

COUNCIL

29 NOVEMBER 2016

REPORT OF MANAGEMENT AND MEMBERS' SUPPORT MANAGER

A.4 A133 Road Traffic Collision Analysis

(Report prepared by Karen Neath)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide Council with an update on the safety review of the A133 undertaken by Essex County Council following a number of fatalities on that road.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- At the Council meeting on 5 April 2016 a motion was debated in relation to the A133 Weeley and Little Clacton by-pass, and it was agreed:-

“That this Council –

- *Is appalled that another serious accident has occurred on the A133 on the Weeley and Little Clacton by-pass last week leading to another fatality. In the last ten months there have been a total of 5 fatalities;*
- *Demands that the Highways Authority take urgent action to investigate the causes of these accidents and implement all, and any, safety measures as soon as practicable; and*
- *Calls on the County Council and local Members of Parliament to support this motion and to do everything possible to ensure that the A133 Weeley and Little Clacton by-pass is made safe for all road users.”*

In actual fact there had been a total of six fatalities in the last ten months.

- Subsequently letters were sent from the Leader of the Council to Essex County Council, Bernard Jenkin MP and Douglas Carswell MP asking that this be looked into as a matter of urgency.
- Essex County Council has now completed its review and has provided the following summary of the final report.

a. Key findings

- 60 collisions were recorded over a 10 year period along the 5.7km route
- 27% (18 collisions) of the recorded collisions involved overtaking or crossover onto the opposing carriageway
- 11% (7 collisions) of the recorded collisions involved vulnerable road users (2 pedestrians and 5 cyclists, 3 of these were fatal collisions (1 pedestrian, 2 cyclists).
- There have been 7 fatal collisions involving 8 casualties over the ten year period, 2 involving cyclists and one involving a pedestrian. There have been 6 fatal collisions in the 13 month period between 12/05/2015 and 12/06/2016.
- Of the 60 collisions 5 involved cyclists, and 16 involved motorcycles/mopeds/ powered two wheelers.

- Using our collision intervention cluster criteria of 4 personal injury accidents within a 50m radius in a 5 year period there are 4 potential cluster sites, none of these clusters include a fatal collision. If the criteria is extended to the 10 year period there are 6 potential collision cluster sites however only one of these includes a fatal collision.

b. Observations

- There is a suitable alternative route for cyclists through Weeley Village.
- There is an issue of drivers overtaking vehicles and crossing over into the opposing carriageway leading to head on collisions.
- The route has minimal conflict points. These being the laybys west of Bentley Road Bridge, and north of the Progress Way Roundabout. There is also an at grade pedestrian crossing for footpath 12. There have been no recorded collisions at the at grade footpath.
- The collision data shows only the laybys present an issue for drivers, there have been four collisions involving the laybys which involved two motorists turning into the laybys and being struck by overtaking vehicles, one involved a pedestrian running into the carriageway into the path of oncoming traffic, and one involved a motorist performing a U-turn from the roundabout into the path of an oncoming vehicles (remedial measure introduced between 2009 and 2012).
- The A133 route was recently resurfaced (2014), there is no evidence within the collision data to suggest that there is a skidding issue for the route the current scrim data indicates a sound/ warning class of surface (this is explained in greater detail in section d below).
- There are cluster sites (site 1 and 6) at both roundabouts predominantly loss of control type collisions and vehicles failing to give way pulling into the path of oncoming vehicles.

c. Conclusion

Looking at the cluster sites identified there are no clear patterns that indicate that the existing infrastructure and layout pose an obvious hazard or danger to motorists. The 5 year cluster sites are situated at the roundabouts. When reviewing the route the road layout is constructed to standard with no departures from a design perspective for either the curvature of the bends, or the gradient on their approaches.

The roundabouts do not have a specifically unusual design and again do not suggest an inherent issue for motorists. With regards to collisions at roundabouts it is expected that there would be at least one collision per year at a roundabout. This would be 10 per roundabout for the 10 year period, however the A133 Colchester Road Roundabout has 9 personal injury collisions, and the A133 Progress way Roundabout there is 8. The conflict points along the route are the four laybys where there is an expectation that over a ten year period there would be collisions. There have been 3 collisions involving the laybys, and only one of these fell within a Cluster site (Cluster site 4).

Overtaking numbers are high it is believed that this is because this is the first opportunity along A133 for a certain distance which presents / allows for an overtaking manoeuvre to safely be undertaken as the carriageway widens up and the forward visibility improves considerably in both directions when entering from the A133 Colchester Road roundabout and the A133 Progress Way roundabout.

Looking at the route as a whole the collision and speed data does not suggest that there is a significant speed related issue with regards to the overtaking manoeuvres, it would appear that the issue is poor overtaking manoeuvres or, motorists attempting to overtake multiple vehicles. We can also look at the collision rate for the route (the number of collisions per km on rural A roads). The rate for this stretch of the A133 is 11.9 collisions per 100 million vehicle kilometres, the Rural A road Rate (taken from DFT 2014 data) is 17.4 collisions per 100 million vehicle kilometres.

It is recommended that improvements are made to the signing and lining at the roundabouts, additional signing is installed to highlight motorcyclists on the exit of each

roundabout and that an experimental speed limit of 50mph is introduced along the A133 between the two roundabouts for a 12 month period. It is expected that by reducing the speed limit to 50mph the need to overtake slower vehicles will be reduced. The lowering of the speed limit may also help reduce the severity of collisions, as any impact speed would be reduced.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Members note the summary report from Essex County Council and the recommendations made.