

WARDS: Norton, Pedmore and Stourbridge East

AGENDA ITEM NO.

DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

STOURBRIDGE AREA COMMITTEE – 9TH FEBRUARY 2004

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

OLDSWINFORD CROSS, STOURBRIDGE: REQUEST FOR PEDESTRIAN CROSSING FACILITIES AT TRAFFIC SIGNALS

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To respond to Area Committee's request for a report regarding the possibility of introducing crossing facilities for pedestrians at the traffic signalled junction at Oldswinford Cross, Stourbridge.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At your meeting of 10th December Area Committee requested a written report for the next meeting, regarding the possibility of introducing pedestrian crossing facilities at the crossroads. (Agenda Item 13.2 refers).

2.2 Traffic Flows

- 2.2.1 The four-arm junction of Hagley Road (A491), Heath Lane (B4186) and Glasshouse Hill (B4186) Oldswinford, is traffic signalled.

- 2.2.2 Between 7 am and 7 pm on typical weekdays, each approach to the crossroads is used by the following numbers of vehicles:-

(1)	Hagley Road (north side)	8813 10075	in out
(2)	Glasshouse Hill	7961 6449	in out
(3)	Hagley Road (south side)	9419 11185	in out
(4)	Heath Lane	8395 6879	in out.

- 2.3 The junction suffers from severe delays to traffic during both peak and off-peak periods. Many complaints are received regarding queues, which can reach as far back as the 'Foley Arms' roundabout.
- 2.4 In order to maximize the operational efficiency of the junction, the signals run on a 'SCOOT' (split cycle and offset optimization technique) system. 'SCOOT' is an adaptive system which responds automatically to traffic fluctuations. It can identify and measure traffic movements and allocates 'green times' in response to existing traffic conditions.
- 2.5 Recorded Personal Injury Accidents at Junction
- 2.5.1 The number of recorded personal injury accidents at Oldswinford Cross over the past three years was seven, six of which involved vehicles only.
- 2.5.2 The only injury accident involving a pedestrian occurred when an intoxicated man stepped in front of moving traffic in Heath Lane. The injured pedestrian admitted liability for causing the accident.
- 2.6 Existing Pedestrian Crossing Facilities
- 2.6.1 At the junction, there are central refuges on all four arms. These currently assist pedestrians crossing each half of the carriageway as vehicles become stationary.
- 2.6.2 There are two pelican crossings in Hagley Road, one near Field Lane and the other in front of Stourbridge College. A third pelican crossing assists commuters to cross Brook Road, to and from Stourbridge Junction railway station.
- 2.7 To introduce pedestrian stages within the operation of the existing signals would, when called, effectively close down the entire junction. This would exacerbate existing delays, and would extend, significantly traffic queues on all approaches. .
- 2.8 Whilst in no way diminishing the needs of pedestrians unfortunately this strategic junction in its current form is incapable of reconciling those needs with the resultant impact on traffic flows.
- 2.9 Therefore, the only acceptable way in which pedestrian facilities could be provided would be part of a major junction improvement requiring significant parcels of land and property.

2.10 Regrettably with the withdrawal of planned projects for Western Bypasses, which might have provided relief for this route and therefore allowed more favourable consideration of pedestrian facilities, it is difficult to foresee the provision of such without a costly major improvement at this junction for which funds are currently not available.

2.11 However, this junction will be considered further for possible inclusion in a future programme of works as may be identified within the Boroughwide Highways Improvement Strategy shortly to be commenced.

2.12 Sustainable Transport

Facilities for pedestrians can assist sustainable forms of transport.

3.0 PROPOSAL

3.1 That the contents of this report be noted.

4.0 FINANCE

4.1 There are no funds available to introduce a major junction improvement scheme at Oldswinford Cross, Stourbridge.

5.0 LAW

5.1 Pedestrian crossing facilities are provided under powers contained in Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, subject to regulations made by the Secretary of State for Transport.

5.2 Powers to acquire land by agreement or compulsorily for the construction or improvement of highways are contained in Sections 238 and 239 of the Highways Act 1980.

5.3 Highway improvement lines are provided under Section 73 of the Highways Act 1980.

6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

6.1 The contents of this report comply with the Council's Policy on Equal Opportunities.

7.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 That Members agree the proposals contained in paragraph 3 of this report.

.....
.....
Director of the Urban Environment - John B. Millar

Contact Officers: Graham Isherwood, ext. 5459,
 Peter Van Geersdaele, ext. 5437

Background Papers

- 10.12.03 Minutes of Stourbridge Area Committee.