

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ADVISORY PANEL MINUTES - 10 SEPTEMBER 2009

Present: Councillor Page (Chair);
Councillors Ayub, Duveen, Merriott, Townend and Willis.

Also in attendance: Councillor Ballsdon (for Item 13).

11. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Traffic Management Advisory Panel meeting held on 9 June 2009 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

12. MATTERS ARISING

Further to Minute 3 of the previous meeting, regarding Special Parking Area (SPA) Amendments 7, it was reported that Lydford Road would now be included with surrounding streets in the schemes to be investigated as part of SPA 8 (see Minute 18 below).

Resolved -

That the position be noted.

13. OAKLEY ROAD JUNCTION WITH KIDMORE ROAD - PETITION

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report on the receipt of a petition, of 625 signatures, worded as follows:

"Stop Look and Listen Petition

We the undersigned urge Reading Borough Council to improve the safety at the junction of Kidmore Road and Oakley Road, particularly with regard to the safety of parents, young people and children crossing at the junction en route to and from school. We are extremely concerned about the volume and speed of traffic, particularly at rush hour, as evidenced by the most recent accident on the 30th June 2009".

The report explained that the petition had been prompted by an accident that had occurred between a lorry and a car at the junction of Oakley Road and Kidmore Road at 7.45am on 30 June 2009. The police had attended the accident and their report stated that the lorry, travelling westbound up Oakley Road, had overshot the give way lines at the junction and collided with the rear of the car, which had been travelling southbound along Kidmore Road.

The report noted that this junction could be busy at times and that its road safety record had been monitored over recent years. There had been one other injury accident recorded within the latest 3-year period that involved vehicles turning at the junction, and neither of the two accidents had involved pedestrians. A safety scheme had been introduced in 2000, with traffic calming on Kidmore Road to reduce

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vehicle speeds and high visibility advance signing on the junction approaches. The junction lining had been refreshed in January 2009.

The report explained that a petition had been received by the Council in 2002 calling for the introduction of measures to improve safety for schoolchildren at the junction, and a petition update report of 9 April 2003 was attached to the report as Appendix 1. It stated that pedestrian/vehicle counts at the junction had shown that there was not sufficient demand to justify a formal crossing, and had concluded that a crossing patrol was the most effective means of improving child safety at this junction at school times.

The report noted that primary school children should be under adult supervision when crossing the road, and that school crossing patrols were promoted for primary schools to provide an adult presence. In 2003 the recruitment of school crossing patrols had been the responsibility of the Education department, and efforts to recruit had been unsuccessful at that time. The Transport section were now responsible for crossing patrols, and officers would approach Caversham Primary School and encourage them to take a lead in recruiting a school crossing patrol. There were no restrictions on who could apply for such a position (CRB checks would be necessary) or how many people could be involved, and it was therefore possible for a number of adults involved with the School to share the responsibility of providing a crossing patrol, which was the case in two other Reading primary schools (St. Mary & All Saints and St Michael's). This was a paid role supported by the Council with training provided.

Lead petitioners Heather Hexter and Karen Ingledew attended the meeting, and at the invitation of the Chair addressed the Panel on the issues raised in the petition.

Resolved -

That the report be noted.

Recommended -

- (1) That the petition be noted;
- (2) That further investigation work be carried out and a report brought back to a future meeting of the Panel;
- (3) That Transport Officers liase with Caversham Primary School to recruit a school crossing patrol for the Kidmore Road/Oakley Road junction;
- (4) That the lead petitioner be informed accordingly.

14. NORTH AREA ACCESS STUDY - THE MOUNT/CLIFTON PARK ROAD JUNCTION - EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC ORDER

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report seeking approval to advertise an experimental Traffic Regulation Order to introduce waiting

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restrictions at the junction of The Mount, Clifton Park Road and Albert Road, Caversham.

The report explained that concerns had been raised by local residents about road safety and in particular vehicle speeds at the junction of The Mount, Clifton Park Road and Albert Road over a number of years. The junction had an unusual crossroads layout with priority flow on the eastern section of The Mount and into Albert Road, forming a sharp east to north bend. The western section of The Mount became a side road at the junction, and Clifton Park Road was no entry southbound except for cycles. The no entry restriction had been introduced with changes to the junction layout as a road safety scheme in 2004. Site observations had shown that the current junction layout functioned as well as possible and that a change of priority was not necessary, but that parking around the junction compromised sight lines and made vehicle movements more difficult and potentially hazardous, particularly for buses heading south from Albert Road into The Mount and for vehicles exiting Clifton Park Road. There were no recorded injury accidents at the junction in the past three years.

To prevent parking around the junction it was proposed to introduce No Waiting at any Time restrictions (as shown on drawing no. NM/CP/M/TMAP/01/09) on an experimental basis, and assess the impact of the restrictions on the operation of the junction and vehicle speeds and movements. The experimental order would operate for a minimum of 6 months and a maximum of 18 months, after which it could be made permanent, modified or withdrawn. Objections to the order would be accepted during the first 6 months of operation. Speed surveys would also be carried out around the junction to assess whether there was a speeding issue, which could be addressed by further proposals at a later date.

Resolved -

That the report be noted.

Recommended -

- (1) That in consultation with the Chair of the Advisory Panel, Lead Councillor for Planning and Transport and Ward Councillors, the Head of Legal Services be authorised to make the appropriate experimental Traffic Regulation Order as shown on drawing no. NM/CP/M/TMAP/01/09 in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996;
- (2) That any objections received to the experimental traffic order be reported to a future meeting of the Panel;
- (3) That the Head of Transport be authorised to modify or suspend provisions of the experimental order and that the experimental traffic order contain provision for this.

15. NORTH AREA ACCESS STUDY - LOWFIELD ROAD WAITING RESTRICTIONS

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report seeking approval to carry out statutory consultation on the introduction of waiting restrictions at 15 side road junctions and on the bend at the northern end of Lowfield Road. This was part of Phase 2 of the Caversham Park Village Pedestrian Improvements scheme, which was included in the North Area Access Study.

The report explained that three packages of works from the North Area Access Study had been adopted by Cabinet at their meeting of 16 January 2006 (Minute 151 refers), and since then a number of schemes had been delivered which had addressed issues of concern to local residents. The Lowfield Road proposal was Phase 2 of the Caversham Park Village Pedestrian Improvements scheme, Phase 1 of which had been completed in 2007. Local consultation on possible improvements for Lowfield Road had been carried out in 2008, and the results gave a list of priorities for improvements in the area, which were the introduction of speed reduction measures, introduction of dropped crossings at side roads and protection of side road junctions from inconsiderate parking by waiting restrictions. The proposal to introduce waiting restrictions in the vicinity of the tight bend near Barnard Close had not been included in the consultation questionnaire, but parking on the bend had since been raised as a road safety issue and it was now included in the scheme.

The report stated that a draft Phase 2 layout of the Caversham Park Village Pedestrian Improvements Scheme had been designed and discussed by the North Area Access Study Steering Group and was currently being finalised in preparation for a further public information exercise prior to the scheme being introduced. It was reported at the meeting that statutory consultation on the proposed waiting restrictions could be delayed until the entire scheme had been finalised, in order to ensure that the proposals complemented the remainder of the scheme.

Resolved -

That the report be noted.

Recommended -

- (1) That in consultation with the Chair of the Advisory Panel, Lead Councillor for Planning and Transport and Ward Councillors, the Head of Legal Services be authorised to carry out statutory consultation in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 to advertise the proposal as shown on drawing nos. NM/LRD/TMAP/08/09 A, NM/LRD/TMAP/08/09 B, NM/LRD/TMAP/08/09 C and NM/LRD/TMAP/08/09 D, and subject to no objections being received to implement the proposal;
- (2) That any objections received during the statutory consultation be reported to a future meeting of the Panel.

16. SECTION 278 HIGHWAYS WORKS - RELOCATION OF SPEED HUMP, ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPMENT AT CALCOT COTTAGES, NEW LANE HILL - OBJECTION REPORT

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report informing the Panel of an objection received to the statutory advertisement of proposals to relocate a speed hump in New Lane Hill as part of the Section 278 works for the Calcot Cottages redevelopment.

The report explained that the Calcot Cottages site was currently being redeveloped and that under the terms of the Section 278 Agreement the existing road hump and associated drainage on New Lane Hill adjacent to the site was to be moved 5m to the south to accommodate the new site entrance. This new location had been agreed by the Transport, Development Control and Highways departments, and would take the road hump closer to the driveway of the objector's property.

It was reported at the meeting that, following a recent site visit, the officer recommendation was that no further action be taken, as the existing hump did not provide any significant hindrance to turning movements, and Calcot Cottages was a small development that would only generate a small amount of traffic.

Resolved -

That the report be noted.

Recommended -

That no further action be taken regarding the proposals shown on drawing NM/NLH278/01/09.

17. CHATHAM PLACE - SECTION 106 WORKS, SERVICE LAY-BY - CHANGE IN WAITING RESTRICTIONS

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report seeking approval to carry out statutory consultation on the modification of waiting restrictions in a service lay-by at Chatham Place.

The report explained that the Section 106 agreement for the Chatham Place development required that a lay-by be created on the southern side of Chatham Street adjacent to the main residential block, for use as a loading and unloading facility. The existing waiting restrictions in Chatham Street had been automatically applied to the lay-by, and although these restrictions prevented parking they also included a peak period loading ban that was not appropriate for a loading bay. The purpose of the lay-by was to accommodate loading and unloading while keeping the main carriageway clear, and therefore the waiting restrictions needed to be relaxed to permit loading/unloading at all times. The proposal, shown on drawing No.NM/CHST/WR/01/09, was to remove the loading ban by changing the waiting restrictions in the lay-by from 'no waiting at any time, no loading 8.15am - 9.15am and 4pm - 6.15pm' to 'no waiting at any time'.

Resolved -

That the report be noted.

Recommended -

- (1) That in consultation with the Chair of the Advisory Panel, Lead Councillor for Planning and Transport and Ward Councillors, the Head of Legal Services be authorised to carry out statutory consultation in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 to advertise the proposal as shown on drawing No.NM/CHST/WR/01/09 and subject to no objections being received to implement the proposal;
- (2) That any objections received during the statutory consultation be reported to a future meeting of the Panel.

18. SPECIAL PARKING AREA (SPA) - MINOR AMENDMENTS 8

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report seeking approval to carry out investigation, statutory consultation and, subject to no objections being received, implementation of requests for changes to waiting/parking restrictions.

The report explained that the Council had received a number of formal requests for changes to waiting and parking restrictions since the previous review (SPA7) had been approved at the Panel's meeting on 11 September 2008 (Minute 18 refers). The schemes held on the list attached to the report at Appendix 1 were requests made by councillors, members of the public and council officers. Funding was available to carry out the investigation, statutory consultation and, subject to no objections being received, implementation of any resulting proposals. Initial findings would be shared with ward councillors at a drop-in event on 19 November 2009, and there would be further consultation with councillors after any proposals had been advertised. Any objections received following the statutory advertisement would be reported back to a future meeting of the Panel.

The Chair reported at the meeting that a ward councillor had requested the withdrawal of the proposals for Carlton Road.

Resolved -

That the report be noted.

Recommended -

- (1) That the requests listed in Appendix 1, with the exception of Carlton Road (REF:MA2), be investigated;
- (2) That in consultation with the Chair of the Advisory Panel, Lead Councillor for Planning and Transport and ward councillors, the Head of Legal Services be authorised to carry out statutory consultations

and advertise the resultant proposals and, subject to no objections being received, that the Head of Transport implement the schemes;

- (3) That any objections received during the statutory consultations be reported to a future meeting of the Panel.

19. CYCLING LIAISON GROUP MEETING NOTES

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report informing the Panel of the discussions and actions arising from the fourth meeting of the Cycling Liaison Group under the auspices of the approved Cycling Strategy, including the Group's proposal to develop a policy for cleaning and maintenance of branded cycle routes.

The report explained that the fourth meeting of the Cycling Liaison Group had been held on 30 July 2009 and had been attended by Councillors Page, Willis, and Gittings, as well as Reading Borough Council officers and representatives of local cycling groups. The notes of the meeting were attached to the report at Appendix 1, and included a resolution that a policy on the cleaning and maintenance of Reading's branded 'Premier' cycle routes be developed.

The report explained that under the Cycling Strategy, radial routes to the town centre and linking key destinations would be branded to form a network of 'Premier' cycle routes. Creating this network would involve filling in gaps in the available infrastructure, introducing new signage and promoting the routes. It would be important to maintain the routes once the branding process was complete, as clean well-maintained routes that were treated consistently, no matter which service was responsible, would be more attractive and encourage greater use than routes where cyclists were concerned about poor or dirty surfaces.

The report explained that, as set out in briefing notes on highways maintenance and street care submitted to the Group and appended to the report at Appendices 2 and 3, the current process of inspection and maintenance included a prioritisation of routes, but did not prioritise the new 'Premier' cycle routes. To address this issue, a policy was being developed by transport officers in partnership with the street care, highways and parks teams. Local cycling groups would be consulted on this policy before options were submitted to a future meeting of the Panel.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Notes of the Cycling Liaison Group be noted;
- (2) That the development of a policy for cleaning and maintenance of branded cycle routes and consultation of key stakeholders be noted, and that the policy be submitted to a future meeting of the Panel.

20. SAFER ROUTES TO SCHOOL - SCHOOL KEEP CLEAR MARKINGS (ZIG ZAGS)

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report seeking approval for a review of school keep clear markings and to carry out statutory consultation for any resulting proposals for the introduction or alteration of waiting restrictions.

The report explained that school keep clear markings were used to prevent vehicles parking near to school entrances and provide a safer environment for children to enter and exit school. The markings were reviewed as part of the Safer Routes to School (SRTS) programme, and where there was a clear requirement for new keep clear markings they were introduced. The SRTS programme was ongoing and there were a number of schools that still did not have keep clear markings. At other schools alterations were required to incorporate new or second entrances that had not been part of the original SRTS programme, and two schools had requested minor alterations to existing markings following the introduction of school crossing patrols.

The report recommended that a full review be carried out of school keep clear markings and proposals for new markings or alterations drawn up and advertised as appropriate. As the markings required a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) it was recommended that all individual TROs be consolidated as a part of this process.

Resolved -

That the report be noted.

Recommended -

- (1) That a review be carried out of school keep clear markings;
- (2) That school authorities be formally advised of the review and invited to submit comments;
- (3) That in consultation with the Chair of the Advisory Panel, Lead Councillor for Transport and Ward Councillors, the Head of Legal Services be authorised to carry out statutory consultation in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 to advertise any resulting proposals for changes to waiting restrictions and, subject to no objections being received, to introduce the new waiting restrictions;
- (4) That any objections received during the statutory consultation be reported to a future meeting of the Panel.

21. SPEED AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report informing the Panel of the results of the 12-month speed awareness poster campaign, including an assessment of speed surveys carried out on roads within the Borough where speeding had been raised as an issue. The campaign had involved sample speed surveys, the

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use of speed awareness posters within areas of concern and further 24-hour speed surveys as appropriate.

The report explained that many positive comments on the poster campaign had been received, and there had been an increase in requests for the campaign to be carried out in other streets without previously identified concerns about speeding. There had been some negative comments, mostly regarding the use of the 30mph speed limit sign, with the main concern being that although 30mph was the speed limit it was not appropriate in some streets. Residents felt that '20's plenty' was a better message regardless of the speed limit, and the 30mph sign poster had therefore been withdrawn. Other negative comments related to a general dislike of the happy/sad face image. It was recommended that the poster campaign continue, with a revision of the messages, and that the monitoring of speeds also continue.

The report explained that the data collected on speeding, attached to the report at Appendix 1, demonstrated that speeding within the Borough was not a significant problem. This reflected the densely populated environment that was mostly subject to the national urban speed limit of 30mph, with significant areas of 20mph speed limit. The speed survey results demonstrated that mean driving speeds were at or below the speed limit, which was consistent with the degree of error found in car speedometers (10%). The results also showed the 85th percentile speed, which was the measured speed at which police considered enforcement to be necessary. For enforcement police would use the speed limit plus 10% plus 2mph, therefore enforcement within a 30mph limit would be at 35mph. The speed surveys also showed a difference in speeds between main route corridors and streets with larger homes set well back from the road, and denser residential streets with houses close to the carriageway.

The report noted that excessive speed and speeding as a factor in road casualties was extremely low within the Borough compared to the national average, and that many of the roads included in the campaign were residential streets without a history of casualties. Much of the concern about speeding was related to antisocial behaviour by a minority of drivers, and speeding within residential streets had been one of the most requested areas for action through community initiatives such as Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGs) and street wardens. Speed data collected during the campaign would be shared with the police and local community through the Thames Valley Safer Roads Partnership and NAGs that had identified speeding as a priority, and used to identify specific areas for enforcement.

Resolved -

That the report be noted.

Recommended -

- (1) That the speed awareness poster campaign and speed surveys be continued;

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- (2) That speed survey data be shared with the relevant Neighbourhood Action Groups and Neighbourhood Police inspectors, in order for them to identify areas and/or streets for speeding enforcement;
- (3) That the Council help to publicise the enforcement action being taken in partnership with community policing against speeding;
- (4) That for roads where the speed survey data indicates a significant speeding problem consideration be given as to whether design alterations could be made to reduce speeding, with any such situations to be reported back to a future meeting of the Panel;
- (5) That a report evaluating the use of speed guns for speeding enforcement be submitted to a future meeting of the Panel.

22. READING STATION - PROPOSED CENTRAL AREA HIGHWAY WORKS

The Director of Environment, Culture and Sport submitted a report giving an update on the Reading Station Capacity and Performance Upgrade, and seeking approval for statutory advertisement of Traffic Regulation Orders in the town centre that were required to facilitate changes to the highway as a result of the upgrade scheme. The report also set out the planning process being pursued in relation to the southern concourse building and its relationship to the highway changes.

Station Upgrade Scheme

The report summarised the performance and capacity improvements to Reading Station, which would be carried out in two phases. Phase 1 (2008-2012) included new platforms to the north of the existing platforms, relocation of the current rail depot (from within the triangle at Cow Lane) to land adjacent to the main line and resolving rail access issues to both the new and existing platforms from the east and west. Phase 1 would also include improvements to the Station including a new footbridge providing platform access, new southern and northern station entrances and the reopening and widening of a pedestrian subway to provide a new segregated footway link across the Station. Phase 2 (2012-2015) included grade separation of the Great Western Mainline and the Southampton/Birmingham lines and the replacement of both bridges at Cow Lane. Officers had been working with Network Rail on the upgrade scheme to ensure that the highway network was protected throughout the works, and that opportunities for improvements to the highway were progressed where possible.

The report explained that the Council was pursuing a planning application for an improved southern station concourse, which was not included in the main scheme, and set out the planning process relating to this additional concourse. The current funding would be used to improve access to the north and for some works to the existing southern concourse, but these were recognised as inadequate to cope with forecast passenger levels or to provide sufficient access to the new station layout. Therefore the Council, with the support of the Department for Transport and

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Network Rail, had decided to submit a bid for the additional funding necessary to provide a new southern concourse.

Central Area Highway Works

The report explained that the Council had made two successful bids to central government for funding for the highways works associated with the station scheme: the Community Infrastructure Fund (£4.7m), to carry out works to improve access routes to the new station from the north and the southeast, and the Regional Funding Allocation (£15m) to carry out works to the highway at Cow Lane and related junctions, as well as works for the southwest access to the station and the new public pedestrian route through the subway.

The new station would have entrances to the north and south, with transport facilities and access arrangements required for both areas. With journeys to the station expected to double from 17m to 35m a year, and three station access points being provided by Network Rail as part of the main scheme, a single local interface would not be able to cope with the variety, number and complexity of movements this use would create. Therefore it was proposed to provide interface facilities at all three Network Rail access points.

Access routes to the station were very heavily used and a doubling of passenger journeys would create more conflicts in the area. To improve safety and create a high quality public realm the proposals for the concourse areas included the removal of vehicles from the area in front of the station. Currently, a restriction was in place whereby access was only permitted for buses, taxis and cycles through Station Hill and Station Approach across the front of the station. The proposed changes to the highway, as a result of the upgrade scheme, would require the closure to buses and taxis of the section of highway across the front of the southern concourse, and a restriction was proposed whereby pedestrians, cyclists and emergency access could still traverse the area. With this closure there would be a need for southwest and southeast station entrances with associated access routes and facilities at each one.

Work with public transport operators on the proposed closure of Station Approach had identified changes to the town centre road network that would be beneficial for access to the new station layout and for general public transport access around the town centre. Attached to the report at Appendix 2 was a list of roads and the associated traffic regulation orders (TROs) required to make the proposed changes to the public highway, detailed proposals for which were shown on plan nos. 22588/007/088 and 22588/007/089 presented at the meeting. It was proposed to carry out statutory consultation on the TROs during October 2009, alongside public exhibitions detailing the proposed changes. A further report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Panel giving full details of the timescale for the highway works to be implemented, and any interim arrangements to be put in place.

Resolved -

That the report and its relationship to the planning process being pursued for the proposed southern concourse building be noted.

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Recommended -

- (1) That scheme and spend approval is given for the proposals as shown on Drawing Nos. 22588/007/088 and 22588/007/089;
- (2) That the Head of Transport, in consultation with the appropriate Lead Councillor, be authorised to make minor changes to the proposals shown on Drawing Nos. 22588/007/088 and 22588/007/089 where required;
- (3) That in consultation with the Chair of the Advisory Panel, Lead Councillor for Planning and Transport and Ward Councillors, the Head of Legal Services be authorised to carry out any statutory consultations and advertise the relevant proposals where appropriate, and subject to no objections being received that the Head of Transport implement the scheme;
- (4) That any objections received during the statutory consultation be reported to a future meeting of the Panel.

(In accordance with Standing Order 38, Councillor Duveen requested that his vote against recommendations (1) to (4) above be recorded.)

(The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 8.09pm).