

REPORT TO GARIOCH AREA COMMITTEE – 25 JUNE 2019

MEMBER PROMOTED ISSUE: PEDESTRIAN CROSSING OLD SKENE ROAD WESTHILL

1 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to consider the Member Promoted Issue in Appendix 1.

2 Background / Discussion

2.1 On 24 May 2019 a Member Promoted Issue (MPI) was submitted by Cllr. Walker requesting a report to Garioch Area Committee regarding:

- the installation of a pedestrian crossing at Old Skene Road, Westhill outlining the current position and delivery timescales;
- consideration of the relevant Council Policy;
- an explanation in terms of the delay in service delivery since the matter was raised in May 2016; and
- all other information pertaining to this matter

The MPI is in **Appendix 1**.

2.2 The current position with the installation of a pedestrian crossing at Old Skene Road, Westhill is that an invitation to tender is currently live to appoint a contractor to carry out the installation. The tender process is due to be completed on 25 June 2019 with a contractor anticipated to be appointed by 5 July 2019. Once a contractor has been appointed, a timescale for installation of the crossing can be provided.

2.3 Aberdeenshire Council's policy for determining if a site should have a formal pedestrian crossing installed is contained within Road Policy Note 15 – Pedestrian Crossing Assessment Policy and can be found in Appendix 2.

2.4 The delay to the progression of this crossing has been the result of a lack of internal design and project support staffing resource as well as a technical and operational issues found during the design process.

2.5 A request for a crossing point on Old Skene Road, Westhill was raised with the Service in May 2016. A previous assessment had been carried out in accordance with Road Policy Note 15 12 months prior to this request and the result at that time was that the site did not meet the criteria for a crossing and no further action was required.

2.6 A request was made to resurvey the site as the original result was close to meeting the criteria. An attempt to resurvey the site in June 2016 failed as the equipment used in the survey failed to record any data. A successful survey was then carried out in August 2016 and this second assessment showed that

the criteria was met for a formal crossing point. At this time there was no budget allocation to progress the crossing. The crossing was included as part of the 2017/18 Capital Plan and was subject to Committee approval.

- 2.7 Approval was received from Garioch Area Committee to formally progress at its meeting on 5th September 2017 (item 10 refers). This was one of many projects being undertaken and no action was carried out on this project until January 2018 due to competing pressures.
- 2.8 As there was no internal design resource (i.e. council officer) available to progress the work required to take the project through to tender and construction, an external consultant was required to complete the design work. This commission was due to be issued in January 2018 and this would have resulted in design work being completed in financial year 2017/18 with construction carried out in financial year 2018/19. However, due to wider corporate budgetary issues, Services were instructed to stop non-essential expenditure. Therefore, the commission was not able to be awarded until April 2018.
- 2.9 Designs for the crossing were submitted by the external consultant in September 2018 and a Design Road Safety Audit was undertaken by Aberdeenshire Council's Road Safety Unit. The audit highlighted that a further traffic survey to determine traffic speeds was required as the detailed design process had seen the site of the crossing move significantly from the first assessment area. There were also minor adjustments required to the design.
- 2.10 The result of the traffic survey did not require any further action and they were approved in November 2018.
- 2.11 As there was no capacity within the Roads Service to construct the crossing, a tender package was created in order to commission an external contractor to construct the crossing. During a final check an issue with the street lighting connections was discovered that would affect the operation of the beacons and the street lighting designs had to be reviewed by officers. Following consultation between the external consultant and officers, the relevant documents were amended, and a revised tender package was then produced. An Invitation to Tender was issued with a closing date of 25 June 2019.
- 2.12 Infrastructure Services previously had a dedicated Projects Team within the Roads, Waste and Landscape Service that carried out design work, coordinated external resource and project managed roads and transportation projects. However, due to difficulties with recruitment and the need to transfer staff to flood prevention work, this internal resource is not available to take forward these type of local schemes. This has resulted in increased pressure in other teams as well as a reliance on external design resource.
- 2.13 The Transportation and Roads, Waste and Landscape Service are actively looking at solutions to resolve the issues described in 2.12 to improve the project delivery process.
- 2.14 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are

incorporated within the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

2.15 Councillor Walker has also been consulted in the preparation of this report.

3 Scheme of Governance

3.1 The Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of Section B.1.1 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it is a matter that is specific to the Garioch Area and not otherwise delegated to any other Committee.

4 Implications and Risk

4.1 An equality impact assessment is not required because the recommendation does not require a decision that will have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics.

4.2 There are no staffing. There are financial implications of installing the crossing and these are estimated to be £35,000.

4.3 No Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level.

Stephen Archer
Director of Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by Martin Hall, Strategy Manager

14 June 2019

MEMBER PROMOTED ISSUE FORM

SUBMITTED BY Cllr Iris Walker, WARD Thirteen.

FULL DESCRIPTION OF THE ISSUE TO BE PROMOTED:

A full report to Area Committee is required in relation to the installation of Pedestrian Crossing Old Skene Road, Westhill outlining the current position and delivery timescales;

Cllr Walker also wishes to consider the relevant Council Policy;

Receive an explanation in terms of the delay in service delivery since this matter was raised in November 2017;

Receive all other relevant information pertaining to this matter.

IS THIS ISSUE CONNECTED OR RELATED TO ANY OTHER PROJECT CURRENTLY BEING PROGRESSED, PLEASE OUTLINE:

The timeline at the end of this MPI form demonstrates that Transportation and Roads Services are not progressing this matter in a timely manner.

HAS THIS ISSUE ARISEN AS THE RESULT OF ANY REPRESENTATION BY CONSTITUENTS OR OTHER PARTIES, PLEASE IDENTIFY ANY INTERESTED PARTIES:

This is a long-standing issue and has been highlighted by Ward Members, Westhill and Elrick Community Council and individual constituents.

HAS THIS ISSUE BEEN CONSIDERED IN THE PAST AND IF SO, WHEN AND BY WHOM (OFFICER OR COMMITTEE):

This matter is under consideration by the Transportation and Road Service but as the attached timeline demonstrates is not being concluded in a timely manner.

IF AN ISSUE PARTICULAR TO AN AREA, HAS THE AREA MANAGER BEEN CONSULTED, IF SO WHEN AND WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME?

This matter was initially raised with the current Area Manager (Garioch) at a Ward Meeting on 9 November 2017, however Cllr Walker has had dialogue with Service dating back to May 2016.

It is hoped the following timeline of activity which, at the time of writing has achieved no tangible outcome, will address the above questions:

Old Skene Road Pedestrian Crossing – Timeline

12.05.16 Cllr Walker e-mailed Principal Officer Roads.

Last item on our ward 13 agenda for your attention was the additional crossing on Old Skene Road. This was discussed in March with Philip Leiper and previously with Bob Gray. There seems to be a consensus that with the expansion of Westhill to the West and there being no safe crossing at that end of Old Skene Road, this is an issue that should be looked at.

Many residents have come forward through email, councillor surgeries and made comments directly about the need for this. Indeed it was recorded on the recent Westhill School re-zoning report that safe routes to schools would be reviewed. Again, your advice would be gratefully received.

Principal Officer Roads forwarded e-mail to Transport Strategy Officer for a response.

16.05.16 Transport Strategy Officer response.

Assessment was done for this location 12 months ago and was close to meeting but fell short, we did say we would revisit this in the future so maybe worth doing an assessment, although no current plans or funding identified for this.

Schools rezoning for Westhill have been agreed by education and new catchments taking effect from August. They have used Old Skene Road as the boundary between Crombie and Elrick all the way along so wont have large groups of pupils crossing this road (always be some out of zone placements, kids going to different nurseries, private nurseries or playgroups). For the Academy pupils, there are crossing on Old Skene road further east, near the entrance to Brimmond Drive, and another close to the Road about leading on to Westhill Drive. Pupils living south of Old Skene road could make use of these crossings to walk to the academy.

However there isn't any crossing facility west of Old Skene Road, although the majority of pupils should not need to be crossing, there may well be a community need for a crossing.

Principal Roads Officer requests another survey to be undertaken and to be advised of the outcome.

Cllr Walker responds to Principal Roads Officer & Transport Strategy Officer

Thanks very much to you both. I think there is a definite need both for Academy pupils who take the short cut through paths leading on to Leddach Road etc then they cross over somewhere round about the back of Blackhills Court and there is as you mention a community need – both for residents in Blackhills/Westdyke areas and further west towards Broadshade.

I have had many residents calling for this over the last few months and the most recent just last week hence the reason I am chasing it up. I realise there is no budget for it at the moment but if the survey was found to be favourable, it would be great to put it on a priority list when funding is available.

19.06.16 Cllr Walker e-mails Transport Strategy Officer requesting a date for undertaking a new survey, asks Officers to bear in mind school holidays are not very long away.

20.06.16 Transport Strategy Officer advises they are hoping to carry out survey that Friday – weather dependant.

Cllr Walker responds - I trust the survey will be done around the time the schools are going in and of course there are two locations to be looked at (the top end of Westhill Drive as per discussions with Scott).
Look forward to your feedback in due course.

24.10.16 Cllr Walker asks for an update.

E-mail forwarded from Principal Roads Office to Cllr Walker which details the following.

31.08.16, Transport Strategy Officer - Results from crossing assessment for Westhill Old Skene Road, I haven't shared with Councillor Walker yet. sorry it took so long, the box we put out before the holidays didn't pick up any data for some reason.

The results show that a zebra does meet the criteria, but it was mainly adults rather than school pupils crossing. I saw 8 pupils crossing and they used the island at the roundabout, adults were crossing at the bus stop, usually relating to getting on and off the bus. School boundary between Crombie Primary and Elrick runs down Old Skene Road so the requirement for a crossing is not for a school requirement but more of a community need.

31.08.16, Response from Principal Roads Officer - Thanks for the update.

No particular opinion on this, my feeling is that if there's a demand from the community and that the criteria is met then we should look to promote it. It's always nice to have some good news for a change.

I'm happy enough for you to get in touch with Cllr Walker with your results/observations.

I trust this will be procured through the Transportation team with capital funding sought through Safety Initiatives next year.

31.0.16, Transport Strategy Officer advises she will discuss budget with senior officer.

25.10.16 Cllr Walker e-mails Transport Strategy Manger requesting an update.

02.11.16 Cllr Walker e-mails Transport Strategy Officer for an update.

Update received - The criteria was meet for a crossing and I sent this on for discussion on where this may sit with the capital plan, but have not heard any more on this.

I realise I also need to discuss with you Skene School and Elrick. I will send on a response roads provided to Skene School recently. We have just installed some more cycle parking at Elrick School, but would be keen to pop out one afternoon and

see what issues they are having, I have been out many times in the past in response to concerns over congestion. The school do try hard to tackle this, but seems to always come back.

- 02.01.17 Cllr Walker requests an update from Transport Strategy Officer as last update provided advised budgets were being looked into for the works.
- 25.01.17 Cllr Walker e-mails Transport Strategy Manger requesting an update, no response received to last e-mail in October 2016.
- 03.02.17 Cllr Walker e-mails Transport Strategy Manager once again requesting an update as last e-mail in January was not responded to and out of office received.
- 06.02.17 Response from Transport Strategy Manager to Cllr Walker.

My apologies for not getting back sooner. There have been quite a few sites identified over the last few months that justify new crossings and due to other workload neither the Roads teams nor my Strategy team have the capacity to take the sites forward. I have arranged with our framework consultant to look at a series of sites where pedestrian/vehicle counts justify some form of controlled crossing. They have been asked to look at what utilities are present, exactly where to locate the crossing, put together bills of quantities etc.

At present they are working on two quite complicated sites at Burn Lane, Inverurie and Market Square, Stonehaven. I don't know if you know either of these sites but any additional crossing could impact on parking spaces, nearby traffic signals etc. and require new traffic orders. The consultant has been asked to finalise these designs by 30 April.

Then the consultant will be focusing on more straightforward sites such as Westhill. This will take place over the summer. Installation will be dependent on available budgets but would be in the autumn at the earliest.

- 17.05.17 Cllr Walker requests an update from Transport Strategy Manager and Transport Strategy Team Leader.

Response from Transport Strategy TL. Apologies for not getting back to you earlier. We should be on track to procure consultancy support in the next couple of weeks with a view to undertaking the preliminary feasibility/design works associated with crossing sites, including the site identified in Westhill.

Once we have our support in place, I'll advise of progress and proposed timetable.

I hope that helps provide some comfort to your constituents that progress will be made over the summer.

- Summer 2017 Cllr Walker e-mails requesting an update.

Transport Strategy Team Leader responds advising the Old Skene Rd scheme will be included in the programme of works being taken to the Garioch Area Committee next week which, after final ratification at ISC in October, will give us the approval to progress the scheme.

I appreciate that that time seems to have passed quickly since the proposal was first mooted, however once we have been through the formal approvals process in line with the new scheme of governance I'm hopeful that we will be able to report on some good progress thereafter.

09.11.17 Raised at Ward 13 Meeting Old Skene Road – Additional Pedestrian Crossing

Roads and Landscape Services Manager (Garioch) advised money is available to provide a crossing on Old Skene road and would be happy to engage with Parent Council.

30.01.18 Ward Meeting update, Roads and Landscape Services Manager (Garioch) advised that the matter was deferred for delivery during the 18/19 budget period.

31.01.18 Cllr Walker e-mails Strategy Team Leader mentioning ongoing projects including Old Skene Road.

07.02.18 Strategy Team Leader Transport e-mails Cllr Walker advising he will look into Old Skene Road Crossing.

15.02.18 Cllr Walker e-mails Strategy TL Transport with additional information regarding the crossing.

16.02.18 Strategy Team Leader Transport responds to query.

On the back of the feedback provided following the engagement with the Parent Council – see below, we have requested that the designer consider a crossing (if feasible) within the area marked in Blue below. I await a response from the consultant on where exactly this would be within this area but will forward that info as soon as I have it.

Unfortunately not a detailed a response at the moment I'm afraid, however some indication of the approximate locality which I hope helps a little.

01.05.18 Ward Meeting Update, Road and Landscape Services Manager (Garioch) queried where the crossing will be sited, Cllr Walker advised west of the road. Roads and Landscape Services Manager (Garioch) progressing with Active Travel Team.

30.05.18 E-mail to Cllr Walker from Strategy Team Leader (Transport)

Framework consultants were approached in January with a commission to design the pedestrian crossing on Old Skene Road, Westhill for completion in March 18. I understand that there were then budget issues which delayed the award of this commission until this current financial year. Framework consultants have again been approached to kick start this piece of work for completion this financial year and I will be able to advise as this progresses.

I am sorry that the two projects above are causing some understandable frustration and I do understand the pressure that this puts onto you. I can assure you that both projects are being progressed as quickly as possible despite the setbacks and resource issues with the best of intentions to deliver as soon as possible.

- 19.06.18 Road and Landscape Services Manager (Garioch) again queried where the crossing will be sited, Cllr Walker advised west of the road. Roads and Landscape Services Manager (Garioch) again confirmed he was progressing the matter with the Active Travel Team. Location to be evaluated by an external consultant, along with others across the Shire, in the coming months
- 08.08.16 Transport Strategy Team Leaders e-mails Cllr Walker with an update. AECOM are currently on the designs for the Westhill crossing at the moment. The site visit work has been completed and the designs are progressing. I'll try and get a firmer timescale later today and let you know once I have this back from AECOM.
- 13.08.18 Area Team requested an update from Strategy Team Leader (Transport)
- 16.08.19 Update from Strategy Team Leader (Transport) - The prelim designs for the crossing on Old Skene Road, Westhill have been completed. The final designs should be completed by the beginning of September.
- 21.08.18 Update at Ward Meeting- Crossing being assessed
- 21.08.18 Cllr Walker e-mails Director of Infrastructure Services.
- E-mails stated:- Since May 2016, I have been pushing for the provision of an additional safe crossing on Old Skene Road following representations from local residents. After requesting the Roads service carry out a survey, it was established that there is a need for an additional crossing, it meets the criteria and funding has been agreed. You will see from the attached copy correspondence that there has been a breakdown in communication from the service. Rather than keep local members up to date, officers have chosen to largely ignore requests for updates or they keep moving the goalposts.
- Local members and residents were certainly not expecting this project to take so long after the survey was done and consultation with the Academy Parent Council complete. I don't want to waste more time taking this issue as a MPI to area committee but I feel that I have exhausted all other avenues. Residents are increasingly frustrated at the lack of progress. Need is established, funding is in place, location has been agreed – what is the real hold up and can we get it done?
- 11.10.18 Area Team requested an update.
- Response from Strategy Manager (Transport) - We have now carried out a Road Safety Audit (RSA) on the designs provided by AECOM and are making amendments to take into account the advice of Road Safety colleagues. This is normally the final stages of design and we will progress to tender stage (unless we can deliver in house dependant on workloads) and provide further feedback once we have a timescale for construction.
- The key things to note from the RSA were to ensure that traffic speeds do not prohibit a crossing and also that the crossing is in the most appropriate location.
- 04.12.18 Area Team requested an update for Ward Meeting. Strategy Manager (Transport) advised tender package for the crossing point has been to local roads for review and

is now with the local roads team to tender and deliver. Future updates in this regard would be best provided by local roads team.

- 05.12.18 Area Team requested an update, Principal Roads Engineer (Garioch) - We expect the contract to be issued on PCS prior to the festive break with a view to awarding the contract early into the new year.
- 18.12.18 Area Team requested an update
- 09.01.19 Area Team requested an update
- 10.01.19 Roads and Landscape Services Manager - The contract is still not issued on PCS but will be issued in January with a contract award following on behind, probably around 6-8 weeks after the tender goes live.
- 15.01.19 Ward Meeting update, Tender for the contract will be issued via PCS in January with final contract to be awarded 6-8 weeks following this, w/c 11th March 2019
- 11.03.19 Area Team requested an update
- 12.03.19 Roads and Landscape Services Manager - We are awaiting street lighting designs and the amended tender documents and plans from the Consultant. We cannot move to the tender stage until we have all of this agreed. We will look to progress as soon as we have the relevant information.
- 19.03.19 Ward Meeting Update provided as above.

Ward members expressed disappointed at the lengthy timescale.
- 02.04.19 Area Team requested an update
- 12.04.19 Roads and Landscape Services Manager (Garioch) - Apologies for delay in responding to this one. No further update meantime I'm afraid, still awaiting finalised proposals so we can go to tender stage
- 21.05.19 Ward Meeting – no further update provided. Members agreed to raise MPI in order to seek a resolution to this matter.

SIGNED: 
Cllr IRIS WALKER

DATED: 24/05/19

Roads Policy Note

15

Subject Pedestrian Crossing Assessment Policy

Approved By : Infrastructure Services Committee

Date : 29th November 2001

Revisions : 8th October 2012
Amendment to para 3 to reflect new development criteria

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL'S PEDESTRIAN CROSSING POLICY

1 Introduction

This policy details the requirements for the introduction of different available types of crossing together with the methods for assessing which type of crossing, if any, should be installed and what supporting measures should be taken at the time of installation.

2 Types of Crossings

The options available are:-

- do nothing, no facility is warranted
- a central refuge island
- a zebra crossing
- a pelican crossing
- a puffin crossing (a more pedestrian friendly version of a pelican crossing)
- a toucan crossing (crossing for pedestrian and cyclists)
- full traffic signal control with a pedestrian phase

3 Selection Method

The key value of selecting which type of crossing is appropriate is the PV^2 conflict value where P is the number of pedestrians crossing the road and V is the number of conflicting vehicles. The PV^2 value is calculated from the arithmetic average of the four highest hourly values taken over a typical day.

To help determine which type of crossing facility is appropriate and further reflect local site conditions the following site data is collected

- the average gap size in the vehicle flow in which a pedestrian will cross the road
- the number of gaps in this vehicle flow per hour
- the average waiting delay for a crossing pedestrian, prior to accepting a suitable gap
- the type of pedestrian, such as elderly, school children, etc
- the use of the crossing by disability groups
- speed of approaching traffic
- sight lines to the proposed site
- accident record over the last three years

- lighting standard adjacent to and on the approach to the crossing area
- skid risk
- carriageway and footway width
- the percentage of cyclists who would use of could be encouraged to use a crossing point
- proximity to adjacent junctions
- waiting and loading restrictions
- proximity to adjacent crossing points

For new developments, it would be appropriate to estimate the pedestrian and vehicular traffic volumes (at completion stage). Safer Routes to School should be considered following the methodology below.

The modified PV^2 value is the PV^2 value modified upwards to take account of a list of factors which reflect local site conditions. These factors are:-

POINTS

(a) SPEED ADJUSTMENT

The following factors should be selected according to either the 85 percentile speed or the vehicle speed limit, whichever is the greater

Up to 35mph	0
36 – 45mph	+1
Over 45mph	+2

(b) VULNERABLE ROAD USERS

The following categories of pedestrians should be recorded in one hour intervals throughout the duration of the pedestrian survey. These totals should then be factored according to the total number recorded during the busiest one hour period.

Elderly/Infirm/People with disabilities/Children under 11 years old (ignore if a school crossing patroller is present)

Total of over 25 people from any of the categories in the highest hour	+1
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(c) ROAD ACCIDENTS INVOLVING PEDESTRIANS *POINTS*

Each pedestrian accident occurring within 50 metres either side of the proposed crossing.	+1.5
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(d) CARRIAGEWAY WIDTH

Less than 6 metres wide	-2
Between 6.0 and 7.0 metres wide	-1
Between 7.0 and 8.0 metres wide	0
Greater than 8.0 metres wide	+1

Note: For Dual Carriageways and sites where a staggered crossing is proposed the above widths should apply to one side of the crossing.

(e) PEDESTRIAN WAITING DELAY

Throughout the 12 hour survey, the waiting time of a random sample of ten pedestrians should be recorded on an hourly basis.

If the average waiting time in any one hour is greater than 30 seconds.	+1
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(f) LOCATION OF PROPOSED CROSSING

(i) Trunk or district distributor road dividing a substantial community	+1
(ii) Adjacent to home for the elderly, disabled or infirm	+1
(iii) Adjacent to hospital or clinic	+1
(iv) Adjacent to school or community centre	+1
(v) Adjacent to busy shops	+1

The above points are totalled and the appropriate multiplication factor obtained. A modified PV^2 is then produced by applying this factor to the original PV^2 value.

No. of Points	Multiplication Factor
1	1.1
2	1.2
3	1.3
4	1.4
5	1.5
6	1.6
7	1.7
8	1.8
9	1.9
10	2.0
11	2.1
12	2.2

4 Selection of Appropriate Type of Crossing
The most appropriate type of crossing for a particular location is chosen with the use of the following flowchart.



