

St Paul Malmesbury Without Parish Council

Report #05.5

BLICKS HILL CROSSING ON A429

1. The Issue

- 1.1 Vehicles travelling along the A429 in the vicinity of the Blick's Hill need to be given a much clearer and earlier warning of the fact that pedestrians/dog walkers and cyclists are about to cross the road; this crossing point is located within a national speed restriction zone.

2. Background

- 2.1 Over many years the parish council has, from time to time, received requests from residents living in Milbourne and Malmesbury to consider ways of improving pedestrian safety at this crossing point. There have been numerous reports of incidents/near misses from both individuals and parents with children about the dangers of this crossing point and more recently an accident resulted in the death of a well-known Milbourne resident.
- 2.2 This recent incident has understandably generated, and continues to generate, a great deal of concern among local people who wish to see something more effective in place at this crossing point than the existing arrangements. Seven years ago Wiltshire Highways installed a coloured road surface at the crossing point, along with non-illuminated warning signs situated some 100 metres on each approach. Whilst this action was considered an improvement unfortunately vehicles travelling at or near the speed limit have little time to heed the warnings and to register the need for caution in the event that pedestrians are waiting to use the crossing.

3. Proposed additional enhancement

- 3.1 The parish council should like to offer a potential viable enhancement to improve the present levels of safety at this dangerous crossing. This option would require the installation of discreet PIR (passive infra red) posts at both sides, east and west, of the A429 at Blicks Hill such that they are triggered by any approaching pedestrians/dog walker and cyclist using the right of way.
- 3.2 This activation would in turn trigger new large illuminated warning signs (similar to Speed Indicator Devices) on the A429, some 100 metres either side of the crossing to alert drivers of the possibility of the crossing point being in use. (The stopping distance for vehicles travelling at 60 mph is 73 metres; 70mph is 96 metres).
- 3.3 The PIRs could be hard wired to the warning signs and all the devices powered by solar panels; peak usage of the crossing point is normally during daylight hours. The installation would therefore be environmentally friendly.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The council accepts that the LHFIG has already investigated potential improvements to this crossing point and concluded that nothing more can be done to enhance the existing arrangements. However given the continuing amount of concern being expressed it believes a more technical/regulatory explanation needs to be provided by WH to either support a proposal such as this or provide a written explanation to the council for dissemination to local residents.

Cllr David Briggs
Chair, Project Working Party
16/05/24