**Meeting:** **Traffic Management Meeting**

**Date:** **15 August 2011**

**Subject:** **Dunstable Street, Ampthill - Resolution of objections to the proposed Zebra Crossing**

**Report of:** **Basil Jackson, Assistant Director of Highways and Transportation.**

**Summary:** To report to the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Services the receipt of objections to proposals for a zebra crossing on Dunstable Street, Ampthill.

Contact Officer: Caroline Almond – Assistant Engineer (Road Safety)
caroline.almond@amey.co.uk

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: Ampthill

Function of: Council

**CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

**Council Priorities:**

To improve the routes to and from school.

**Financial:**

The cost of introducing the Zebra Crossing will be approximately £35,000.
This funding is being provided from developer contributions received under S106 planning agreements.

**Legal:**

None as part of this report

**Risk Management:**

None as part of this report

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

None as part of this report

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

None as part of this report

**Community Safety:**

The proposal will improve road safety for pedestrians, in particular students at Alameda Middle and First Lower School when crossing the road on the desire line while travelling to and from school.

**Sustainability:**

None

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

**1. That the proposal to introduce a Zebra Crossing on Dunstable Street, Ampthill be implemented as set out in this report.**

## Background and Information

1. The Council conditioned section 106 allocations to facilitate improved pedestrian and cycle movements on Dunstable Street, Ampthill. It was considered that this would be best achieved by providing a zebra crossing to improve the existing school patrol crossing site for non motorised users. As part of the introduction of the zebra crossing, it will be necessary to build out the kerb edge to improve visibility and reduce the road width to that required for the zebra crossing. In addition, a white 'H' bar marking is proposed to the south of the crossing to ensure that drivers' have a clear view of pedestrians waiting to cross. The scheme would result in the loss of two or three parking spaces. This was indicated in the public notice.

2. The proposals were formally advertised by public notice in June 2011. Consultations were also carried out with the emergency services and other statutory bodies, Ampthill Town Council and Elected Members. Local residents were also consulted.

3. A total of 9 representations have been received, all of which are opposed to the advertised proposals. Copies of all of these are included in Appendix C and the comments are summarised below.

4. The main points raised by those responding to the formal consultation, in order greatest ocurrence, are as follows:-

   a) Concerns about the proposed loss of on-street parking space.

   b) Concerns about the potential loss of the existing School Crossing Patrol.

   c) Comments about the chosen location for the zebra crossing.

5. Bedfordshire Police have raised no objection.

**Conclusion and the Way Forward**

6. The following observations relate to the specific points listed above.

   a) It is accepted that some properties have no off-road parking and rely on parking on-street. This inevitably means that at some times of the day, residents might have difficulty finding a parking space close to their home. Unfortunately, if a zebra crossing is to be provided the loss of some parking spaces is unavoidable. However, in response to the concerns expressed, the visibility requirements have been re-assessed and the length of the kerb build-out could be reduced. Therefore, instead of the advertised 7.5 metres length of lost parking, as described in the public notice, only 6 metres would be lost. As a result, it is expected that one parking space to the north of the proposed crossing and one to the south, due to the 'H' bar marking, would be lost.

   b) There is a widely perceived concern that the implementation of this zebra crossing would result in the loss of the existing school crossing patrol, but this is not the case. Central Bedfordshire Council currently has no plans to remove the crossing patrol at this location.

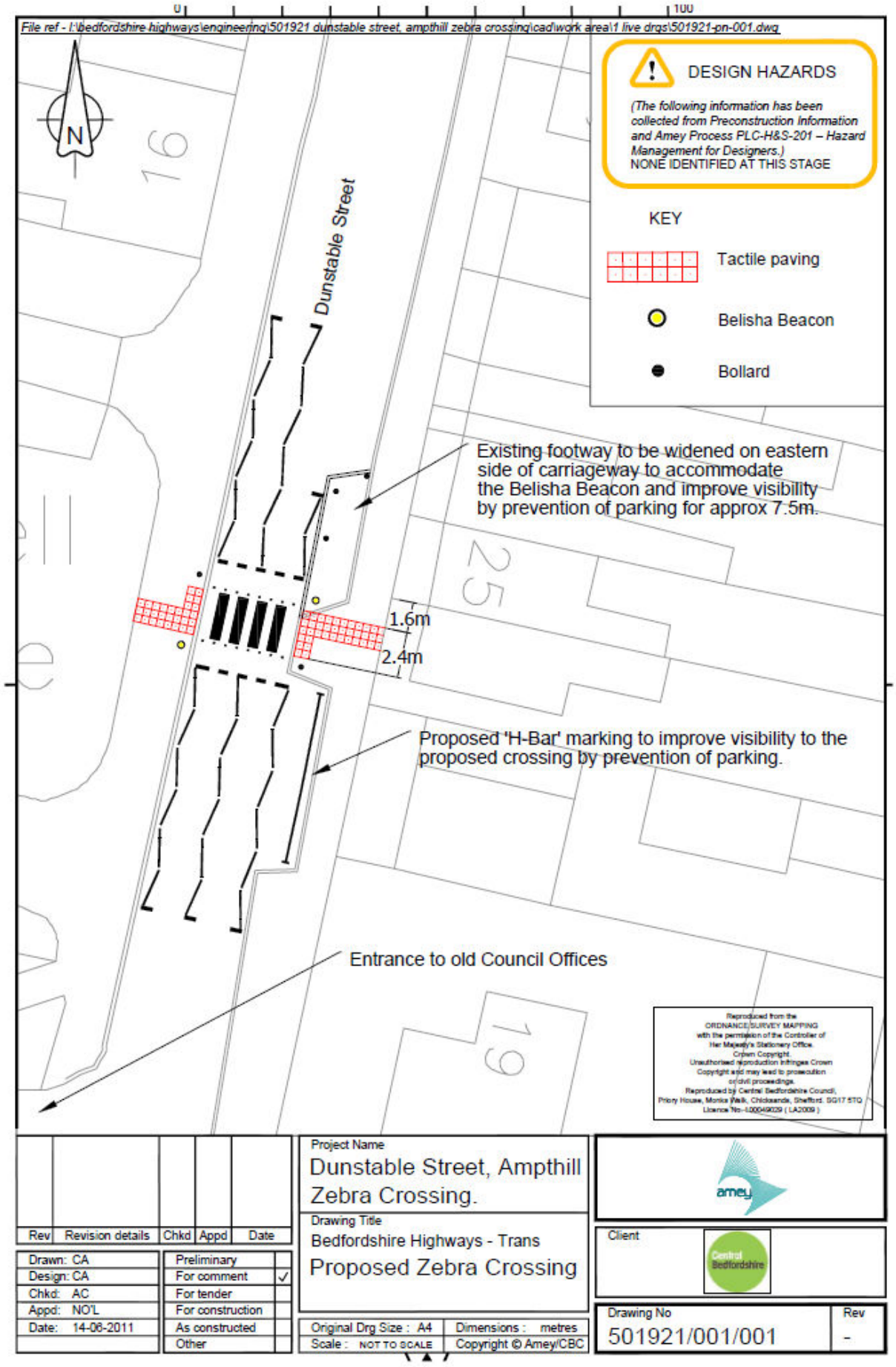
   c) The location of the crossing has been assessed to best match the desire line of the school pupils travelling to and from school. Some objectors have suggested that the crossing be sited between the two mini-roundabouts at Oliver Street and Station Road, but this would create potential road safety and traffic flow issues. Therefore, the proposed location is seen as the optimum for promoting road safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

7. In conclusion, it is felt that the proposed zebra crossing will improve road safety for non motorised users and the minimal loss of parking is needed to achieve correct intervisibility when using the crossing and is acceptable in relation to the advantages gained.

8. It is recommended that the proposal be implemented as advertised with the inclusion of the amended layout as described in 6.a) above.

**Appendices:**
Appendix A – Location plan
Appendix B – Public notice
Appendix C – Representations on proposals

## APPENDIX A


File ref - I:\bedfordshire highways\engineering\501921 dunstable street, ampthill zebra crossing\cad\work area\1 live drgs\501921-pn-001.dwg
0
100
N
DESIGN HAZARDS
(The following information has been collected from Preconstruction Information and Amey Process PLC-H&S-201 – Hazard Management for Designers.)
NONE IDENTIFIED AT THIS STAGE
KEY
Tactile paving
Belisha Beacon
Bollard
Dunstable Street
16
25
19
Existing footway to be widened on eastern side of carriageway to accommodate the Belisha Beacon and improve visibility by prevention of parking for approx 7.5m.
1.6m
2.4m
Proposed 'H-Bar' marking to improve visibility to the proposed crossing by prevention of parking.
Entrance to old Council Offices
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Rev
Revision details
Chkd
Appd
Date
Drawn: CA
Design: CA
Chkd: AC
Appd: NO'L
Date: 14-06-2011
Preliminary
For comment
For tender
For construction
As constructed
Other
Project Name
Dunstable Street, Ampthill Zebra Crossing.
Drawing Title
Bedfordshire Highways - Trans
Proposed Zebra Crossing
Original Drg Size : A4
Dimensions : metres
Scale : NOT TO SCALE
Copyright © Amey/CBC
amey
Client
Central Bedfordshire
Drawing No
501921/001/001
Rev
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**APPENDIX B**

# PUBLIC NOTICE

**ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 – SECTION 23**

## PROPOSED ZEBRA CROSSING – DUNSTABLE STREET, AMPTHILL

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL, in exercise of its powers under Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act, 1984 and all other enabling powers, propose to establish a zebra crossing on Dunstable Street, Ampthill. This proposal has been designed to improve the safety of pedestrians and other vulnerable road users, especially pupils travelling to Firs Lower School and Alameda Middle School.

The location of the proposed zebra crossing is to be sited where currently a school crossing patrol assists children crossing the road. The scheme is expected to result in the loss of several on-street parking spaces due to visibility issues at the crossing.

**The location of the proposed Zebra Crossing is as follows:-**

Dunstable Street, Ampthill :- centred approximately 45 metres north of its junction with Oliver Street.

A copy of a plan showing this proposal can be examined during normal office hours at Ampthill Library, 1 Dunstable Street, Ampthill, MK45 2NL. Please contact Caroline Almond, tel. 0845 365 6057 or email caroline.almond@amey.co.uk for further advice on this proposal.

Technology House
239 Ampthill Road
Bedford MK42 9QQ

Basil Jackson
Assistant Director for Highways

16th June 2011

**APPENDIX C**

**17th June 2011 – CORRESPONDENCE 1**

'I have just been made aware of the proposed zebra crossing on Dunstable Street and I would like to raise my concerns over this matter as a resident on Dunstable Street I find that the use of a lollipop lady is vital due to the amount and speed of traffic that travel along the road each day I fear that if a zebra crossing is put in place that vehicles will not slow down for the children to cross. And that the children will simply just walk across without properly checking first without the use of someone being there.

Also the parking at the moment is a struggle and to take away 3 more space would be ludicrous, we have noticed that even residents from Oliver Street park along Dunstable Street.
I'm sure if there was an advertised vacancy for a lollipop lady/man there would be takers or even as a volunteer.

I think if funds are no longer available for a lollipop person then a Zebra crossing should be placed in-between the two mini roundabouts along Dunstable street (between the top of Station rd and top of Oliver st) as that is a clear road with no parking along there and traffic should of slowed down for the roundabouts in the first place so speed shouldn't be a problem'.

**17th June 2011 – CORRESPONDENCE 2**

Dear Sir,

**Re: Proposed Zebra Crossing, Dunstable Street, Ampthill, BEDS.**

Further to issue of the Public Notice in respect of the above, and having had time to carefully review plans showing the proposal, we are writing to register our strong objection to the proposals. The proposals will result in the loss of three parking spaces-you will of course not be aware, but parking along Dunstable Street is already difficult for residents, and the removal of a further three spaces will only exacerbate the situation. This will result in residents either being forced to seek other parking in adjacent streets thereby causing problems else where, or parking in a dangerous manner where ever feasible.

We take safety at the crossing point very seriously-my own daughter uses it every day to got to the Firs Lower School, as will my son in due course. We see nothing wrong with the current arrangements, and accordingly would therefor respectfully request that you reconsider the above proposals.

Should you require any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact myself.

## 18th June 2011 – CORRESPONDENCE 3

'Hello

I am writing for more information and to voice my concerns surrounding the planned zebra crossing for Dunstable St in Ampthill near the junction of Oliver St

I assume that this is a money saving initiative, the crossing replacing the lollypop lady? I understand the need for such decisions in todays climate however I have serious concerns.

My concerns are that this will result in the loss of parking spaces in an area which is already short of spaces.

I live at the junction of Oliver St and Dunstable St. At present I get to park within 100 meters of my house around 5 days out of 7. Otherwise I am forced to park on Station Rd past the Crescent.

The Limes development will undoubtedly result in a greater demand for spaces in this area. I know they have some parking within the development but visitors etc will surely end up parking in the streets.

How many spaces will be lost?
Are new spaces to be created elsewhere? eg outside 14 Dunstable St which I believe is council owned and derelict, or between station road and oliver st
Can a residents scheme be introduced to ensure local people will be able to park witihin a reasonable distance of their home?
Is a zebra crossing with the associated controlled zones the right solution? How about a simple traffic island? Have other types of crossing been considered?
Is this the best location? There are other locations where parking will not be effected (a) between Baker St and Arthur St (around 46 Dunstable st or (b) between station road and Oliver st.
Is this proposal justified by a history of accidents or injuries?

Please can you advise whether residents have any right to influence these plans'?

## 18th June 2011 – CORRESPONDENCE 4

I strongly object to the proposal for two reasons:

1. The proposal will remove 3 car parking spaces. As the resident at 25 Dunstable Street the spaces will be removed directly outside my house. Parking spaces are at a premium in this part of Dunstable Street and I do not see any plans to replace the spaces anywhere else or restrict parking to residents only. This will end up with residents being forced to park in a dangerous way for example when unloading, which defeats the object of the crossing in the first place.

2. Currently we have a perfectly adequate crossing further up Dunstable Street and a lolly pop service for the school children when required right outside my house. I personally believe this is much safer than a zebra crossing, and probably much cheaper to operate.

Please take my views into serious consideration.

## 18th June 2011 – CORRESPONDENCE 5

I have just seen your proposed drawing for the zebra crossing on Dunstable Street Ampthill.

This causes the residents major problems particularly for parking our cars. It's already difficult for us to park our cars due to the lack of parking places and this propsal will be taking away another 4 places.

I thought your idea of not having a crossing lady was to save on your costs and now you are spending money on this. There are already two crossings with lights nearby one on Dunstable street and one on Flitwick Road. I would have thought putting these resources to better use at this time of austerity would be the mores ensible option.

I understand children have to be safe but I don't see this a sensible solution it won't be long before children will take a chance on the crossing whereas if the crossing lady was there its a bigger deterrent. I work in the town centre opposite the zebra crossing there and see how the cars abuse it and there are many near accidents.

The crossing lady does a very good job and she is popular with the children. Her wages put money back into to local community whereas paying a big construction firm is unlikely to do this. I also believe she will keep the children safer than a zebra crossing.

I hope you will give this a great deal of consideration if you have the best interest of the local community in mind.

## 21st June 2011 – CORRESPONDENCE 6

'May I lodge my objection to the proposed Zebra crossing at Dunstable Street.
As residents we already struggle to park anywhere near our homes and with the parking space already removed from the former Council offices the parking problem is a major issue. To remove 3 parking spaces to assist in visibility is excessive.

The knock on effect will be that residents park dangerously along adjacent streets which are already overcrowded.

This crossing has been in place many years and to my knowledge has never caused injury of any of the children crossing. The crossing lady is a valuable addition to the community and the children take far more notice of a human that a flashing light. Added to which the cost I suspect would outweigh the cost of a minimum wage employee for many a year to come, all of which comes out of the tax payers money'.

## 29th June 2011 – CORRESPONDENCE 7

'At the moment I have a tenant living there who was distressed to learn of the proposed zebra crossing to be placed outside the property.

I understand that a number of people living on Dunstable Street have opposed the plans and I would like to know how I go about voicing my serious concerns, mainly because the crossing will take the place of 3 or so car parking spaces.

It's always been difficult finding a space outside my house, or even further along the street and I have frequently had to park in one of the surgery car parks along Oliver Street. It's very dark along this road and in the winter I feel very uncomfortable having to walk the length of it'

May I also add that - as I'm sure you're aware - there are two crossings close by: one further down on Dunstable Street and the other on Flitwick Road.

Is the new crossing absolutely necessary? There is also a lollypop lady who works outside my house who does an excellent job. Is it proposed that the crossing will take the place of this lady? The government are continually emphasizing the need to become part of a bigger society/community; surely this is a contradictory move'.

## 5th July 2011 – CORRESPONDENCE 8

I am writing to make known my objections to the installing of the Zebra Crossing on Dunstable Street.
I am objecting on the basis that:

1. Parking on Dunstable Street is already difficult and removing 3 spaces will mean that people will park more dangerously on Dunstable Street.
2. The structure is only needed at the start and end of the school day.

## 7th July 2011 – CORRESPONDENCE 9

I'm writing this email to distress my feelings for the zebra crossing along near my shop (Flowers with Flair). A huge number of the public have been in my shop to complain about this matter and I really believe its not the ideal place in-between two entrances is totally wrong It will be too much and the car parking spaces were going to loose just out of order and i really think it should go the other side of the bus stop opposite the bakery as that's a better place for it or why
don't the council just pay the 6k for the lollypop lady's job, Its just wasting tax payers money.