Okehampton Town Council
18th August 2025
Meeting Report

Date:	11th August 2025
Name:	Emma James

6. **<u>Market Street Pedestrian Crossing Lights</u> –** To consider correspondence in relation to replacement of the lights

I have been passed your details by XXXXXXX regards a query about the pedestrian linking at the crossings in Okehampton.

Essentially it is difficult to link the sites fully as it is always dependant on when a pedestrian presses the button and at which point in the cycle the junction is at. We can only hold pedestrians on red for so long (typically no more than 30s) as we will quickly get complaints from them and more importantly longer waiting times can encourage some pedestrians to cross when not safe to do so.

The linking onsite has been out of action for a spell due to a fault at the junction, but this was rectified in the past few months so is now working again. The current linking inhibits the ped crossing from changing for 35s when the junction begins its move to the Market Street Phase. The aim is therefore to give Market St traffic around 30s clear green while the ped is held on green to traffic. (the other crossing on Fore Street is on a similar arrangement for its stage)

However, in reality it depends on when a pedestrian presses the button. If they press it say a second before the inhibit period starts, the crossing will start moving to green to pedestrians and so they will go to green as Market Street gets its traffic green (the inhibit can only stop the crossing from changing. If it is already moving stage before the inhibit starts it has to complete the stage change to peds).

At other points in the cycle the crossing will also react to pedestrian demands as appropriate and this will clearly then impact vehicles leaving the supermarkets. The crossing itself has a variable clearance time so on some occasions it will hold traffic on red for longer depending on the speed of the pedestrians (at other times it should change back quicker). The new equipment will hopefully work better on that basis as modern detection generally works better with pedestrians.

Unfortunately, at this location there are many delaying factors for traffic. The junction is spread out with tight turns and narrows sections so movement of traffic is generally slower, all approaches are busy and as it runs 4 stages the cycle times can be longer when busy. In addition, pedestrians crossing at other locations randomly will slow vehicles, cars parking in the bays on Fore Street can stop traffic passing and in general having all the supermarkets in that one location means there are larger numbers of vehicles entering/exiting the car parks all of which will be mean it is slow at times throughout the area.

As such there is unfortunately no scope to improve the situation and there have been traffic studies completed in recent years to look at options for the area as a whole with no solutions found. While it may not seem so the current arrangement is the best that can be achieved on the current road network.