

WARDS: Belle Vale, Hayley Green and Cradley South

AGENDA ITEM NO 13

DUDLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

HALESOWEN AREA COMMITTEE – 30th MARCH 2005

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

**BUS SHOWCASE ROUTE No9 – A 458 BELLE VALE
JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT**

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 To report the results of public consultation and to seek the committees support to the proposed improvement to the junction of Belle Vale and Lutley Mill Road with the A458 Stourbridge Road, Halesowen.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 At its meeting of 17th November 2004 the area committee supported a report of the Head of Traffic and Road Safety designating the A458 Halesowen Stourbridge Corridor as an active Bus Showcase route and to receive future reports as and when schemes along the route were developed.

2.2 Junction improvements are being sought along the route to improve journey times for all users and in particular to secure bus journey time reliability and in general to improve the public transport option.

2.3 The existing Belle Vale - Lutley Mill Road junction although being very busy actually represents little delay to A458 traffic, however, the complex nature of this staggered junction makes pedestrian movements across the main road to and from adjacent bus stops extremely hazardous.

2.4 As a guide to best practice the “Bus Showcase Handbook” promoted by the West Midland Metropolitan Authorities and major bus operators indicates that it is essential that good pedestrian access is provided to bus stops at all times. This can include controlled pedestrian facilities such as pelican crossings.

2.5 It had been suggested that the junction should be realigned and signalised but this increased delay and required the relocation of the existing bus stops. A preferred alternative scheme has been developed that includes widening the A458 Stourbridge Road in the vicinity of the junction to accommodate right turning traffic and a minor realignment of Lutley Mill Road junction. The bus stops that remain roughly in their existing relative positions would be connected by the provision of a controlled pedestrian (Pelican) crossing. The scheme would also include some waiting and loading restrictions to safeguard the passage of traffic.

2.6 Following a verbal report to the area committee of the 2nd February 2005 public consultation has taken place. The results of the consultation are appended to this report, however, in summary it was found that, as at the 22nd February, there have been 285 questionnaires out of a distribution of 820 have been received which represents a return of 35%. Of these 261 (92% of those returned) were in favour of the scheme, 13 (4%) were against and 11 (4%) expressed no opinion.

2.7 No adverse comments have been received from the emergency services and Centro.

3.0 PROPOSAL

3.1 That the area committee note the findings of the public consultation and support implementation the scheme as proposed in Drawing No T 04r1.

3.2 In an effort to avoid delay to the proposals the area committee agree that final decisions on any unmet concerns be made by the Cabinet Member for Transportation in consultation with the Director of the Urban Environment.

4.0 FINANCE

4.1 The scheme will be wholly financed from the Highways Capital settlement - Bus Showcase Joint Metropolitan Initiatives - as coordinated by the Passenger Transport Executive "Centro".

5.0 LAW

5.1 The Council is empowered to improve Highways under section 62 of the Highways Act 1980.

5.2 Section III of the Local Government Act 1972 empowers the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive to or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

6.1 Improved public transport will support the Councils policy on equal opportunities.

7.0 RECOMMENDATION

7.1 That the Area committee agree the proposals as set out under section 3 above.



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Director Directorate of the Urban Environment - John B. Millar

Contact officer: Martyn Holloway Ext: 5426

Background documents used in preparation of this report:-

i) Report to the Halesowen Area Committee dated 17th November 2004

Appendix: Public Consultation Findings

The main points raised by the objectors were:-

	Objector's Comment	Response
1	We don't understand why the road would be moved towards our house and not the other way there is open land! Residents of 1 Lutley Mill Road.	This is to increase the distance between the two junctions (Belle Vale and Lutley Mill Road) to accommodate the pelican crossing.
2	I would prefer a traffic light controlled junction incorporating pedestrian crossings and not as suggested.	This option has been investigated, however there would be problems associated with this. as there could also be a safety problem by placing the signals at the bottom of steep inclines. The eastbound bus stop would need re-locating and as signalisation would delay buses
3	The crossing is in the wrong place it should be above Beecher Road East on DH and would be shorter crossing in safety.	This would place the crossing at the bottom of a steep incline. The pedestrian desire line would probably shift to the pelican location where it is currently difficult to cross.
4	More people cross the A458 at the bottom of Drews Holloway than where you plan to put a pelican crossing.	See above.
5	Putting a pelican crossing between 2 road junctions seems daft but that seems to be the norm for planners.	It is in accordance with the design standards.
6	The problem is turning right out of BVR not LMR. Traffic lights are a better option.	There are problems turning from all arms of the junction. See above regarding provision of traffic lights.
7	Plans would make right turn out of Beecher Road East and Belle Vale even harder than now. I would support plans making r turn out of these two roads easier. These are actions I regularly take, but never need to turn right into Lutley Mill Road.	The pelican crossing may provide gaps for right turning traffic from BVR and therefore may improve the situation.
8	Already too much traffic up Drews Holloway in rush hour from traffic lights. Even more if another set of traffic back up on Stourbridge Rd and it is difficult to pull out from our road. (resident of Foxhollies Drive)	The scheme should not increase the traffic flows on Stourbridge Road. There are currently no plans to signalise the junction with Foxhollies Drive.
9	I think this scheme would cause problems turning right out of Belle Vale, Beecher Road East and Lutley Mill Road. There are problems now.	The pelican crossing may provide gaps for right turning traffic from BVR and therefore may improve the situation
10	The pelican crossing would be safer located west side of BRE just inside Drews Holloway.	This would place the crossing at the bottom of a steep incline.
11	A much more satisfactory approach would be to realign Belle Vale & Lutley Mill Road with each other & then install traffic signals with signal controlled ped crossings. The land is available to carry out the alignment. It also has the advantage of not moving the traffic in an already heavily trafficked rd nearer to 12 residential properties in LMR.	This idea was investigated. The eastbound bus stop would require relocation either westwards or eastwards further up Stourbridge Road. The signals would be at the bottom of a steep incline.
12	Some sort of crossing should be introduced for pedestrians parents/children have trouble. But not to be widening.	The respondent appears to be in favour of the crossing but not the carriageway widening.
13	One respondent offered no comments	