

Traffic Management Sub-Committee

11 September 2025



Reading
Borough Council
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Title	Petition Receipt & Response – Last Crumb Junction
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Emma Gee, Executive Director Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services
Report author	Robert Conway, Network Management Technician
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That the Sub-Committee notes the content of this report.2. That the Sub-Committee notes and agrees the officer response in Sections 3.3 – 3.5.3. That no public inquiry be held into the proposals.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Sub-Committee of a petition that has been received requesting the installation of controlled pedestrian crossing facilities at the junction of Westfield Road, Peppard Road, Prospect Street and Henely Road, known locally as the “Last Crumb” Junction.
- 1.2. This report also provides the officer response to this petition. Namely, the request for such facilities is captured on the regularly reported ‘Requests for Traffic Management Measures’. There are many other unfunded requests for change within this report and officers are seeking funding opportunities to deliver these, in addition to the potential of local 15% Community Infrastructure Levy allocation.

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, for which the principles of the Council’s Local Transport Plan and Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Plan support. The principle of enhancing facilities for pedestrians and removing potential barriers to residents and visitors using sustainable, active transport modes aligns with these strategies.

3. The Proposal

Current Position

- 3.1. On 2 September 2025 a petition was submitted to the Council containing indications of support from 1855 individuals. The petition has been hosted online and was created on 3rd July 2025 stating:

There is a total lack of facilities for Caversham pedestrians crossing from Westfield Road to walk up Peppard Road and visa versa. It is not hyperbolic to describe crossing

here as utterly terrifying. The simple installation of a puffin crossing at this location would have limited impact upon traffic and yet improve pedestrian safety exponentially. It is not a case of, if an accident will happen here, but more, a case of when.

It should be noted that crossing here by pedestrians is a very frequent occurrence. Furthermore, many of these pedestrians are children. You have children going to and from: The Hill primary school, St Anne's RC primary school, Chiltern nursery, Caversham Preparatory school, Queen Anne's school and Highdown school. All these children are regularly forced to take their lives in their hands. Not only are school children forced to cross without adequate provision, parents who live on Peppard road who wish to take their children to the closest play area (Westfield road park), are also forced to gamble with their children's safety. It is ridiculous the council has spent money on refurbishing this play area only for the journey there to be so dangerous!

Furthermore, if you wish to visit Balmore Park from Westfield Road, again, those wishing to access green spaces are having to play Russian roulette with their safety.

As any parent I want to promote a healthy lifestyle to my child by walking to school - a wish that is aligned with the government's promotion of healthy living; and yet, I am faced with the irony of having to cross a dangerous junction in order to promote a healthy lifestyle! This is of course the same danger facing anyone who wishes to walk into Reading town centre from Peppard road (and use the specially designed pedestrian bridge over the river!).

It is of course also important to remember that this danger to pedestrians does not only have an impact upon individuals - it has an impact upon society as a whole. If we are to reduce obesity and the associated costs to the NHS, we need to embed a culture of walking from childhood - how can this be achieved by asking children to face unnecessary dangers on a daily basis? In addition, we all need to be taking steps towards living in a carbon neutral way - how can these steps be achieved if they are literally causing our children to step onto a dangerous road?

Furthermore, as any parent, I want to be teaching my child the importance of road safety and the green cross code. This is impossible to do at this junction; and thus, must be having a huge impact upon the understanding of road safety for a multitude of other children, young people and adults in the area. It is also worth noting that for drivers it can hardly be a pleasant experience having to dodge pedestrians on their car journeys.

There are of course the normal excuses like 'it would cost too much', but are we really saying life is not valuable enough? Or, of course, the old trope, that it would cause delays. To this I ask, what is really more important? Asking a driver to add, less than, two minutes to their journey or saving a child's life as they walk to school? Or the ludicrous line that drivers would be confused by the change! This would easily be addressed with signage to indicate a change. It really boils down to, are we going to address this matter now, before a death, or find the line "lessons need to be learnt" is being said when it is all too late!

Finally, it should be noted the dangers faced by all pedestrians crossing junction are not only even greater for our children, but also for our elderly and disabled too. The most vulnerable are being put in the most danger! This is abhorrent!

- 3.2. At the desired location, all approaching roads are 30mph and are single lane approaches and exits, with the exception of Henley Road, which has an additional right-turn filter lane. This junction is the meeting point of two nationally classified 'A' roads, so experiences relatively high volumes of local and commuter traffic by a number of transport modes.

The junction will be serving as a catchment for a variety of local journeys, including access to schools, shops, bus stops and businesses (local and town centre).

While the junction has traffic signal control, these do not operate a controlled pedestrian crossing phase and the equipment, while operational, is one of the Council's older installations. The nearest controlled crossing is a zebra crossing on Prospect Street, approximately 175m to the south-west.

The Peppard Road and Prospect Street approaches have relatively narrow footways that are additionally constrained behind, and the eastern footway on Peppard Road starts to raise significantly from the relative carriageway level.

- 3.3. Upon receiving a petition to improve pedestrian crossing facilities at the Last Crumb Junction in November 2017, the Council agreed to add the change to the regularly reported 'Requests for Traffic Management Measures' list for consideration at the Traffic Management Sub-Committee meeting in January 2018.

Officers appreciate the strength of feeling with regards to the requested alterations to this junction, but such changes will require substantial funding that is not yet identified. A guide cost of circa £500k+ is expected, however there are a great deal of variables that could mean a much higher cost. The request also sits alongside requests for changes across the Borough with over 130 other entries for which there is also local demand, but as yet no identified funding. These schemes are typically moved forward when funding is received externally through developer agreements and reviewed periodically for priority by councillors when that funding becomes available.

There is no set criteria which Councillors are required to apply when allocating these funds, but typically a range of factors are considered. These may include the benefits of a change such as safety or access improvements, the risks, such as increased queuing (creating air quality issues for local residents), displacement (causing rat runs down inappropriate roads) as well as the costs and available resources to allow delivery which have to be considered against other requests for change or improvement.

Options Considered

- 3.4. The Council is currently in the budget setting process for financial year from April 2026 and as part of this process it is actively considering whether more funding for these schemes can be provided, including this request for change, outside of developer funding. At this stage we are not in a position to confirm whether or not this will result in a funding stream as there are many competing priorities to balance against the money available to the council.
- 3.5. Until such time as funding has been secured for this project, unfortunately we are unable to commence any detailed investigation into this request, as this work will require funding and available officer time has to be used on schemes that are already funded.

The existing entry for this requested change, within the 'Requests for Traffic Management Measures' report, will be updated to reflect the receipt of this petition.

Other Options Considered

- 3.6. None at this time.

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, if agreed, do not directly lead to a change being introduced. However, the nature of the request align most closely with the following priority:

Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint

The appropriate provision of facilities to support walking, and/or removing potential barriers to walking, can lead to an uptake in this active travel mode and to using public transport options (walking to a bus stop). This can support reducing pollution, improving air quality and creating spaces where people feel the benefits of clean air and active travel. It should be noted, however, that the change will likely have a negative impact on traffic flow through the junction, and the impact of this will need to be considered.

These provisions also support accessibility and mobility, which are key to thriving, connected communities, ensuring everyone including the vulnerable can safely use public spaces, regardless of age or ability.

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. The recommendations of this report will not directly lead to changes being introduced, so a Climate Impact Assessment has not been considered necessary at this time.

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1. The lead petitioner will be informed of the decision of the Sub-Committee regarding the request that they have made, following publication of the meeting minutes.
- 6.2. 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. 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 at this time as the report recommendations do not directly lead to any physical changes being introduced.

8. Other Relevant Considerations

- 8.1. There are none.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1. There are no foreseen legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1. There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

11. Timetable for Implementation

- 11.1. Not applicable.

12. Background Papers

- 12.1. There are none.