

**Traffic Management  
Sub-Committee  
5 March 2026**



**Reading**  
Borough Council  
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<b>Title</b>	Informal Consultation – A4 London Road corridor & Sutton Seeds Roundabout Proposals.
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To update the committee of the work officers have undertaken with colleagues at Wokingham Borough Council on proposals for the A4 London Road corridor and of Wokingham Borough Council's commencement of an informal consultation of these proposals.
<b>Report status</b>	Public report
<b>Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report</b>	Emma Gee, Executive Director Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services
<b>Report author</b>	James Clements, Transport Programme Manager
<b>Lead Councillor</b>	Cllr John Ennis, Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport
<b>Ward</b>	Park
<b>Corporate priority</b>	Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>The Sub-Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. note the content of this report.</li> </ol> <p>Subject to the Outcome of the informal consultation, and should Wokingham Borough Council proceed with the scheme, the Sub-committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Authorise the Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood services in consultation with the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services to undertake the statutory consultation for the proposed amendments to the existing Traffic Regulation Order relating to the London Road Bus Lane.</li> <li>3. Authorise the Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood services to make minor amendments to the agreed proposals if required prior to the implementation, in consultation with the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services, the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport and the Chair of the Traffic Management Sub Committee.</li> <li>4. That subject to no objections being received the scheme be considered as approved and the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the amendments to the Traffic Regulation Order.</li> </ol>

	5. That should the 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.
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## 1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Sub-Committee of the work officers have undertaken alongside officers at Wokingham Borough Council to develop proposals for the continued improvement to the A4 London Road corridor and Sutton Seeds Roundabout and the informal consultation, launched by Wokingham, into these proposals.

## 2. Policy Context

- 2.1 The Council Plan for the years 2025/28 includes priorities of delivering a sustainable and healthy environment and to reduce our carbon footprint, which align closely with the provisions of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA), as both seek to improve public wellbeing and sustainable development.
- 2.3 Full details of the Council 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 Reading Borough Council's Transport Strategy 2024 is a statutory document that sets a vision to make Reading a greener and healthier town by providing better sustainable travel choices, including buses. The transport strategy also contributes towards the vision of a net zero carbon Reading by 2023, as set out in the Reading Climate Emergency Strategy. It also includes guiding policies and principles including those related to Network Management (RTS17), Parking (RTS20), Enforcement (RTS21) and Demand Management (RTS22).
- 2.5 The Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) is a sub-strategy and core element of the Reading Transport Strategy, which sets a vision to make Reading a greener and healthier town by providing better sustainable travel choices, including buses. The transport strategy also contributes towards the vision of a net zero carbon Reading by 2030, as set out in the Reading Climate Emergency Strategy
- 2.6 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA) sets out the legal basis for making TROs. It gives local authorities the power to make TROs to regulate or restrict traffic as needed for:
- (a) avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road or for preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising, or
  - (b) preventing damage to the road or to any building on or near the road, or
  - (c) facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians), or
  - (d) preventing the use of the road by vehicular traffic of a kind which, or its use by vehicular traffic in a manner which, is unsuitable having regard to the existing character of the road or adjoining property, or
  - (e) preserving the character of the road in a case where it is especially suitable for use by persons on horseback or on foot, or
  - (f) preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs

- or
- (g) any of the purposes specified in paragraphs (a) to (c) of subsection (1) of section 87 of the Environment Act 1995

### **3. Proposal**

- 3.1 Following the implementation of the new bus lane on London Road between Liverpool Road and Cemetery Junction, Reading Borough Council and Wokingham Borough Council have jointly commissioned WSP engineering consultants to design a number of options that could deliver further improvements to this corridor. These designs have now been subject to traffic modelling to assess the impact with a view to recommending a proposed option.

#### ***Current Situation***

- 3.2 The London Road bus lane was introduced in August 2024 and saw the implementation of a new westbound bus lane between Liverpool Road and Amity Road, near Cemetery Junction. This bus lane was created through the reallocation of lane 1, which was previously a general traffic lane towards Reading.
- 3.3 The bus lane requires all general traffic travelling towards Reading, from both the A4 and A3290, to merge into a single lane (lane 2) shortly after Liverpool Road. The bus lane can be used by licensed hackney carriages, motorcycles and bicycles.
- 3.4 The bus lane is used by a number of routes including park and ride services to the town centre as well as to the hospital and university, local services from Woodley, and longer distance routes from Twyford, Maidenhead and High Wycombe. The bus lane is also used by the RailAir buses from Heathrow Airport.

#### ***Joint Working and Option Appraisal***

- 3.5 Officers working with colleagues at Wokingham Borough Council and WSP held a series of site meetings and workshops where a number of options were developed for this corridor on the approach to the new bus lane. These included amendments to the bus lane, general vehicle lanes and traffic signals both through the London Road and at the junction at Sutton Seeds Roundabout.
- 3.6 Traffic surveys were undertaken in June 2025 with further validation surveys in November 2025. This data was used to model the impact of the options to assist with option appraisals.
- 3.7 Of the options proposed, a number were discounted due to the impact on general traffic movements with no substantial benefit for bus journeys. Safety concerns were also cited for vehicles queuing on the A3290 with some of the options. The option assessment led to a preferred option which provided benefits for both general vehicles and bus trips through the corridor without increasing the safety issues forecast with previous options.

### ***Proposed Option***

- 3.8 The option proposed is to provide a new bus lane on the A4 London Road eastern approach to the Sutton Seeds Roundabout and closing the bus gate from the services road. A new bus lane would be installed through the roundabout using vacant highway space and not removing capacity for general traffic. Within Reading the proposals involve shortening the bus lane by approximately 30m and introducing a dedicated right-turn lane for vehicles turning in to Liverpool Road.
- 3.9 The option involves works both in Wokingham Borough and in Reading Borough, and will include:

#### ***Within Wokingham Borough***

- removing the conflict between buses and parked cars on the service road by removing the existing bus only access onto the A4 London Road and diverting buses onto the A4 London Road.
- providing a dedicated space for buses on the A4 London Road in the form of a bus lane.
- keeping two general traffic lanes on the A4 London Road alongside the new bus lane by narrowing the central reserve.
- converting a hatched area, which is currently used land on the south of the roundabout to create a bus lane on the roundabout towards Reading.
- adding additional traffic lights and amend the configuration to help manage and improve traffic flow
- amending and refreshing road traffic markings to make it clearer which lane traffic should be in.
- improving the waiting area for bus passengers using The Drive bus stop on Reading Buses Orange 13 service and make the stop accessible to all other bus services on the A4 London Road, which includes Carousel's 850 and 127, Thames Valley Buses 128/129 service and Reading Buses 12.

#### ***Within Reading Borough***

- shortening the existing bus lane to allow for the introduction of a right-turn only lane opposite Liverpool Road
- 3.10 This option provides benefits to journey times for both general motor vehicles and bus services on this corridor as well as enabling a more consistent journey time. Modelling shows that for the A4 London Road westbound route this option performs notably better than current baseline conditions in the PM peak with a 38 second improvement to journey times and, from the A3290, a 37 second improvement. During the morning peak the improvements are more modest with a 9 second improvement on average for the A4 London Road section and 15 second for the A3290 section.
- 3.11 For buses an average of a 28 second improvement per journey on the A4 section and 34 seconds improvement on the A3290 section is shown during the morning peak and a 30 second improvement for the London Road and a 23 second improvement for the A3290 section during the afternoon peak period.
- 3.12 The Sutton Seeds roundabout is a busy junction with 21 buses per hour traveling towards Reading. In the morning peak hour, a further 1033 vehicles travel from London Road east and 863 vehicles per hour from the A3290 south, enter the roundabout.

- 3.13 The modelling data outlined above indicates that, if the full scheme is implemented, over 9 minutes of journey time saving is identified for buses during the morning peak hour. For general traffic there will be the equivalent of a total of 6 hours and 45 minutes' worth of journey time saving during the morning peak hour for traffic heading into Reading.
- 3.14 This option would also benefit motorists using Liverpool Road to access areas of New Town as they now have a dedicated lane to access as well as more space when exiting Liverpool Road toward Reading.

### ***Informal Consultation***

- 3.15 In order to meet the conditions of the funding awarded for the delivery of the scheme, as well as meeting the requirements to proceed with consultations prior to the pre-election period later in 2026, Wokingham Borough Council commenced a 5-week informal consultation the week commencing Monday 23rd February 2026.
- 3.16 Transport Officers briefed both the Leader of the Council, the Lead Member for Transport and Climate and the Chair of Traffic Management Sub-Committee, prior to the consultation. Authority for Reading Borough Council to officially support the consultation was granted through the delegated authority afforded through an Officer Decision Notice, published on 12 February 2026.
- 3.17 The Officer Decision Notice was made to support the informal consultation only.
- 3.18 In order to proceed with the changes proposed within the borough of Reading, these would require a statutory consultation. Within the decisions proposed in this report, officers are seeking approval to undertake a future statutory consultation (for the elements of the scheme within the borough of Reading), subject to the outcome of the informal consultation, and should Wokingham proceed with the overall scheme.
- 3.19 As the design is currently at concept stage, officers are also seeking delegated approval to make minor non-material changes to the final designs. Any changes will remain consistent with the approach set out within this report and will only be made where necessary, and to accommodate any constraints or to improve the outcomes of the scheme.

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

- 4.1 The Council Plan has established five priorities for the years 2025/28. These priorities are:
- Promote more equal communities in Reading
  - Secure Reading's economic and cultural success
  - Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint
  - Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading's adults and children
  - Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future
- 4.2 In delivering these priorities, we will be guided by the following set of principles:
- Putting residents first
  - Building on strong foundations
  - Recognising, respecting, and nurturing all our diverse communities
  - Involving, collaborating, and empowering residents
  - Being proudly ambitious for Reading

- 4.3 Full details of the Council Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the Council's website - [Council plan - Reading Borough Council](#). These priorities and the Council Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.
- 4.4 The recommendations in this report align with the Council's priorities, namely, to **Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint**
- 4.5 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 enables the Council to introduce measures like speed limits, one way systems, bus lanes, or restrictions on certain vehicles. These provisions directly support reducing pollution, improving air quality and creating spaces where people feel the benefits of clean air and active travel like walking and cycling.
- 4.6 By implementing TROs, the Council can create more green spaces and pedestrian friendly areas, aligning with its goal of promoting a healthy environment which has a positive impact on the life of every resident – making Reading a greener, more attractive place to live, with a tangible impact on physical and mental health and life expectancy.
- 4.7 These actions also support accessibility and mobility, which are key to thriving, connected communities, ensuring everyone including the vulnerable and excluded can safely use public spaces, regardless of age or ability.
- 4.8 By managing traffic to reduce congestion and improve public transport flow, the Council can boost local economic activities and make it easier for everyone to access education, skills and training and good jobs.

## **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 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 our target of a carbon neutral Reading by 2030.
- 5.3 A climate impact assessment has not been considered necessary as this is for information report only. If the recommendations are to proceed with the options proposed a climate impact assessment will be undertaken but it is anticipated that as the scheme within Reading only requires limited signage and lining works and delivers overall benefit to both general traffic and bus journeys the impact will be largely positive.

## **6. Community engagement**

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 A 5-week consultation period commenced on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February and has been promoted by both Reading Borough and Wokingham Borough Council.
- 6.3 The implementation of the original bus lane followed a 6-week consultation in 2023 alongside the consultation to the Reading Transport Strategy 2040.

## **7. Equality impact assessment**

7.1 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.

7.2 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.

7.3 Further EIA assessments, where necessary, may be undertaken once the schemes are developed in detailed design.

## **8. Other relevant considerations**

8.1 None

## **9. Legal implications**

9.1 The Informal Consultation does not permit Reading Borough Council the legal powers to make changes to the existing Traffic Regulation Order.

9.2 Subject to the Outcome of this Informal Consultation, and should a statutory consultation be required, then the legal implications identified below shall come into effect.

9.3 The Council has considered all of its legal obligations when seeking to make Traffic Regulation Orders.

9.4 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 sets out the legal basis for making TROs. The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 provides for the statutory processes to be followed in making TROs.

9.5 Before making a TRO, the local authority must carry out a statutory consultation, engaging with the Chief of Police, residents, businesses, emergency services and transport operators. A notice detailing the proposed restrictions and the reasoning behind them is published in a local newspaper and displayed on site in the areas where the restrictions would apply. Members of the public have 21 days in which to submit objections or comments on the proposal. In order for any comments to be valid, it must be in writing, state the grounds on which it is made and sent to the address specified in the notice.

With any traffic regulation order proposals, the Council (either via delegated authority, or by agreement of the Traffic Management Sub-Committee) may decide whether to proceed with the TRO as published, modify it, or abandon it. If it is agreed to proceed, the TRO is formally made and a further notice is published giving the date when the order comes into force. The final step is to implement the restrictions by installing the necessary signage and road markings.

- 9.6 The Council has considered its Network Management Duty under the Traffic Management Act 2004 and its Section 122 duty under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

### **Network Management Duty**

- 9.7 Part 2 Section 16 (1) of The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a duty on the Council as a local traffic authority to manage their road network with a view to achieving, so far as may be reasonably practicable having regard to their other obligations, policies and objectives, the following objectives—

- (a) securing the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network; and
- (b) facilitating the expeditious movement of traffic on road networks for which another authority is the traffic authority.

- (2) The action which the authority may take in performing that duty includes, in particular, any action which they consider will contribute to securing—

- (a) the more efficient use of their road network; or
- (b) the avoidance, elimination or reduction of road congestion or other disruption to the movement of traffic on their road network or a road network for which another authority is the traffic authority;

and may involve the exercise of any power to regulate or co-ordinate the uses made of any road (or part of a road) in the road network (whether or not the power was conferred on them in their capacity as a traffic authority). This duty places an ongoing obligation in ensuring overall traffic efficiency and network performance and not only applies to vehicles but all to pedestrians and cyclists.

### **Section 122 duty**

- 9.8 Further Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 places a duty on the local authority so far as practicable to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway. In carrying out this exercise the Council must have regard to the following:

- Desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises.
- The effect on the amenities of any locality effected and (without prejudice to the generality of this paragraph) the importance of regulating and restricting the use of roads by heavy commercial vehicles, so as to preserve or improve the amenities of the areas through which the road(s) run.
- The strategy prepared under Section 80 of the Environment Act 1995 (the national air quality strategy).
- The importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and of securing the safety and convenience of persons using or desiring to use such vehicles.
- Any other matters appearing to the local authority to be relevant.

- 9.9 This duty focuses on the making of individual traffic regulation decisions.

- 9.10 Each of these duties has been considered in detail in relation to the schemes identified in this report.

- 9.11 Patricia Tavernier has cleared these Legal Implications.

## **10. Financial Implications**

- 10.1 A budget of £300k has been assigned to this project and is included within the approved Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) budget.
- 10.2 The Council has committed approx. £75k to cover half of the expenses incurred by Wokingham Borough Council, to develop these options. This has been funded by the Council's BSIP revenue award.
- 10.3 Should the Council wish to proceed with the proposal the scheme costs would be modest as the works within the borough would largely be adjustments to road markings and signage.
- 10.4 In addition to officer time, the above budget includes supporting the completion of the detailed design drawings (for the extent of the works within the borough) as well as the advertising of the proposed amendments to the Traffic Regulation Order, which is a requirement as part of the statutory consultation process.
- 10.5 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.
- 10.6 There are no foreseen financial risks related to the recommendations of the report.

## **11. Timetable for Implementation**

- 11.1 The informal consultation will run for 5 weeks, commencing 24<sup>th</sup> February 2026, after which Wokingham will undertake analysis of the response and provide feedback to Council officers. Subject to this feedback and members decision, the timeframe for statutory consultation and scheme implementation will be outlined to members.

## **12. Background Papers**

- 12.1 None

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Concept Design Drawings – A4 London Road & Sutton Seeds Roundabout Improvement scheme.**