

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE : **Environment, Planning and Infrastructure**

DATE: **6<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

DIRECTOR: **Gordon McIntosh**

TITLE OF REPORT: **Notice of Motion from Councillor Malone – “To instruct the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure to support the request by the International School of Aberdeen and install a safe pedestrian crossing similar to other crossings on North Deeside Road at the entrance of the School. At present there is no safe crossing and pupils and community members must negotiate a very busy road.”**

REPORT NUMBER: **EPI/12/162**

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This is a background report which responds to Councillor Malone’s Notice of Motion “to instruct the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure to support the request by the International School of Aberdeen and install a safe pedestrian crossing similar to other crossings on North Deeside Road at the entrance of the School. At present there is no safe crossing and pupils and community members must negotiate a very busy road”.

Following the deferral of this item by the committee on the 11<sup>th</sup> September further discussions have been held with the school and an update is provided.

**2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

There are no recommendations at this time.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising from this report. The International School of Aberdeen has informally intimated that they are willing to finance any proposal accepted by Aberdeen City Council.

#### **4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT**

- 4.1 The content of the report meets with the local Community Plan objectives to continually improve road safety and maximize accessibility for pedestrians and all modes of transport.
- 4.2 The proposals are in line with the Council's Transportation Strategy to improve safety for all road users by continuing to reduce the number of casualties in traffic collisions.

#### **5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

None arising from this report

#### **6. REPORT**

##### **Background**

- 6.1 At its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2012 full Council considered a motion raised by Councillor Malone "to instruct the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure to support the request by the International School of Aberdeen (ISA) and install a safe pedestrian crossing similar to other crossings on North Deeside Road at the entrance of the School. At present there is no safe crossing and pupils and community members must negotiate a very busy road"
- 6.2 Council officers have been in discussions with the International School of Aberdeen for the previous 18 months to bring forward a scheme to enhance pedestrian safety at this location, and these discussions are still in progress.
- 6.3 This issue originates from the Planning Application for the relocation of the school.
- 6.4 A Transportation Statement was submitted in support of the application with regard to the impact the development was likely to have on the local roads network.
- 6.5 Within this statement it was indicated that, at that time, the vast majority of the pupils were taken to the school by buses provided by the school that the majority of the remainder travelled by car. In short only 1% of pupils cycled/walked to school and when school staff were included the figure rose to 2% of daily visits.
- 6.6 It was indicated that this bus service would continue after the move and that the travel split would remain.

- 6.7** The proposal in the Planning Application was approved on the information submitted and did not include a requirement for a pedestrian facility. Had a pedestrian facility been highlighted by the schools consultants as a requirement at the planning stage then the roads mitigation necessary to support the application would have reflected this along with the conditions associated with a crossing facility.
- 6.8** Correspondence from the School's engineering/planning consultant restarted in August 2010 shortly after the new school opened, requesting that ACC consider the introduction of a pedestrian facility.
- 6.9** Initial surveys were carried out to determine the numbers of people walking and cycling to the School, and also to record the level of community usage. These surveys indicated a level well below that which would be necessary to support the introduction of a crossing facility.
- 6.10** When considering the survey results a meeting was held with the School Management, Head Teacher, their Planning/Engineering Consultant and the Council's Traffic Management Team to discuss the various options that had been suggested by the school and to rule out those that were not possible. The discussions also considered the means by which to take forward those options that had potential.
- 6.11** Various measures were discussed at length and these included, reducing the speed limit on North Deeside Road, Pelican/Puffin crossings, Zebra Crossing, Pedestrian Refuge Islands and School Crossing Patrollers.
- 6.12** Of these options only the Pedestrian Refuge Islands and installing a School Crossing Patroller were considered viable by the Traffic Management Team. It was suggested that the ISA take forward these two options for further investigation. The school does not wish to pursue the option of a School Crossing Patroller.
- 6.13** Proposals for retro-fitting a pedestrian refuge island at either side of the School entrance were submitted. However, on both occasions the design did not meet the recommended standards and guidance on best practice documents contained within the "Design Manual for Roads Bridges" and the recommendations in "The Design of Pedestrian Crossings" and "Cycling by Design".

### **Update**

- 6.14** A meeting 26th September was attended by Councillor Malone, representatives of the International School Aberdeen and officers from the City Council to review crossing options.

- 6.15** The outcome of this meeting was that a facility could be installed subject to a departure from standards that officers felt could be accommodated in the constrained circumstances.
- 6.16** The standards contained within the design guidance documents indicate that separate independent running lanes be provided for both motorised vehicles and cyclists with a central island capable of accommodating cyclists and pedestrians. Whilst provision to the absolute standards is achievable within a green field environment it is necessary to consider the constraints of the existing environment and in this particular case the urban environment
- 6.17** The design of a scheme to meet the recommended design standards would include the widening of the North Deeside Road by approximately 1.2 m requiring existing walls and mature trees to be taken down and replaced. The cost of the widening the road and impact on the built environment would very high when compared to the level of provision and would not be in scale. It is therefore considered that provision a pedestrian island at this location to meet the recommended design standards would not be a cost effective or affordable option.
- 6.18** A departure from the recommended standards that will provide a pedestrian crossing facility has been considered and can be accommodated within the existing road boundary without any significant additional risk to other road users and whilst maintaining visibility and sight stopping distances.
- 6.19** A layout for a pedestrian island that meets the minimum design standards for a pedestrian crossing and which is similar to existing crossing facilities on the North Deeside Road is possible within the current road boundaries. However it will be noted that in order to accommodate the pedestrian crossing island it will not be possible to provide a dedicated cycle lane through the location of the island but will revert to a standard shared carriageway over this short section.
- 6.20** We currently await an updated design from the school's consultants, taking account of the agreed criteria and specifications, but are confident that an acceptable design will be forthcoming.

## **7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

Ruth Milne  
Technical Officer,  
[rumilne@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:rumilne@aberdeencity.gov.uk)  
(01224) 538052

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

N/A