

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	10 JANUARY 2019	AGENDA ITEM:	14
TITLE:	ROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENT - VASTERN ROAD ROUNDABOUT WITH GEORGE STREET (READING BRIDGE) AND NAPIER ROAD		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION & STREETCARE	WARDS:	ABBEY
LEAD OFFICER:	SIMON BEASLEY	TEL:	0118 937 2228
JOB TITLE:	NETWORK AND PARKING MANAGER	E-MAIL:	simon.beasley@reading.gov.uk

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Sub-committee of road safety improvements to be implemented at the roundabout where Vastern Road (IDR) meets Bridge Street (Reading Bridge) and Napier Road.
- 1.2 The roundabout has an increasing casualty problem particularly as a result of motor vehicles colliding with cyclists. The current road layout is undefined and consequently significant lane changing occurs within roundabout. Cyclists are particularly vulnerable within these conditions as demonstrated by the number of casualties.
- 1.3 The road safety improvements consist of relining the roundabout to clarify lane destinations to remove the need for lane changes within the roundabout. The expectation is that this alteration will reduce motor vehicle/pedal cycle collisions and resultant casualties.
- 1.4 Appendix 1 - new road layout.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee note the contents of this report.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The government expects Local Authorities to implement road safety schemes to address sites with a history of personal injury collisions, and where possible link these with the promotion of sustainable travel.
- 3.2 Under the 1988 Road Traffic Act, the Highway Authority has a duty to take steps to both reduce and prevent collisions on the road network. In addition under the Traffic Management Act 2004 the authority has a duty to maintain and manage the road network and secure the safe and expeditious movement of traffic. (Traffic is defined to include pedestrians). It is therefore imperative that the authority continues to strive to reduce road casualties to ensure the network is safe for all users.

4. BACKGROUND AND PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The Vastern Road roundabout is a five road, multi-lane, entry/exit junction which results in it being less clear to users how to approach it. Consequently certain movements can result in lane changes within the roundabout leading to accidents. Many collisions result in casualties but collisions involving cyclists is significant and needs attention.
- 4.2 The casualty statistics for the junction show a steady increase over the past few years with a growing number of cyclists being hurt. When reviewing casualty statistics it is the national standard to look at the latest 3-years. This identifies patterns of accidents that may need treatment to improve road safety and avoids attempting to deal with one-off instances.
- 4.3 The latest full calendar year casualty statistics exist from 2017. Looking back over the 3-year period 2017 to 2015 there were 26 casualties recorded at the roundabout. 18 of this total were cyclists with two main cluster areas around the northwest side (Vastern Road west) and east side (Napier Road) of the roundabout. Looking back over past 3-year rolling periods there is a steady increase of cyclist casualties.

This is shown by:

2016 to 2014 - 11 cyclist casualties from a total of 20;
2015 to 2013 - 10 cyclist casualties from a total of 18;
2014 to 2012 - 6 cyclist casualties from a total of 14.

The two main cluster groups have remained consistent throughout the whole of this period to 2012.

- 4.4 It has been the desire to re-line the roundabout for some time as a road safety improvement. This has proved to be a challenging project due to the number of lanes and entry/exits into the roundabout. The road safety improvements consist of re-lining to clarify lane destinations and remove the need for lane changes within the roundabout. The expectation is that this alteration will reduce all collisions but specifically motor vehicle/pedal cycle collisions and resultant casualties.
- 4.7 Appendix 1, shows the new layout of the junction which will be ordered and implemented as soon as possible.
- 4.8 There will be a period where users will have to change established habits to adjust to this new layout. This is particularly so for users travelling from Forbury Road to Caversham via Reading Bridge. Lane discipline is key to improving road safety and users will be required to be in the correct lane before entering the roundabout. This will require further information on Forbury Road and Vastern Road (under the railway) prior to the roundabout to ensure users are in the correct lane.
- 4.9 Even as a result of this change further improvement may be needed. One idea which has been discussed is the use of continental style give way markings on the Vastern Road west-side entry to the roundabout. This is currently a non-prescribed road marking but early indications are the Department of Transport (DfT) would allow a trial within Reading specifically aimed at improving safety for pedal cyclists.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 5.1 This proposal contributes to the Council's priorities, as set out below:
- Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe
 - Ensuring the Council is fit for the future

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 In the development of this proposal a representative of the Reading Cycle Campaign had been consulted. Whilst the changes do not require any public consultation the changes will require advanced signing to prepare road users of the new layout.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Under the 1988 Road Traffic Act, the Highway Authority has a duty to take steps to both reduce and prevent collisions on the road network. In addition under the Traffic Management Act 2004 the authority has a duty to maintain and manage the road network and secure the safe

and expeditious movement of traffic. (Traffic is defined to include pedestrians). It is therefore imperative that the authority continues to strive to reduce road casualties to ensure the network is safe for all users.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 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.

8.2 It is not considered that an Equality Impact Assessment is relevant as the proposals are not deemed to be discriminatory to persons with protected characteristics. A statutory consultation will be conducted, providing an opportunity for objections/support/concerns to be considered prior to a decision being made on whether to implement the proposals.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The cost of this change will be met by existing transport budgets.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 TM Sub-committee report: 12th March 2015 Annual Road Safety Programme.