

Traffic Management Sub-Committee

13 June 2024



Reading
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Title	Proposals for a Pedestrian Crossing and School Keep Clear Markings – Richfield Avenue
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Report author	Darren Cook, Transport Development Control Manager
Lead Councillor	Cllr John Ennis
Ward(s)	Thames
Corporate priority	Healthy Environment
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That the Sub-Committee notes the content of this report.2. That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to undertake statutory consultation/notification processes for the proposed Tiger crossing on Richfield Avenue, in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.3. That the Highways and Traffic Services Manager, in agreement with the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport, be able to make minor alterations to the agreed proposals.4. That subject to no objections being received the scheme be considered as agreed for implementation enabling delivery planning to commence.5. That should a scheme receive objection(s) during the statutory consultation period, that these be reported to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee for consideration and decision regarding scheme implementation.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. In July 2022 planning consent was granted for the erection of a new secondary school on Richfield Avenue, to be known as the River Academy School. As part of this planning permission pedestrian and cycle improvements were secured along Richfield Avenue including widening of the existing footway / cycleway on the western/northern side and the creation of a footway / cycleway on the eastern/southern side. In addition to this a Tiger Crossing is to be provided to aid school children and the wider public cross Richfield Avenue along with alterations to the parking restrictions along Richfield Avenue to facilitate the crossing and the introduction of School Keep Clear markings.
- 1.2. These Highway works are to be undertaken by the Department for Education as part of the school development and will be included within a S278 Highway Works Agreement.
- 1.3. This report seeks approval for officers to undertake statutory consultation/notice processes necessary to progress the Tiger Crossing and parking restriction alteration elements of this scheme.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. The proposals align with the principles of the Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP), Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). The Tiger crossing proposals will complement the Council's Climate Emergency Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy by removing barriers to the greater use of sustainable, healthy transport options.

3. The Proposal

- 3.1. This scheme would deliver a Tiger crossing on Richfield Avenue and will provide safer routes for children to walk to the new River Academy school as well as providing a pedestrian and cycle link to Rivermead Leisure Centre from the west.
- 3.2. School Keep Clear markings are also proposed which are to be located in two separate areas one being adjacent to the pedestrian entrance to the school and the other by the vehicular access.
- 3.3. The works subject to this report are illustrated on drawing FS0949-GDM-ZZ-ZZ-DR-Y-0100 Rev P01, which can be found at Appendix 1.
- 3.4. Should there be any objections received during the statutory consultation periods, Officers will report this feedback to a future Sub-Committee meeting where it may be considered for a decision.
- 3.5. Should no objections be received, it is recommended that the scheme(s) be considered as approved.
- 3.6. It is recommended that the Highways & Traffic Services Manager, in agreement with the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport, be able to make minor alterations to the agreed proposals. These may be necessary due to unforeseen engineering reasons.

4. Contribution to Strategic Aims

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

Healthy environment

The installation of Tiger crossings is expected to improve the experience of pedestrians in the area. They reinforce the spirit of the revised Highway Code in providing priority for pedestrians and require motorists and pedestrians to be more observant of their surroundings. Reductions in traffic speed can lead to a nicer environment for walking and cycling.

Complementing other Council initiatives, these measures will contribute to encouraging people to make healthy transport choices through the removal of barriers toward doing so. This will contribute toward the Council's goal of making the town carbon neutral by 2030, through reducing emissions by private vehicle use.

5. Environmental and Climate Implications

- 5.1. The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 5.2. A Climate Impact Assessment has been conducted, which considers a net 'LOW POSITIVE' impact as a result of the Sub-Committee agreeing to the recommendations of this report.
- 5.3. The implementation of this scheme, if agreed, will require a level of civil engineering work to be undertaken and the installation of electrically powered lighting for Tiger crossing.
- 5.4. These will have a minor negative impact during installation and a very minor ongoing negative impact due to the continued energy use by the low-energy LED Tiger crossing lighting. They will, however, be long-standing facilities and it is expected that the installation of this scheme will remove barriers that many people will have to walking and cycling, which will offset these impacts by a likely reduction in private vehicle journeys.

While it is difficult to quantify, it is expected that the benefits will outweigh the impacts over time.

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1. The planning application was subject to consultation therefore providing the opportunity for the comments from the public.
- 6.2. Statutory notifications/consultation required for the proposed Tiger crossing and inclusion of the School Keep Clear markings will be conducted in accordance with appropriate legislation. 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, and feedback (support or objection) can be submitted.
- 6.3. Policy Committee and Traffic Management Sub-Committee are public meetings. The agendas, reports, meeting minutes and recordings of the meetings are available to view from the Council's website.

7. Equality Implications

- 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. 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, nor do they significantly vary existing operations. Statutory consultation processes will be conducted, where required, providing an opportunity for objections/support/concerns to be considered prior to a decision being made on whether to implement the proposals.

8. Other Relevant Considerations

- 8.1. None

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1. Notice will be given for the implementation of Tiger crossings under Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
- 9.2. This report seeks agreement for the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services to undertake this process.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1. The scheme will be fully funded by the developer through the S278 Highway works Agreement.

11. Timetable for Implementation

- 11.1. Subject to approval being granted by this committee the statutory consultation will commence shortly with the intention of reporting back to September 2024 Traffic Mgt Sub-Committee should objections be received.
- 11.2. Subject to approval the installation of the new Tiger crossing on Richfield Avenue is expected to be complete prior to the school opening in September 2024.

12. Background Papers

12.1. None.

Appendices

1. Richfield Avenue Ped Crossing and School Keep Clear Scheme Design