
Meeting: Traffic Management Meeting
Date: 16th February 2010
Subject: Petition – To create a new footway in the grass verge opposite Gilbert Inglefield and Vandyke Schools – Leighton Linlade.

Report of: Basil Jackson

Summary: The purpose of this report is to present a petition received from the Plantation Unitary Branch of the South West Bedfordshire Conservative Association on behalf of parents, teachers, governors and other members of this ward regarding children crossing Vandyke Road. This petition has been presented at Executive Committee and referred back for a further report.

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Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: Leighton-Linslade Central/Plantation

Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The provision of a footpath would improve walking routes for pedestrians

Financial:

If the proposals are accepted by Central Bedfordshire Council there will be a capital cost of approximately £70,000 for construction of a footway.

Legal:

None as a result of this report.

Risk Management:

None as a result of this report.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None as a result of this report.

Equalities/Human Rights:

None as a result of this report.

Community Safety:

Would improve safety for pedestrians

Sustainability:

Central Bedfordshire encourages the use of walking as a sustainable transportation mode where suitable

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1.

- (a) The portfolio holder for safer and stronger communities is requested to note the contents of the report following an investigation into the provision of a footpath on Vandyke Road and to recommend that no action is taken to provide a footway at this location at the present time.

Background and Information.

1. In December 2009 a petition was sent Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and forwarded for investigation to the Transportation Manager at Bedfordshire Highways on behalf of parents, teachers, governors and other members of Plantation and Heath and Reach Ward who are requesting that CBC pave the grass walkway opposite Gilbert Inglefield and Vandyke School to enable students to cross at pedestrian crossing and walk towards the town centre.
2. This petition was reported to Executive Committee on the 15 September 2009 and referred back for a further report.
3. Gilbert Inglefield and Vandyke Schools are situated on Vandyke Road.
4. There are two crossing points close to the schools.
 - A toucan crossing outside Gilbert Inglefield school leading directly into Nelson Road
 - An uncontrolled crossing point close to the Meadway mini roundabout.Students are also understood to cross the road at other points closer to town.
5. The lead petitioner considers that the uncontrolled crossing point is situated right on top of a roundabout and the ad hoc crossing points are where cars have not yet slowed down for the roundabout.
6. There is no footway leading from the toucan crossing toward the town centre on the north west side at this point.
7. The lead petitioner is therefore requesting an extension of the pavement on the northwest side from the toucan crossing as far as the southern junction of Vandyke Road and the Vandyke Road service road
8. A Safer Routes to School project has recently been implemented in the vicinity of these two schools and resulted in a number of changes to access

arrangements . part of the design process for such schemes is to look at the school travel plans and extract pertinent information to inform the design process. The creation of a footway on the opposite side of Vandyke Road was not an aspiration within the Vandyke Upper School travel plan.

9. Additionally in assessing this request for a footway it is important to note as follows:
 - That there is a perfectly suitable footway on the school side of Vandyke Road on which to walk toward the town centre.
 - The toucan crossing leads directly into Nelson Road running parallel to Vandyke Road. This is a less heavily trafficked road that is linked back via Clarence Road to Vandyke Road where a footway does exist on the north west side of the road heading into town.
 - That the uncontrolled crossing point is there to permit access to the footway leading to the properties on the Vandyke Road service road.
 - That these are middle and upper school students and being capable of walking to and from school unsupervised should be considered to be competent to make a safe crossing of Vandyke Road further toward the town if that is their wish.

10. Reference has also been made within the covering letter to the surface of the road at the roundabout which is badly pitted and dangerous for cyclist. This has been forwarded to the Bedfordshire Helpdesk for action and this will not form part of this report.

The Way Forward

9. Whilst it is accepted that a footway in this location would be a net benefit to the network there are adequate alternative routes and as a result a scheme to provide a footpath has been given a low priority and will not be included in the current five year programme.

10. The estimated cost of the works is £60 – 70k purely for footway construction. Dependant upon any necessary statutory diversions being needed and upon whether there may be a need to pipe the ditch that would adjoin part of the footpath those costs could be much higher.

Conclusion and Next Steps

No action be taken to provide a footway at this location or an additional crossing of Vandyke Road at this time.

Background Papers

Copy of Petition

A plan will be displayed at the meeting