

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	12 JANUARY 2022		
TITLE:	STATION HILL - ALTERATIONS TO SOUTH WEST INTERCHANGE TAXI RANK		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	CLIMATE STRATEGY AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	HIGHWAYS & TRAFFIC SERVICES	WARDS:	ABBAY
LEAD OFFICERS:	DARREN COOK	TEL:	0118 937 2612
JOB TITLES:	TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT CONTROL MANAGER	E-MAIL:	DARREN.COOK@READING.GOV.UK

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To report to the Sub-Committee traffic management measures associated with the development of the Station Hill site, which is bounded by Station Hill, Greyfriars Road and Garrard Street.
- 1.2 This report seeks approval from the Sub-Committee to carry out a Statutory Consultation on changes to the waiting restrictions surrounding the Southwestern Interchange at Reading Station.
- 1.3 The changes required are minimal and ultimately result in a minor relocation of the taxi rank and drop off bay facilities. It should be stressed that the capacity of the taxi rank is being increased by the redesign from 18 to 22 with the drop off / pick up bay capacity being unaltered. Comparison extracts are provided below.

Figure 6.6: Existing Taxi Rank Capacity (18 Vehicles)

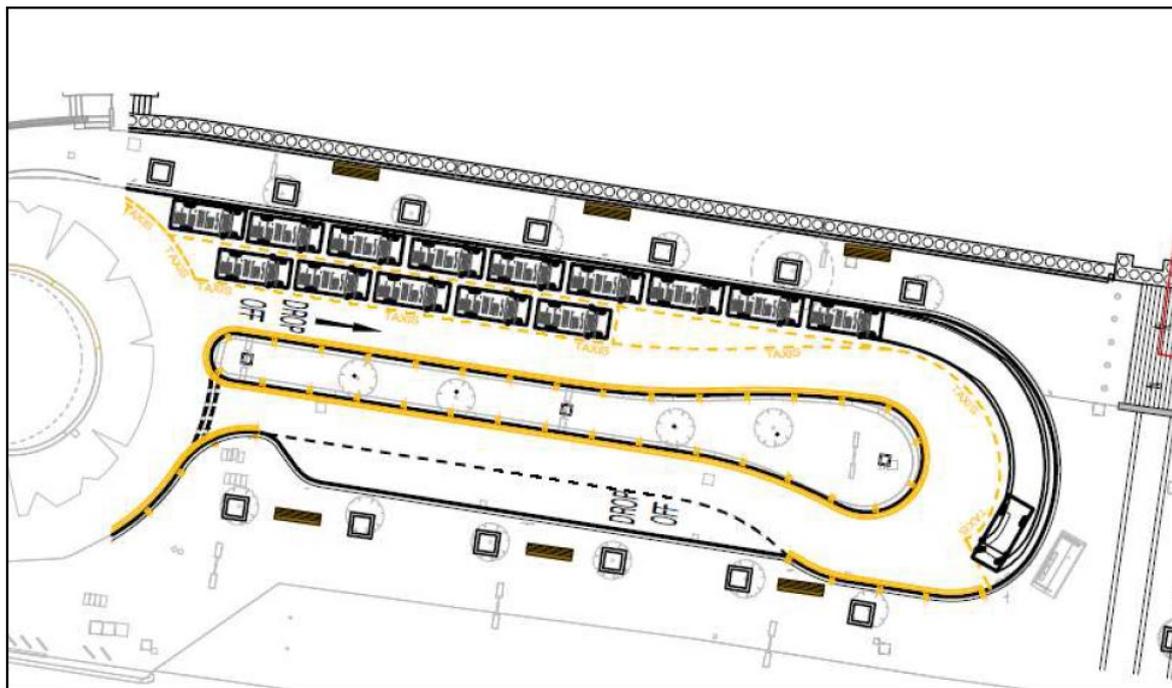
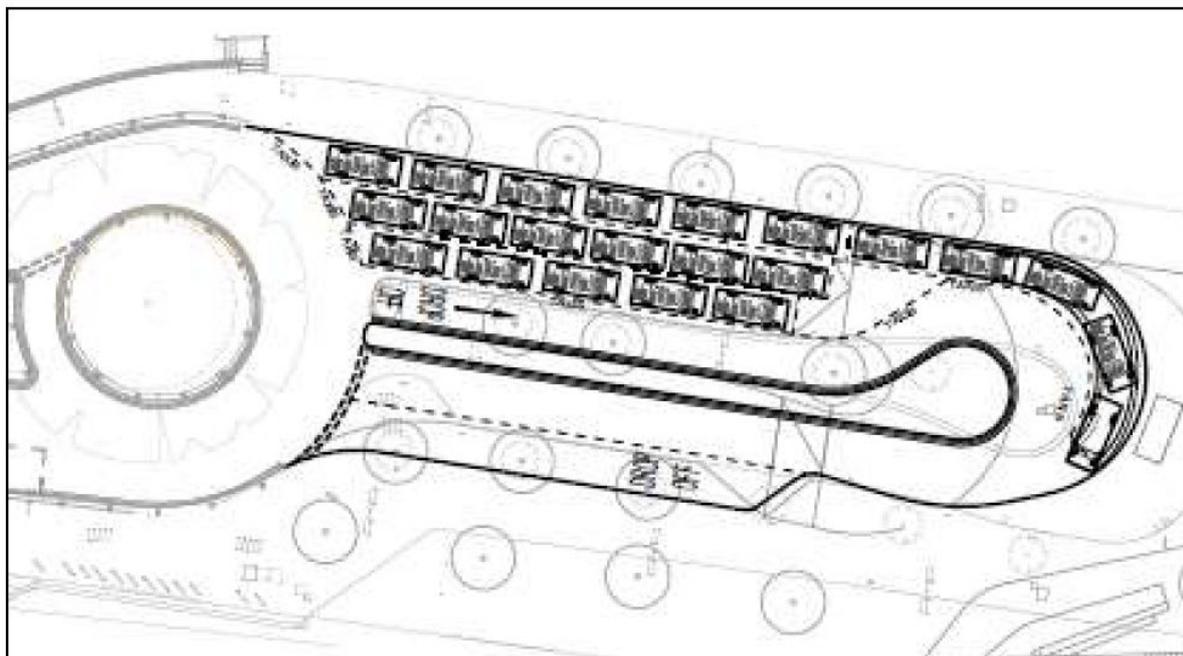


Figure 6.7: Proposed Taxi Rank Capacity (22 Vehicles)



- 1.4 Appendix 1 - SHRN-STN-SW-ZZ-DR-CH-1201 Rev C01 STATION HILL, READING, PHASE 2 DETAILED DESIGN, PROPOSED ROAD MARKINGS & SIGNAGE illustrates the proposals surrounding the development and the exact line markings proposed. Please note that for the consultation a dedicated drawing will be prepared solely illustrating the proposed layout.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the report.**
- 2.2 That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to undertake a statutory consultation in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996, for the proposals contained within in Appendix 1.**
- 2.3 That subject to no objections being received, the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the Traffic Regulation Order for the proposed scheme.**
- 2.4 That any objection(s) received following the statutory advertisement be reported to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee.**
- 2.5 That the Head of Transport (or appropriate Officer) in consultation with the appropriate Lead Councillor, be authorised to make minor changes to the proposals.**
- 2.6 That no public inquiry be held into the proposals.**

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The provision of waiting/parking restrictions and associated criteria is specified within existing Traffic Management Policies and Standards.**
- 3.2 The proposed alterations also complement the Council's Local Transport Plan, Climate Emergency Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy as they are a consequence of the proposed pocket park, which is also to be provided as part of the wider Highway works. The pocket park includes the provision of improved pedestrian routes in a north south direction while including wheeling ramps for cyclists therefore creating an improved permeability through the Town Centre. The pocket park will be available to the public and can be used as an area of enjoyment by creating a place to sit and relax, have lunch, chat with friends.**

4. BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS

- 4.1 On 22nd July 2021 a Hybrid Planning Permission was granted for Phases 2 and 3 of the Station Hill development. The Phase 2 works have commenced on the site and consist of demolition of existing structures, erection of an eighteen storey building containing office use (Class B1) and flexible retail, non-residential institution and assembly and leisure uses (Class A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D1 and D2). Provision of podium deck, vehicular access and parking. New public open space and landscaping and bridge link over Garrard St.**
- 4.2 The Highway works required to construct the pocket park commenced earlier in the year and further works likely to proceed early next year, although exact timescales are unclear at this time.**
- 4.3 During the application discussions it was agreed that alterations to the existing Southwest Interchange would be necessary to facilitate any new Pocket Park the design of which was agreed during the planning discussions.**

4.4 These revised restrictions will ensure that increased taxis will be able to serve the taxi rank and that drop off / pick up operations could continue.

4.5 The existing TRO's are listed as follows:

Schedule 1
No Waiting and No Loading at Any Time

Station Hill, South Side

From a point 75 metres east of the junction of Greyfriars Road to a point 10 metres west of that point

Schedule 2
No Waiting At Any Time Except Hackney Carriages

Station Hill, North East and South Side

On the north side from a point 50 metres east of its junction with Greyfriars Road around the east side of Station Hill and onto the south side of Station Hill, finishing at a point 80 metres east of its junction with Greyfriars Road on the south side

Schedule 3
Loading Only

Station Hill, South Side

From a point 55 metres east of its junction with Greyfriars Road for a distance of 25m

4.6 The proposed TRO's are listed as follows:

Schedule 1
No Waiting and No Loading at Any Time

Station Hill, South Side

From a point 96 metres east of the junction of Greyfriars Road to a point 19 metres east of that point

Schedule 2
No Waiting At Any Time Except Hackney Carriages

Station Hill, North East and South Side

On the north side from a point 56 metres east of its junction with Greyfriars Road around the east side of Station Hill, finishing at a point 115 metres east of its junction with Greyfriars Road on the south side

Schedule 3
Loading Only

Station Hill, South Side

From a point 62 metres east of its junction with Greyfriars Road for a distance of 26m

4.7 The proposed restrictions surrounding the site can be found at Appendix 1.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

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

Healthy Environment

Waiting restrictions can assist in preventing obstructive, hazardous or other nuisance parking. In some situations, inconsiderate parking can compromise safety or result in difficulties for residents and businesses. Many parking issues can create delays or accessibility obstructions for users of the network such as pedestrians, cyclists, domestic vehicles, delivery vehicles, emergency services and public transport.

The proposals promoted through the proposed alterations can help to reduce some of these parking issues. They can lead to more efficient traffic flow, clearer footways, improvements to perceived Highway safety and greater containment. These can lead to lower vehicle emissions and the removal of barriers toward the greater use of sustainable and healthy transport modes. The proposals will contribute to the Council's goal of making the town carbon neutral by 2030.

- 5.2 This proposal contributes to the TEAM Reading Values, as set out below:

Together - Proposed alterations brought forward through consultation with the Council and the developer to provide an increased capacity within the taxi rank allowing for the creation of the Pocket Park.

Efficiency - This scheme programme develops various proposals in an efficient and cost-effective way (see Section 10).

Ambitious - The scheme ensures that the taxi rank provides for an increased capacity and allows for the creation of the Pocket Park therefore providing an existing landscape feature within the Reading Town Centre Area that also improves pedestrian and cycle connections through the Town Centre.

Make a Difference - As per the above.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26th February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).

- 6.2 A climate impact assessment has been conducted for the recommendations of this report.

There has been some minor negative impact for investigation and design, through travel and energy usage. Travel impacts have been mitigated by Officers travelling to the site through walking and cycling. Advertised notices need to be weatherproof and are, therefore, not typically recyclable. The implementation of schemes currently requires burning of fossil fuels for the specialist machinery and some road marking application/removal techniques.

The making of this permanent TRO will require (by regulation) advertisement of the legal Notice in the local printed newspaper, which will have a negligible, one-off impact in terms of likely additional printing and paper usage.

However, it is expected that these relatively minor negative impacts over a short period of time will be more than overcome by the benefits of scheme implementation. The proposals cover perceived local safety, accessibility and

traffic flow issues that, once resolved, should improve traffic flow (lower emissions) within the vicinity of the development.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

7.1 Any Statutory consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996, advertised on street, in the local printed newspapers and on the Council's website (the 'Consultation Hub'). Notices will be advertised in the local printed newspaper and will be erected, typically on lamp columns, as close as possible to affected area.

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, victimization 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. Waiting Restrictions can have a positive impact whereby the roads are made safer for all users as locally problematic parking issues are reduced.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 New, or changes to existing, Traffic Regulation Orders require advertisement and consultation, under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. The resultant Traffic Regulation Order will be sealed in accordance with the same regulations.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Funding for the statutory consultation comes from S106 monies secured to alter the parking restrictions surrounding this development and stipulated within the S106 agreement dated 22nd July 2021. The implementation of the parking restrictions will be undertaken by the developer by way of the Section 278/38 Agreement, which is in place to secure alterations to the existing Highway.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None.