

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 July 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 6 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,
- Results of pedestrian and vehicle surveys.

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Pamela Bale - Tel (0118) 9842980
E-mail Address:	pbale@westberks.gov.uk
Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Andrew Garratt
Job Title:	Principal Traffic & Road Safety Engineer
Tel. No.:	01635 519491
E-mail Address:	agarratt@westberks.gov.uk

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 agrees with the recommendations.
Ward Members:	Councillor Royce Longton - The original petition calling for a pedestrian crossing on Reading Road was initiated by elderly residents of Highfield Court who were anxious to be able to reach the shops by the Forge Garage in safety. I recently spoke to most of the Highfield Court residents. About half of them said they were too old to go out much on their own but the other half repeated their wish for a pedestrian crossing, all except one of them saying they would use a crossing as far away as Holmdene if provided. The results of your more widespread consultation indicated a strong majority view in favour of a crossing, but not directly

by the shops. Another factor has now emerged in that Burghfield Parish Council is having a young children's (under 5) play area constructed on Auclum Green, close to the Pharmacy. This will create more pedestrian traffic, including toddlers, and they too would be assisted by a pedestrian crossing located close to Holmdene. I appreciate that the Hawksworth Road roundabout is not far from the play area site, but I do not consider that to constitute a safe crossing point, particularly for young children. I therefore believe that a pedestrian crossing should be provided in this general area, possibly close to Holmdene. This view was endorsed unanimously at last night's meeting of Burghfield Parish Council.

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

Opposition Spokesperson:

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

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 An 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.

2. Crossing on Reading Road in vicinity of The Forge Garage

- 2.1 A crossing location was identified in the vicinity of The Forge Garage and 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.
- 2.2 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.

2.3 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.

3. Response to public consultation

3.1 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%)

3.2 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.

3.3 During consultation of the Individual Decision report on a crossing by The Forge Garage Councillor Royce Longton requested that a crossing should be provided close to the Holmdene junction. Councillor Pamela Bale decided to defer the Individual Decision so that Councillor Longtons request could be fully investigated.

4. Crossing on Reading Road in vicinity of Holmdene

4.1 Surveys were undertaken in June 2014 to determine if the criteria for a crossing would be met. During the hours of the survey, 7am to 7pm, there were a total of 36 pedestrian movements of which 6 were elderly pedestrians and were 3 child pedestrians (under the age of 16). The results showed that the PV² value was well below the threshold for when the introduction of a formal crossing is considered.

4.2 During the hours of the survey a total of 121 pedestrian movements were recorded using the pedestrian crossing point at the splitter island on the roundabout. The movements included 8 elderly pedestrians and 53 child pedestrians.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 Of the responses received to the consultation of a crossing facility by The Forge Garage 78% considered that a 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.
- 5.2 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 April 2014. 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.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 An alternative crossing location to The Forge Garage 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.
- 5.5 The results of the recent survey show that the crossing location to the west of its junction with Holmdene is not on the pedestrian desire line and is used very little by the residents of Highfield Court. There is a pedestrian refuge at the roundabout, approximately 100 metres to the south west, which is used by pedestrians to safely cross Reading Road.
- 5.6 However during member consultation of the draft report Councillor Longton referred to a future change in circumstances, which may result in more pedestrian movements across Reading Road. It is uncertain if this possible increase in pedestrian movements will be sufficient to meet the crossing criteria.
- 5.7 Given the consensus of the residents and the results of the recent survey it is recommended that a crossing facility is not introduced on the Reading Road at The Forge Garage.
- 5.8 A crossing facility is not recommended at present to the south west of its junction with Holmdene. However once the young children's play area has been introduced on Auclum Green then a further survey could be carried out to determine if the change in circumstances justify a formal crossing facility.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 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 Forge Garage.

- 6.2 Given the results of the pedestrian survey and that there is a safe crossing point approximately 100 metres away, it is recommended that a formal crossing facility is not introduced at present on Reading Road south west of its junction with Holmdene.
- 6.3 That a further pedestrian and vehicle survey be undertaken between Holmdene and the roundabout a few months after the completion of the young children's play area on Auclum Green
- 6.4 That the petition organiser be informed of the decision.

Appendices

None