

Traffic Management Sub-Committee

14 January 2023



Reading
Borough Council
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Title	Jacksons Corner – Proposals for Statutory Consultation
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Report author	James Penman, Network Services Manager, Network Services
Lead councillor	John Ennis
Corporate priority	Healthy Environment
Recommendations	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Note the content of this report2. That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to undertake a statutory consultation for the proposed alterations in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 19963. That subject to no objections being received, the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the Traffic Regulation Order(s)4. That any objection(s) received during the statutory advertisement be reported to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee5. That the Highways & Traffic Services Manager, in agreement with the lead Councillor and Ward Councillors, be allowed to make minor alterations to the proposals as may be necessary6. That no public inquiry be held into the proposals

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. As part of the agreed planning permissions at Jacksons Corner, situated to the north-east of the junction with Kings Road and High Street, proposed alterations to the highway layout were agreed. Details of the original planning permission 141713 are available [here](#) and the implemented planning permission 160849 (details available [here](#)) carried these agreed alterations forward.
- 1.2. The alterations include widening of the narrow footway width on the northern side of Kings Road, reversal of the one-way traffic direction along Abbey Square, increased provision and relocation of bus stops and provision of on-street loading bays. These changes would necessitate alterations to existing waiting restrictions.
- 1.3. The developer has provided Reading Borough Council will funding to deliver these alterations, which it is required to do by 31 March 2024.
- 1.4. The alterations require statutory consultation and this report seeks agreement of this Sub-Committee for officers to undertake these processes and report feedback to a future meeting to inform the implementation (or otherwise) decision.

2. Policy context

- 2.1. The Council's new Corporate Plan has established three themes for the years 2022/25. These themes are:
 - Healthy Environment
 - Thriving Communities
 - Inclusive Economy
- 2.2. These themes are underpinned by "Our Foundations" explaining the ways we work at the Council:
 - People first
 - Digital transformation
 - Building self-reliance
 - Getting the best value
 - Collaborating with others
- 2.3. Full details of the Council's Corporate Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the [Council's website](#). These priorities and the Corporate Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.
- 2.4. If agreed for implementation, the proposals are expected to align with the Council's Local Transport Plan, Climate Emergency Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy by improving local public transport accessibility and improving accessibility for users of the currently-constricted footway.

3. The proposal

Current Position

- 3.1. Jacksons Corner (1-9 Kings Road, RG1 3AS) is situated to the north-east of the junction with Kings Road and High Street in Reading Town Centre. Planning permission for the building 141713 was granted on 30 March 2015 (the Committee report is available [here](#)) and it included a range of agreed Highway alterations that were carried forward into the implemented planning permission 160849 that was granted on 10 March 2017 (the Committee report is available [here](#)).
- 3.2. Appendix 1 shows the range of proposed Highway alterations, which include footway widening, alterations to bus stop locations (including an additional stop), provision of loading bays and a reversal of the one-way traffic direction along Abbey Square.

The plan on Appendix 1 should be considered illustrative, and the provision of the additional bus stop on the eastern side of the junction with Abbey Square would require adjustment to the adjacent disabled and motorcycle parking bays on Kings Road.
- 3.3. The developer opted to provide Reading Borough Council with a funding sum to deliver this range of alterations, on the provision that the scheme is implemented prior to 31 March 2024. This sum is £72,909.74.
- 3.4. Alterations to Highway waiting restrictions and traffic restrictions will require statutory consultation. Any objections received against the alterations proposed in the statutory consultation would require a further report to this Sub-Committee so that the contents may be considered as part of the implementation (or otherwise) decision.

Options Proposed

- 3.5. This report seeks approval by this Sub-Committee for officers to produce a detailed and complete drawing to clearly capture all of the necessary alterations required to deliver the alterations approved alongside the developer planning permission.

Thereafter, it is recommended that officers formally propose the alterations by undertaking statutory consultation.

- 3.6. Subject to the Council receiving no objections to the proposed alterations, it is recommended that officers be authorised to make the resultant Traffic Regulation Order(s) and commence delivering the scheme within the timescales required by the funding agreement.

Should objections be received, officers will report these to a future meeting of this Sub-Committee so that the contents may be considered as part of the implementation (or otherwise) decision.

- 3.7. It is recommended that the Highway & Traffic Services Manager, in agreement with the lead Councillor and Ward Councillors, be allowed to make minor alterations to the proposals as may be necessary. These Councillors will additionally be provided with the revised drawing (Section 3.5 refers) as soon as practicable and advance notification of the consultation commencement.
- 3.8. Officers intend that where existing bays would need to be relocated to accommodate the proposed alterations on Appendix 1, that there will be no reduction to the local provision of parking space that they currently provide.

Other Options Considered

- 3.9. Should the alterations not be delivered prior to 31 March 2024, it is very likely that the funding will need to be returned to the developer. While there is scope in the funding agreement that could allow very minor alterations to the agreed plan in Appendix 1, any proposal for significant alterations will likely result in the developer wishing for the funding to be returned.
- 3.10. The only further option considered would therefore be not to proceed with the proposed alterations and to return the funding.

This is not recommended by officers at this time, as this will result in a loss of the benefits that the alterations would bring for improved footway accessibility, loading provision and public transport accommodation in the vicinity. The statutory consultation process provides the opportunity for objections, and should these be received, this option can be considered.

4. Contribution to strategic aims

Healthy Environment

- 4.1. The proposal, if agreed for implementation, is expected to improve accessibility along the currently constricted footway, making the area easier to travel around and reducing risks to users. It brings additional bus stop capacity to improve access to public transport.

5. Environmental and climate implications

- 5.1. The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers) and as such recognises the need to minimise the climate impacts of its decisions.
- 5.2. A climate impact assessment has been undertaken and concludes that consultation and implementation of the proposals would have a 'Net Low Positive' impact.

There will be some negative impact from energy use, waste generation and use of transport associated primarily with the implementation of the scheme (if agreed). However, these will be 'one-off' impacts, with there being no expected additional ongoing impacts.

It is expected that these delivery impacts would be outweighed by the positive ongoing impact of the scheme. This is primarily in relation to the increased loading and bus stop provision, which will reduce emissions through seeking alternative/unnecessary waiting for access to these facilities.

- 5.3. The construction works will be delivered by the Council's Highways & Drainage team who include carbon reduction targets and improved sustainability within works programmes. The intent is to reduce the amount of carbon used to produce the materials at source, using recycled materials where possible, lower temperature bitumen, reducing the uncontrolled waste in the environment to reduce pollution of the natural environment, and using electric vehicles and plant where possible.
- 5.4. The Council on 15th October 2019 formally adopted of the 'Unite Construction Charter' where the Authority supports the 'Get Britain Building' campaign, which is aimed at supporting and sustaining the British construction industry. As a result, all relevant construction projects will be required to comply with the Authority's Sustainable Buying Standard for Highways and Construction Materials, which requires structural steel and other relevant materials to be covered by BES 6001 Responsible Sourcing of Construction Product certification, or equivalent.
- 5.5. The Council is committed to a tree planting programme to increase canopy cover, improve biodiversity and reduce localised flooding. The Council has committed up to 1% of the value of the road resurfacing programmes towards this initiative and the Town Centre will also benefit from this programme.
- 5.6. The Reading Climate Emergency Strategy, which was endorsed by the Council in November 2020, highlights the importance of adapting to climate impacts as well as reducing the emissions which are driving climate change. The Council will regularly review design standards for roads, in conjunction with industry bodies, to take into account the extreme weather events (both extreme heat and extreme cold) to ensure sustainability of the public highway network.

6. Community engagement

- 6.1. The planning applications (Section 3.1 refers) where the Highway alterations were proposed in principle have previously been available for public viewing and have been subject to Council Committee consideration.
- 6.2. Statutory consultation(s) 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 newspaper(s) 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.
- 6.3. Traffic Management Sub-Committee is a public meeting. The agendas, reports, meeting minutes and recordings of the meetings are available to view from the Council's website.

7. Equality impact assessment

- 7.1. 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.
- 7.2. Delivery of the proposal will necessitate the movement of existing disabled parking bays, so it was considered that an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was necessary. This is attached as Appendix 2.
- 7.3. The assessment concludes that the proposals could have a differential impact on persons with a disability, but notes that this could be a positive and/or negative impact, as the relocated bays could be closer, or further away from the destination of different users.

- 7.4. If the recommendations of this report are agreed, the statutory consultation process will provide an opportunity for feedback. Following this, the EqlA can be revised and their could be scope to recommend adjustments to the proposed scheme if necessary, reasonable and within the terms of the funding agreement.

Officers intend for there to be no overall reduction in disabled parking space as a result of the proposed alterations.

- 7.5. Officers will inform the supporting officer, Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council's Access and Disabilities Working Group of the proposals and the details of the statutory consultation, should the Sub-Committee agree to the undertaking of this process.

8. Other relevant considerations

- 8.1. Procedural Requirements and Regulatory Duties – Section 9 refers to the regulatory requirements for advertising Traffic Regulation Orders.

9. Legal implications

- 9.1. The proposed alterations to waiting restrictions and traffic direction reversal will require statutory consultation, whereby the new Traffic Regulation Order(s) must be drafted under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and advertised in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
- 9.2. This report seeks agreement for the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services to undertake these processes.

10. Financial implications

10.1 Revenue Implications

	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000
Employee costs	NIL	NIL	NIL
Other running costs			
Capital financings costs			
Expenditure	NIL	NIL	NIL
Income from:	NIL	NIL	NIL
Total Income	NIL	NIL	NIL
Net Cost(+)/saving (-)	NIL	NIL	NIL

Staff costs will be capitalised.

10.2 Capital Implications

Capital Programme	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000
Proposed Capital Expenditure	72,909.74	NIL	NIL
Funded by	Secured S106 funding	N/A	N/A
Total Funding	72,909.74	NIL	NIL

10.3 Value for Money (VFM)

The scheme is fully funded by developer Section 106 contributions. If agreed for delivery, all elements that can be delivered by Reading Borough Council's own resources will be delivered as such, and not outsourced. This includes development of the detailed plan, drafting and creation of the Traffic Regulation Orders and delivering the majority of the engineering elements on street.

10.4 Risk Assessment

The funding is considered to be sufficient in order to deliver the alterations within the funding agreement. The primary risk is around elements that could result in either the scheme not being agreed for delivery, or delays that would result in delivery being post 31 March 2024. In these instances, it is expected that the developer will request that the funding is returned to them. This would render all elements of the scheme unfunded.

11. Timetable for implementation

- 11.1. If agreed, the statutory consultation is expected to be undertaken over the summer and feedback reported to this Sub-Committee in September 2023.
- 11.2. Should the Sub-Committee agree to the implementation of the alterations, the Traffic Regulation Order(s) will be sealed and, following a six week period for any legal challenges to be raised, the scheme will be delivered before the end of this financial year (31 March 2024).

12. Background papers

- 12.1. There are none.

Appendices

- 1. Illustrative plan to show the alterations proposed within the funding agreement
- 2. Equality Impact Assessment