

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

<b>TO:</b>	<b>TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>12 JUNE 2019</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM:</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>WEST READING STUDY</b> <b>a) PROGRESS UPDATE</b> <b>b) RECOMMENDATION FOR STATUTORY CONSULTATION</b>		
<b>LEAD COUNCILLOR:</b>	<b>TONY PAGE</b>	<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT</b>
<b>SERVICE:</b>	<b>TRANSPORT</b>	<b>WARDS:</b>	<b>MINSTER, SOUTHCOTE</b>
<b>LEAD OFFICER:</b>	<b>JAMES PENMAN</b>	<b>TEL:</b>	<b>01189 372202</b>
<b>JOB TITLE:</b>	<b>ASSISTANT NETWORK MANAGER</b>	<b>E-MAIL:</b>	<b>JAMES.PENMAN@READING.GOV.UK</b>

#### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The West Reading Study was formed to consider and implement a variety of enhancements, funded from local developer contributions, in areas of Coley Park and Southcote.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on the measures introduced to date and those measures that are yet to be implemented as part of this study.
- 1.3 There is an issue of traffic rat-running along Silchester Road and Faircross Road, then turning in the junction of Fawley Road to avoid traffic on the A4 Bath Road and the bus gate on Southcote Lane. This is undesirable and also poses risks to pedestrians, particularly children traveling to school, in the morning.

This report proposes a solution to this issue and recommends that this proposal proceeds to statutory consultation.

- 1.4 Appendix 1 provides drawings to demonstrate the current issue in the vicinity of Fawley Road and the proposal to resolve the issue, which is recommended for statutory consultation.

#### 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the report and supports the ongoing delivery of the study outcomes.

- 2.2 That the recommended proposals in 'Part b' of this report proceed to statutory consultation.**
- 2.3 That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to carry out the statutory consultation and advertise the proposals in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.**
- 2.4 That subject to no objections received, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make the Traffic Regulation Order.**
- 2.5 That any objections received following the statutory advertisement be reported to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee.**
- 2.6 That the Head of Transport, in consultation with the appropriate Lead Councillor be authorised to make minor changes to the proposals.**
- 2.7 That no public enquiry be held into the proposals.**

### **3. POLICY CONTEXT**

- 3.1 The scheme proposals are in line with Reading Borough Council's Local Transport Plan and current traffic management policies and standards.**

### **4. BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS**

- 4.1 The West Reading Transport Study was established in June 2015, with the purpose of identifying, defining and prioritising transport schemes within Southcote and the western section of Coley Park. The overriding objective of the study is to take a balanced approach to enhancing the local area and connecting links, through measures that improve accessibility, road safety for all users, better managing traffic and parking, and encouraging the use of public transport, cycling and walking.**
- 4.2 The West Reading Transport Study Steering Group has been established to direct progress of the study. The group is chaired by the Lead Member for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport, and includes membership from the Ward Councillors for Southcote and Minster. Representatives of other organisations are invited to attend Steering Group meetings as appropriate.**

- 4.3 To ensure best value for money and to maximise the deliverables from this study, the majority of all design, supervision and construction work has been conducted by Officers of Reading Borough Council. External resources/contractors have only been appointed when necessary.

#### Part a: Progress update

- 4.4 To date, the following measures have been delivered in the study area:

- New, raised, zebra crossings on Wensley Road and Southcote Lane and the raising of an existing zebra crossing on Southcote Lane.
- Two new large-area 20mph zones introduced in Coley and Southcote.
- Traffic calming (speed humps and cushions) introduced in Coley and Southcote, to complement the new 20mph zones.
- Raised crossings introduced, with herringbone surface printing, at the side-road entrances along Southcote Lane.
- Parking restrictions added on Holybrook Road to provide passing places and aid traffic flow.
- Bus stops along Southcote Lane upgraded by installing raised kerbing to assist with accessibility.

- 4.5 The following measures are being developed:

- Conversion of a strip of verge on Wensley Road into a parking layby. Complimentary parking restrictions are being proposed for statutory consultation in the 2019a Waiting Restriction Review programme and works on the construction of the layby have been instructed to contractors.
- Procedures and costings are being developed and considered for the potential Highway adoption and street lighting of the long footpath that runs between the western end of Wensley Road and Coley Avenue (south).
- Options for uncontrolled crossing facilities are being investigated for Southcote Lane, near to the junction with Fawley Road.
- Herringbone surface printing will be installed to highlight uncontrolled crossing points around the two roundabouts on Southcote Lane at Circuit Lane and Virginia Way.
- Alterations to the speed cushions on Southcote Lane, near to its junction to Burghfield Road, are being considered to increase their effectiveness.
- Signing 'tidy-up' in Southcote - removing unnecessary and damaged signing.
- Designing and sharing a 'kiss & drop' lining proposal with Southcote Primary School, which they could consider for implementation on their land to aid with school traffic flow. This will be conducted alongside the proposals in Part b of this report.

- 4.6 Requests for considering and developing Resident Permit Parking proposals for the Granville Road and Coley Avenue (south) areas have been captured in the Resident Permit Parking report that is regularly reported to this Sub-Committee.

Part b: Recommendation for statutory consultation

- 4.7 To avoid peak-time traffic on sections of the A4 Bath Road, and the eastbound bus gate on Southcote Lane, a significant number of motorists are using Silchester Road and Faircross Road to access Southcote Lane. They are turning left onto the road (there is a no-right-turn and traffic island that restricts the right-turn) and conducting a U-turn in the junction with Fawley Road, so that they may re-join the A4 Bath Road further to the east.
- 4.8 These movements pose a number of issues and concerns, namely:
- This increases traffic levels in the already-congested, residential streets around Southcote Primary School during school drop-off times. This increases risks of driver frustration, resident frustration damage to cars (including those parked along the street) and particularly risks to pedestrians wishing to access the school.
  - Motorists turning at the junction with Fawley Road do so with varying levels of success and consideration of those around them. The movement poses increased risks of vehicle collisions, but particularly risks to pedestrians wishing to access the Blessed Hugh Farringdon school. Damage is also being conducted to the kerbing and verge areas around the junction.
- 4.9 Appendix 1 provides a drawing to illustrate the problem vehicle movements and the recommended solution.
- 4.10 It is proposed that the most effective method in which to stop the aforementioned rat-running and turning movements is to reverse the one-way directions of Silchester Road and Faircross Road.

The 'left-turn-only' restriction from Faircross Road onto Southcote Lane and 'no-entry' from Southcote Lane onto Faircross Road would be revoked, with a 'no-entry' from Circuit Lane onto Silchester Road and from Silchester Road onto Faircross Road also being proposed.

The Southcote Lane eastbound bus gate is very effective at reducing the volumes of traffic using Southcote Lane during the morning peak-period, when school children are arriving to the area. It is not recommended that this restriction is removed, or moved.

Reversing the one-way directions of Silchester Road and Faircross Road will remove the ability for traffic to bypass the Southcote Lane bus gate and proceed toward the town centre. This will stop the rat-run and stop the turning movements in the junction of Fawley Road for this purpose.

- 4.11 It is acknowledged that changing the one-way directions will require those wishing to access Southcote Lane in the morning by private motor vehicle, to do so via its eastern end at the roundabout with the A4 Bath Road. However, this could have some benefit to reducing the use of private motor vehicle travel and increased consideration of using other modes of transport.

Residents of Silchester Road and Faircross Road wishing to travel eastbound would also be required to join the A4 Bath Road via Circuit Lane during the times at which the Southcote Lane bus gate is operational.

- 4.12 This proposal will require statutory consultation, therefore, officers recommend that approval to conduct this consultation be granted to officers and that any objections be reported to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee so that they may be considered before a decision is made about approving the implementation. If no objections are received, it is recommended that officers be granted approval to develop the proposals, with the Steering Group, for implementation.
- 4.13 It should be noted that the proposal in Appendix 1 highlights a number of considerations, such as the movement/removal of traffic islands and adjustments to the Highway to accommodate the one-way reversals. The plan should be considered as indicative at this stage.

Pending the outcome of the statutory consultation, detailed investigations can be conducted, the design finalised and costed. There will be costs associated with this work, which officers recommend against incurring until the results of the statutory consultation and the decision of the Sub-Committee is known.

- 4.14 The Steering Group will consider the cost of the changes alongside the anticipated costs for the remaining aspects of the study. The Steering Group can then decide its delivery priorities against the remaining level of developer funding available.

## **5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

- 5.1 This proposal supports the aims and objectives of the Local Transport Plan and contributes to the Council's priorities, as set out below:
- Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe

- Ensuring the Council is fit for the future

## **6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

- 6.1 Informal consultation took place during the early formation of the area study. Formal, statutory consultations have taken place for those elements of the scheme that have required this process to date.
- 6.2 Further statutory consultation will be conducted in accordance with appropriate legislation. Notices will be advertised in the local printed newspaper and will be erected on Highway street furniture within the affected area.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 New, or changes to existing, Traffic Regulation Orders require advertisement and consultation, under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

## **8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 8.1 In addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 the Council is required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to 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.
- 8.2 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 and statutory consultations provide an opportunity for objections/support/concerns to be considered prior to a decision being made on whether to implement the proposals.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The cost of a scheme will be dependent on the necessary changes that are required as part of the detailed design work, as per item 4.13.

- 9.2 The study is being funded by local developer contributions, which are a combination of CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) and Section 106 contributions.
- 9.3 The Steering Group will consider its delivery priorities within the confines of available funding.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1 West Reading Transport Study - Update (Traffic Management Sub-Committee, March 2018).