

Transport and Environment Committee

10:00am, Tuesday, 27 August 2013

Request to Provide a Surface Crossing of the Calder Road at Parkhead

Item number	8.5
Report number	
Wards	7 – Sighthill/Gorgie

Links

Coalition pledges	P33
Council outcomes	CO15 , CO21 , CO22 and CO26
Single Outcome Agreement	SO4

Mark Turley

Director of Services for Communities

Contact: Mike Avery, Neighbourhood Manager

E-mail: mike.avery@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 527 3801

Executive summary

Request to Provide a Surface Crossing of the Calder Road at Parkhead

Summary

To report to the Committee that although the proposed pedestrian surface crossing at Parkhead remains a high priority to the Neighbourhood Partnership, they are unable to meet the potential costs. Therefore the Neighbourhood Partnership seeks to refer this matter back to the Committee for consideration at a later date as part of any capital investment review.

Recommendations

To agree to have this scheme referred back to the Transport and Environment Committee to commit to consider funding for the installation of a crossing during the current Budget Review.

Measures of success

Neighbourhood Partnership satisfaction that while not currently deliverable, local desire is such that this scheme remains open for consideration subject to suitable future budget availability.

Financial impact

None.

Equalities impact

Consideration has been given to both the positive and negative impacts of the proposed surface crossing and it is felt that without the results of a full feasibility study it would not be appropriate to make a conclusive recommendation regarding the suitability of the surface crossing. However, interim recommendations include the installation of extra street-lighting and CCTV which has now been carried out. The underpass is also monitored regularly by our Community Safety and Street Cleansing teams to enhance the safe perception of the underpass.

Sustainability impact

The recommendations within this report do not have any adverse impact on carbon impacts, adaptation to climate change or sustainable development.

Consultation and engagement

As detailed later in the report, lengthy engagement has been undertaken with the South West Neighbourhood Partnership and affiliated stakeholders to ensure that any decisions made are based on local priorities. As part of prior investigations and

feasibility assessments, the emergency services and Napier University were involved in discussions of both positive and negative implications of the proposed surface crossing. Local Elected Members within Ward 7 have been consulted though no comments have yet been received.

Background reading / external references

[27 July 2010 Report - Calder Road Underpass Feasibility of Alternative Surface Crossing](#)

Request to Provide a Surface Crossing of the Calder Road at Parkhead

1. Background

- 1.1 At the meeting on 28 July 2009, the Transport and Environment Committee (T&EC) instructed the then Director of City Development to provide a report on the feasibility of an additional surface crossing on the Calder Road in the Parkhead area.
- 1.2 A Road Safety Assessment was undertaken during the day and evening of Monday, 28 September 2009. The assessment and findings were prepared by independent consultants and included the views of Lothian and Borders Police (L&BP) with regard to community safety aspects of the existing underpass. These findings subsequently formed the basis of a report which was presented to the T&EC on 27 July 2010 (Appendix 1).
- 1.3 The T&EC of 27 July 2010 recognised the strong community support for the surface crossing. However, they concluded that the matter had competing road safety and community safety issues. It was difficult to justify expenditure on a feasibility study as no capital funding was available at that time. It therefore recommended referring the report to the South West Neighbourhood Partnership for their consideration of the issues and a suggested way forward.
- 1.4 The matter was subsequently discussed at the South West Neighbourhood Partnership business meeting on 1 February 2011 and referred to the meeting of the South West Neighbourhood Partnership Transport and Environment Forum on 11 February 2011. At this meeting, it was reluctantly accepted and agreed by the Partnership that without the availability of capital funding, that the installation of a surface crossing at the desired location could not be progressed at that time.
- 1.5 However, running in parallel with the above discussions, unique funding had been secured by the South West Neighbourhood Manager which allowed the installation of a voice activated CCTV system in the Parkhead underpass in July 2011.

2. Main report

- 2.1 A full site-survey and preliminary design is required in order to develop an accurate cost estimate for the installation of a surface crossing. However, an indicative estimate in 2010 put the costs well in excess of £150,000. Following recommendations made by Road Safety and Lothian and Borders Police, the cost approximation included costs for a staggered pedestrian crossing with a

central island, associated anti-skid surfacing, the re-positioning of the bus lay-by and the infilling of the existing underpass with its ramped accesses.

- 2.2 From a road safety perspective, the underpass represents the safest means of crossing as it reduces the potential for conflict between vehicles and pedestrians by separating them. In addition, installing an at-grade crossing at this location may introduce a road safety hazard where there is no history of collisions at present.
- 2.3 The 2010 report drew attention to the fact that this location was not eligible for assessment for inclusion on the existing priority list for surface crossings, maintained by the Road Safety Team as this project does not meet the standard criteria for the creation of a new surface crossing.
- 2.4 Safety concerns regarding the use of the underpass at this location (and others on the Calder Road) continue to be voiced by the public and this matter was raised again by local Elected Members when they met with the Director of Services for Communities in February 2013 where the matter was further discussed.
- 2.5 It is recognised that there continues to be a strong desire from the local community (which is supported by the South West Neighbourhood Partnership) to have a surface crossing installed at this location. However, there is no capital budget availability to allow this project to proceed at this time.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 To agree to have this scheme referred back to the Transport and Environment Committee to commit to consider funding for the installation of a crossing during the current Budget Review.

Mark Turley

Director of Services for Communities

Links

Coalition pledges	P33 – Strengthen Neighbourhood Partnerships and further involve local people in decisions on how Council resources are used.
Council outcomes	CO15 – The public are protected. CO21 – Safe – Residents, visitors and businesses feel that Edinburgh is a safe city. CO22 – Moving efficiently – Edinburgh has a transport system that improves connectivity and is green, healthy and accessible. CO26 – The Council engages with stakeholders and works in partnership to improve services and how we deliver on agreed objectives.
Single Outcome Agreement	SO4 – Edinburgh’s communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric.
Appendices	Appendix 1 – 27 July 2010 Report - Calder Road Underpass Feasibility of Alternative Surface Crossing.

Calder Road Underpass – Feasibility of Alternative Surface Crossing

Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee

27 July 2010

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To report to the Committee the outcome of the feasibility study undertaken on Calder Road to assess the potential for a surface pedestrian crossing (see location plan in Appendix 1).
- 1.2 To seek approval to refer the report to the South West Neighbourhood Partnership to consider how best to reconcile the competing road safety and community safety issues.

2 Summary

- 2.1 At its meeting on 28 July 2009 the Committee instructed the Director of City Development 'to provide a report on the feasibility of an additional surface crossing on Calder Road'. A Road Safety Assessment was undertaken during the day and evening of Monday 28 September 2009. The assessment and findings were prepared by independent consultants and include the views of Lothian and Borders Police (L&BP) with regards to security issues at the existing underpass.
- 2.2 The scope of the assessment was to:
 - a) Identify the *existing site conditions* through day and night time surveys;
 - b) Identify the *road safety implications and concerns of providing a surface crossing*;
 - c) Identify the *impact of the proposed crossing on the local infrastructure environment* of Calder Road;
 - d) Investigate *safety concerns inherent in the existing underpass arrangements*; and
 - e) Provide *recommendation on the provision of a surface crossing* based on both road safety and community safety grounds.

- 2.3 The report makes comment only on observations made during the site surveys by the study team.
- 2.4 There is strong community desire for a surface crossing based largely on community safety concerns regarding the underpass. However, road safety concerns exist over the creation of a surface crossing. This report suggests a problem solving approach through the Neighbourhood Partnership.

3 Main report

Existing infrastructure

- 3.1 Calder Road is part of the A71 dual carriageway east-west route serving Edinburgh. The carriageways are separated by a central reserve that contains continuous metal fencing and posts. A bus lane runs along both carriageways within the study area, whilst bus lay-bys are located immediately east of the underpass on both carriageways. At this location (refer to Appendix 1), the crossing of Calder Road is by way of the pedestrian underpass.
- 3.2 Approaches on Calder Road to/from the two roundabouts due east (serving Saughton Road) and west (serving Bankhead Avenue) are for the most part straight and level, providing good forward visibility.
- 3.3 Calder Road underpass is well lit internally, but is without permanent CCTV coverage. The underpass is used by cyclists, even though it has prohibition signs and a low roof. The approaches and general layout of the ramped areas on both sides of the underpass are adequately lit and easily identified. A side opening leads east to a stairway that serves the westbound bus lay-by on Calder Road.
- 3.4 The underpass connects West Fairbrae Drive to the north with Parkhead Gardens to the south, providing direct access between the two areas for pedestrians. These streets form part of wider residential areas, comprising of traffic calmed streets with terraced properties, as well as schools, eg St Joseph's Primary School, and other local services, which are busy throughout the day. A number of shops and a public house are accessed via Parkhead Gardens.
- 3.5 A new junction incorporating traffic lights with a pedestrian phase is planned as part of the Napier University campus redevelopment. Planning permission has been granted for this work. However, this junction is located some distance from the underpass concerned.

Calder Road traffic flow and incident analysis

- 3.6 Calder Road experiences high levels of commuter traffic, low to mid levels of residential traffic and numerous bus services throughout the day. This section of road is subject to a 40mph speed restriction.

3.7 Generally hourly daytime flows are high, comprising of:

- Eastbound (to city centre) – 1050 vehicles/hour
- Westbound (from city centre) – 810 vehicles/hour

Traffic speeds are for the most part acceptable and generally fall within the advertised speed limit, although they are higher in the evening.

3.8 All 2004-2008 incident data within a 100m radius of the underpass was analysed to identify existing incident patterns and trends. There were three recorded injury collisions, none of which involved pedestrians crossing the carriageway. All were slight casualties, two of which involved passengers boarding/exiting buses, whilst the other was a car-to-car collision involving a lane-change manoeuvre. This analysis does not indicate an incident pattern.

Driver behaviour

3.9 The driver behaviour observed during the site visits included:

- a) Vehicles tended to be driven too close to one another, which was particularly prevalent during the evening/night;
- b) Higher speeds were recorded during the night time visit;
- c) Behaviour was generally adequate and considerate; and
- d) No sudden stop or lane change manoeuvres were observed.

Other behaviours

3.10 A total of 837 pedestrians utilised the underpass during the site visit (8am-10pm). Key observations were that throughout the day the gender split was approximately 50/50; with more females earlier in the day and more males at the end of the day. Parents accompanying children were notable during the daytime; so were users with specific mobility requirements, especially in the early afternoon. Cyclists tended to be prominent towards the end of the day.

3.11 In addition to the 837 pedestrians that utilised the underpass during the site visit, 7 pedestrians elected to cross the surface of Calder Road by negotiating the central reservation and fence. All pedestrians were male, generally in the 17 to 24 age group and all seemed to be aware of the dangers as they waited for adequate gaps in traffic before crossing.

3.12 The arrival of the westbound bus services and the disembarking of passengers coincided with pedestrians progressing across the carriageway of Calder Road via the central reservation.

Location of proposed at-grade surface crossing

- 3.13 Two sites were considered for locating the proposed crossing, one to the west and the other to the east of the existing underpass. A location to the east is preferred since:
- a) It is already served by existing footways on either side of Calder Road;
 - b) The central reserve is wide enough to accommodate a pedestrian refuge essential for a staggered two stage crossing;
 - c) The proposed location is already well lit by a double headed light column;
 - d) On the west side there is significant on-street parking servicing the local amenities which would need to be removed to ensure the crossing is kept visible to oncoming drivers; and
 - e) A west side crossing would be sited very close to the junction of Parkhead Gardens/Calder Road, which would add additional pedestrian movements into this T-junction.
- 3.14 This recommended position would need to be confirmed through a detailed feasibility study. Regardless of the final position, the following works would be required to enable a surface crossing to be installed safely:
- a) Due to a level difference between the central reserve and the carriageway, significant engineering works would be required to accommodate the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act;
 - b) The bus lay-by would need to be relocated;
 - c) A review of street lighting to ensure the crossing is adequately lit; and
 - d) Measures such as anti-skid surfacing and advanced warning signs to ensure that current traffic behaviours where drivers drive too close to one another do not increase the likelihood of additional nose-tail collisions. This could also increase the risk of vehicles being shunted into pedestrians on the crossing.
- 3.15 Additional safety concerns also need to be noted:
- a) Additional delays experienced by drivers may impact upon driver behaviour potentially increasing driver frustration;
 - b) Potential tailbacks from the roundabout may encourage pedestrians to cross on red so increasing the risk of an incident; and
 - c) It is possible that potential tailbacks from the crossing may extend back onto the roundabouts causing delays on the approaches.

Road safety position

- 3.16 From a road safety perspective, it is recommended that the existing underpass continues to function as the main crossing point since:
- a) The introduction of a surface crossing may increase the risk of vehicle and pedestrian collisions occurring on Calder Road;
 - b) The existing underpass separates vehicles and pedestrians, thereby significantly reducing the potential for vehicle/pedestrian collisions;
 - c) There is no significant incident record and no pedestrian incidents at this location;
 - d) The incident analysis did not identify any trends; and
 - e) The potential increase in incident rate could be particularly significant to the elderly as 8.5% of pedestrians recorded during the site visit were in the 60+ age group.
- 3.17 A new at-grade crossing may result in an increase in road collisions against the low-level of current incidents.

Community safety aspects

- 3.18 There is a strong community desire for an alternative crossing. Evidence from a 2005 workshop held by the Older Persons Service Forum, the Sighthill, Broomhouse and Parkhead Community Council, a 2008 community petition and a recent Needs Assessment carried out on behalf of the local Community Health Partnership all indicate that for some parts of the community, fear of crime prevents use of the underpasses. For older people in particular, this can seriously restrict their freedom of movement within the community and access to facilities, particularly movements between the communities of Broomhouse and Parkhead. The carriageway of Calder Road effectively splits these two communities.
- 3.19 Crime reports from Lothian & Borders Police indicate no particular pattern of attacks within the underpasses. Twenty-six incidents occurred in the 16 months between 1 May 2007 and 20 August 2008, the majority of which were assault and/or robbery.
- 3.20 Short term measures have already been implemented to improve the safety and perception of safety within the underpasses. These include improvements to lighting, repainting with anti-graffiti paint, cutting back of vegetation to improve sightlines, installation of temporary CCTV and increased patrols by Police and community safety wardens.

- 3.21 Discussion with Lothian & Borders Police established that the underpass was currently not being used to full capacity due to one or more of the following:
- a) Pedestrians' desire to seek a more direct route;
 - b) A perception that the underpass or the area in the immediate vicinity is unsafe, due to knowledge that incidents do take place and consist mainly of crimes against persons; or
- 3.22 Lothian and Borders Police support an alternative means of crossing Calder Road. However, if a surface crossing is introduced without closing the underpass, it is likely to significantly reduce the number of people using the underpass. This in turn is likely to increase the perception of the underpass as being unsafe or give additional opportunity for crimes against persons due to the overall decreased usage. If a surface crossing were to be provided, it is the Police's recommendation, from a personal safety perspective, that the underpass be closed at this same time. It should be noted, however, that this sentiment is not entirely reflected by the community, who would prefer a choice of options.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The cost of the road safety study was £3,450 met from the Transport revenue road safety budget.
- 4.2 A full site-survey and preliminary design would be required in order to develop an accurate cost estimate for the installation of a surface crossing. As a guide to the costs, an indicative estimate would be in excess of £150,000. This would include costs for the staggered pedestrian crossing with a central island and associated anti-skid surfacing as well as costs for the re-positioning of the bus lay-by, the ramped accesses and the potential closure and in-filling of the existing underpass. No funding source exists for such a crossing – from a road safety perspective, the underpass represents the safest means of crossing. There is in any case a priority list for new surface crossings but this location is not eligible.
- 4.3 It is estimated that a detailed site survey and preliminary design would cost approximately £30,000. Given that no funding is available for the crossing itself, it is highly questionable whether it is worth spending such a sum on a design study. It should be noted that, because no funding exists for the crossing, the design study would require to be funded from revenue. The only budget for which this design study could therefore be funded from is the local roads revenue repairs budget. The consequence of this would be that fewer potholes could be repaired.

5 Environmental Impact

- 5.1 There is no environmental impact from this report.

6 Equalities Impact

- 6.1 The current crossing provision has a negative impact on peoples' quality of life through the perceived or real risk of becoming a victim of opportunistic crime when using the underpass. The provision of a surface crossing could alleviate these fears through the removal of the need to use the underpass. However, there are safety concerns relating to a surface crossing and, in any case, funding for a surface crossing is not available.

7 Conclusions

- 7.1 It is recognised that there are potential community benefits to a surface crossing and that there is a strong community desire to have this option. It should be noted however, that by installing an at-grade crossing at this location it may introduce a road safety hazard where there is no history of collisions at present. Also to be considered are other concerns related to traffic management and the Chief Constable's concerns.
- 7.2 It is questionable whether the expenditure of £30,000 on a Feasibility Study for a project which does not meet road safety concerns, and for which no implementation funding is available, is reasonable. However there is clear community support for the project.
- 7.3 There is no immediate solution which reconciles the community safety and road safety concerns. It is therefore recommended that this issue be referred back to the South West Neighbourhood Partnership for consideration through a problem solving approach, involving relevant partners.

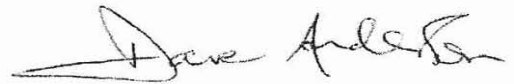
8 Recommendations

- 8.1 To note the conclusions of this report.
- 8.2 To refer the report to the South West Neighbourhood Partnership for consideration of the issues and a suggested way forward.
- 8.3 To discharge the remit.



Mark Turley
Director of Services for Communities

16/7/10



Dave Anderson
Director of City Development

Appendices	1 – Location Plan
Contact/Tel/Email	Steve Murrell, City Development, 0131 469 3699; steven.murrell@edinburgh.gov.uk ; Mike Avery, Neighbourhood Manager, South West Neighbourhood, 0131 527 3801, mike.avery@edinburgh.gov.uk
Wards affected	Ward 7 – Sighthill/Gorgie
Single Outcome Agreement	Supports National Outcomes: LO9 The number of casualties resulting from road traffic collisions is reduced.
Background Papers	Calder Road, Road Safety Study

Appendix 1 – Location Plan showing the Calder Road underpass

