

Traffic Management Sub-Committee

10 September 2026



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	Road Safety: Kings Road, Proposal for Statutory Consultation
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Emma Gee, Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services
Report author	James Penman – Network Services Manager
Lead Councillor	Cllr John Ennis, Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport
Council priority	Deliver a sustainable & healthy environment & reduce Reading's carbon footprint
Recommendations	1. That the Sub-Committee notes the content of this report. 2. That the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to undertake a statutory consultation for the recommended alterations to the outbound bus lane, in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. 3. That subject to no objections being received, the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the traffic regulation order. 4. That any objection(s) received during the statutory consultation period are considered by officers and a delegated decision for the outcome of the Order be made by the Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport. 5. Should a decision be taken to implement the resultant Order, the Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the Traffic Regulation Order.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Approximately half of the casualty incidents are occurring from vehicles turning at the entrances to Reading College, Kingsgate Street and Rupert Street.
- 1.2. This report proposes alterations to the outbound (eastbound) bus lane on Kings Road, which is being proposed as a risk mitigation measure seeking to reduce incidents involving casualties at these junctions.
- 1.3. The proposed changes to the bus lane will require statutory consultation. Officers are seeking agreement to undertake the consultation, and delegation to consider objections and determine the outcome of the proposed Traffic Regulation Order, which is expected to reduce the time needed for a decision on the outcome.
- 1.4. The proposed changes are expected to have little, if any, impact on journey times for authorised users of the outbound bus lane.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA) sets out the legal basis for making Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), including Speed Limit Orders (SLOs). 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 section 87(1) of the Environment Act 1995.
- 2.2. Reading Borough Council's Transport Strategy 2024 is a statutory document that sets the plan for developing the Borough's transport network. It includes guiding policies and principles including those related to Network Management (RTS17) and Road Safety (RTS19).
- 2.3. 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), and the Road Traffic Act 1988, as they seek to improve public wellbeing and sustainable development, and to improve road safety through analysing and programming schemes to address patterns of potentially treatable casualty incidents causations.

3. The Proposal

Background

- 3.1. Police supply basic information regarding any incidents they attend, or are reported, involving casualties on the highway. This data is provided in a nationally standardised format and includes probable causation factors – the likely reasons that the incident occurred, selected from a standardised list.
- 3.2. The causation factors are critical in considering whether patterns of incidents may be treatable with engineering solutions, and will influence the treatments that we may consider. By introducing appropriate changes that seek to reduce the risks of those causations occurring, the resultant scheme would be expected to reduce the severity and number of future casualty incidents.
- 3.3. It would not be appropriate to publicly share sensitive information around the probable causation factors relating to the casualty incidents on Kings Road. However, the patterns of incidents are almost evenly split between two scenarios:
- a. Pedestrians crossing at, or near to the controlled pedestrian crossings, located outside Reading College and to the west of Cemetery Junction; and
 - b. Vehicles turning left across the outbound bus lane, into Reading College, Kingsgate Street and Rupert Street.
- 3.4. It is challenging to identify engineering solutions that could positively address pedestrian incidents, as there are unfortunately behavioural factors involved. However, the Council

has met Reading College on site twice and is grateful for their positive and constructive engagement. As a destination that attracts both pedestrian and vehicular traffic, they have significant communication and educational reach for regular users of the area. While pedestrian casualties are not exclusive to pupils of the College, alongside continued exploration of potential engineering options, this engagement should be beneficial in educating and influencing pedestrian behaviour.

- 3.5. In the following section, officers are recommending adjustments to the outbound bus lane, as a risk mitigation measure for incidents caused by vehicle turning movements. Some signing adjustments, and decluttering around the junctions have been delivered already, improving existing sightlines.

The Proposal

- 3.6. Appendix 1 provides a drawing to illustrate a proposed 'breaking up' of the outbound (eastbound) bus lane ahead of three junctions. These are the junctions at the entrance to Reading College, Kingsgate Street and Rupert Street.
- 3.7. The proposal, if delivered, will enable vehicles wishing to turn into these entrances/streets to change lanes 20-30m ahead of the turnings, before turning left.
- 3.8. The expected benefits of the proposal are as follows:
 - a. Greater opportunity for drivers to look and notice each other, ahead of a turning, by introducing an initial lane change ahead of the turn (less abrupt initial vehicle movements); and
 - b. Lower speed differential between vehicles in the bus lane and those transitioning ahead of the turn (greater opportunity to respond/react, or in the worst case, lower impact speeds).
- 3.9. The proposal requires additional signage, so the scheme has been very carefully designed so that these signs do not interfere with visibility around the junctions. The proposed scheme has also been independently Road Safety Audited, where no concerns have been raised about the design. A further audit would be undertaken following the delivery of the scheme, if approved.
- 3.10. The Sub-Committee is asked to note that while the lining and signing changes would typically be relatively quick to deliver, there remain some sections of red surface dressing material in this bus lane that would require prior resurfacing. This area is on the list of reserve sites for resurfacing. Owing to contractor availability and weather conditions, there may still be a delay in delivering the changes, should the decision be made to do so.
- 3.11. It is not considered that the proposal will negatively impact journey times of vehicles authorised to use the bus lane. It does not introduce more traffic into the lane, it just allows the same traffic wishing to turn, to do so in a more gradual manner.

Decisions Being Sought

- 3.12. The Sub-Committee is asked to agree to the undertaking of a statutory consultation to propose the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) changes necessary to deliver the proposed scheme.
- 3.13. The Sub-Committee is also asked to agree a delegation to the Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport.

This delegation is to consider any objections and to agree the outcome of the TRO, and is intended to aid the timeline and efficiency of potentially implementing this change.

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 of this report propose to deliver changes that aim to treat the causes of casualty incident patterns on Kings Road. Should the changes be delivered, it is expected that the number and severity of casualty incidents related to vehicle turning movements will reduce. This will be monitored.

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 and a net minor negative impact. This is expected to be very minor, and associated with waste produced by weather proof notices (regulatory requirement for a statutory consultation) and delivery of the scheme.

6. Community Engagement

6.1. Statutory consultations are 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.

6.2. Respondents to statutory consultations will also be informed of the outcome of the proposals.

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 Implications

7.1. It is not considered that an Equality Impact Assessment is relevant to the recommendations or resultant decisions arising from this report as the proposals are not anticipated to have a differential impact on people with protected characteristics. The statutory consultation process provides an opportunity for objections/ support/ concerns to be considered prior to a decision being made on whether to implement the proposals.

8. Health Implications

8.1. Health in All Policies (HiAP) ensures council decisions across all services consider their impact on people's health and wellbeing, especially those most exposed to the risks of poor health outcomes. Some people live longer, healthier lives than others, not because of their personal choices alone, but because of the circumstances they are born into, grow up in, live, work and age in. By applying HiAP and the HIA process to council services such as housing, transport, education and economic policy, the Council

can help create the conditions that extend healthy lives, reduce avoidable demand on vital public services, and support stronger, more prosperous communities.

- 8.2. A HIA Screening was undertaken, which triggered the requirement to undertake a Rapid Health Impact Assessment. The assessment was triggered because the proposal in this report is expected to create a significant – albeit positive - change to health factors, potentially affects a large number of people and multiple Wards.
- 8.3. The assessment considered the reasoning for the proposal and anticipated change (benefit), as outlined in this report. It is not considered that the proposal would disproportionately impact on the health of particular groups of people, nor widen/reduce existing health inequalities within Reading.

9. Other Relevant Considerations

- 9.1. There are none arising from the recommendations of this report.

10. Legal Implications

- 10.1. The Council has considered its legal obligations when seeking to make Traffic Regulation Orders.
- 10.2. 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.
- 10.3. Before making an Order, 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 comment 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.
- 10.4. With any TRO proposals, the Council may decide whether to proceed with the Order as published, modify it, or decide not to make the Order . If it is agreed to proceed, the Order 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.
- 10.5. 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

- 10.6. Section 16 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.
- 10.7. 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 on the Council to consider overall traffic efficiency and network performance and applies not only to vehicles but also to pedestrians and cyclists.

Section 122 duty

10.8. 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:

- The desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises;
- The effect on the amenities of any locality affected 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.

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

Section 39 (Road Traffic Act 1988)

10.10. This duty requires the local authority to undertake studies into accidents arising out of the use of vehicles and to take such measures as it considers appropriate to prevent such accidents. Section 3 describes how police supplied casualty data is analysed and used to inform potential treatments.

10.11. Patricia Tavernier has cleared these Legal Implications

11. Financial Implications

11.1. This proposal will be funded from the Local Transport Grant allocation toward road safety schemes. It is anticipated that the costs for consulting (statutory advertising) and delivering the proposals will be less than £10k.

11.2. Should the scheme be agreed and the road is not resurfaced as part of the Highway Maintenance programme, costs will be sought for resurfacing the area needed to deliver the changes proposed in this report and it is intended that these would be met from the same capital grant allocation.

11.3. Andy Stockle has cleared these Financial Implications.

12. Timetable for Implementation

12.1. The expected timetable is as follows:

Line	Milestone	When (subject to change)
1	Scheme design completed and independent Stage 1 & 2 Road Safety Audit (RSA) undertaken, outcomes considered.	Complete
2	Undertake statutory consultation	October 2026
3	Consider objections and decide the outcome of the TRO	November 2026
4	Subject to the outcome decision, seal the TRO, arrange delivery	Subject to resurfacing. May be as early as January 2027.

13. Background Papers

13.1. There are none.

Appendices

1. Drawing of the proposed scheme.