

REPORT TO CALNE AREA BOARD

CALNE A4 WHITE HART JUNCTION PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

FEASIBILITY STUDY

CATG began work almost two years ago in response to an issue submitted by a local resident:

Issue number: 3483

'I hope you can help I live at The Quarry and walk my 2 children to Priestley School every week day morning. We need to cross the London Road by The White Hart Hotel which is currently very difficult and very dangerous too. Many people cross here including John Bentley students. It would be so much safer if there was a proper crossing either a zebra or a pelican crossing. Some drivers are kind enough to stop to let pedestrians cross but this is also very dangerous as drivers behind who are concentrating on the roundabout don't see the car in front stop I have seen many near misses here vehicle and pedestrian and strongly feel that a crossing is needed somewhere on the lower end of the London Road'.

The Town Council was asked whether it would support CATG commissioning a feasibility study on that basis and responded as follows:

'In the minutes of the CATG meeting held on 23 October 2014 it was noted that the road network around the White Hart Hotel is a cause for concern and should be considered a priority. The group suggested that a feasibility study could be conducted and asked what the Town Council's views are on this issue.

At a meeting of the Town Development & Planning committee on 6 Jan, members discussed and commented as follows;

"117/14 ROAD SAFETY ON THE A4 CALNE AT THE WHITE HART HOTEL JUNCTION

Members discussed the road network in this location, and had the same concerns over the safety of pedestrians (school children in particular) and road users alike. It is only a matter of time before there is a serious accident. Councillor Boase has spoken with the landlord of the White Hart Hotel, who shares members concerns. Members supported/welcomed the suggestion to commission a feasibility study at this location on the understanding that it would be funded by the Area Board. Members were keen to see the results of the study".'

At the time the feasibility study was commissioned air quality was not included because it was not mentioned on the original issue sheet and the Air Quality Working Group had not made its request that the CATG should consider pollution/traffic flow and safety in line with issues located within the Air Quality Management Area.

The CATG group was very aware of the Air Quality hotspot in that vicinity and were eager to avoid adding any more delays to traffic in that area, therefore the Air Quality matter was considered in all the discussions that fed into the feasibility study, with relation to traffic flow.

The feasibility study was instigated and begun before 11 August 2015, although it was not completed and presented to the CATG until 9 November 2016 due to staffing pressures in the interim period.

was delayed due to pressures on staff resource.

Area Board note.

3.5. White Hart Junction road safety MS reported that a feasibility study had begun. A pedestrian count had been ordered, but would not take place until the start of the new school term.

Area Board note.

CATG meeting notes from 11th Aug 2015 (reported to the Area Board 6/10/2015)

The formal request from the AQ working group was not made until 30 August 2016.

To consider traffic flow with regard to road safety and air pollution through the Calne Air Quality Management Area					
	White Hart Roundabout alterations	Ask CATG (Cllr. Crisp) to consider traffic flow when it conducts Feasibility studies.	GA/AH		
Promote awareness in the	'Love calne, love clean air'				

Air Quality Action Plan 30/08/16

The CATG considered the feasibility study and the three options contained in it on 9 November and decided that, although costly, Option 3 would provide the most improved pedestrian safety without impeding traffic flow or increasing air pollution. The CATG also drew up a plan to attempt to finance the implementation of Option 3 which was reported to the Area Board on 6 December 2016.

b)	Pedestrian Safety at A4 White Hart Junction Issue No: 3483	Feasibility report presented to CATG for discussion. CATG in favour of Option 3 to be presented to Calne Town Council for support prior to preparing recommendation for the area board and a substantial highways bid.	Prepare briefing note for Town Council. Take report to Calne Town Council TD&P, 7th Dec 2016. Take recommendation to Area Board, Feb 2017. Substantive Highways bid, March/April 2017	MS/JV CH CC MS/JV
c)	Anchor Road / Brewers Lane	Feasibility report being developed for discussion at the next		

The Town Development & Planning committee since discussed the feasibility study on 2 further occasions:

- 7th December 2016:
"121/16 WILTSHIRE COUNCIL – CALNE A4 WHITE HART PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS
Members discussed the report and the three proposed options in some details. The Chairman clarified that the schemes proposed are trying to improve road safety while also seeking to ensure good traffic flow as this location impacts upon the top 'hot spot' for poor air quality in the Calne Air Quality Management Area. With this in mind, members unanimously favoured Option 3 as their preferred scheme. They agreed that the removal of one of the mini roundabouts would have a positive effect on the traffic flow, which is a major concern, with traffic at a standstill generating unacceptable levels of air pollution in this location. It was suggested that in addition to Option 3, highways officers investigate the possibility of re-introducing a filter lane, by removing the raised flower beds on the wide pavement opposite The White Hart, to allow vehicles entering the town on the A4 from Quemerford, wishing to travel towards Melksham on the A3012, to filter off left before reaching the mini roundabout. This would almost certainly ease congestion at peak times. Members to discuss potential contributions on clarification of the above suggestion working in parallel with Option 3"

- 15th Feb 2017.

“152/16 - WILTSHIRE COUNCIL – CALNE A4 WHITE HART PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

Members noted they are being asked to consider the three options in relation to improving pedestrian safety however they felt strongly that issues surrounding pedestrian safety, air quality and traffic flow should be considered collectively not in isolation. This approach is simply not practical. Members were disappointed that Wiltshire Council seems to be focusing solely on this one aspect, and whilst pedestrian safety is a concern and may need addressing, a holistic approach is required. Members were not minded to approve any of the options as presented. Members requested feedback from the CATG meeting at which this will be discussed”

This was a great disappointment to the CATG members, after the Town Council’s initial support and acceptance that Option 3 would have a positive effect on traffic flow, as the notes of the 7 December meeting show. The CATG has committed considerable officer resource and money to bringing a scheme to this point. Members feel that the Town Council committee suggestions represent separate issues to the one originally raised, that the suggestions would require significant works that have not been considered or explored by Highways officers and which may be beyond the finances of the CATG, even with a Town Council contribution and a successful Substantive Highways bid. The suggestion of a filter lane was not supported by Highways officers as, although it might speed traffic flow a little, that would not be in the most sensitive area and it would also mean that the width of highway pedestrians had to cross would be considerably increased, which was against the original brief.

CATG Members are minded to make recommendation to the Area Board that, without Town Council support of this scheme, it should be removed from the priority list and the issue be closed. If the Town Council wishes to further its suggestions, a new issue would have to be submitted by the Town Council together with some commitment to the standard contribution of at least 30% of any further costs.

C. Crisp 20 March 2017