Department for Transport

Department forTransport
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Our Ref: TO/366712
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Pip Jackson
The Access Association

4 October 2021

Dear Ms Jackson

Colourful Pedestrian Crossings.

Thank you for your email of 6 September to the Department for Transport about your concerns with coloured surfacing.

The Department for Transport is aware that this has been used in a few places and our views are as follows.

All pedestrian crossings are regulated by the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 (TSRGD). This includes zebras, puffins, and the type of pedestrian facilities at junctions you've referred to.

TSRGD prescribes the signs, signals and markings that must be used to create the different types of crossing. Chapter 6 of the Traffic Signs Manual gives guidance on design of crossings, including road markings, but the requirements of TSRGD take precedence over any good practice guidance. Chapter 6 can be found in accessible PDF format at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/traffic-signs-manual

In the Department's view, coloured surfacing is not considered a traffic sign or road marking and therefore doesn't come within the scope of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD). It has no legal meaning and therefore could be placed within the crossing studs at a signal-controlled crossing, or pedestrian facility at a junction.

The use of surfacing in this way needs careful thought. Striped designs must be avoided – there is a trend to use surfacing materials (e.g. different types of stone paviour) in patterns to mark informal crossings, including some that are striped. Our view is that any crossing that is not a zebra must not resemble one. That would extend to using a striped pattern at a signalled crossing.

Zebra crossings have a defined priority in law, and anything that looks like one could lead pedestrians to assume priority when it doesn't exist.

The Department feels that any authority using these should consider the possible impact they may have on all road users, perhaps through a risk assessment process. Consideration of the impacts on disabled people should form part of this process, for example through an Equality Impact Assessment.

I trust this has explained the Department's position for you.

Yours sincerely

Frederick Pike