

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

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| TO: | TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE | | |
| DATE: | 2nd MARCH 2023 | | |
| TITLE: | STATION HILL - ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING RESTRICTIONS ON FRIAR STREET AND GARRARD STREET | | |
| LEAD COUNCILLOR: | TONY PAGE | PORTFOLIO: | CLIMATE STRATEGY AND TRANSPORT |
| SERVICE: | HIGHWAYS & TRAFFIC SERVICES | WARDS: | ABBEY |
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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 Phase 1 site, which is bounded by Friar Street, Garrard Street to the south and north respectively and retail and commercial units to the east and west.
- 1.2 This report seeks approval from the Sub-Committee to carry out a Statutory Consultation on changes to the waiting restrictions, pay and display bays, loading bays and taxi ranks along the Friar Street and Garrard Street frontages.
- 1.3 The committee should be reminded that a report has previously been presented to them on 15th September 2021 that recommended the retention of an existing small taxi feeder bay at the eastern end of Garrard Street, as this will enable a small number of taxis to wait and feed the horseshoe rank with line-of-sight. It was further recommended that due to long-term development works that parking restrictions be placed along the remainder of Garrard Street to prevent parking.
- 1.4 The works to be undertaken by the developer are broken down into 3 separate phases to take account the phased construction of the development and is in relation to the delivery of the physical Highway works. It is however likely that the delivery of the restrictions would be broken down into 2 distinct areas, those being Friar Street and Garrard Street.
- 1.5 Appendices 1-3 listed below 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.

- Appendix 1 - SHR-RMB-X0-EX-DR-C-03-100531 Rev P08 SOUTH SITE S278 WORKS PROPOSED KERB, TRAFFIC SIGN AND ROAD MARKING SHEET 1
- Appendix 2 - SHR-RMB-X0-EX-DR-C-03-100532 Rev P08 SOUTH SITE S278 WORKS PROPOSED KERB, TRAFFIC SIGN AND ROAD MARKING SHEET 2
- Appendix 3 - SHR-RMB-X0-EX-DR-C-03-100533 Rev P10 SOUTH SITE S278 WORKS PROPOSED KERB, TRAFFIC SIGN AND ROAD MARKING SHEET 3

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 wider alterations also complement the Council's Local Transport Plan, Climate Emergency Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy, this is for the following reasons:**
 - The relocated crossing is a consequence of the proposed Friars Walk entrance into Station Hill, which will provide a direct link through to Reading Station creating improved permeability through the Town Centre.
 - Improved public realm through the development continuing onto the Station Hill 2 development site as well as along Friar Street and Garrard Street frontages.
 - Provision of a continuous footway on the southern side of Garrard Street, which is not currently provided.
 - Creation of uncontrolled crossing facilities with tactile paving on side roads/junctions along Garrard Street to aid pedestrian movements.
 - Reprovision of taxi rank, loading bay and pay and display parking provision lost in other locations around the site because of the redevelopment and associated works.

4. BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS

- 4.1 Planning Permission was granted in December 2019 for Phase 1 of the Station Hill development which comprised several planning applications. The works have been on-going for some time and ultimately consist of the demolition of existing structures, erection high rise residential uses, flexible retail, non-residential institution and assembly and leisure. Provision of a basement car park with cycle and refuse storage and servicing areas. New public open space and landscaping is provided through the development which links to the bridge link over Garrard St that is being delivered via the Station Hill Phase 2 development.
- 4.2 The Highway works associated with Friar Street are to commence shortly with the Garrard Street works due to commence later this year, although exact timescales are unclear at this time. The descriptions of each area I have separated below for ease of reference.

Friar Street - Illustrated at Appendix 1 - SHR-RMB-X0-EX-DR-C-03-100531 Rev P08 SOUTH SITE S278 WORKS PROPOSED KERB, TRAFFIC SIGN AND ROAD MARKING SHEET 1

- 4.3 During the application discussions it was agreed that the existing crossing facility on Friar Street should be relocated slightly to the east so that it aligns with the entrance of the Station Hill development. This relocation has knock on implications to the existing taxi rank located along Friar Street, which is to be severed with the majority located to the west of the relocated buildout and the remainder located to the east of the buildout.
- 4.4 The existing bay is to be reduced by a distance of 10m, which retains an 8m long dedicated taxi rank.
- 4.5 To the west of the relocated build out a replacement bay is proposed that would facilitate the following:
- **No Waiting At Any Time Except Hackney Carriages between 11pm and 5am**
 - **Loading Only between 5am and 11pm**
- 4.6 The red route restrictions will surround the build out as is currently the case.
- 4.7 The proposed alterations therefore increase the taxi facilities during the evening and overnight and also provides an additional loading facility for buildings on the northern side of Friar Street, which includes some of the commercial facilities that form part of the Station Hill development.

Garrard Street West - Illustrated at Appendix 2 - SHR-RMB-X0-EX-DR-C-03-100532 Rev P08 SOUTH SITE S278 WORKS PROPOSED KERB, TRAFFIC SIGN AND ROAD MARKING SHEET 2

- 4.8 The proposed development includes the provision of an improved vehicular access located at the western extent of the development site. The wider access and increased radii at the junction results in the reduction of the previous pay and display bays from 22m to 18m.
- 4.9 The remainder of this frontage would be provided with double yellow line restriction as is currently the case.

Garrard Street East - Illustrated at Appendix 3 - SHR-RMB-X0-EX-DR-C-03-100533
Rev P10 SOUTH SITE S278 WORKS PROPOSED KERB, TRAFFIC SIGN AND ROAD
MARKING SHEET 3

- 4.10 During previous discussions related to the Station Hill developments it had been suggested that the taxi rank along Garrard Street would be removed. It is however acknowledged that taxis are still operating within Garrard Street as they head to the Horseshoe taxi rank on Station Hill. The management of the taxi ranks is to be dealt with under a separate report, but it should be acknowledged that the committee were previously presented with a report on 15th September 2021 that recommended the removal of all parking, loading and taxi facilities along Garrard Street bar a small section of taxi ranking located at the eastern end.
- 4.11 This proposal does not propose the replacement of the taxi rank on Garrard Street but seeks to improve the immediate environment around the Station Hill development by providing facilities that could be utilised by both residents and visitors as well as facilitate servicing for both the residential and the commercial units. These changes include the following:
- 12m long 2 hour no return within 2 hours pay and display bay, this being consistent with the bays currently / previously provided along Garrard Street.
 - 12m long Loading Bay
 - Double Yellow line restrictions along the remainder of the Garrard Street and Merchants Place frontages.
- 4.12 The proposed restrictions surrounding the site help facilitate the physical Highway changes aimed at improving the public realm on both Friar Street and Garrard Street and these are illustrated at Appendices 1-3.

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 improved permeability through the Town Centre.

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

Ambitious - The scheme ensures that improved permeability and Public Realm are provided through the Town Centre along with adequate parking, taxi and loading facilities in order to serve the development and the wider community.

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 will be contributed by the developer. The implementation of the parking restrictions will be undertaken by the developer by way of the Section 278 Agreement, which is in place to secure alterations to the existing Highway.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 11.1 None.