

PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE

Date: Monday, 17 May 2021

Title: West Witney Sports Ground - Cycling Speed Awareness

Contact Officer: Maintenance & Environmental Services Officer - Angus Whitburn

Background

West Witney Sports Ground has a junction consisting of a pedestrian and cycle route. The route is correctly marked however visibility around the area is poor and there is no signage leading out of West Witney sports ground. Although no close calls, incident or accidents have been reported to Witney Town council it has been reviewed as a potential hazard.

Current Situation

The pedestrian and cycle route has the correct signage, bikes and pedestrians should be slowing down and giving way to traffic. The issue seems to lie with the visibility around the junction. There are two large hedges and a line of trees blocking the view for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. As it is an infrequently used junction regular users of the pedestrian and cycle route have the habit to walk out without stopping and giving way to traffic.

Additionally there are no precautions from the road. There is no traffic signage leading out of West Witney sports ground that Witney Town Council is responsible for. At a minimum, the council should install two 5mph speed signs in both directions. To further help reduce the risk surrounding the junction the council could also install a warning sign for "Cycle Route Ahead" on the exit.

A cheaper option would be to cut back and mulch the hedge. On exiting West Witney the hedge on the right side cuts off all visibility to users. Some may not even realise this is an exit from a sporting ground and those using the sports ground may not even realise there is a cycle route.

Environmental impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

The removal of any vegetation would be a negative approach to Witney Town Council's environmental goals and would raise a concern about the possible removal of any habitats.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

If a serious (or any) incident was to happen at the junction part of the investigation would involve the Council. So now the issue has been raised Witney Town Council do need to act swiftly to remedy it and mitigate the risk.

Financial implications

The cost of a 450mm – 600mm road grade pedestrian or cycle crossing ahead sign is between - £30.00 - £80.00.

“5mph” speed signs - £42.00

Galvanised Traffic Post - £119.99

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. Approve the purchase and installation of 2 “5mph” signs and posts.
2. Consider the additional installation of a warning sign for “Cycle Route Ahead”
3. Delegate to officers the responsibility of assessing and possibly remove part of the hedge to the right side of the junction exiting West Witney.