

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	2nd March 2023	AGENDA ITEM:	
TITLE:	READING GREEN PARK STATION		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	CLIMATE STRATEGY AND TRANSPORT
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1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Sub-Committee to undertake a statutory consultation for the implementation of traffic restrictions in the form of double yellow lines, bus gate, bus stops, pay & display car parks, taxi rank, disabled parking bays and motorcycle bays.

1.2 Appendix 1 - Drawings

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the content of this report.

2.2 That the Sub-Committee approves the Statutory Consultation to take place.

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(s).

2.4 That any objection(s) received following the statutory advertisement be reported to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 The Council's Corporate Plan supports the delivery of new transport infrastructure in order to manage levels of congestion, improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions, whilst enabling the economic recovery and planned levels of growth in the borough and wider urban area.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Reading Green Park Station is a new railway station on the Reading to Basingstoke line. The station and multi-modal interchange will significantly improve accessibility and connectivity to this area of south Reading which has had large-scale development including the expansion of Green Park business park and Green Park Village residential development as well as the proposed future development of Royal Elm Park.
- 4.2 The scheme is being progressed in partnership with Network Rail and GWR, who will ultimately own and operate the station respectively.
- 4.3 Construction works for the station and multi-modal interchange is now complete, and supported by partners from the railway industry, the project has now entered a period of thorough testing and authorisation prior to the station's official opening and public use. The Council is working with Network Rail and GWR to ensure that the station is open as soon as possible which is currently scheduled for Spring 2023.
- 4.4 In order to manage access to the station officers seek authority to undertake a statutory consultation for the implementation of the following:

Implementation of No Waiting No Loading At Any Time

No waiting and no loading at any time (double yellow lines) along the Flagstaff Road to protect the highways from illegal parking between the taxi rank and bus stop(s).

Implementation of Prohibition Of Vehicles Except Bus, Cycle And Authorised Vehicles Only

A bus gate through the one-way system on the approach to Reading Green Park Station where only buses and authorised vehicles can go through, marked on street and by appropriate signage.

Implementation of A Bus Stand No Stopping Except Buses At Any Time

2 bus stop locations, one outside the Station entrance and another for Rail Replacement Buses on the opposite footway. These are bays restricted for use by vehicles that are defined as buses, including coach or minibus.

Implementation of No Waiting At Any Time Except Taxis

A taxi rank that will operate at all times. The aim of this bay is to provide a dedicated area for all Taxis to operate services, conflict free with other road users.

Implementation of Short and Long Stay Car Parks

Implement short and long stay car parks. The proposals will optimise parking, reduce traffic and increase traffic flow as fewer cars are required to drive around in search of an open parking space.

Implementation of No Stopping Except Disabled (Blue) Badge Holders At Any Time. Maximum stay 12 Hours. No Return Within 4hrs.

Implementation of 12 disabled parking bays. Disabled Parking bays will be clearly marked as individual bays with a Wheelchair symbol painted on the road along with associated signage at each bay. Any driver correctly displaying a valid Blue Badge can park in the bay.

Implementation of No Stopping Except Rail Industry Permit Holders At Any Time. Maximum stay 12 Hours. No Return Within 4hrs.

Implementation of 3 Rail Industry parking bays. Rail Industry Parking bays will be clearly marked on street with a Hatching and “Railway Industry Only” along with associated signage. Any driver correctly displaying a valid Rail Industry Permit can park in the bay.

Implementation of Motorcycles bays

Implementation of two dedicated spaces for Motorcycles within the Long Stay Car Park.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The delivery of Green Park Station contributes to the Council’s Corporate Plan themes as set out below:

- **Healthy environment**

The implementation of rail facilities will help to alleviate queues on the A33 and lead to an increase in uptake of this sustainable transport mode. This can lead to a reduction in motor-vehicle journeys, particularly short local journeys, which can be some of the most polluting, improving air quality by reducing emissions.

- **Thriving Communities**

The new station will deliver major benefits to residents living in the south of Reading, businesses at Green Park and supporters of Reading Football Club. The new station will be an integral part of Reading’s sustainable transport infrastructure, significantly improving accessibility to the south Reading area where large-scale development is taking place, including the expansion of Green Park Business Park and Green Park Village. It will also provide another option for football fans heading to and from the Select Car Leasing Stadium on match days, again alleviating the pressure off our busy roads.

- **Inclusive economy**

Green Park Station will bring new employment opportunities, encourage regeneration and investment, and reduce congestion. It will drive social mobility and offer equality of access to centres of employment. Supporting a

sustainable expansion of the railway network into local communities is vital to catalysing this socio-economic growth and potential.

- 5.2 Full details of the Councils Corporate Plan are available on the website and include information on the projects which will deliver these priorities.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Transport is the biggest greenhouse gas emitting sector in the UK accounting for around 27% of total carbon emissions. As set out in the Reading Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-25, this figure is lower in Reading with transport accounting for around 20% of carbon emissions. However, significant investment in sustainable transport solutions is vital in order to respond to the Climate Emergency declared by the Council in February 2019 and to help achieve the target of a carbon neutral Reading by 2030.
- 6.2 The Climate Impact Assessment tool has been used to assess the proposals set out within this report, resulting in an overall Net Medium Positive impact. This is due to the programme being focused on encouraging the use of sustainable transport, walking and cycling as attractive alternatives to the private car. The programme will enhance facilities to encourage more use of sustainable transport and active travel options, and therefore reduce the use of the private car resulting in the reduction of congestion, carbon emissions and other air quality issues.
- 6.3 In addition, the delivery of the major transport schemes as set out within this report form a vital part of our overall transport and climate emergency strategies, which has achieved considerable success in recent years. This includes bus usage in Reading being the second highest in the country outside of London, having increased by 23% since 2010, and around 35% of trips into Reading town centre being made by pedestrians and cyclists.
- 6.4 Proposals set out in this paper seek to support a step-change in transport infrastructure and services and cover perceived local safety, accessibility, and traffic flow issues that, once resolved, should improve traffic flow (lower emissions, improved flow for public transport) and remove barriers towards increased use of sustainable and healthy transport options.

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 of intention will be advertised in the local printed newspaper and will be erected on lamp columns within the affected area. The Police are a statutory consultee and will be directly notified. The consultation will be hosted on the Council's website (the 'Consultation Hub'), where details and plans will be available.
- 7.2 Traffic Management Sub-Committee is a public meeting and 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 of the Equality Act 2010, a public authority must 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, and
- 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 and statutory consultation provide an opportunity for the content of objections/support/concerns to be considered prior to a decision being made on whether to implement the proposals.

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/revoked in accordance with the same regulations.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The only immediate financial implications resulting from the recommendations of this report will be for the advertising of proposed Traffic Regulation Order, which is a requirement as part of the statutory consultation process.

10.2 It is considered that the recommendations of the report provide value for money as the benefits of the proposal can be realised with very modest costs.

10.3 There are no foreseen financial risks related to the recommendations of the report.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None