

# Traffic Management Sub-Committee

13 September 2023



**Reading**  
Borough Council  
Working better with you

<b>Title</b>	Jacksons Corner – Results of Statutory Consultation
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision
<b>Report status</b>	Public report
<b>Report author</b>	James Penman, Network Services Manager, Network Services
<b>Lead councillor</b>	John Ennis
<b>Corporate priority</b>	Healthy Environment
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Note the content of this report</li><li>2. That objections noted in Appendix 2 are considered and the Sub-Committee agrees to either implement, amend, or reject the proposals.</li><li>3. That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to seal the resultant Traffic Regulation Order, if applicable.</li><li>4. That respondents to the statutory consultation be informed of the decisions of the Sub-Committee accordingly, following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting.</li><li>5. That the Highways &amp; 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.</li><li>6. That no public inquiry be held into the proposals</li></ol>

## 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. This report informs the Sub-Committee of objections resulting from the statutory consultation for the proposals agreed at the June 2023 Sub-Committee meeting (report available [here](#) and Appendix 1 is the scheme drawing). Members are asked to consider these objections and conclude the outcome of the scheme.

## 2. Policy context

- 2.1. The proposals align with the following theme in the Council's Corporate Plan for the years 2022/25.
  - Healthy Environment
- 2.2. 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. The range of alterations included footway widening on Kings Road, both sides of Abbey Square (by 1.5m and 1m respectively), alterations to bus stop and shelter locations (including an additional stop), provision of loading bays and a reversal of the one-way traffic direction along Abbey Square.

Achieving these alterations requires the movement and adjustment of existing restrictions, namely the current disabled parking bays on Abbey Square and Kings Road and the motorcycle parking bay 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. In the previous report to this Sub-Committee at the June 2023 meeting (available [here](#)), officers acknowledged that the developers plan lacked some detail and undertook to produce a detailed plan for statutory consultation.

This plan is attached as Appendix 1 of this report.

- 3.5. Members are asked to note that the advertised proposals represented a minor deviation to the original developer plan, where we have proposed the relocation of the Abbey Square disabled parking bays to the south side of the street instead of the northern side. This has been considered necessary to help alleviate any issues that larger vehicles may have when coming from the west side of the Square as they need additional room to turn – an alteration due to feasibility concerns with the original concept. It is not considered that this minor deviation breaches the terms of the funding agreement and nor the outcome of the Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 3).

As officers committed, the proposal maintains the same amount of disabled parking space, although this regrettably necessitates the loss of 6m of motorcycle parking due to adjacent vehicular accesses. There will remain around 11m of motorcycle parking space remaining and this existing bay has appeared largely unoccupied during multiple daytime visits by various officers.

- 3.6. Alterations to Highway waiting restrictions and traffic restrictions require statutory consultation, and following agreement to do so at the June 2023 Sub-Committee meeting, officers undertook this process between 10<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.

- 3.7. The statutory consultation process is a consultation with the public and other statutory consultees to create and seal a Traffic Regulation Order. Traffic Regulation Orders underlie on-street restrictions and allow them to be implemented and enforced.

The statutory consultation process is the Council proposing a new Traffic Regulation Order and in doing so, it must seek any objections so that these may be considered as part of the decision on whether the restrictions be implemented.

Statutory consultations are not voting processes, where a higher number of objections compared with comments of support would necessarily lead to proposals not being implemented. Rather, it is expected that the responses will be balanced toward objections and the Council needs to consider the reasons provided in the objections and decide whether a scheme is amended, removed or installed as advertised.

Statutory consultations are open for anyone considered to be impacted to respond, meaning that the respondent's address and other personal information is irrelevant. Under Data Protection law, capturing this information is not necessary and therefore is not a requirement.

#### Options Proposed

- 3.8. The Sub-Committee is asked to consider the consultation feedback in Appendix 2 and decide whether the scheme may be implemented, or should not be implemented.

If agreed for implementation, 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 and within the scope of the advertised Traffic Regulation Order.

- 3.9. When considering the outcome for this scheme, the Sub-Committee is asked to note that the funding is ringfenced for delivering the scheme and has a delivery deadline as one of the conditions. Aside from potential feasibility issues in this constricted area, proposed alterations to the scheme may breach the funding conditions.

Should the scheme not be agreed for delivery, proposed alterations breach the funding conditions or the scheme not be delivered prior to 31 March 2024, it is expected that the Council will need to repay the secured funding and no part of this scheme has identified funding from other sources.

#### Other Options Considered

- 3.10. Due to the conditions of funding, there is very limited scope for variation of the scheme and officers believe that the proposal in Appendix 1 provides the best benefits for the minimum alteration to existing restrictions. Therefore, not implementing the scheme is the only other option considered, which would not be recommended for the reasons set out in Item 3.9 of this report.

### **4. Contribution to strategic aims**

- 4.1. The Council's new Corporate Plan has established three themes for the years 2022/25. These themes are:

- Healthy Environment
- Thriving Communities
- Inclusive Economy

- 4.2. 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
- 4.3. 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.
- 4.4. This proposal contributes to the Council’s Corporate Plan Themes as set out below:

#### Healthy Environment

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) have been 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 have been erected on street, as close as possible to affected areas.
- 6.3. Ward Councillors were made aware of the commencement dates for statutory consultation, so that there is an opportunity for them to encourage community feedback in this process.
- 6.4. Where this report contains petitions that have not been separately reported, the lead petitioner(s) will be informed of the decision of the Sub-Committee, following publication of the agreed meeting minutes. Respondents to statutory consultations will also be informed of the Sub-Committee decisions.
- 6.5. 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 formed part of the report at the June 2023 meeting of this Sub-Committee and is attached as Appendix 3.
- 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. The statutory consultation process has provided an opportunity for feedback for the proposals, which are not proposed to reduce the overall length of, nor the restrictions within the relocated disabled bays.

Officers additionally 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.

7.5. Following the detailed design work and upon reviewing the feedback to the statutory consultation, it is not considered that the EqlA needed to be revised and nor is there evidence to suggest that that the scheme should not be agreed for implementation as advertised on the basis of equality impact concerns.

**8. Other relevant considerations**

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

**9. Legal implications**

9.1. The proposed alterations to waiting restrictions and traffic direction reversal required statutory consultation, whereby the new Traffic Regulation Order(s) were drafted under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and advertised in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

The resultant Traffic Regulation Order(s) will be made under the same regulations, if agreed.

9.2. Following the making of this Order, the public must be afforded a period of six weeks to raise any legal challenge, prior to the implementation of any elements contained within.

9.3. This report seeks agreement for the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services to undertake these processes.

**10. Financial implications**

10.1 Revenue Implications

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

Staff costs will be capitalised.

## 10.2 Capital Implications

<b>Capital Programme</b>	<b>2023/24 £000</b>	<b>2024/25 £000</b>	<b>2025/26 £000</b>
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 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.

## 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. 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. Plan to show the alterations proposed in the advertised Traffic Regulation Order**
- 2. Feedback received during the statutory consultation**
- 3. Equality Impact Assessment**