

Individual Executive Member Decision

A329 Oxford Road Pedestrian Crossing Improvement

Committee considering report: Individual Executive Member Decision

Date ID to be signed: 20 December 2016

Portfolio Member: Councillor Jeanette Clifford

Forward Plan Ref: ID3206

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To report on consultation responses on proposed pedestrian crossing improvements on the A329 Oxford Road, Purley-on-Thames and recommend whether to proceed with the proposal.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that:

- (1) a traffic signal controlled “Puffin” crossing is installed as proposed in the consultation;
- (2) the respondents to the consultation are informed accordingly.

3. Implications

- 3.1 **Financial:** If implemented, the scheme will be funded from Section 106 funds acquired from the Shanly Homes Development for highway improvement works.
- 3.2 **Policy:** None
- 3.3 **Personnel:** None
- 3.4 **Legal:** None
- 3.5 **Risk Management:** If implemented, the project will be managed in accordance with the Highways and Transport Service’s approach to risk management.
- 3.6 **Property:** None
- 3.7 **Other:** None

4. Consultation Responses

Members:

Leader of Council: Councillor Roger Croft

Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman: Councillor Emma Webster

Ward Members: Councillor Rick Jones has made no objection at the time of writing.
Councillor Tim Metcalfe has made no objection at the time of writing.
Councillor Laszlo Zverko (neighbouring ward) has made no objection at the time of writing.

Opposition Spokesperson: Councillor Billy Drummond has “no problem with the proposed crossing, especially if it makes it safer for pedestrians”.

Local Stakeholders: Consulted in October 2016 via leaflet drop. See Appendix C for a summary of the responses.

Officers Consulted: Mark Edwards, Neil Stacey, Glyn Davis

Trade Union: Not applicable

5. Other options considered

5.1 The possibility of constructing a continuous footway on the south side of the A329 connecting Theobald Drive to Roebuck Rise was examined. This is not considered to be feasible due to its impact on the adjacent tree protection area and land ownership issues.

5.2 The option of an uncontrolled crossing point consisting of a central traffic island and dropped kerbs was investigated. This would involve the construction of a 2m wide (minimum width) pedestrian refuge with 3m running lanes either side of the island. As Oxford Road is currently 6m at this point, this would require widening of the carriageway by a minimum of 2m, plus an additional 2m to construct a footpath on the south side of the road. This widening and footway construction would have a significant impact on the tree preservation order area, would involve the construction of an expensive retaining structure and involve the purchase of land outside the highway boundary. It is also considered that due to the speed and volume of traffic using Oxford Road, a controlled crossing, which does not require vulnerable pedestrians to wait in the centre of the road, is the safer option.

Background Papers:

Traffic Survey Data

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position

Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months

Item is Urgent Key Decision

Report is to note only

Wards affected:

Purley-on-Thames, Westwood

Strategic Aims and Priorities Supported:

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aims:

- P&S – Protect and support those who need it**
- HQL – Maintain a high quality of life within our communities**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priority:

- SLE2 – Deliver or enable key infrastructure improvements in relation to roads, rail, flood prevention, regeneration and the digital economy**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy aims and priority by providing a safer route for pedestrians.

Officer details:

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6. Executive Summary

- 6.1 Oxford Road is part of the A329 route between Purley-on-Thames and Reading. The site is situated adjacent to the junction with Theobald Drive. As part of the planning approval for a new development to the east of Roebuck Rise, funding has been secured to improve local footways and pedestrian crossing facilities.
- 6.2 A vehicle and pedestrian survey was undertaken on Thursday 30th June 2016 between 07:00 and 19:00. 85th percentile speeds were 39mph eastbound and 37mph westbound, significantly in excess of the 30mph speed limit. During the survey, a two-way total of 10,686 vehicles were recorded and a total of 63 pedestrians crossed the road in the vicinity of the Theobald Drive junction. The busiest hourly period was between 15:00 and 16:00, corresponding with the end of the school day. Around half of pedestrians crossing were children under the age of 11 years.
- 6.3 Although the number of pedestrians crossing the road is low, and would not normally be sufficient to justify the provision of a controlled crossing, the high vehicle speeds and traffic volumes need to be taken into account. It is considered that the difficulty in crossing Oxford Road and perceived safety issues (ie high traffic speeds) may be discouraging local residents from using the route. A controlled crossing may therefore encourage more people to walk to school or the nearby Tilehurst Station. It should also be noted that the new development will generate additional local journeys, some of which could be made on foot.
- 6.4 Local stakeholders were consulted in October 2016 by means of a leaflet drop. The leaflet proposed that a controlled crossing should be installed and is included in Appendix C.
- 6.5 The consultation resulted in a low response rate, with only three responses received, two from members of the public and one on behalf of the Theobald Drive Residents' Association. All the responses were strongly in favour of a controlled crossing, although some suggestions for further improvements were also made. The responses are summarised in Appendix C, together with Officer's comments on the further suggestions.

7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix A – Supporting Information
- 7.2 Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment
- 7.3 Appendix C - Consultation leaflet and Summary of responses