

Report for Resolution

Report to Norwich Highways Agency Committee
27 January 2011

Item

6

Report of Head of Transportation

Subject Bowthorpe Road Zebra crossing

Purpose

To consider the objections and responses to public consultation for the proposal to provide a Zebra crossing on Bowthorpe Road opposite the entrance to Earlham Cemetery.

Recommendations

The committee is recommended to:

- (1) note results of the consultations on the two alternative locations for a zebra crossing on Bowthorpe Road;
- (2) agree that at the current time a zebra crossing cannot be justified in this location;
- (3) approve the installation of appropriate warning signs and road markings on the approaches to the cemetery entrance.

Financial Consequences

The total cost of the revised proposals is in the region of £8,500, including all fees already spent, and funding is available from the Local Transport Plan budget. This represents a saving of £41,500 on the original allocation to this scheme

Strategic Priority and Outcome/Service Priorities

The report helps to meet the strategic priority “Safe and healthy neighbourhoods – working in partnership with residents to create neighbourhoods where people feel secure, where the streets are clean and well maintained, where there is good quality housing and local amenities and where there are active local communities” and the service plan priority delivering the Local Transport Plan.

Contact Officers

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Background Documents

Report and minutes of the Norwich Highways Agency Meeting of 26 March 2009 and November 2009

Report

Background

1. At the meeting of March 2009, your committee considered a petition containing 32 signatures from local residents of Bowthorpe Road, Bond Street and Merton Road asking for the City Council to provide a safe, signalised crossing into the cemetery opposite Bond Street. The petition also asked for a 20mph speed limit on Bowthorpe Road.
2. The petition asked for the City Council to:

‘provide a safe signalised crossing into the cemetery opposite Bond Street, and, until that can be done, to implement measures to improve visibility for pedestrians and cyclists wishing to cross Bowthorpe Road at this point’

and to:

‘implement the 20mph speed limit for residential roads plan for the whole of Norwich, and until that can be done, to implement 20mph speed limits for Bowthorpe Road.’
3. The petition was supported by Councillor Read who pointed out that ‘it was impossible to see up Bowthorpe Road Street when a vehicle was parked’, and suggested that waiting restrictions outside the florist might be appropriate
4. At your meeting of November 2009, you agreed to allocate funding to safety improvements on Bowthorpe Road at this location.

Site Assessment

5. The location has been assessed for a crossing and came out as 15th in the current list of pedestrian crossing priorities. A pedestrian count carried out in September 2005 showed that around 29 pedestrian cross the road in this area between 8.15am and 9.15am, and a further 19 between 2.30pm and 4.00pm
6. Further pedestrian counts over a longer period of the day were undertaken in January 2011 to assess the level of use that a Zebra crossing would receive during the winter months. The results are shown as appendix 6.
7. There has been 8 recorded personal injury accidents between Farrow Road and Dereham Road in the year ending 31 December 2009, 3 serious and 5 slight. The 3 serious accidents were to a cyclist, a motorcyclist and a bus passenger. Of the 5 slight accidents, 3 involved pedestrians, 1 a motorcyclist and 1 a bus passenger.
8. Speed surveys carried out in 2004 indicate that the 85th percentile speeds are around 30mph.
9. The request for a signalised crossing on this section of Bowthorpe Road is not justified given the cost of such a facility and the number of pedestrians

10. A pedestrian refuge would require widening of the carriageway, which is not possible due to the existing footway widths. , due to the turning movements from Bond Street and the cemetery gates, it would need to be located away from the desire line.
11. A Zebra crossing was therefore considered, and it was decided that public consultation should be carried out with local residents and stakeholders.

Public Consultation

12. Consultation on 2 possible locations (either side of the Bond Street junction) was undertaken in October and November 2010

Option 1 – Zebra crossing to west of Bond Street

13. A letter and plan shown as appendix 1 was sent to local residents and businesses on 25 October 2010.
14. Option 1 would remove approximately 15m of on-street parking / loading to the west of the Bond Street junction. This would be directly affect 3 of the 4 businesses in this area (the Florist, the Stone Mason and the Café).
15. The objections and comments received are summarised in appendix 2. Four objections were received, from the 4 businesses in Bowthorpe Road. The main grounds for the objections are that the crossing would remove customer parking and make loading very difficult.
16. In addition, a petition containing 231 signatures from city wide addresses was organised by the 4 businesses, headed as follows:

‘PETITION AGAINST A ZEBRA CROSSING BEING PLACED IN FRONT OF ROBINSON’S STONEMASONS, RENE’S FLOWERS, BOND STREET CAFÉ, MERRY-GO-ROUND’.

17. As a result of these objections, a second option was produced which had less impact on parking and loading

Option 2 – Zebra crossing to east of Bond Street

18. A letter and plan shown as appendix 3 was sent to local residents and businesses on 26 November 2010.
19. Option 2 would remove approximately 6.5m of parking to the east of Bond Street, which would be outside residential properties.
20. The objections and comments received are summarised in appendix 4. Three objections were received - 2 from local businesses, and one from a residential property.
21. Councillor Read expressed concern that the visibility of the crossing for westbound traffic would be restricted by parked vehicles, and asked for the zig

22. The safety audit carried out on this layout also raised concerns about visibility of pedestrians waiting to cross, and is recommending that the length of the zig zag lines be increased.

Assessment of options

23. Both options have received objections about the removal of parking / loading areas in Bowthorpe Road.
24. Option 1 would require the removal of about 3 car parking spaces and the 4 local businesses are concerned about the impact this would have on their trade.
25. Option 2 would not affect parking or loading to the west of Bond Street, but would remove some parking to the east. It will be necessary to increase the length of the zig zag lines on the north east side of the crossing to provide greater visibility, as shown in appendix 5. This would have the effect of removing about 12.5m of parking (2-3 car spaces) outside nos. 74 to 78 Bowthorpe Road.
26. Some of the objectors believe that a crossing is not justified as very few people cross Bowthorpe Road at this location, and money would be better spent providing pedestrian crossing facilities at the Dereham Road junction. They also point out that during the winter months the cemetery closes at 4.30pm.
27. Pedestrian counts taken in January 2011 indicate that during the morning peak hour, 35 pedestrians cross to and from the cemetery, either to visit the cemetery or to cut through to Earlham Road. Throughout the rest of the day, about 25 pedestrians cross per hour. From the end of October to the end of March (5 months of the year), the cemetery closes at 4.30pm so the Zebra crossing would be less likely to be used.
28. The Department for Transport advises that crossings should be used regularly to ensure safe operation. Local Transport Note 1/95 states that 'Caution should be exercised when pedestrian flows are generally light or light for long periods of the day. Drivers who become accustomed to not being stopped at the crossing may begin to ignore its existence, with dangerous consequences'.
29. The total cost of installing the Zebra crossing is likely to be in the region of £35,000 - £40,000.
30. Whilst a Zebra crossing would clearly benefit some local residents, the number of pedestrians likely to use it and the restricted opening times of the cemetery combined with the high installation cost suggest that it may not be the best solution for this location.
31. Officers have considered alternative solutions to speed reduction methods on Bowthorpe Road. The options for physical speed reducing measures are limited given that it is a bus route, however the use of warning signs on the approaches to the cemetery gates could be considered.

Conclusions

32. Committee agreed in November 2009 to allocate funding for an improvement scheme near the cemetery gates. A pedestrian refuge was considered but rejected because the road is not wide enough, so a Zebra crossing was considered. Two possible locations were identified and consulted on.
33. Both locations have attracted objections and a petition against the Zebra crossing from the local businesses. The traders are concerned that the removal of parking spaces outside or close to their premises will deter customers from stopping, and will also make deliveries very difficult.
34. Pedestrian counts indicate that the crossing would not be used regularly throughout the day. After the morning peak, the level of use drops to around 25 pedestrians per hour, and for 5 months over the winter the crossing will hardly be used after 4.30pm.
35. The Department for Transport advises that crossings need to be used regularly throughout the day so that drivers become accustomed to stopping for pedestrians. If this is not the case, safety could be compromised.
36. Additionally, given the delays involved on consulting on an alternative option, it is now not possible to install a zebra crossing in the current financial year. On the 24th January Norfolk County Councils' Cabinet is to consider a report on the provisional capital improvement budget for 2010/11, and it is clear from that report that funding for next year will be severely limited. A full report on the implications of funding levels will be reported to your March meeting, but it is very difficult to justify allocating scarce funding to a scheme that has limited benefits, such as this.
37. Instead officers have considered a low cost option involving warning signs and carriageway markings. A plan detailing this option will be circulated at your meeting. This scheme could be installed in the current financial year within the existing budget

APPENDIX 2

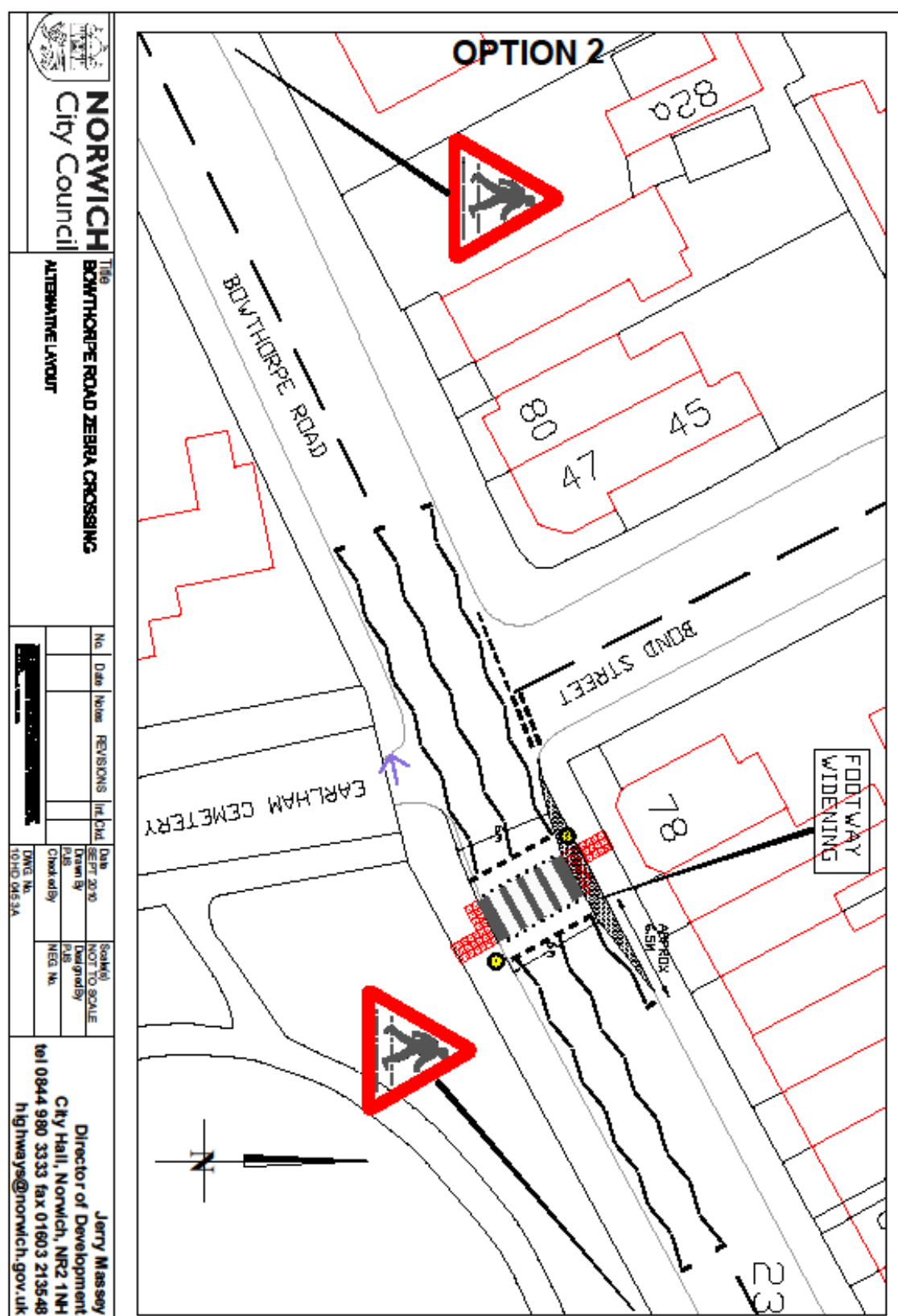
BOWTHORPE ROAD ZEBRA CROSSING RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION FOR OPTION 1

NORWICH HIGHWAYS AGENCY COMMITTEE - 27 JANUARY 2011

Date	Name / Address	Comments	Officers Comments
29 October 2010	51 Bowthorpe Road	Approves of the crossing but would prefer not to have antiskid surfacing due to noise issues	Tests are being carried out to assess the need for antiskid surfacing
30 October 2010	Norwich Cycle Campaign	Welcomes the crossing but concerned about the build-out, and would like this removed	Reducing width of road to 6m will help reduce vehicle speeds. Only a small amount of build-out is possible, so it should not be a problem to cyclists
30 October 2010	84 Bowthorpe Road	There is a need for a crossing but concerned about reduction in parking to the west of Bond Street. Would like permit parking in Bond Street / Merton Road. The crossing doesn't line up with the pedestrian entrance into the cemetery.	Loss of parking is unavoidable if crossing to be provided in this location.
30 October 2010	Merry Go Round, 30 Bowthorpe Road	OBJECTS to the proposal. It's location outside the shops will be detrimental to the 4 local businesses in this area. Most customers to this shop arrive by car and need to unload bulky goods. They will not be able to park close to the shop.	Noted
4 November 2010	30 Bond Street	Pleased with the proposal	Noted
6 November 2010	20 Bond Street	Suggests that railings will be needed on the corner of Bond Street to stop vehicles parking on this corner and restricting visibility.	Railings not considered necessary
7 November 2010	3 Bond Street	Supports the crossing, as it will improve visibility when turning right from Bond Street to Bowthorpe Road	Noted

10 November 2010	Rene's Florist, 82a Bowthorpe Road	<u>OBJECTS</u> to the proposal. 1. Customers will have nowhere to park and it will affect business. 2. There is a pedestrian crossing further up the road by the hospital. 3. There is a more urgent need for a crossing at the Dereham Road signals. 4. The Council should be supporting local businesses. 5. It would leave delivery lorries with nowhere to unload. They would have to park opposite which would completely block the road for 20 minutes. 6. The crossing would only serve a small number of people who use the cemetery as a short cut, and the cemetery is locked at 4.15pm in the winter.	Noted
10 November 2010	S&A Stone Masons, 82-82a Bowthorpe Road	<u>OBJECTS</u> to the proposal. The 4 family businesses have only 3 parking spaces on Bowthorpe Road, which will be removed if the Zebra goes ahead. This will affect passing trade and deliveries. Very few people would use the crossing. Also, the cemetery should not be used as a short cut, and a crossing would encourage this.	Noted
12 November 2010	9 Bond Street	Approves of the crossing as it will make it safer and reduce speeds, but concerned about the effect on the local businesses.	Noted
14 November 2010	Bond Street Cafe	<u>OBJECTS</u> to the proposal. It would severely restrict parking for the café and 3 other family run businesses	Noted
21 November 2010	PETITION FROM 4 BUSINESSES	<u>PETITION OF OBJECTION</u> containing 231 signatures from city wide addresses	Noted

APPENDIX 3



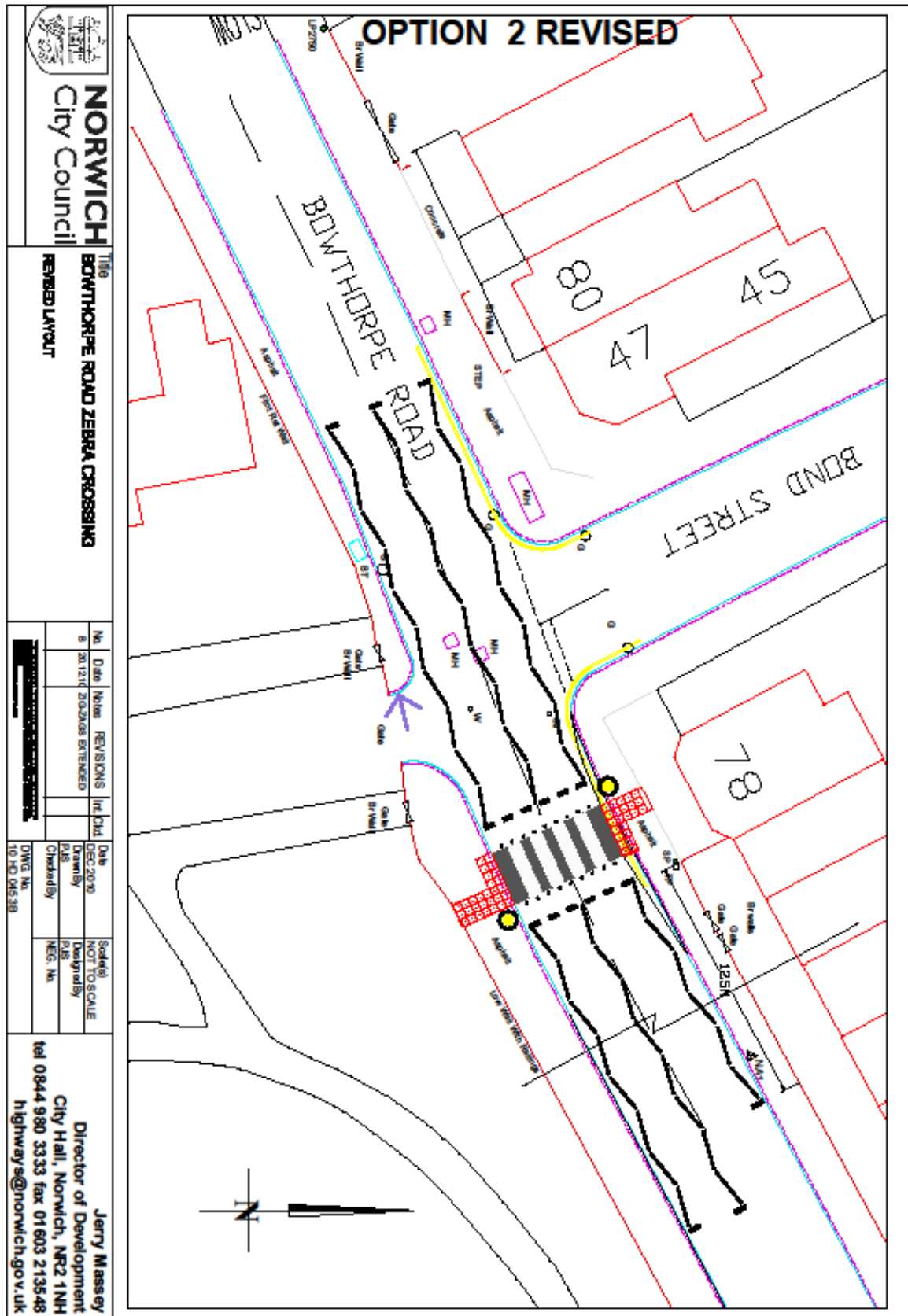
APPENDIX 4

BOWTHORPE ROAD ZEBRA CROSSING RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION FOR OPTION 2

NORWICH HIGHWAYS AGENCY COMMITTEE - 27 JANUARY 2011

Date	Name / Address	Comments	Officers Comments
30 November 2010	Living Streets	Do not object to the revised location but disappointed that the location has been revised as a result of objections from car owners and businesses	Option 2 is no less convenient for pedestrians than option 1
2 December 2010	Merry-Go-Round, 78 Bowthorpe Road	Feels that the petition has been disregarded. Thinks the second proposed site just moves the problem along and doesn't address the parking issues. It also compromises the safety of customers as they will have to park further away from the shop	The alternative location was proposed in response to the petition, and has less of an effect on parking outside the shops.
6 December 2010	60 Bowthorpe Road	<u>OBJECTS</u> to the proposals. Crossing is on a slight bend and brow of hill, where cars travel at speed. It will reduce the amount of residents parking, which is already difficult. Residents should be put before businesses. Suggests moving it to nearer Merton Road and introducing permit parking	. A crossing near Merton Road is less likely to be used by people visiting the cemetery.
6 December 2010	Norfolk Police	No objections	Noted
Unknown	Rene's Florist, 82A Bowthorpe Road	<u>OBJECTS</u> to the proposal. The removal of parking east of Bond Street will result in residents seeking alternative parking outside the businesses. The crossing would serve very few people and the cemetery closes at 4.15pm in Winter. A crossing would be better located at the Dereham Road junction.	Noted
7 December 2010	Councillor Read	Concerned that the crossing will be dangerous as visibility of pedestrians on the north side will be restricted by parked vehicles. Would like the zig-	Agree. If this location is approved, the zig-zags on the

		zags extended.	north east side will be extended.
10 December 2010	Merry-Go-Round	OBJECTS to the proposal. Passing trade will be put off visiting if there is nowhere to park. Thinks this location will be dangerous as too many junctions nearby etc. Very few pedestrians cross in this area.	Noted
11 December 2010	26 Bond Street	Prefers option 1 as it will improve visibility for vehicles emerging from Bond Street.	Noted
13 December 2010	Bond Street	Supports either proposal	Noted
13 December 2010	Unknown	Prefers option 1 as it will prevent business customers parking on the double yellow lines. This will make it safer when emerging from Bond Street.	Noted



APPENDIX 6

Site	Bowthorpe Rd/Bond Street junction				Date	06-Jan-11	
Time	Pedestrian Category						Total
	Disabled People	People with Buggies	Adults Aged 16 - 65	Adults Aged Over 65	Adults with Children < 16	Children	
08:00 - 08:15	0	0	7	0	2	5	14
08:15 - 08:30	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
08:30 - 08:45	0	1	2	2	1	0	6
08:45 - 09:00	0	1	6	1	4	0	12
09:00 - 09:15	0	0	8	1	0	0	9
09:15 - 09:30	0	1	9	0	0	0	10
09:30 - 09:45	0	0	7	0	0	0	7
09:45 - 10:00	0	0	4	2	3	0	9
10:00 - 10:15	0	0	3	1	0	0	4
10:15 - 10:30	0	0	5	4	0	0	9
10:30 - 10:45	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
10:45 - 11:00	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
11:00 - 11:15	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
11:15 - 11:30	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
11:30 - 11:45	0	0	6	2	0	0	8
11:45 - 12:00	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
12:00 - 12:15	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
12:15 - 12:30	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
12:30 - 12:45	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
12:45 - 13:00	0	0	5	0	0	0	5
13:00 - 13:15	0	0	2	4	0	0	6
13:15 - 13:30	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
13:30 - 13:45	0	0	7	0	0	0	7
13:45 - 14:00	0	1	8	1	0	0	10
14:00 - 14:15	0	0	5	1	0	0	6
14:15 - 14:30	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
14:30 - 14:45	0	0	3	2	0	0	5
14:45 - 15:00	0	0	4	3	0	0	7
15:00 - 15:15	0	0	4	1	0	0	5
15:15 - 15:30	0	2	6	0	2	0	10
15:30 - 15:45	0	0	2	0	2	0	4
15:45 - 16:00	0	0	10	1	7	0	18
16:00 - 16:15	0	0	2	0	0	3	5
16:15 - 16:30	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
16:30 - 16:45	0	0	2	0	0	2	4
16:45 - 17:00	0	0	4	0	0	3	7
Total	0	6	152	28	21	13	220