

From: Sue Isherwood <sueisherwood9@gmail.com>
Sent: 11 April 2025 12:06
To: Amelia Elve <amelia.elve@somerset.gov.uk>; Jon Fellingham
<jon.fellingham@somerset.gov.uk>
Cc: 'Ros Wyke' <roswyke@yahoo.co.uk>; Chris and Ann Langdon
<chrislangdon@btinternet.com>; Rachel Spiller <clerk@westburysubmendip-
pc.gov.uk>
Subject: Westbury -sub-Mendip PC- submission concerning safe crossnig of the A371

Dear Amelia and Jon,

We acknowledge receipt of Jon's email of 3 April.

We understand that you cannot consider a proposal which has not been laid before you.

Here is a further working up of what the Parish Council would like considered by Highways in their advice to the Church Commissioners and their agents.

This issue is of great importance to our community so please give this your urgent consideration and do come back to us with any queries or requirements for more information.

Regards,

Sue Isherwood

Chair of Westbury PC

Westbury sub Mendip

Exploring potential for a safe pedestrian crossing of the A371 to meet requirements of WM1

Introduction

Current outline application 2025/0137/OUT submission does not fully consider sufficient options for provision of a safe pedestrian crossing of the A371.

Statement from WM1 (point 6) requires – *“Further investigation will be required of traffic impacts and a safe access onto the A371 will be required. Safe pedestrian links should be provided to enable access on foot to the village core”*

Highway standards require sufficient sight lines and pavement widths which the current road layout does not make available . This proposal identifies how these requirements can be met making use of land that could be made available to the south of the existing crossing

A safe way to cross the A371 is the number one priority expressed by a number of village consultations over the last two years. The parish council request that the council planning teams and the applicants of the current outline application 2025/037/OUT assess this option prior to determination.

Current Crossing

Does not offer sufficient sight line visibility looking south towards Station Rd (Wells) nor provides sufficient pavement width for poles for lights / signage. We believe the sight line visibility looking east towards cheddar is already satisfactory.

See fig 1 for sight line estimation for 20 mpg; current 85 percentile speeds of 24 mph and for current speed limit of 30 mph (extracted from manual for streets)

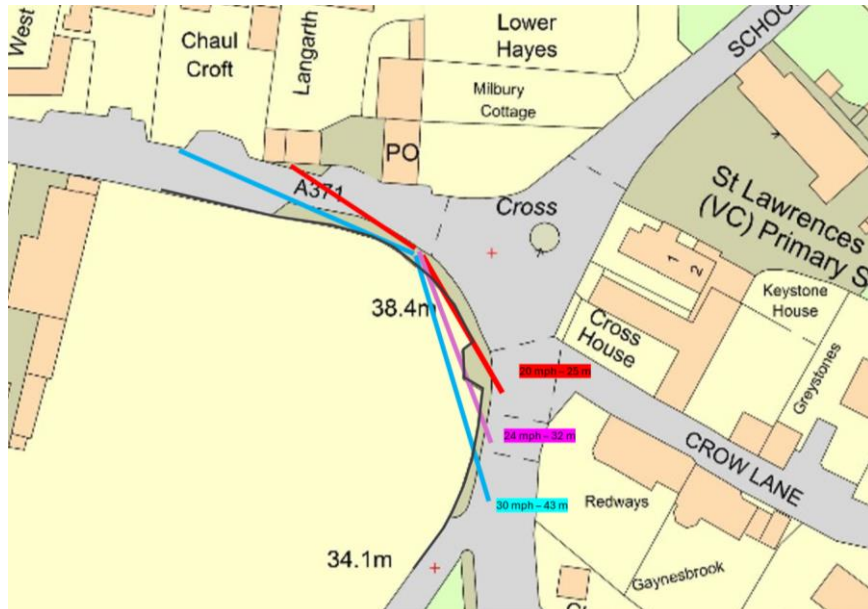


Fig 1 – showing approx sight lines for “stopping sight distances” by speed

Elements of Potential Solution

The current crossing position is the best location as it provides sufficient visibility to the west but insufficient to the south (east). Alternative positions have been considered but would reduce visibility further and conflict with bus stop location.

The following elements are based on making use of the existing crossing position.

Sight Line requirements (looking south). Sight lines require that additional land is available to provide unrestricted view of traffic / pedestrian crossing point for distances to suit assumed traffic speeds. This would require any obstacles (walls and railings) to be under 600mm along the sight line visibility splay. Either from reduced height of current wall or relocation of wall behind a sight line visibility splay.

The working assumption proposed is that a 30 mph sight line is not necessary given existing traffic speed (85%) are 24mph (Pell Frischmann Traffic Survey) but that sight lines for 20 mph assume too much - successful implementation of this speed limit – and that this reduces speeds to 20 mph or below. Proposal therefore works on sight lines necessary for 24 mph speeds

Table of speeds / sight lines required (manual for streets)

Conclusion drawn from manual for streets (see fig 2) is that the following sight line distances / visibility splays will be required. The Pell Frischmann traffic surveys showed that 85 percentile speeds of traffic travelling north towards shop from station rd direction was 24 mph .

20mph – 25m

24 mph – 32m

30 mph – 43m

Sight lines looking west are already sufficient. Sight lines looking south towards station road are insufficient and could be improved as outlined below.

Land availability: The owners of Court House Farm have indicated they are open to being part of a solution if making available a slice of land would solve sight line and pavement width issues. They would require that the existing footpath across the front garden is diverted such that it does not cross part of the property. See Fig 2.

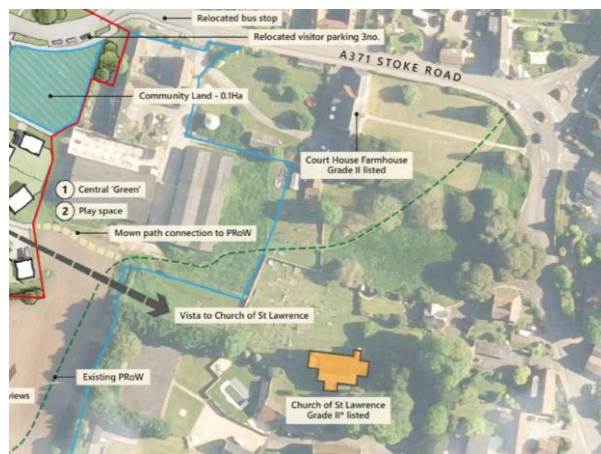


Fig 2 – Route of existing public footpath across Court House Farm garden

Footpath Diversion – There are a number of possible routes that a diverted footpath might take – either west along A371 and then south through proposed new RL access or south to land surrounding church and then west. The route that perhaps would make most sense from (line of desire) would be west along the A371. This alternative route was in use for many years prior to 2012 (?). Footpath diversion assessment required (and pavement widths addressed).

Listed Buildings Impact – To achieve sight line visibility splays required there will be a need for at least a section of wall to be reduced in height or relocated as per sketches attached . There is also a requirement for widening of the pavement at the crossing point to allow for installation of poles etc.

The impact of this change in the curtilage to a listed building will need assessment and balanced by the public benefit. Securing this assessment will require input from the conservation officers as well as planners.

Shop garden wall Impact – To achieve the pavement width on the north side of the crossing point it would also be necessary to set a 2 or 3 m section of the current wall of the shop garden further back from the highway.

Lighting Impact - Transport design notes on pedestrian crossings refer to the need for an experienced lighting engineer to assess that there is the required lighting for drivers to see

pedestrians and suggests that supplementary lighting can be used to illuminate the crossing. The community need to understand what impact the level of required lighting will present. The dark skies policy as published by the PC makes allowance for lighting to be installed where safety requires.

Green Space- The front garden of Court House Farm is a registered green space for the village and so any adjustment to the curtilage will have a small impact on this area. Given the significant public benefit it would be reasonable to expect this to be acceptable to the community.

Draft alignment sketch

To illustrate the extent of any realignment / reduced height of the curtilage wall of Court House Farm that would be necessary (assuming a 24 mph speed sight line) please see attached doc titled "Sight Line Positions Draft 1"

Conclusions

With the possibility of Court House garden land being made available to meet sight line and pavement width requirements there is potential for a safe crossing to be installed meeting highway standards. This would be subject to

- Footpath diversion being agreed and enabled prior to installation of any safe crossing . The diversion proposed is not onerous for footpath users and brings significant public benefit.
- Changes to curtilage wall agreed (reduced height or set back) and the listed building impacts being judged as acceptable in the balance. The public benefit for safety of village residents is judged to be greater than the impact on the listed building or its setting.
- Community shop agreement on relocation of a short section of shop garden wall. As the shop has the well-being of its customers as a top priority this the re-arrangement of the existing section of wall should not present a barrier
- Lighting levels of a safe crossing meet safety requirements and are acceptable to the village

Westbury Sub Mendip Parish Council ask that

1. The council planning and highway teams fully consider this option and the elements necessary as outlined
2. The local planning authority request that the Church Commissioners carry out a detailed design for this option prior to any determination of the 2025/0137/OUT application to consider how this can satisfy planning policy WM1 (bullet 6)

If there are alternative designs for a safe crossing that then emerge the Parish Council may wish to seek views from community on preferred options.

Appendix: See "Sight Line Positions Draft 1" Doc attached

