

North Yorkshire County Council

Business and Environmental Services

Executive Members

26 January 2018

Flashing Amber School Crossing Patrol Warning Lights

Report of the Assistant Director – Highways and Transportation

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To seek approval from the Corporate Director, Business and Environmental Services (BES) in consultation with BES Executive Members, for the adoption of a formal position on the installation of Flashing Amber Warning Lights to complement School Crossing Patrols at Certain Locations.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 North Yorkshire County Council's Road Safety Team has responsibility for providing School Crossing Patrols (SCPs) at designated locations, set out in accordance with Section 26 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended by the Transport Act 2000. The team follows The Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) and Road Safety GB's School Crossing Patrol Service Guidelines, November 2013 as the national guidance to delivery of the NYCC SCP service.

3.0 Guidance on Flashing Amber Hazard Warning Lights

- 3.1 Part of the above guidance sets out when flashing amber hazard warning lights may be used in addition to the "Children going to or from School or playground ahead" warning sign. Images of the lights and sign taken from the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD) 2016 are shown at Appendix B.
- 3.2 The guidance reads as follows:

Flashing Amber Hazard Warning Lights

Under the Statutory Instruments 2002 No.3113 'The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002', flashing amber hazard warning lights 4004 may be installed in addition to warning sign "Children going to or from School or playground ahead" (diagram 545) with a supplementary "School" or "Patrol" plate (diagram 547.1), at difficult sites when:

- a) the 85%ile speed of cars is greater than 35 mph*
- b) the forward visibility of the SCP is less than 100 metres, or exceptionally on any road where difficulties arise because of the lack of suitable gaps in the traffic flow having regard to the width of the carriageway*
- c) in any situation where conditions make the SCP operation particularly difficult.*

An SCP or other authorised person may switch on flashing amber warning lights at any time when children are travelling to and from school, whether or not they are being supervised. If provided, warning lights must be switched on at the start of each SCP duty period and switched off at the end.

- 3.3 The School Crossing Patrol Service Guidelines have not been updated since TSRGD 2016 replaced the 2002 Regulations, which now provides that the supplementary plate "Disabled Children" may be used in addition to the warning sign.

- 3.4 The 2013 version of the Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 4 “Warning Signs” meanwhile states that:

Flashing amber lights (diagram 4004) are used to give emphasis to the warning sign where the 85th percentile speed exceeds 35 mph, or on a busy road where a driver’s attention is likely to be fully occupied. The lights may be used only when diagram 545 is used together with diagram 546, 547.1 or 547.7 and the crossing point is in use (whether or not it is supervised). See regulation 50 (40 in the Northern Ireland Regulations) and direction 55(1). Lights should not be used near level crossings, traffic signals, Pelican, Puffin, Toucan or Zebra crossings if this might cause confusion or distraction. They should never be used to warn of children crossing at signalled or Zebra crossings. Guidance on the possible need to sign such crossings can be found in section 8 (signalled crossings) and para 9.3 (Zebra crossings).

Where conditions at a patrol site justify flashing lights and there is another patrol site situated within 500 metres that does not, consideration should be given to the provision of lights at both or neither site.

4.0 NYCC Approach to Flashing Amber Hazard Warning Lights

- 4.1 NYCC does not have any approved Policy, Protocol or Procedure in place covering the provision of these warning lights, and has in the past simply followed the guidance provided by the aforementioned School Crossing Patrol Service Guidelines. Following a recent query from an elected member, it has been suggested that NYCC should formally adopt a position on these warning lights, to enable a consistent approach when queries and requests for the lights are received.

5.0 Suggested Position

- 5.1 In order to ensure that the NYCC position only allows the provision of these signs at the locations of greatest need, to maintain their effectiveness, it is suggested that the following is adopted, which is a combination of the School Crossing Patrol Service Guidelines, November 2013, Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 4, 2013, and TSRGD 2016:
- Flashing Amber Hazard Warning Lights to TSRGD 2016 Schedule 14, Part 2, Item 23, should only be provided:
 - a) To warn of a designated School Crossing Patrol site;
 - b) In conjunction with the sign provided for at item 25 of the table in Part 2 of Schedule 2, together with a plate bearing the legend “School”, “Patrol” or “Disabled children”;
 - c) At locations where:
 - i. the 85th percentile speed of cars is greater than 35 mph, or;
 - ii. the forward visibility of the SCP is less than 100 metres, or exceptionally on any road where difficulties arise because of the lack of suitable gaps in the traffic flow having regard to the width of the carriageway, or;
 - iii. on a busy road where a driver’s attention is likely to be fully occupied, or;
 - iv. in any situation where conditions make the SCP operation particularly difficult.
 - d) Lights should not be used near level crossings, traffic signals, Pelican, Puffin, Toucan or Zebra crossings if this might cause confusion or distraction, and should never be used to warn of children crossing at signalled or Zebra crossings;
 - e) Where conditions at a patrol site justify flashing lights and there is another patrol site situated within 500 metres that does not, consideration should be given to the provision of lights at both or neither site.

- The lights should only be lit when the crossing point is in use (whether or not it is supervised).

5.2 Adopting this position will ensure a consistent approach to requests for Flashing Amber Warning Lights, and will ensure that Officers, Members, and the Public have clarity on where the signs may be used.

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 This position will ensure that Flashing Amber Warning Lights, which require more maintenance than a standard warning sign, are only used at the locations of greatest need. As this paper simply seeks to formalise the position that has been followed customarily until now it is anticipated that there will be no impact on the number of sites which are eligible for lights, and therefore no change to maintenance requirements.

7.0 Equalities Implications

7.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for any adverse equalities impacts arising from the recommendations of this report. It is the view of officers that the recommended protocol does not have an adverse impact on any of the protected characteristics identified in the Equalities Act 2010 and an EIA screening form is attached at appendix A.

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for any legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report. It is the view of officers that the recommendations included in this report do not have any significant legal implications. All requirements within the suggested position are compliant with the relevant legislation and guidance, namely Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016, Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 4 2013 and The School Crossing Patrol Service Guidelines, November 2013.

9.0 Recommendations

9.1 It is recommended that the Corporate Director, Business and Environmental Services in consultation with BES Executive Members agree to the adoption of the suggested formal position on the provision of Flashing Amber School Crossing Patrol Warning Lights.

BARRIE MASON
Assistant Director Highways and Transportation

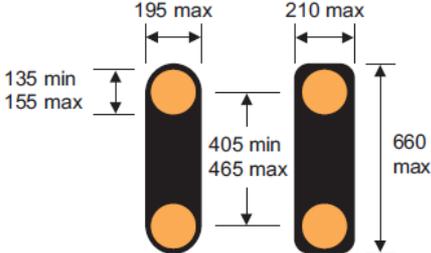
Author of Report: James Smith

Background documents: None

<p>Initial equality impact assessment screening form (As of October 2015 this form replaces 'Record of decision not to carry out an EIA')</p> <p>This form records an equality screening process to determine the relevance of equality to a proposal, and a decision whether or not a full EIA would be appropriate or proportionate.</p>			
Directorate	Business and Environmental Services		
Service area	Highways and Transportation		
Proposal being screened	Flashing Amber School Crossing Patrol Warning Lights		
Officer(s) carrying out screening	James Smith		
What are you proposing to do?	To adopt a formal position stating when Flashing Amber Warning Lights will be used to complement School Crossing Patrols at Certain Locations		
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	The County Council's Road Safety team currently follows The Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) and Road Safety GB's School Crossing Patrol Service Guidelines, November 2013 as the national guidance to delivery of the NYCC SCP service. NYCC has not however adopted a formal position on this assessment, which impacts on service delivery to customers.		
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	No, the recommendation suggests adoption of a position which is entirely consistent with national legislation and guidance, and which is the same as that customarily used. There will not therefore be any additional resources required.		
<p>Is there likely to be an adverse impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYCC's additional agreed characteristics?</p> <p>As part of this assessment, please consider the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent is this service used by particular groups of people with protected characteristics? • Does the proposal relate to functions that previous consultation has identified as important? • Do different groups have different needs or experiences in the area the proposal relates to? <p>If for any characteristic it is considered that there is likely to be a significant adverse impact or you have ticked 'Don't know/no info available', then a full EIA should be carried out where this is proportionate. You are advised to speak to your Equality rep for advice if you are in any doubt.</p>			
Protected characteristic	Yes	No	Don't know/No info available
Age		✓	
Disability		✓	
Sex (Gender)		✓	
Race		✓	
Sexual orientation		✓	
Gender reassignment		✓	
Religion or belief		✓	

Pregnancy or maternity		✓	
Marriage or civil partnership		✓	
NYCC additional characteristic			
People in rural areas		✓	
People on a low income		✓	
Carer (unpaid family or friend)		✓	
Does the proposal relate to an area where there are known inequalities/probable impacts (e.g. disabled people's access to public transport)? Please give details.	No		
Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate? (e.g. partners, funding criteria, etc.). Do any of these organisations support people with protected characteristics? Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.	No		
Decision (Please tick one option)	EIA not relevant or proportionate:	✓	Continue to full EIA:
Reason for decision	The recommendation suggests adoption of a position which is entirely consistent with national legislation and guidance, and which is the same as that customarily used. By ensuring NYCC's position is in line with national guidance the signs will be used at the locations of greatest need, and in a way which is consistent and clear.		
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	<i>David Bowe</i>		
Date	15/01/2018		

Diagrams of Flashing Amber Warning Lights and School Crossing Patrol Signs

23	<p>Diagram 4004 Signals placed at or near a school crossing place where children likely to be crossing the road on their way to or from school ahead (Alternative types)</p>		<p>The container may be coloured grey</p>
25	<p>Diagram 545 Children going to or from school or playground ahead</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "School", "Patrol", "Playground", "Disabled children", "Blind children" or "Deaf children" with or without an arrow pointing to the left or to the right; 2. "School", "Patrol", "Playground", "Disabled children", "Blind children" or "Deaf children" and a distance with or without an arrow pointing to the left or to the right; or 3 "No footway for" and a distance

The fourth column names the associated plates that can be added to the sign. One of the legends must be used with the sign.