

1(A) QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

1. Boyd Butler to ask the Chair:

LED Street Lighting

Are you happy having residents being caused pain in their eyes with the 4000k LED lights you have installed ?

RESPONSE by Councillor Page Chair of the Traffic Management Sub-Committee

I thank Mr Butler for his question.

LED street lighting was first introduced in Reading in 2012 and there have been very few issues or problems brought to our attention during that time. It is certainly not the intention of the Council to cause pain to any of its residents.

As Mr Butler may know Reading, Wokingham and Slough Councils are involved in a joint Invest to Save project for the conversion of our street lighting to deliver much reduced energy consumption, lower maintenance costs and savings to our overall budgets.

The Councils employed a suitably qualified and experienced street lighting designer to specify the lanterns for the Invest to Save project, and she has been retained for the duration of the project to provide advice when required.

LED street lighting lanterns do produce a brighter light than the SOX lanterns they are replacing on a national scale. However, all LED lanterns in the Borough will be dimmed via the Mayflower CMS (Central Management System) reducing glare.

2. Tanja Rebel to ask the Chair:

LED Street Lighting

Is this Sub-Committee aware of studies showing that blue-rich white light (BRWL) causes excessive glare which is especially hard to deal with for the ageing eye and thus detrimental to Road Safety ? If not, will it look into this? If yes, will it consider bringing down the planned CCT (Correlated Colour Temperature) of the street lights to 3000K, i.e. warm-white Light ?

RESPONSE by Councillor Page Chair of the Traffic Management Sub-Committee

I thank Ms Rebel for her question.

There are a number of articles and studies suggesting that external LED lighting has adverse health and environmental effects, but there is no definitive study which conclusively proves a link. Similarly there is no conclusive study which proves that people prefer 3000K LED sources to higher temperatures - it is a matter of personal preference.

In their recent report "Human responses to lighting based on LED lighting solutions" Public Health England concluded that, in terms of ocular safety, none of the LED street light lanterns that were tested were bright enough to cause retinal damage in normal use at reasonable distances. It also concluded that, at a distance of 2m, reaching exposure limit values for the Blue Light Hazard would require steady fixation for over 2.5 hours, based on conservative calculations. Street lighting columns are a minimum of 5m above the ground and it is highly unlikely that this exposure level would be reached under normal conditions of operation.

The report also highlighted the need to consult a properly trained and qualified lighting designer or engineer when specifying LED solutions, using the latest guidance to provide the best solution whilst considering all factors. The Council and our partners in the Invest to Save project (Wokingham and Slough Councils) employed a suitably qualified and experienced street lighting designer to specify the lanterns for the Invest to Save project. She has been retained for the duration of the project to provide advice when required.

The Council has not received any complaints or concerns that LED street lighting causes problems of glare for drivers or that it has any adverse effect on road safety.

All LED lanterns in the Borough will be dimmed via the Mayflower CMS (Central Management System) reducing glare.

On this basis the council will continue to specify LED lanterns with a CCT of 4000K.

3. Helen Perkins to ask the Chair:

Albert Road/Highmoor Road

The tragedy on the 14th May at the junction of Albert Road/Highmoor Road was not an isolated incident. It was, sadly only the latest in a long series of accidents at this dangerous junction which have been reported to the Council.

Drivers using the junction need to be protected, and most importantly all pedestrians, including children who walk to Caversham Primary School and Highdown Secondary School, deserve to walk in a safe environment.

Will the council implement effective traffic safety measures for this junction, in consultation with the Police and the local community?

4. Helen Perkins to ask the Chair:

Albert Road/Highmoor Road

In addition to the fatal accident on the 14th of May, there was a serious crash at the same point a week earlier on the 7th. The crash caused damage to a garden wall, and would have resulted in serious injury or death if a pedestrian had been nearby.

This crash is also the subject of a police report.

Will the council consider the police reports from both collisions when designing the measures necessary to make this junction safe ?

5. Helen Perkins to ask the Chair:

Albert Road/Highmoor Road

The HARC campaign has conducted a survey of over 100 local households to ask what options they would accept in solving the problems at this junction. The options canvassed were:

1. A raised table designed to slow down the approaching traffic from all four directions.
2. A 20 mph speed limit on Albert Road running from Richmond Road to The Mount.
3. Speed cushions along Albert Road
4. A chicane/narrowing of Albert Road
5. Re-routing of traffic/Bus-gate as proposed in 2014

To date 134 household responses have been received.

120 are in favour of option 1 (90%)

69 are in favour of option 2 (51%)

72 are in favour of option 3 (54%)

33 are in favour of option 4 (25%)

7 are in favour of option 5 (5%)

HARC are extremely concerned that the proposed change of priority at this junction will result in an increase in accident numbers. Will the council be willing to consider a distinctive, raised table as an alternative solution to this problem ?

RESPONSE by Councillor Page Chair of the Traffic Management Sub-Committee (to questions 3 to 5)

I thank Helen Perkins for her questions which, for convenience, have been answered together.

We will be having a full discussion about this junction later this evening. I'm happy for her to either ask some supplementary questions now or, if she prefers, at the start of the discussion we will have on the later item 7.

There have already been a number of reports considered by the Traffic Management Sub-Committee related to concerns around this junction with an assessment of options. On the agenda tonight there is a report that sets out the current position.

We always consider police accident reports where there has been a casualty and the precise causation factors determined by any police investigation. It is by this very process that earlier recommendations have already been made to the Sub-Committee by professional highway officers.

As today's report re-iterates we are committed to reducing casualties, but this has to be based on the facts to ensure we get the correct outcome, and that safety is improved and the number of casualties reduced.

I have seen the police *Traffic Management Post Collision Report* that contains the following information:

Historic Collision Data - the last five year STATS 19 collision history: Three slight injury collisions all with common causation factors. Car drivers travelling east in Highmoor Road failing to stop/give way then colliding with vehicles travelling north in Albert Road.

Carriageway Condition - The road surface and infrastructure appeared visually to be in reasonably good condition where lines and road markings are faded but in my view visible to users.

The 'stop' signs look fresh in good condition and are appropriately placed and are complemented by high skid surface on both approaches and coloured red.

Travelling in Albert road south to north the centre of the road has a narrow white line hatched out section with designated right turn arrow in the centre of the cross road junction. This area is also filled with red surfacing below the white lines which is often placed at a known collision site to enhance the area and hazard potential with a clear message to drivers.

Signing - All permanent hard signing at this location is compliant to standard. The 'Stop' signs located on Albert Road were bright and in very good condition and unobstructed by

other infrastructure or foliage. The white lines and other road surface markings were present and visible.

The use of 'stop' lines rather than 'give way' are specifically regulated with limited visibility a specific criteria for application without traffic regulation order. This location clearly qualifies for the use of this traffic control measure in these circumstances.

Conclusion - The scene of this collision carries obvious road safety remedial measures that have been placed historically by the Highway Authority in response to the limited visibility for traffic approaching in Highmoor Road. These markings were visible and appropriate in application but clearly not complied with by some drivers.

The police are yet to finalise their investigation where they will then consider any further action including possible prosecution(s), where a driver is found to be at fault.

I hope that members of the public, as well members of the Sub-Committee, will accept that not all accidents can be prevented by the Council. Some accidents are caused by irresponsible, reckless or even criminal behaviour.

Whilst I understand the view that 'something must be done' the Council has a duty to make decisions based as far as possible on the facts - and not emotion.

6. James Berrie to ask the Chair:

Extra Care Facility on Albert Road

A2Dominion's proposed Extra Care facility on Albert Road will have a main exit onto Albert Road. The facility is currently due to provide 43 apartments, 15 of which will have two rooms and all rooms will be doubles. It therefore has the capacity to house 58 or more residents. In addition to the residents exiting at this point will be carers, visitors, maintenance workers, daily regular deliveries for residents and the restaurant and refuse collections.

Given that just a few metres closer to the blind bend it is deemed by the traffic report to be dangerous to have an entrance/exit, what is the Council's view on the safety of this entrance and exit, in particular for the elderly residents? The Albert Road entrance and exit were previously separate and used predominantly by the occasional Readibus, staff and once a week refuse collections. It is now proposed that it become the main entrance and exit. Just a few hundred yards up the road, the Highmoor Road junction with Albert Road has been the scene of many serious accidents, and very sadly one recent fatality. Do the Transport Sub Committee not see an equally serious accident waiting to happen with the volume of traffic, including elderly drivers, entering and leaving the Albert Road site, so close to a blind corner and surrounded by bus stops, onto a road where people are known to travel too fast? Concerned local residents have been asking the developer to re-site access via Dovedale Close where there is good visibility in both directions, little traffic and there are unlikely to be fast moving cars. Will the Transport Management Sub Committee recommend this alteration to the planning officer, Jonathan Markwell, for his planning recommendation ?

7. James Berrie to ask the Chair:

Extra Care Facility on Albert Road

Referring to the same proposed A2 Dominion development on Albert Road, it is noted in the transport document for Construction Traffic, that during the two year build, the designated route for all deliveries and waste to the site, including lorries from the A4074, will be via the Highmoor Road/Albert Road junction. As this is also the main route for children walking to Caversham Primary and Highdown Secondary Schools, in the light of the recent tragedy and the catalogue of accidents caused by safety issues at this junction, does the Transport Sub Committee deem it an appropriate junction via which to route construction traffic for the two year build ?

RESPONSE by Councillor Page Chair of the Traffic Management Sub-Committee (to questions 6 and 7)

I would encourage Mr Berrie to submit any representations he wishes to make about the planning application in relation to Extra Care facility on Albert Road directly to the Planning Department through the statutory planning consultation process. The way to object to the Council about a planning application is to write to the Planning Department, either by post or by e-mail - to assist with this we have a comments form on the Council's website. You should quote the planning application number.

Any development will have to consider its impact on the highway and the road network and this forms part of the planning process. Anyone is free to comment on and make representation on a planning application - this is part of the process - comments and objects are heard at Planning Application Committee which is a monthly meeting (the next meeting is 27th June). Concerns about highway safety can be raised, but it should be borne in mind that such issues are subject to careful technical examination by qualified engineers. Concerns over how any development would affect highway safety or the convenience of road users will be assessed independently to seek the view of highway engineers with a response presented to Planning Applications Committee for consideration.

Representation can be made directly to Planning Applications Committee but you must register your desire to speak with the planning department through those communication means already suggested.