

PROPOSAL FOR PROVISION OF A PEDESTRIAN CROSSING - LOVE LANE, RAYLEIGH

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 On 9 April 2002 the Area Highways Manager presented a report to the Environmental Services Committee concerning a proposal to provide a zebra crossing in Love Lane. The resolution (Min. 143/02) is summarised as follows:-

- The report be submitted to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for further consideration.
- A sum of £7,000 to be used to enhance safety outside the school specifically for new guard rails and the planting of trees or bollards
- Letters to be sent to the School and to the Police with regard to parking practices and enforcement.

Appendix 1 contains the report submitted in April.

This report contains developments since then, concludes that the best option is the construction of a "build out" in Love Lane and seeks finance from the District Council for this if they wish to proceed

2 DEVELOPMENTS SINCE APRIL

2.1 A welcome addition to the discussions has been made by the Headmaster of Rayleigh Primary School, Mr P Malcolm, who is keen to promote safety both inside and outside the school grounds. He has concerns that if a zebra crossing were to be constructed at the Spring Gardens end of Love Lane, the current practice of parking of coaches used to ferry school children to their various venues would be curtailed because of the associated zig zag markings supporting the crossing installation. There is insufficient room to accommodate a large coach within the school grounds.

2.2 The school sports ground and swimming pool are situated five minutes' walk away in Spring Gardens. This means that, at this time of the year especially, up to 240 children are taken across Love Lane for their sports activities and Mr Malcolm is keen to support a measure that would facilitate children crossing the road.

2.3 A suggestion has been made to construct a "build out" and create priority working for traffic. This does have some merit in that it reduces the width of

the road over which the school children would have to cross. The narrowing of the road should also prevent the bad practice by some drivers of parking on the footway as traffic would not be able to pass.

- 2.4 Essex County Council has funding for the 2002/2003 financial year for reconstructing some of the footway in Love Lane, which includes the area outside the school.

3 OPTIONS

3.1 Option 1

Design and construct a zebra crossing. (Subject to Safety Audit and Consultation)

Advantages/Disadvantages

- Only suitable location in Love Lane for a crossing is at the Spring Gardens end of Love Lane.
- Some concerns with forward stopping sight distance for vehicles approaching a zebra due to the proximity of the descent towards Rayleigh Station. Recent speed checks show vehicles travel well within the speed limit here and this may reduce the forward stopping sight distance required.
- Location of the zebra crossing will only benefit pedestrians crossing at the Spring Gardens end of Love Lane
- Associated zig zag markings will prevent parking either side of the crossing. This will severely hamper the parking needs of coaches visiting the school.
- Could be of benefit by preventing parent parking but would need policing to ensure compliance. Any illegal parking would be a danger to users of the crossing by obstructing visibility.
- Road safety – statistically there is a likelihood of introducing one injury accident per year at sites where a crossing facility has been installed. There are currently no reported injury accidents at this location.

3.2 Option 2

Design and construct a “build out” extending into carriageway opposite property Nos. 11 and 13 Love Lane (Subject to Safety Audit and Consultation)

Advantages/Disadvantages

- At the "build out" there will be a reduced road width for pedestrians to cross
- A short length of wider footway will be provided where pedestrian space is at a premium outside the school
- This option will still allow for a coach to pull up at the school gate
- Should prevent parking on the opposite side of the road as vehicles would obstruct free passage
- There may be valid objections from the residents of Nos. 11 and 13
- Speed of traffic may increase as drivers compete with oncoming traffic to get through restricted width.
- It is important when considering changes that measures introduced do not produce hazards where none exist at present. It is agreed that poor driver behaviour at school time contributes to concerns. However, traffic speeds recorded at between 20 and 25 mph are appropriate for this location. Should the introduction of the option to construct the build out cause the speed of traffic to increase then the scheme would be deemed unsuccessful and the Highway Authority would want to remove it.

4 SUMMARY

The Highways Authority does not consider it necessary to provide a crossing facility in Love Lane. If, however, the District Council wishes to provide one, Option 2 provides the best solution.

5 FINANCE

Options 1 and 2 are each likely to cost £15,000, to be funded by Rochford District Council in addition to the £7,000 funding for the provision of replacement guard rails and bollards or trees. At the present time £26,700 is available within Rochford's Capital Programme for the works.

Members should note that if a "build out" is constructed and traffic speeds are shown to increase, the Highways Authority would expect the District to fund the costs involved in removing the facility.

6 RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed that this Committee **recommends**

- (1) That a detailed design be prepared for the construction of a “build out” and priority working outside Love Lane School
- (2) That the District Council provides funding for the measures already agreed outside the school and for design and construction of the “build out”

N McCullagh
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Background Papers:

Social Crossing Report from Mouchel Consulting Ltd held on file at Churchill House, Eastwood Road, Rayleigh

Appendix 1 Last Report

For further information please contact Lyn Harvey on (01268) 771458