

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	15 JUNE 2022	AGENDA ITEM:	9
TITLE:	CIL NORCOT ROAD ZEBRA CROSSING: RESULTS OF STATUTORY CONSULTATION		
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions enabled development of several local Transport-related schemes, following allocations in 2021. This included a new zebra crossing provision on Norcot Road.
- 1.2 A consultation was carried out in October 2021, however, it was decided that the affected bus stop needed to be moved further away from the crossing in order to ensure there was adequate visibility of pedestrians. A second consultation was therefore carried out in February 2022. This proposal required the removal of on street parking bays and following objections from residents, the decision was deferred. Officers have now carried out a third consultation with a new location for the zebra crossing, which does not require the removal of any on street parking bays and ensures there is also good visibility of pedestrians who would be using the crossing.
- 1.3 This report informs the Sub-Committee of objections received during the latest statutory consultation for the proposal to install a zebra crossing on Norcot Road. Members are asked to consider these objections and conclude the outcome of the proposal.
- 1.4 Appendix 1: Feedback received to the statutory consultation.
Appendix 2: Drawing showing the proposal for a zebra crossing on Norcot Road.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the content of this report.
- 2.2 That consultation feedback in Appendix 1 is considered and the Sub-Committee agrees to either implement, amend or reject the proposal.

- 2.3 That respondents to the statutory consultations be informed of the decisions of the Sub-Committee accordingly, following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting.
- 2.4 That no public inquiry be held into the proposals.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The proposals align with the principles of the Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP), Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). The zebra crossing proposals will complement the Council's Climate Emergency Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy by removing barriers to the greater use of sustainable, healthy transport options.

4. THE PROPOSAL

Current Position

- 4.1 The first consultation for the zebra crossing on Norcot Road proposed that the crossing be installed outside properties 89-91, with the bus stop to be relocated outside properties 93-95. This consultation was carried out in October 2021 and the results were reported to the Sub-Committee at its meeting in November 2021. In the report, Officers explained that following an independent road safety audit, an item had been raised about vehicle speeds and its impact on visibility distance requirements. A survey had been commissioned but the results had not been received. It was explained that depending on the results, it may be necessary to relocate the bus stop further east than initially anticipated. The Sub-Committee approved an additional consultation to be carried out, should it be necessary.
- 4.2 Following the results of the survey, it was necessary for the bus stop to be relocated further east to ensure that there was adequate visibility of pedestrians using the crossing when a bus was using the nearby stop. A second statutory consultation was therefore carried out in February 2022 as part of the Waiting Restriction Review Programme 2021B. The proposal required that some on street parking bays be removed so that the bus stop could be installed outside properties 101-105. The zebra crossing was to remain outside properties 89-91. The results of this consultation were reported to the Sub-Committee at its meeting in March 2022. A number of objections were received from residents to the proposal, which reduced parking spaces. The Sub-Committee deferred the decision, pending further work from Officers to consult on another location for the crossing.
- 4.3 The latest consultation has now been completed and took place from 12th May-8th June 2022. This proposal requires that the zebra crossing be moved further west and closer to the junction with Blundells Road, outside properties 85-87. This revised location allows the bus stop to be moved outside properties 93-95 (as indicated on the drawings for the original consultation). This ensures that the visibility requirements are met, whilst not requiring any of the on street parking bays to be removed. The drawing can be seen in Appendix 2.

Options Proposed

- 4.4 Appendix 1 includes all of the feedback received to this consultation. The Sub-Committee is asked to consider this feedback and decide whether the scheme can be installed as advertised, or not.

Members are asked to note that the Statutory Consultation closes on 8 June 2022. Due to report publication deadlines, Appendix 1 will initially be published with feedback received up to those reporting deadlines. This will then be updated and re-published with any further comments received up to, and including 8 June 2022.

Other Options Considered

- 4.5 It is not considered that there is an alternative location for the zebra crossing and bus stop in this immediate vicinity, without impacting on the safety of the crossing (and, therefore, its feasibility) or the on-street parking bays.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 This proposal contributes to the Council's Corporate Plan Themes, as set out below:

Healthy environment

The installation of a zebra crossing will hopefully improve the experience of pedestrians in the area. Pedestrians will be more visible to motorists and vehicles will be required to stop for as long as is necessary for pedestrians to cross, without the use of traffic lights.

In complement to other Council initiatives, zebra crossings will contribute to encouraging people to make healthy transport choices through the removal of barriers toward doing so. This will contribute toward the Council's goal of making the town carbon neutral by 2030, through reducing emissions by private vehicle use.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 6.2 A Climate Impact Assessment has been conducted, which considers a net 'NIL' impact as a result of the Sub-Committee agreeing to the recommendations of this report.

The implementation of a zebra crossing is likely to be the most impactful elements of the report recommendations, as these require a level of civil engineering work to be undertaken and the installation of electrically-powered beacons.

These will have a minor negative impact during installation and a very minor ongoing negative impact due to the continued energy use by the low-energy LED beacons. They will, however, be long-standing facilities and it is expected that the installation of these crossings will remove barriers that many people will have to walking, which will offset these impacts by a likely reduction in

private vehicle journeys. This is particularly so with these proposed schemes, as they are on good links to/from school routes and/or shopping areas, so should encourage good footfall. While it is difficult to quantify, it is expected that the benefits will outweigh the impacts over time.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

7.1 Ward Councillors and the Lead Councillor for climate strategy and transport were provided with some early concept proposals for the zebra crossings. This has provided an opportunity for comment and local informal consultation.

7.2 Statutory notifications/consultation required for the zebra crossing proposal have been conducted in accordance with appropriate legislation. Notices of intention were advertised in the local printed newspaper and erected on lamp columns within the affected area. The Police are a statutory consultee and have been directly notified. The consultation was also hosted on the Council's website (the 'Consultation Hub'), where details and plans are available.

7.3 Policy Committee and Traffic Management Sub-Committee are public meetings. The agendas, reports, meeting minutes and recordings of the meetings are available to view from the Council's website.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, 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 proposal is not deemed to be discriminatory to persons with protected characteristics, nor do they significantly vary existing operations. Statutory consultation processes have been conducted, where applicable, providing an opportunity for objections/support/concerns to be considered prior to a decision being made on whether to implement the proposals.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no foreseen legal implications relating to the proposal for a zebra crossing.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications arising from the proposals set out in this report are set out below:-

10.1. Revenue Implications

	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000
Employee costs	NIL	NIL	NIL
Other running costs			
Capital financings costs			
Expenditure	NIL	NIL	NIL
Income from:			
Fees and charges	NIL	NIL	NIL
Grant funding			
Other income			
Total Income	NIL	NIL	NIL
Net Cost(+)/saving (-)	NIL	NIL	NIL

Staff costs will be capitalised.

10.2. Capital Implications

Capital Programme reference from budget book: page line	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000
Proposed Capital Expenditure	£50	NIL	NIL
Funded by Local CIL (15%) funding allocation - 2021	£50	NIL	NIL
Total Funding	£50	NIL	NIL

The transport project referenced in this report is funded from local CIL funding allocations agreed by Policy Committee in June 2021. These contributions are to cover the whole project costs, including surveys and investigation works, not just the deliverables and the above figure is the total allocation for delivery of the scheme.

3. Value for Money (VFM)

Officers consider that the recommended proposal within this report offers the best outcome based on the funding available and the purpose to which it has been allocated. It is not considered that additional funding would deliver a scheme that would offer significantly greater benefits against the purposes to which the funding has been allocated.

The scheme has been investigated and designed by officers of Reading Borough Council and all civil engineering work will be undertaken by the Council's in-house delivery team. The exceptions will be specialisms that currently lay outside of the Council's resources, such as lining implementation, sign creation and the supply, installation and electrical connection of the zebra crossing beacons. However, these will be appointed through existing contracts and using

contractors that conduct these works to a scale that provides value for money through their chargeable rates.

Road Safety Audits have been outsourced to a contractor with these specialisms, but also provide an independent perspective on the zebra crossing scheme designs, which can assist in defending potential challenges.

4. Risk Assessment.

There will always be an element of financial risk regarding more complex works that require excavation and adjustment to the Highway layout. These risks should be minimised pre-excitation, as officer investigations have included colleagues from the delivery team. However, there is always a risk of unforeseen engineering challenges, even following the receipt of utility plans. It is beneficial that the majority of the civil engineering work is being conducted by Reading Borough Council, as this ensures close communication and true joint working throughout delivery.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 Allocation of The Community Infrastructure Levy 15% Local Contribution (Policy Committee, June 2021).
- 11.2 CIL Locally funded schemes 2021: Results of statutory consultations (Traffic Management Sub-Committee, November 2021).
- 11.3 Waiting Restriction Review: Objections to waiting restriction review 2021B and requests for waiting restriction review 2022A (Traffic Management Sub-Committee, March 2022).