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**Meeting:** Traffic Management Meeting

**Date:** 24 July 2013

**Subject:** Petition - Court Drive Dunstable

**Report of:** Jane Moakes, Assistant Director Environmental Services

**Summary:** The purpose of this report is to present an E petition received requesting further works in Court Drive - Dunstable

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Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: Dunstable Icknield

Function of: Council

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Priorities:**

#### **Financial:**

The cost of additional works will be met from within existing highway budgets

#### **Legal:**

None other than referred to in the report.

#### **Risk Management:**

None other than referred to in the report.

#### **Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

None as a result of this report.

#### **Equalities/Human Rights:**

None other than referred to in the report.

#### **Community Safety:**

None other than referred to in the report.

#### **Sustainability:**

None as a result of this report

## **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

- (a) The petition be noted**
- (b) That the lead petitioner be informed in respect of additional works carried out or planned for Court Drive.**

### **The Petition**

1. An electronic petition has been received by Central Bedfordshire Council signed by 135 people.

“We the undersigned petition the council to Improve the Court Drive area of Dunstable to improve safety, make it easier to use for all and to make it clear for insurance companies in the case of accidents. We submit the following needs to be changed: 1. Introduce road markings for Court Drive along its entire length. With no road markings it is not at all clear who has right of way and for such a busy road in a vital area of the town centre, road markings need to be introduced to make the area more accessible, safer to use for both drivers and pedestrians and so in the case of an accident, insurance companies have some basis of road laws to make a decision on fault. The junction with Kingsway is precarious without road markings, due to the loss of the roundabout meaning priorities have changed and there being no signs. At night it is especially dangerous because of the lack of lighting meaning it is impossible to see who has right of way if the road user is not familiar with the”

There would appear to have been more intended text but this was not present on the website.

### **2. Background**

3. The Court Drive project is a significant highway project intended to complement the town centre of Dunstable. It has been designed to provide a high quality on-street passenger/bus interchange with different areas defined by changing surface colours and detail rather than traditional raised kerblines using the principles of shared space.
4. The timing of this scheme to in place prior to the opening of the busway is part of the overall public transport enhancement works for Dunstable.
5. Court Drive also gives access to a major supermarket, College, Theatre complex and is a route to White Lion Retail Park and is thus a busy route for both pedestrians and vehicles including buses and taxis.
6. The principle of shared space is that vehicles and pedestrians use the same surfaces without strict segregation relying instead upon reduced vehicle speeds and intervisibility.
7. A number of comments had been made through social media and email by the public as the scheme progressed and since completion concerning their perceptions of the design and their feelings about their safety in using the new space.

8. All schemes of this magnitude are subject to the Road Safety Audit procedure. This is a procedure that subjects a scheme to safety audit at various stages in its life from design through completion to longer term use. It is designed to highlight any areas which, in the opinion of the auditors, may give rise to concerns in on-going use of the scheme by the intended user groups.
9. The safety audit process is a nationally agreed and used system for commenting upon the safety of designs and built schemes. The audits are carried out by trained and experienced safety engineers in accordance with the procedure set out in section HD19/03 of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.
10. The scheme was completed in spring 2013. The Stage 3 road safety audit was undertaken following the substantial completion of the works and raised a number of issues for further consideration by the design team.
11. Following a review of these concerns as part of the audit process the following potential modifications to the scheme were identified to better facilitate its use and increase differentiation at the preferred crossing points.
  - Design and install asphalt 'imprint' overlay to raise awareness of Courtesy Crossings and scheme extents. Finish to be 'oxide red' in 'cobblestone finish'.
  - Design and install 'bolt down' planting features to central reservation to stop overrun. CBC requires a choice of planting features to select from.
  - Design and install planting areas in areas where parked vehicles illegally park verge. Areas are to include a knee rail fence to protect planting from pedestrians.
  - Install a non-slip cover in carriageway at the Junction of Court Drive and Kingsway.
  - Design and install asphalt 'imprint' overlay to guide vehicles exiting the roundabout to follow the nearside kerb alignment.
  - Design roundabout feature to increase deflection for southwest bound traffic. Design to include changes to the two lane approach so that buses join normal traffic before entering the roundabout. CBC to confirm acceptability of design. Give way markings to be added to all junctions. All road markings should be undertaken in one visit so that multiple mobilisation costs are avoided.
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  - Design and install asphalt 'imprint' overlay to provide additional visual keys to clarify the intended use of the junction of Court Drive and Kingsway.
  - Design and install tactile paving on inline crossing points to national guidance. Design and install 'stud' type blisters on inline crossings.
  - Install two no. Bollards adjacent to Asda Courtesy Crossing.
  - Design and install physical restraint along Asda retaining wall.

## **Conclusion and Way Forward**

12. Some of these works i.e. the addition of red imprint patches at crossing points , along with some additional road markings have been undertaken. Other elements will be designed and implemented in the coming weeks and months.
13. These works, developed through the use of a rigorous safety audit process, are intended to improve and enhance the experience for the road users of Court Drive.
14. The lighting levels have been checked and are considered appropriate.
15. It is clear that whilst the scheme has been innovative in its use and delineation of highway space there have been concerns from those that use it that the lack of fixed delineation of spaces into those for vehicles and those for pedestrians is insufficient for them to feel comfortable in using the space. This is why a number of the changes are targeted at this aspect.
16. It is considered that these changes occasioned through the safety audit process will address the concerns raised by the petitioners. A further stage of audit is available after the scheme has been in operation for in excess of 12 months.

