



## **OBJECTIONS AND APPEALS REPORT**

Date Written	14 <sup>th</sup> January 2016
Report Author	Martin Stark
Committee Division	Objections and Appeals Sub Committee
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non Exempt
Committee Date	3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2016

*To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen*

# **Proposed Toucan Crossing - Rocky Road Penydarren, Merthyr Tydfil - Consideration of Objections**

### **1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To advise Councillors of objections received to the recently advertised Notice of Establishment for a Toucan Crossing at Rocky Road Penydarren and to recommend approval of the proposal as intended.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 That the objections received to the advertised Notice of Establishment for a Toucan Crossing at Rocky Road Penydarren be noted but discounted on road safety grounds so as to allow the introduction of the crossing as intended.

### **3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The proposed Toucan Crossing at Rocky Road is part of the Penydre Safe Routes in Community Scheme. The overall aim of the scheme is to improve walking and cycling links for the communities of Dowlais/Pantysgallog/Galon Uchaf and Gurnos. It will improve access to the local schools, in particular Penydre, hospital, shops and leisure facilities at Cyfarthfa Park. The overall scheme includes widening of footpaths and installing new controlled crossings.

- 3.2 The current routes the pupils walk to school mean having to cross a number of 30mph roads at Gurnos Road, Galon Uchaf Road and Rocky Road. This scheme will allow pupils to avoid a roundabout at Galon Uchaf and the area around Pant Industrial Estate where the volume of vehicles is higher due to a nearby junction with the A465 Trunk Road. Concerns have been raised by the headteacher and parents on the current routes available and the overall project will reduce or eliminate those.
- 3.3 The overall scheme will improve accessibility and safety for pupils travelling to and from Penydre High School. By encouraging walking and cycling and its benefits as a mode of transport and also allowing people to enjoy open spaces, it will improve health and fitness levels and social interaction, this is a key area of the Single Integrated Plan. The installation of controlled crossings will make the area a safer place to walk and cycle to school. Penydre High school has existing cycle parking facilities and has had some additional cycle training for children in Year 8 and Year 9/10. The improvements will make the walk a more pleasant and safer experience for not just the school children but the wider community also. This scheme also links well with the Active Travel (Wales) Bill in improving and promoting walking and cycling routes within the County Borough.
- 3.4 The scheme will improve general road safety within the community. By installing controlled crossings and improving off road paths, the pupils and wider community will have a safer way to access schools, hospital, shops and the facilities at Cyfarthfa Park. This scheme is consistent with the Welsh Governments Road Safety Strategy for reducing casualties, especially achieving a reduction in child casualties and in improving school/community environments.
- 3.5 The development of this scheme will provide a safer walking and cycling route and will encourage pupils who would not have previously considered cycling or walking as a commuter option. The scheme will change pupils' behaviour/attitude to active travel.

### **3.6 CONSULTATION/PUBLIC NOTICE**

- 3.7 Consultation was carried out with Penydre School involving meetings and to discuss the current route to and from the School. A consultation letter drop was carried out to residents in the vicinity of the Rocky Road Toucan crossing in October 2015. In accordance with Statutory procedures, public notice was given of the County Borough Council's intention to establish a Toucan Crossing and included a Notice advertised in the Merthyr Express on 24<sup>th</sup> December 2015 stating that objections to the Notice should be returned by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Public Notices were also displayed on site. Details of the Notice and a plan showing the location is indicated in Appendix A for Councillors' information.

### **4.1 OBJECTIONS**

- 4.2 The Council has received a petition and objection to the advertised Notice of Establishment and this is attached in Appendix A for consideration.
- 4.3 Officers have carefully considered the petition and make the following observations.

- 4.4 The zig-zag markings associated with the crossing will reduce on-street parking in the vicinity of no's 20/21 by approximately 7 vehicles outside the properties and 7 opposite. It is acknowledged some residents would not be able to park at the same location however there are no other restrictions in the vicinity and alternative parking will be available off the zig-zag markings a close distance away. The crossing zig-zag markings are outside a driveway, however, manoeuvring is still possible in and out as the markings will not prevent this and the driveway will remain accessible.
- 4.5 The audible signal associated with the crossing can be adjusted if necessary should the usual level be unacceptable to residents. Should the crossing be damaged or vandalised it would be maintained by the Highway Maintenance Section in accordance with usual procedures. It is not uncommon for controlled crossings to be installed in residential areas, outside properties and the introduction of a crossing at this location would encourage the use of the footpath as intended. The footpath has recently been improved and use of the crossing will increase once the communities become aware of its presence and will provide a controlled crossing point across Rocky Road.
- 4.6 The Toucan crossing location at Rocky Road is proposed because there is a gap of approximately 18 metres between property no.s 20/21. This enables the Crossing to be located mid-way and as far away from each property as possible. The location also provides more visibility than further up Rocky Road near the bend at Galon Uchaf roundabout. The crossing is also located adjacent to the established footpath and therefore a desire line at this point. The footpath has recently been improved and provides continuity between Pant and Galon Uchaf. The crossing will improve accessibility and road safety for pupils travelling to and from Penydre High School.
- 4.7 Council Officers consider the Toucan Crossing would provide an important facility for pedestrians and cyclists to cross Rocky Road at this location and should be introduced for road safety reasons as intended.
- 4.8 In making a decision the Appeals Committee is required to consider the petition in determining the outcome of the proposal to introduce the Toucan Crossing on Rocky Road.
- 4.9 Officers have carefully considered the petition and consider the objections should be noted but discounted on road safety grounds so as to allow the introduction of the Crossing as intended.

## **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

- 5.1 The cost of this crossing and also the other crossings associated with the Safe Routes in Community Scheme is being met by available Welsh Government funding in the 2015/16 financial year.

## **6.0 SINGLE INTEGRATED PLAN AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT SUMMARY**

6.1 The Single Integrated Plan & Sustainability Impact Assessment has been completed and the proposals positively impact on a number of aspects of the Corporate Plan and Single Integrated Plan, including People in Merthyr Tydfil have the opportunity and aspiration to learn and develop their skills to maximise their potential, People in Merthyr Tydfil benefit from a strong, sustainable and diverse economy, People, who live and work in Merthyr Tydfil are supported to enjoy a healthier and better quality of life, Sustainable Development - enhancing the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of people and communities, achieving a better quality of life for our own and future generations and Financial Sustainability of Public Services. No negative impacts have been identified.

## **7.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full assessment is required. The form can be accessed on the Council's website/intranet via 'Equality Impact Assessment' link.

7.2 The positive impacts of the proposed Toucan Crossing are as follows:-

- (i) The Crossing at Rocky Road is one of a number of crossings as part of the Penydre Safe Routes in Community Scheme. The overall aim of the project is to improve walking and cycling links for the communities of Dowlais/Pantysgallog/Galon Uchaf and Gurnos. Access will be improved to the local schools, hospital, shops and leisure facilities at Cyfarthfa Park.
- (ii) This location provides a direct link to the footpath opposite which has recently been improved and provides continuity between Pant and Galon Uchaf.
- (iii) The Crossing provides a location that allows pupils to avoid the Galon Uchaf roundabout and the area around Pant Industrial Estate where the volume of vehicles is higher due to the A465 Trunk Road.
- (iv) Reduce concerns raised by the headteacher and parents on the existing routes available.
- (v) The crossing will improve accessibility and safety for pupils travelling to and from school.
- (vi) Encouraging walking and cycling, allowing people to enjoy open spaces, improve health and fitness levels and social interaction. The location is subject to a 30mph speed limit and the installation of a controlled Toucan crossing will make the area a safer place to cross the road.
- (vii) The improvements will make the walk a more pleasant and safer experience for school children and also the wider communities. This scheme also links

well with the Active Travel (Wales) Bill in improving and promoting walking and cycling routes within the County Borough.

- (viii) This scheme will improve general road safety within the community. By installing a controlled crossing, the pupils and wider community will have a safer way to access schools, hospital, shops and the facilities at Cyfarthfa Park.
- (ix) The development of this route would provide a safer walking and cycling route and will encourage pupils who would not have previously considered cycling or walking as a commuter option.
- (x) The Crossing will also help change pupils' behaviour/attitude to active travel.

7.3 There are no negative impacts. Alternative on-street parking will be available in the area and the drive-way will still be accessible.

7.4 The proposal to introduce these improvements involves the provision of a Toucan Crossing at Rocky Road Penydarren, the location of which is indicated in Appendix A.

**ELLIS COOPER**  
**CORPORATE DIRECTOR**  
**(PLACE AND TRANSFORMATION)**

**COUNCILLOR DAVID JONES**  
**CABINERT MEMBER FOR**  
**NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND**  
**PUBLIC PROTECTION**

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>		
<b>Title of Document(s)</b>	<b>Document(s) Date</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
Traffic Management File H10.0	Ongoing	Traffic Management Section, Unit 20 Pentrebach
<b>Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?</b>		

***Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.***