

MN004280 Bishops Lydeard Phase 2 - Sites 3 and 9

joanna.zalewska@somerset.gov.uk | THU MAR 26 15:02 | 7 minute(s) read

David

Following the design review, it has been brought to my attention that there are potentially a few issues that have been identified for sites 3 and 9:

1. **Site 3** – Mount Street, where the original TPA design included an uncontrolled crossing just north of the garage.

A. Parking - it is noted that there is a regular parking at this location. This would mean that waiting (and possible loading) restrictions would be needed to ensure that visibility of and for pedestrians is provided and maintained where people are encouraged to cross, so that they may do so safely. The introduction of such restrictions (which may remove the ability to park for around 40m each side of the proposed uncontrolled crossing point) may well face resistance from residents and businesses. While Somerset Council would undertake formal consultation on any restrictions as part of the Traffic Order making process, if and when that stage is reached, it may be worth the Parish Council informally consulting with those likely to be directly affected to ensure that this is likely to be acceptable, before further time and cost is incurred. I would appreciate your thoughts on the possible parking restrictions that may be required around the new pedestrian crossing, and confirmation if any concerns related to the parking loss from the adjacent residents/ businesses have been ever raised.

I am aware that losing parking is never a welcomed decision but we need to address safety concern here, and I hope you understand the likely implications if any accidents occur in the vicinity of the proposed crossing. Please could you confirm if any discussions were ever had with the adjacent business/residents about possible loss of parking.

B. Pedestrian crossing location – perhaps a more of concern, is that all pedestrians were observed during the site visit crossing at a distance from the proposed uncontrolled crossing location identified in the TPA handover report. The desire line for pedestrians appears to be between the short section of footway on the eastern kerb side (between the Hither Mead junction and the Village Hall access) and the footway alongside the car parking area to the west.

While this location is problematic, having the potential for multiple conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles, providing a crossing at an alternative location not near a pedestrian desire line is most unlikely to be used, even if more suitable from a safety perspective. Saying that though, the aim of a scheme is to create a safe crossing point and hopefully change the behaviour of non-motorised network users and encourage people to use the crossing in the proposed location. There is a potential risk for reputational damage though, to both the Parish Council as client, and Somerset Council as the highway authority, if it is not clear that money has been used on an improvement that provides local value. It should be noted that, as part of our work, we would consult with internal stakeholders including those responsible for the ongoing upkeep of any

implemented measures, and there may well not be an appetite to take on the maintenance responsibility for a measure where the benefit to the public is not clear.

If the Parish Council are minded to proceed as originally proposed, it is recommended that a full pedestrian survey is undertaken to confirm desire lines for pedestrians, so that any facility will be located where it provides most benefit. However, it should be noted that there is a risk that this will confirm that the desire line is as observed during the site visit, and if so improvements to make a pedestrian crossing at this location safe for pedestrians will likely be difficult and have other impacts even if achievable (e.g. on access to and spaces within the adjacent car park, if pedestrian/ vehicle conflicts are to be managed properly).

Please can Parish Council confirm that they wish the design team to progress as previously instructed, bearing in mind the above comments.

C. An unsafe informal crossing by the village hall – although it is outside of the scope of site 3, it is something that undoubtedly will be brought up by Road Safety auditors in connection to the proposed scheme. There is currently a tactile on the hall side that leads people onto the carriageway and crossing to a misaligned access without a tactile on the other side. Could you confirm if this was something that has ever been considered by Parish Council to put right?

2. Site 9 High Street to Delta Rise

A. the virtual footway on High Street.

It has been flagged before within the Feasibility Technical Note that “the TPA design for site 9 included an additional length of virtual footway, which is unlikely to be acceptable to the Highway Authority but would need further investigation to confirm this, as set out in Somerset Council’s review of this design” (see ‘Bishops Lydeard - Street Design – Design review’, Somerset Council, 2024’). Following on from that and the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit on TPA design received in August 2024 recommendations, and in light of the lack of national guidance for the provision of the virtual footways (as it’s understood that they do not provide adequate protection for pedestrians from passing vehicles, are not considered to be all inclusive and are potential for pedestrian/ vehicle collisions), Design Team has undertaken an initial virtual footway appraisal and a site-specific risk assessment to confirm if the virtual proposal is acceptable from design and road safety perspective. It has been decided that the virtual footway scheme may be suitable for implementation on High Street, only if the following measures are incorporated within the scheme:

- An uncontrolled pedestrian crossing on a raised table at the northern end of the scheme near Delta Rise to help pedestrians safely access the new virtual footway, help control vehicle speeds and protect the start of the virtual footway from encroaching traffic.
- Speed reducing measures on the approach to the proposed speed table, including transverse bar markings and 20mph roundels (as traffic speeds are relatively high with 85th percentile speeds in excess of 30mph, despite the existing 20mph speed limit).
- Improved street lighting, as the Highway Lighting team has confirmed that the existing lighting is very poor, reducing the visibility of pedestrians on the virtual footway during the hours of darkness, hence improvements to the existing highway lighting, as well as additional column(s) will be required.

- Improved highway drainage (i.e. additional gullies) in the vicinity of the Site 9.

Therefore, we have put Site 9 on hold until Parish Council decide on how they would like to proceed. Please note that there will be an impact on the scheme programme/ cost if Parish Council decides to progress Site 9 design, giving consideration to drainage and lighting requirements. Also, if only upgrade of the existing virtual footway required, there may be still a need to provide some additional measures to make it safer.

B. The wayfinding signs between Pound Lane and Darby Way

I would like to get your opinion on what location you would prefer to add as destination on wayfinding signs when walking up north from Pound Lane access to the northern access to Darby Way. It is understood that most likely destination is Football Club, but the TPA design was just picking up the route only up the northern access to Darby Way with pedestrians being left walking up the carriageway then.

If you are still happy to proceed with that, we may need to look at some safety measures to be added at the section of carriageway between Darby Way and the Football Club access (i.e. signing). We are concerned that even though there is 20mph speed limit, the speed data shows that they are considerably higher, so it is a safety concern that may be picked up by Road Safety Audit when they consulted about the scheme design. Please could you confirm accordingly.

Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries concerning the above, otherwise I look forward to receiving your decision on the Sites 3 and 9 as soon as possible, so we can follow your instructions, as necessary. I will set up a project meeting to discuss if you have any queries concerning the above.

Many thanks and best regards

Joanna

Joanna Zalewska

Project Manager

Somerset Council

+44 1823359484

