

The A44 Kington bypass was designed as an all-purpose single carriageway road and was opened in 1982. At the time that the road was constructed the design allowed for a forward visibility of 160m, this being the acceptable minimum within the design standards at that time.

In accordance with the Road Safety Policy contained within the current Local Transport Plan, and in line with Section 39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 together with historic national best practice guidance, Herefordshire Council undertakes an annual review of all recorded personal injury collisions on roads within the County. In line with the agreed criteria, these sites are subject to investigation and, where appropriate, additional measures may be introduced to improve road safety in line with available resources. Locations where such works have been carried out are subject to an ongoing enhanced inspection and maintenance regime, in addition to the monthly driven safety inspection policy, as detailed within the current Highways Maintenance Plan and the Public Realm Annual Plan.

The location in question has not previously been identified as having a defined history of collisions from the above approach and has therefore not been subject to any form of enhanced maintenance regime.

Following the collision, works were immediately undertaken to remove foliage and to improve the forward visibility at the location, this work taking place after the joint inspection by the Police and the Council's lead road safety officer. An instruction has subsequently been issued to Balfour Beatty Living Places for the reinstatement of visibility splays along the length of the bypass; it is anticipated that this additional work will be complete before the end of September 2022. This piece of work will improve the visibility for pedestrians and motorists alike.

Moving to the individual points within the Regulation 28 report:

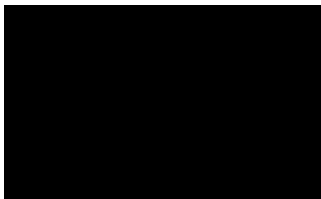
- i) The issue of prevailing foliage is addressed above. In addition, the Council will add the Kington Bypass to its list of sites that require an enhanced maintenance regime. On top of regular monthly maintenance inspections for the A44, the whole site will have specific quarterly safety inspections that will include the side road and the footpath. The locality steward responsible for the inspections will be made aware of the requirements needed to ensure safety at this location. The regime will also ensure that the forward visibility along the bypass is maintained as per the original design requirements, taking into account the prevailing speed limit in force.
- ii) The safety barrier, in the form of pedestrian guardrail, was installed to prevent pedestrians moving from the river bridge directly onto the bypass. It has the effect of halting pedestrians and encouraging them to check for traffic prior to crossing the road. There are no plans to move or alter the position or layout of the pedestrian guardrail as it is considered adequate to prevent inadvertent entry onto the bypass. The police are aware of this and have not raised any objections.
- iii) The crossing point is a historic one and pre-dates the construction of the bypass. The line of the path is a public right of way, reference Kington Urban Footpath 29. The line of the path is complicated by the presence of a footbridge over the adjacent Gilwern Brook. The path is popular locally and provides ready access to the Offa's Dyke. There are no plans at this time to either move the line of the footpath or to provide a footbridge over the A44. The presence of the pedestrian guardrail is considered to offer adequate protection and is standard practice for numerous situations where public rights of way cross a highway in the county.

- iv) The A44 is currently subject to the National Speed Limit, i.e. 60mph for a single carriageway road. The Council is soon to consult on the lowering of the speed limit to 50mph, the lowest speed limit that is considered appropriate for this class of road and its nature, i.e. a road with minimal access points and good overall visibility. The Council will not be seeking to lower the speed limit further in the vicinity of the collision as speed limits are not set for point locations but rather for the overall look and feel of the network over a section of road. It is anticipated that this will take up to nine months to complete in order to allow for consultation and the statutory processes for making the necessary traffic regulation orders.

- v) It is noted that warning signs for pedestrians crossing exist only on the eastbound approach. A review of the location, using Google Maps StreetView, shows that this has been the case since at least 2009. That said, the Council will be reviewing signing and lining along the length of the bypass and will implement any improvements prior to March 2023. While this review will ultimately determine the details of the proposals, it is likely to at least include pedestrian warning signs on each approach to the three existing locations where public rights of way cross the bypass. The extended period for implementation is required to ensure that any proposed design complies with the requirements of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016, and that there is sufficient time to make any relevant orders.

Should you have any further queries or questions then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



CHIEF EXECUTIVE