

Report to: Lead Member for Transport and Environment

Date of meeting: 26 February 2018

By: Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Title: Petition requesting the introduction of a pedestrian crossing on Offham Road (A2029), Lewes, in vicinity of Blois Road.

Purpose: To consider the petition with 453 signatures presented by Offham Road Residents Action Group calling on East Sussex County Council (ESCC) to provide a pedestrian crossing facility near to Blois Road.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Lead Member is recommended to advise the Petitioners that:

- (1) Their request for a pedestrian crossing has been reassessed using the scheme prioritisation process for local transport improvements; and
 - (2) The pedestrian crossing at the Blois Road location does not currently achieve sufficient priority for funding through the capital programme for local transport improvements.
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1 Background Information

1.1 At the County Council meeting on 5 December 2017, Councillor O' Keeffe presented a petition to the Chairman on behalf of the Offham Road Residents Action Group stating:

"We, the undersigned, call on East Sussex County Council to provide a pedestrian crossing on the Offham Road (A2029) from the top of the 'piggy steps' up from Blois Road to the pathway through to Hill Road. We want this crossing so that children and parents can cross safely to Wallands School. On this stretch of the Offham Road the speed limit is 40mph which makes it hazardous to cross the road".

1.2 A copy of the petition is available in the Members' Room. Standing Orders provide that where the Chairman considers it appropriate, petitions are considered by the relevant Committee or Lead Member and that a spokesperson for the petitioners is invited to address the Committee. The Chairman has referred this petition to the Lead Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment.

2 Supporting Information

2.1 In 2006, the County Council held a public consultation on a number of schemes across Lewes as part of the Lewes Streets Ahead initiative. These included a number of measures along Offham Road which consisted of:

- The introduction of a mini roundabout at the junction between Offham Road and The Avenue;
- 'Priority working' arrangements introduced at regular intervals along Offham Road between the junctions of King Henry's Road and The Avenue to reduce traffic speeds;
- The introduction of two new pedestrian crossings on Offham Road; and
- Localised footway widening along Offham Road between the junctions of Landport Road and Wallands Crescent.

2.2 To date, the mini roundabout at the junction of Offham Road and The Avenue has been implemented using external funding from a development contribution.

2.3 In July 2013, a petition was submitted by Councillor O'Keeffe calling for the remaining measures on Offham Road to be implemented. Following the submission of the petition, a meeting was held with Councillor O'Keeffe to determine whether there were particular aspects of the Offham Road proposals that were seen as a priority. Councillor O'Keeffe identified the pedestrian crossing on Offham Road adjacent to the steps leading to Blois Road on the Landport Estate and the pedestrian crossing immediately west of the junction of Offham Road and Prince Edward's Road as the highest priorities.

2.4 Both of these proposals were assessed at that time using the scheme prioritisation process for local transport improvements to determine whether they should be priorities for possible funding through the capital programme for local transport improvements.

2.5 The pedestrian crossing west of the Offham Road / Prince Edward's Road junction scored above the benchmark and following a detailed assessment, was included in the 2017/18 Capital Programme for Local Transport Improvements. This scheme, which is part funded by a local development contribution, is currently under construction and scheduled to be in operation by the end of March 2018.

2.6 The pedestrian crossing at the Blois Road location (see Appendix 1) did not achieve the benchmark score to enable it to be taken forward for further consideration at that time. This is because it would not achieve any potential accident savings given the relatively good safety record around this location.

2.7 Following receipt of the latest petition, the request for the Blois Road crossing has been reassessed using the same scheme prioritisation process but still does not achieve the benchmark score to be taken forward to detailed appraisal for funding through the Capital Programme for Local Transport Improvements. The crash record for the last 36 months has been reviewed which shows that there continues to be a good safety record at this location. Our Traffic & Safety team have confirmed that the existing speed limit of 40mph on this section of Offham Road is appropriate for the appearance and characteristics of the road and that there are no current proposals to review the speed limit.

2.8 The Traffic & Safety team have also advised that works have been commissioned to upgrade the current school warning lights either side of the informal crossing point near Blois Road and these are expected to be installed in the near future.

2.9 The request for the crossing will be kept on file should an external source of funding come forward.

2.10 Although a pedestrian crossing at this location on Offham Road is not a priority for the County Council, the petitioners may wish to approach Lewes Town Council to determine whether they would support an application for the scheme to be match funded through the County Council's Community Match Initiative.

3 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

3.1. The request for an additional pedestrian crossing facility on Offham Road in the vicinity of Blois Road has been reassessed using the County Council's scheme prioritisation process for local transport improvements but currently does not score sufficiently highly for funding through the Capital Programme for Local Transport Improvements.

3.2 It is therefore recommended that the Petitioner be informed that whilst the County Council is unable to fund the pedestrian crossing, it is recognised that there remains a strong local desire for the crossing scheme and that they may wish to approach Lewes Town Council to explore opportunities for match funding through the County Council's Community Match initiative.

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LOCAL MEMBERS

Councillor O'Keeffe

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Petition