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Councillor Alison Spicer
Chairman
Town Centre Regeneration Policy Development Committee
Cannock Chase District Council
Civic Centre
PO Box 28
Beecroft Road
Cannock
Staffordshire
WS11 1BG

Ref: MW-034/CM

Your ref:

Date: 16 March 2015

Dear Councillor Spicer

Town Centre Regeneration Police Development Committee – Rugeley Public Realm Work

Thank you for your letter dated the 9 February 2015. In relation to your queries you have raised please see below my response, which I have structured in the order raised.

Design/Safety Concerns

- The Zebra crossing on the Armitage Road side of the railway bridge was positioned there as there was no alternative location feasible, due to the access to the Vets and the junction with Wharf Road. This position is the natural design line for pedestrians and given that no suitable alternative location was or is available, the team decided that the crossing was required and is deemed safe. The scheme has had independent Road Safety Audits and a further Road Safety Stage 4 audit will be undertaken later this year and, if required, Staffordshire County Council will take any appropriate remedial action.



- The parking bays are all marked in a suitable way and are suitably and adequately signed. We have been made aware that vehicles are parking illegally on the central median strip outside of the designated bays and therefore causing a nuisance and also damaging the grass verge around the trees. Increased enforcement in the area would need to be discussed with Cannock Chase District Council which would serve to dissuade drivers from parking their vehicles incorrectly or beyond the time restrictions of the bays.
- The modelling did not suggest that a tail-back of traffic from Brereton would occur, which is being witnessed happening post completion. Where vehicles are believed to be excessively queuing on Brereton Road, the time for vehicles to get from this point to the Globe Island roundabout is in fact no greater than their previous journey time when the two traffic signal controlled junctions were operational i.e. the model showed that vehicles occasionally were able to travel at greater speeds before our improvement works. However, vehicle speeds were irregular so higher speeds were offset by the stationary periods due to the traffic signals, i.e. their journey time would have been comparable to that observed now the scheme is complete. Certainly, the off-peak traffic scenarios have been significantly improved following our improvement scheme, with the peak period journey times largely remaining unaltered.
- A Traffic Regulation Order is in place and enforceable for the 20mph restriction. The order did tie in with the completion of the works and came into effect on the 22 July 2014, which was actually before the scheme completion date.
- I have asked the lead Designer to reassess the signage for the entire scheme and assess the potential requirement/options to install additional signage to reinforce the no entry to the fuel station. We will keep you informed of progress on this.
- The kerbs were purposely designed to have a low threshold to allow emergency vehicles to pass vehicles on Horse Fair. It has clearly become apparent that drivers are occasionally illegally parking on the grass verge or indeed overriding them for other reasons. A potential solution would be to install a strip of tarmac to the rear of the kerb for a width of 0.5m to push the grass verge further away from the live traffic lane. Strategically positioned street furniture would prevent motorists from performing 'U' turn manoeuvres, which would eradicate many of the issues. Staffordshire County Council is currently looking at these solutions and will keep you informed of progress.

- Road Safety Audits are performed by specialist professionals who are also independent of the design team. They cannot take account of 'local' input, although there is of course an obligation on the Designer(s) to review the comments within and take any necessary actions.
- Further disruption to Horse Fair – Staffordshire County Council has programmed to be surface dressed, which is an incredibly quick, and effective road surface treatment and preventative measure and will protect the carriageway from more intrusive remedial work for many years. The sub-contractor who undertakes surface dressing in Staffordshire has programmed the work to occur between mid-July to early August although this cannot be guaranteed due to the scale of their operation and programme. The operation is extremely quick, so I would expect the work to be completed within 4 days. The crew will place advanced warning signs at least 7 days in advance of the surface dressing commencing.

Impact upon Business

Unfortunately, no financial support can be offered to the Rugeley Traders Association, however, of course it is hoped that the improvement works and additional free parking provision along Horse Fair will encourage additional drivers and visitors to stop and spend in Rugeley, generating additional income for and supporting the town.

I hope that I have answered all the issues you have raised, if you would like any further information please do not hesitate to contacting me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Winnington', written in a cursive style.

Mr Mark Winnington
Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport