

Individual Executive Member Decision

Title of Report:	Proposed Pedestrian crossing on Reading Road, Burghfield
Report to be considered by:	Individual Executive Member Decision
Date on which Decision is to be taken:	31 st March 2014
Forward Plan Ref:	ID2795

Purpose of Report: To respond to a petition that has been submitted to the Council opposing the introduction of a pedestrian crossing on Reading Road, Burghfield and consider the responses received during a public consultation and to seek approval of officer recommendations.

Recommended Action: That the Executive Member for Highways, Transport (Operations), Emergency Planning, Newbury Vision resolves to approve the recommendations as set out in Section 4 of this report.

Reason for decision to be taken: To provide a response to the petitioners.

Other options considered: N/A

Key background documentation:

- Report to the Kennet and Pang Valley Area Forum on 23rd April 2008,
- The petition,
- The public consultation letters, plans and questionnaires,
- Responses to the public consultation

Portfolio Member Details	
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Implications

- Policy:** None arising from this report.
- Financial:** None arising from this report as introduction of a pedestrian crossing is not recommended.
- Personnel:** None arising from this report.
- Legal/Procurement:** None arising from this report.
- Property:** None arising from this report.
- Risk Management:** None arising from this report.

Is this item relevant to equality?	Please tick relevant boxes	Yes	No
Does the policy affect service users, employees or the wider community and:			
• Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Will the policy have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Does the policy relate to an area with known inequalities?		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Outcome (Where one or more 'Yes' boxes are ticked, the item is relevant to equality)			
Relevant to equality - Complete an EIA available at www.westberks.gov.uk/eia			<input type="checkbox"/>
Not relevant to equality			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Consultation Responses

Members:

- Leader of Council:** Councillor Gordon Lundie - To date no response has been received, however any comments will be verbally reported at the Individual Decision meeting.
- Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman:** Councillor Brian Bedwell has no comment.
- Ward Members:** Councillor Royce Longton - The precise location proposed for the crossing is clearly unsuitable for the reasons outlined by Mr Marshall. However, there is clearly a demand for a crossing in this general area, particularly from elderly residents of Highfield Court seeking to reach the shops, as indicated by the 238 signature petition I received back in 2008.
- This was confirmed by your consultation exercise which attracted a high (ca 50%) response rate, with an

overwhelming 77.8% of the 324 respondents saying that a crossing should be introduced.

I would therefore urge that a crossing should be provided, possibly close to the Holmdene junction which is almost opposite a path leading from Highfield Court along the edge of the Auclum Green open space.

Councillor Carol Jackson-Doerge - To date no response has been received, however any comments will be verbally reported at the Individual Decision meeting.

Councillor Keith Woodhams notes the Report.

Opposition

Spokesperson:

Local Stakeholders: N/A

Officers Consulted: Mark Edwards, Mark Cole

Trade Union: N/A

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only		<input type="checkbox"/>

Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 The initial request for a Pedestrian Crossing on the Reading Road, Burghfield came via a 238 signature petition presented to full Council by Councillor Royce Longton on 11th December 2007.
- 1.2 A report was presented to the Kennet and Pang Valley Area Forum on 23rd April 2008, with the recommendation that *“given the constraints of the location and that the criteria for a formal crossing is unlikely to be met, it is recommended that a crossing facility is not introduced at this time”*
- 1.3 Subsequent availability of S106 funding for the Burghfield area prompted an enquiry to Burghfield Parish Council for input on what highways improvement measures they would like to see investigated. During correspondence the issue of the introduction of a formal crossing on the Reading Road was raised.
- 1.4 Surveys were undertaken into pedestrian movements and traffic volumes (PV2) on 22nd June 2011, which established that the criteria for a formal crossing was not met. However when the criteria is not met special factors are considered which include the need for a crossing, are there any specific destinations which could be accessed via the crossing and is the traffic creating a barrier which discourages pedestrians from crossing the road.
- 1.5 After careful consideration of the special factors and the Parish Councils wish for a crossing to be introduced on the Reading Road, a crossing facility was designed for consultation with the adjacent properties. On 28th November 2013 an 869 signature petition against the proposed crossing was received from Mr M.H.Marshall, the landlord of the three shops in close proximity to the proposed crossing location. The petition made reference to the following issues:
- Vehicles delivering to the shops will be restricted by the proposed crossing,
 - Trade will be seriously affected due to the zig zag lines prohibiting any vehicles parking or unloading on the roadside as they have for many years,
 - Trade will be seriously affected as customers will not wish to queue to access a more restricted site. This would lead to the viability of individual shops being brought into question especially the Bakery outlet which also provides every day needs of hot and cold foods,
 - That the crossing, which will be little used, will not have any effect on traffic speeds,
 - To enforce the 30mph speed limit by speed camera which would have the desired effect of reducing vehicle speeds of through traffic 24/7. The cost of which would be approx 30% of that of a Puffin crossing and associated works.
- 1.6 A public consultation exercise was undertaken to fully assess the residents need for a crossing facility, where approximately 640 letters, plans and questionnaires were circulated to properties within a catchment area to the north and south of Reading Road.

2. Response to public consultation

2.1 At the close of the public consultation period on 24th January 2014, a total of 329 responses were received. The responses to the questionnaire are detailed below.

1. Do you think a pedestrian crossing facility should be introduced on the Reading Road.
Yes= 256 (77.8%), No= 67 (20.4%), No indication=6 (1.8%)
2. Do you think a crossing facility should be introduced at the location shown on the enclosed plan?
Yes= 87 (26.4%), No= 235 (71.4%), No indication=7 (2.1%)
3. If a crossing facility was installed at the proposed location, would you be likely to use it?
Yes= 131 (39.8%), No= 181 (55%), No indication=17 (5.2%)
4. Do you think a crossing facility should be introduced on the Reading Road at a different location to that shown on the plan?
Yes= 180 (54.7%), No= 129 (39.2%), No indication=20 (6.1%)

2.2 Many of the respondents made additional comments and the main responses include:

- 40% felt that proposed location was busy and unsafe,
- 14% felt that the proposed crossing was bad for the local business,
- 13% felt that the proposed crossing should align with the footpaths,
- 10% felt that the crossing will slow traffic down,
- 7% felt that there was no need for a crossing as people need to take care when crossing the road.

3. Conclusion

3.1 Of the responses received 78% considered that a crossing facility should be introduced on the Reading Road, but only 26% supported the proposed location. 55% indicated that they are unlikely to use a crossing facility at the proposed location and 55% considered a crossing facility should be introduced at a different location.

3.2 Whilst 40% of respondents considered the location to be busy and unsafe, there has only been one slight recorded injury accident in the vicinity of the shops on Reading Road within the latest three year period to the end of December 2013. This occurred in February 2012 and did not involve a pedestrian as a vehicle turned into the Forge Garage across the path of a motorcycle. It is appreciated that there are times when the car park to the shops can be busy with vehicle movements.

3.3 When a proposed crossing facility is not recommended other measures are often investigated to aid pedestrian movements across the road. Due to the constraints of the public highway and location of private access the introduction of measures such as pedestrian refuges and build outs are not feasible.

- 3.4 An alternative crossing location was investigated to the north-east and due to the width of the existing footway and location of private driveways, the closest location which could accommodate a crossing facility would be to the east of the Mans Hill junction. This would not be on the pedestrian desire line and therefore unlikely to be used. Therefore this location is not recommended for a formal crossing facility.
- 3.5 An alternative crossing location was investigated to the southwest and the closest location suitable for a crossing facility would be to the west of its junction with Holmdene and the footpaths leading to Thrush Close to the north and Tarragon Way to the south. In the consultation response to this report Councillor Longton requested a formal crossing facility at this location to assist residents of Highfield Court.
- 3.6 This location is not on the main pedestrian desire line and therefore unlikely to be used. Although the number of possible users from Highfield Court is too few to justify the introduction of a crossing facility, there is a pedestrian refuge at the roundabout, approximately 100 metres to the south west, which pedestrians can use to cross Reading Road. Given the above a formal crossing facility to the west of the Holmdene junction is not recommended.
- 3.7 Given the consensus of the residents it is recommended that a crossing facility is not introduced on the Reading Road at the proposed location.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 Given the responses to the public consultation and the number of signatures on the petition it is recommended that a formal crossing facility is not introduced on the Reading Road at the proposed location.
- 4.2 It is recommended that a crossing facility is not introduced at any other location on the Reading Road due to the possible locations being too far from the pedestrian desire lines and because they are unlikely to be used.
- 4.3 That the petition organiser be informed of the decision.

Appendices

None