

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	4 NOVEMBER 2014	AGENDA ITEM:	16
TITLE:	EAST AREA TRANSPORT STUDY UPDATE		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION & STREETCARE	WARDS:	REDLANDS, KATESGROVE, PARK & ABBEY
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members of the Sub-Committee on progress with the East Area Transport Study.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes this report.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The proposals are in line with Reading Borough Council's third Local Transport Plan (LTP) and existing traffic management policies and standards.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Council, as the Local Highway Authority, is responsible for the provision, improvement and maintenance of transport infrastructure within the Borough. It is also responsible for the management of the highway network, which extends to include road safety and asset management. This requires that the Council be minded of the impacts that the highway and its use has on local communities.
- 4.2 In support of this work the Council has developed a number of area transport studies. These have previously seen the installation of a variety of measures, from dropped kerbs through to larger-scale highway works.

4.3 The University & Hospital Area Transport Study was established in 2011 and the Eastern Area Access Study was established in 2012. Progress for both studies is overseen by a Joint Steering Group which is chaired by the Lead Member for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport; and comprises membership of Abbey, Redlands, Katesgrove and Park Ward Councillors, and representatives from the University of Reading and Royal Berkshire Hospital.

5. PROGRESS

5.1 Works commenced on the highway improvement scheme along London Road on Monday 10th March 2014. Substantial completion was reached at the end of October 2014. The scheme has included widened and resurfaced footways along London Road between Southampton Street and Watlington Street and a newly resurfaced footway on the south side of London Road between Redlands Road and Alexandra Road to compliment the new shared footway/cycleway. Several traffic signal upgrades have also been completed at London Street/London Road, Crown Street/Southampton Street, and London Road/Alexandra Road. Eight new raised junction tables have been introduced along London Road at its junctions with East Street, Watlington Street, Denmark Road, Donnington Road, Blenheim Road, De Beauvoir Road, Granby Gardens and Eastern Avenue.

5.2 The highway improvements at Cemetery Junction commenced in May 2014 and substantial completion was also reached at the end of October 2014. The roads and footways have been resurfaced, new street furniture such as cycle parking and benches have been installed and several areas have been adjusted to allow for new landscaping and tree planting. The new shared use footway/cycleway has been created starting at the Eastern Avenue junction and running along the south side of Cemetery Junction to tie into the existing London Road footway/cycleway facility. The traffic signals at Cemetery Junction have been upgraded and a new pedestrian crossing has been provided just east of the De Beauvoir Road junction to serve the pedestrian desire line at this location.

5.3 The implementation of advisory cycle lanes on Southampton Street and Silver Street will be progressed separately early next year. The cycle lanes will be achieved by using the existing hatched areas on the highway and therefore highway capacity will not be affected.

5.4 Officers have identified a preferred option to install a pedestrian refuge island on Pepper Lane to aid pedestrian access to both the University and Leighton Park School.

5.5 The proposed eastern area 20mph speed limit has been approved and officers are now completing the detailed design process in order to introduce the scheme at the earliest opportunity.

6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 6.1 To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all.
- 6.2 To develop Reading as a Green City with a sustainable environment and economy at the heart of the Thames Valley.
- 6.3 To support the Green Travel Plan policies of the University of Reading and the Royal Berkshire Hospital.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 Statutory consultation has been undertaken in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
- 7.2 Study-wide consultations have been undertaken with residents in November 2011 and May 2012 as part of the University & Hospital Area Transport Study. A public exhibition of the proposed pedestrian and cycle schemes was held in January 2013.
- 7.3 Ongoing engagement with representatives from the University and Hospital is undertaken through the study Working Group and Steering Group meetings.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 None arising from this report.

9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 In addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 the Council is required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:-
 - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 9.2 The Council has carried out an equality impact assessment scoping exercise, and considers that the proposals do not have a direct impact on any groups with protected characteristics.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The study is funded by existing Transport budgets, including the Local Sustainable Transport Fund.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 University & Hospital Area / Eastern Area Access Study TMAP reports - June 2011, September 2011, June 2012, September 2012, November 2012, March 2013 and June 2013.
- 10.2 East Area Transport Study TMSR Reports - September 2013, November 2013, January 2014, March 2014, June 2014 and September 2014.