

Mrs Karen Dilks  
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7 October 2019

Dear Mrs Dilks

**Re: Regulation 28 – Pauline Howell (Inquest held 3 June 2019)**

Thank you for your letter dated 15 August 2019 sent to [REDACTED] in Legal Services in relation to the above inquest, and enclosing a Regulation 28 Report To Prevent Future Deaths asking Newcastle City Council to take action.

First of all we again extend our sympathies to Pauline Howell's family and friends. Whenever there is a tragedy the council looks at what lessons can be learned to try and avoid such accidents occurring again.

In order to give full consideration to the issues you raised, we commissioned two independent Stage 4 Road Safety Audits by different experienced Civil Engineers to review the current junction layout and signal phasing. Should you wish to see copies of the independent road safety audits we will make them available to you.

It should be noted the junction has been substantially re-modelled since the pedestrian fatality in 2015 and the Road Safety Audits undertaken assess only the current layout. Apart from some modifications to the green/red man signal boxes made in January 2019, the current layout is the same as that which would have been in place at the time of the second fatality that was the subject of the recent inquest.

The Stage 4 Road Safety Audits included consideration of post scheme road traffic collision data, along with site visits to review physical layout and observe pedestrian and traffic movements at the junction.

In response to the issues you have raised neither of the Road Safety Audits consider the locations of the pedestrian crossing points to be problematic. In fact, one of the independent consultants noted that:

*'Observations made on site suggest that the crossing points are on the desire line for pedestrians and that any movement of these points away from their current positions would unlikely affect the desire line.'*

**If you need this information in another format or language, please contact the person who sent it.**

It is also important that this is seen in the context of the Forensic Collision Investigation reconstruction report, which concluded that primary cause for the collision was the actions of Mrs Howell.

The junction was designed as part of a wider scheme to improve cycling and incorporates a number of elements to reduce speed, such as a 20mph speed limit and a raised table across the junction to both slow traffic and provide an at grade crossing facility for pedestrians.

The two Stage 4 Road Safety Audits have identified some minor issues with the junction layout and some potential remedial measures.

One issue was raised as part of both consultants' Stage 4 Road Safety Audits:

Potential confusion over road layout as the segregated cycle lane could be mistaken as southbound carriageway – there had been an original suggestion to install text on the kerb edge at pedestrian crossing points to state 'Look both ways' which was discounted at the time as not permitted under the regulations. This is now permitted by the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions and will be installed.

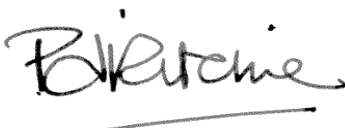
Other minor scheme improvements will include:

1. Amend the tactile paving on the north west corner of the junction outside the Central Library to improve consistency for blind and partially sighted users.
2. Revise the phasing of lights and install detection sensors. Amend the location of the primary traffic signal head and raise the level of the pedestrian repeaters.
3. Replace damage on splinter island between cycle lane and general traffic lane for west bound traffic on New Bridge Street West.

We anticipate that the work highlighted above will be undertaken during late October 2019.

I trust that this information is of assistance and addresses your concerns over the junction.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat Ritchie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Pat Ritchie  
**Chief Executive**

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