

HIGH STREET, ONGAR REPORT BY DISTRICT MANAGER, TRAFFIC AND PROJECTS ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

Background

There is currently £35,000 of funding available through a Section 106 agreement with the developer Higgins Homes Ltd. Officers have been actively investigating the possibility of implementing a zebra crossing in the vicinity of Love Lane and High Street, Ongar in order that these funds can be utilised. However, a number of issues have arisen through these investigations, to which Officers have been working to resolve.

These problems include the width of the footway being insufficient to accommodate a crossing. The current width varies from 1.0m to 1.2m; the required minimum width being 2.0m. Officers have investigated increasing the footway width at this point; however this section of verge does not form part of the publicly maintainable highway and so encroaching into the verge is the only solution to increase the footway width. The gradient of the verge (See Figure 1) means a brick retaining wall with concrete foundations would also be required. The ECC Structures Team have investigated this and estimated the costs of constructing such a feature would be in the region of £20,000.



Figure 1 High Street, junction with Love Lane

As the verge is in private ownership, ECC would have to enter into negotiations with the landowner. ECC Solicitors advise the cost of this would be approximately £1,000, plus costs should the owner be inclined to sell the land to Essex County Council. Bearing in mind that these estimates have been established and it is clear that the scheme now exceeds the funding available, the Legal Department

have not pursued any communication with the landowner to discuss the sale of the land owing to insufficient funds being available at the present time.

The current estimate for implementing the crossing alone is approximately £30,000. A summary of these costs is detailed below and as Members will see, currently exceeds the funding available.

Summary

Zebra crossing	£30,000
Land purchase	£2,000 (including costs) Estimate given June 10
Retaining feature	£25,000 (including costs) Estimate given August 2010
Total	£57,000

Budget available **£32,000** (deficit of £25,000)

Alternatives

In light of the above, Officers have been pursued other locations, however there are no other suitable locations for a controlled crossing, owing to the presence of vehicle crossovers, bus stops and visibility splays. Officers have also investigated the provision of a pedestrian refuge, due to the reduced cost of construction and the reduced footway requirement. However policy dictates that the refuge width must be a minimum width of 1.6, the existing carriageway this has insufficient width to accommodate the refuge. Additionally, the presence of vehicle crossovers and bus stops as mentioned above also restricts the placing of the refuge

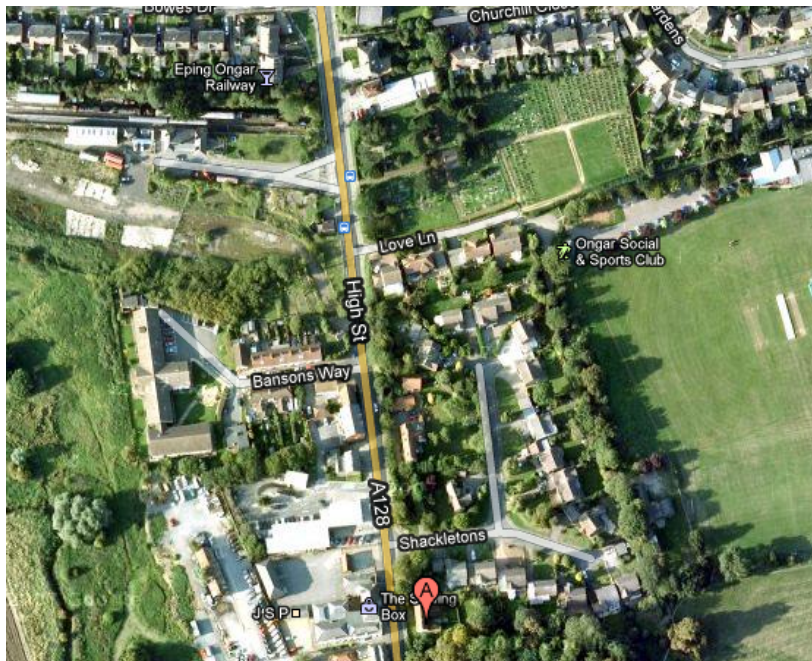


Figure 2 Plan High Street, junction with Love Lane

Considerations

Officers are aware of Members feeling of concern, bearing in mind the increase in development in the local area and the increase in capacity at local facilities. Officers have approached the Parish Council with a view to discussing any suggestions on how to use this funding and would be happy to discuss any proposals put forward. However, it must be noted that maintenance works, such as resurfacing and relining, cannot be considered through this funding avenue. But upgrades to existing crossings, such as newer/brighter belisha beacons, can be included.
