

REPORT: Executive Board Sub-Committee

DATE: 7 December 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Proposed Zebra Crossing – Cronton Lane, Widnes

WARDS: Farnworth

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report the results of a consultation exercise for a proposed zebra crossing on Cronton Lane and to determine the action that should be taken.

2. RECOMMENDED: That:

- 1) the comments received be noted and the zebra crossing proposal be discontinued in favour of implementing an improvement to the refuge island at the roundabout, subject to consultation with the adjacent landowners; and
- 2) the location continue to be monitored to see whether further improvements are required following the improvements to the refuge.

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Area Forum for Birchfield, Farnworth and Halton View received a request from the residents of the new houses recently built and being constructed off Norlands Lane to install a pedestrian crossing on Cronton Lane outside the shops. Following informal discussions it was decided to investigate a zebra crossing, as the funding for a Puffin Crossing was outside the scope of the Area Forum.
- 3.2 A possible location was found and the proposal was advertised in the local press and on site for a period of some four weeks leading up to 31 May 2006. Comments were received from the Post Office about the difficulties a pedestrian crossing would cause to the operation of their business. Subsequently a number of comments were received both in favour and against the proposal from residents in the area, and also from the owner of Cronton Fish Bar No.2 and Bargain Booze. Also a petition was submitted in favour of the crossing via Councillor Cross. The number of people who have written supporting the crossing is 8, plus 88 people included in the petition. The number objecting is 102 including the three businesses above.
- 3.3 A pedestrian/traffic survey was carried out on Tuesday 12 September 2006. Although a controlled crossing is not justified under the former national criteria, there were a significant number of pedestrians crossing Cronton Lane. This indicated that the busiest time for pedestrians was between 18.00 and 19.00,

which is unusual and the surveyors indicated that it was people using the chip shop and off licence.

- 3.4 At present there are double yellow lines on Cronton Lane outside the shops, which prohibit parking, but there is an exemption for the delivery of goods to the adjacent shops, and this is particularly important for deliveries to the Post Office. The installation requirements of a zebra crossing includes zigzag lines which would prohibit parking, loading and unloading. Contravention results in the driver being prosecuted for an endorsable offence and therefore delivery drivers will not stop on them to deliver to the shops. This would cause operational problems for the shops
- 3.5 In the last five years there have been two reported injury accidents in the vicinity and neither of them involved pedestrians. Both accidents involved parked cars.
- 3.6 In view of the comments received, it is clear that the zebra crossing proposal, however desirable, would be divisive. An alternative improvement for pedestrians has therefore been developed. This would widen the refuge island and provide an additional length of footway outside the barber's shop. See plan attached to the report. This would help to reduce the conflict between pedestrian and vehicles and provide, it is hoped, an acceptable compromise.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Resource Implications

- 5.1.1 The zebra crossing proposal was to be funded from Area Forum budgets, the alternative improvements outlined in 3.6 are estimated to cost £10,000 and can be funded from within the same allocation. The on-going revenue costs would be minimal and met from existing Highways budgets.

5.2 Social Inclusion, Sustainability and Best Value Implications

- 5.2.1 None

5.3 Legal Implications

- 5.3.1 If the Council proceeded with the zebra crossing proposal and the Post Office complained to the Ombudsman, then it would be difficult to justify the need for the crossing, given the lack of relevant pedestrian accidents.

5.3 Crime and Disorder Issues, Human Rights Act Implications

- 5.3.1 None

6. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

6.1 Document	Available for inspection	Contact
Letters and e-mails received	Highways & Transportation Department	Stephen Rimmer Ext. 3182
Petition from residents	Rutland House Halton Lea	
Pedestrian/vehicle survey results		

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO CRONTON LANE/NORLANDS LANE, WIDNES

