


VIDEO – Local councillor campaigns for traffic lights at Dalmahoy



Local councillor Bill Henderson may only have been elected to his position last May but he has in the words of one resident 'hit the ground running'. He is campaigning hard for the council to find the money to fund a new set of traffic lights on the west of the city on the busy A71 at the junction of Dalmahoy Road.

The junction is staggered and there are two bus stops, one of which is set against a wall and only has about a foot and a half of pavement in front of it. As a result people do not use it to wait for a bus, preferring to stand in the entranceway to Dalmahoy Hotel where there is less likelihood of them being hit by a passing vehicle.

 Councillor Henderson said:-“There definitely need to be changes made here. There have been quite a few accidents on this part of the road in the last few years, and I just don't want the next one to be a fatality. People coming from Ratho going towards the city often encounter a bus in the slip road where there is actually a bus stop. It is just downright dangerous.

“The council have roughly estimated the cost, and traffic lights will cost around £410,000, but there is a cost benefit ratio. Each accident costs around £35,000 and if we assume that there are about five accidents a year you could save around £150,000 in one year. The traffic lights would take minimum maintenance and would be here for much longer than 3

or 4 years which is how long it would take to recoup the money spent. The traffic lights might be here for the next 20 years!

“The Hotel backs the plan as they have tour buses and heavy lorries which need to get in and out. There are also lots of cars visiting the hotel and the golf and country club which need to be able to do so safely. If it was safer then it might actually draw more people in to the hotel.

“The money has to come out of a budget. The council has various budgets for road repair or for safety and we need to get some budgets put together so that the funding can actually be put in place, and this is being investigated right now. The council is not against the idea and the money would not have to be from the council alone. Marriott who own the hotel might contribute and so might Cala who are building in Ratho, but ultimately the council have to pick up the largest part of the bill as it is a road safety issue.

“Another safety issue with this part of the road is the two bus stops. One of them is highly dangerous. This is the main bus stop for people going to Livingston and the pavement is only about two feet wide. People really cannot use this safely. ”

Councillor Ricky Henderson who also represents the Pentland Hills ward said:-” I’m supportive of any measures to improve safety at this junction.”

The Ratho and District Community Council also said that they welcome the proposal to install traffic lights at the junction with Dalmahoy Road and the A71. A spokesman said:-“It has been the scene of a number of accidents over the years. Traffic lights will both enhance traffic and pedestrian safety.”

A local business owner in Ratho:-“It really is a very dangerous junction and many people take their lives in their hands trying to access the Dalmahoy Hotel from Ratho.”

Graham Dane, Chair of Currie Community Council takes a slightly different stance:-“The junction between Curriehill Road and the A71 is unlit and not near any source of lighting on a moonless night. Currie Community Council have had several complaints about this junction, and have lobbied for a safety audit and improvements to it. A highly reflective information board situated some distance from the crossing in each direction, with a street light and smaller board at the crossing itself would hugely improve visibility. The light could possibly be solar charged. This would not be an expensive option and would contribute substantially to road safety and make road users feel a lot safer.”

The Edinburgh Reporter met up with Councillor Henderson one morning at the junction to see the traffic for ourselves. This was one weekday morning during the school holidays...

