide to exclude other road users from the proposed cycle lanes.

5. Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 It is recommended that the recommended proposals be adopted to enhance road safety for students attending Southend High School for Boys and to take advantage of funding available via 'Cycling Southend' for the provision of cycle lanes in Prittlewell Chase, to link with those planned west of Hopleythick Lane.
- 5.2 The provision of the cycle lanes will also complement Southend High's desire to boost cycling practice at the school.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

Implementation adds to customer satisfaction by addressing road safety issues. Implementation will also support the Council's priority to develop Community Safety through improved road safety and promote the health benefits associated with improved cycling facilities.

6.2 Financial Implications

The resource implications of this report are limited to the ongoing revenue costs for maintenance and those associated with any shortfall that might occur in connection with the installation of the cycle lanes, taking into account the match funding that can be realised via 'Cycling Southend'.

KeyMed is funding the design and consultation processes, and part-funding project implementation.

6.3 Legal Implications

Implementation of the scheme will require notices and traffic orders which follow a statutory legal process.

Any enforcement with respect to the zebra crossings is a matter for the police.

These matters have been discussed and agreed by an officer within the Department of Legal and Democratic Services

6.4 People Implications

None

6.5 Property Implications

None

6.6 Consultation

The only private residences affected by the proposed crossings are Nos 84 & 86 Prittlewell Chase, with whom informal consultation has already taken place.

Further consultation has also been undertaken with Southend High School for Boys.

If the proposals are supported for implementation, a period of formal consultation will follow with any objections to be presented at a future meeting of the T&PWP&CC.

If none are received, Cabinet Committee is being asked to resolve that the scheme is implemented without any further reference to committee.

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

The proposal will not adversely affect those with certain limitations on physical mobility: it is considered that the provision of the crossings will effectively enhance their safety by provision of formal, recognised and identifiable crossings on a busy distributor route.

6.8 Risk Assessment

The principal risks to the Council from the outcome of this report are a negative impact on Customer Satisfaction and failure to implement the project. Negative effects on customer satisfaction are mitigated through being able to respond to customer concerns in the first instance and subsequently consulting on the proposals. The likelihood of the project not being implemented is mitigated through the longstanding and trusted partnership between the Council and KeyMed.

6.9 Value for Money

Value for money is implicit in the project being developed and implemented through KeyMed's sponsorship and the match funding available via 'Cycling Southend'.

6.10 Environmental Impact

The creation of new cycle lanes will have a positive impact environmentally by encouraging increased use of cycling as a means of transport.

7. Background Papers

None

8. Appendices

Appendix 1: Plan of the Proposals