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# Northcroft Lane, Newbury – Pedestrian Improvements – Supporting Information

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## 1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 Northcroft Lane is part of a route between Newbury town centre and Northcroft Leisure Centre and surrounding residential areas.
- 1.2 As a result of concerns expressed by local residents, officers investigated ways in which pedestrian facilities could be improved on Northcroft Lane. Currently, many pedestrians walk in the carriageway between numbers 42 and 54 rather than the available footway on the north side of the road, and can come into conflict with vehicles. This appears to be because the existing footway is particularly narrow (1.2 metres), making it difficult for pushchair and wheelchair users to use safely, or for two people to comfortably walk side-by-side.
- 1.3 Officers have also observed that many pedestrians walk along the footway on the south side of the road, but when this footway ends they carry on walking in the carriageway rather than cross over to use the footway on the north side.

## 2. Supporting Information

- 2.1 No injury accidents have occurred on this section of Northcroft Lane in the three year period to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017. Just one injury accident has been recorded in the last ten years; this occurred in July 2012 when a pedestrian on the footway was struck by a passing car. This may be related to the narrow width of the footway in this location, but despite this accident, this is a very good safety record and would not normally be considered to justify the implementation of a project on grounds of safety.
- 2.2 The carriageway of Northcroft Lane is approximately 4.5 metres wide, which is not sufficient for two-way traffic flow except for the very smallest of vehicles. There is no formal arrangement for vehicles in either direction to give way, but from observation traffic seems to flow well with drivers being prepared to wait for oncoming vehicles. Traffic speeds are low due to the nature of the road and generally within the 20mph speed limit.

## 3. Proposals

- 3.1 There is not enough space to build a new footway on the south side of the road, but it is possible to widen the existing footway west of the West Street junction, as shown on drawing number 81141-Northcroft-001 (see Appendix D). This would cost approximately £15,000 and result in a section of the carriageway being reduced down to a single lane with priority give way markings, and the removal of 2 parking spaces. These measures would require localised amendments to the highway drainage infrastructure.

- 3.2 In addition, it is possible to install new dropped kerbs at the side roads to make it easier for pedestrians to use the footway rather than the carriageway at a cost of around £5,000.
- 3.3 It was anticipated, however, that the loss of two parking spaces to accommodate the widened footway would not be popular with residents who have no alternative but to park on-street.
- 3.4 It was therefore agreed with the Portfolio holder for Highways that residents and road users should be consulted to enable officers to gauge whether the loss of the parking spaces and change to the road layout was an acceptable “trade-off” for the improvement for pedestrians.

#### 4. Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1 In 2016, Newbury Town Council was asked for its comments on the potential improvements, and was supportive albeit with some comments about the loss of parking spaces and the priority working.
- 4.2 The project was then subject to a delay due to other priorities, but in March 2017 residents were consulted on the potential improvements by way of a letter drop (89 properties received a letter). The proposals were also publicised on the consultation section of the Council’s website.
- 4.3 Twelve responses to the consultation were received, which can be considered a low response rate. Five responses were in favour of the proposal and five against, with two responses making some general comments but not specifically stating either support or objection. The responses are summarised in Appendix C, together with Officer’s comments.
- 4.4 As expected, the main area of concern was the reduction in parking spaces that would result from the widening of the footway. Although only two spaces would be lost, there is clearly significant pressure on the parking capacity for residents in the area. The “priority working” arrangement was perceived by some respondents as being a barrier to traffic flow.
- 4.5 In order to remove the two parking spaces, a Traffic Regulation Order would need to be made. This would require a separate, statutory consultation process. It is clear from this consultation process that objections to the Order would be received and this would delay implementation of the project.

#### 5. Conclusion

- 5.1 There would be a benefit to pedestrians in widening the footway, especially those with pushchairs and wheelchair users.
- 5.2 It is however, debatable as to whether the pedestrians who currently choose to walk in the carriageway would cross the road to use the footway. It is not considered that this is a particularly serious problem, given the nature of the road and low traffic speeds.
- 5.3 Overall, officers consider that the benefit of widening the footway is marginal relative to the costs of the project and the removal of the two parking spaces. Furthermore, the consultation responses are small in number and evenly split

between support and objection, so cannot be considered as a mandate to proceed with the project.

- 5.4 It is therefore recommended that the footway widening should not be implemented. However, the proposed dropped kerbs at the side road junctions would give pedestrians a more level walking route with no obvious adverse effects to other road users and it is recommended that these are implemented.

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**Officer details:**

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## Appendix B

### Equality Impact Assessment - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity.

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

<b>Name of policy, strategy or function:</b>	Northcroft Lane, Newbury – Pedestrian Improvements
<b>Version and release date of item (if applicable):</b>	N/A
<b>Owner of item being assessed:</b>	Neil Stacey
<b>Name of assessor:</b>	Neil Stacey
<b>Date of assessment:</b>	20/04/2017

Is this a:		Is this:	
Policy	No	New or proposed	No
Strategy	No	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes
Function	Yes	Is changing	No
Service	No		

<b>1. What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the policy, strategy function or service and who is likely to benefit from it?</b>	
<b>Aims:</b>	To improve pedestrians facilities on Northcroft Lane, Newbury
<b>Objectives:</b>	To widen an existing footway
<b>Outcomes:</b>	To reduce the need for pedestrians to walk in the carriageway
<b>Benefits:</b>	Reduced conflict between pedestrians and vehicles.

<p><b>2. Note which groups may be affected by the policy, strategy, function or service. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this.</b></p> <p>(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)</p>
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Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Disabled people (people with impaired mobility)	The widened footway would be of particular benefit to young, elderly and disabled pedestrians.  If the scheme does not proceed, no such facilities will be provided, but conditions for disabled pedestrians will be no worse than in the current circumstances.	The current footway is too narrow to be used comfortably by people with wheelchairs or pushchairs, or those escorting young children.
All other groups	No effect.	N/A
<b>Further Comments relating to the item:</b>		
None		

<b>3. Result</b>	
<b>Are there any aspects of the policy, strategy, function or service, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Please provide an explanation for your answer:</b> The proposed crossing will reduce, rather than contribute to inequality, as explained above.	
<b>Will the policy, strategy, function or service have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Please provide an explanation for your answer:</b> Conditions for disabled pedestrians will be no worse than in the current circumstances. Conditions for motor traffic will remain unchanged.	

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered 'yes' to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment.

If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template.

<b>4. Identify next steps as appropriate:</b>	
<b>Stage Two required</b>	No
<b>Owner of Stage Two assessment:</b>	N/A
<b>Timescale for Stage Two assessment:</b>	N/A

<b>Stage Two not required:</b>	Yes
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**Name:** Neil Stacey

**Date:** 20/04/2017

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**Please now forward this completed form to Rachel Craggs, the Principal Policy Officer (Equality and Diversity) for publication on the WBC website.**

## Appendix C

### Summary of replies to consultation

	Reply from	Comments made	Officer comment
1.	Local resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Not supportive</li> <li>b) Too few spaces currently, reduction required to suit the proposal will make the situation worse.</li> <li>c) Impact on traffic at peaks times from Strawberry Hill will reduce the flow to Northcroft leisure centre, increased by additional property being built.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Noted</li> <li>b) Noted</li> <li>c) Noted</li> </ul>
2.	Local resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Not supportive</li> <li>b) Reduced parking bays unacceptable, existing parking is inadequate for the task as if, reduction will make the situation worse.</li> <li>c) Concern of historic culvert on the south side of the carriageway adjacent to housing that may not be able to withstand increased vehicle loading.</li> <li>d) May encourage cyclists to use proposed widened footway to avoid the priority give way system.</li> <li>e) Impact on vehicle traffic at peak times will prevent movement to and from Northcroft leisure centre.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Noted</li> <li>b) Noted</li> <li>c) This would be investigated further if the project proceeds to detailed design and construction</li> <li>d) The widened footway is not intended for cyclists, who should be using the carriageway along with vehicles, but the point made is valid.</li> <li>e) Noted</li> </ul>
3.	Local resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Not supportive</li> <li>b) Reduced parking bays unacceptable, existing parking is inadequate for the task as if, reduction will make the situation worse.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Noted</li> <li>b) Noted</li> </ul>
4.	Local resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Supportive</li> <li>b) Increase of traffic in this area caused by narrowing of road and proposed priority give way.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Noted</li> <li>b) Noted</li> </ul>

*Footer to be completed by Strategic Support*

West Berkshire Council

name of decision body

date of meeting

Northcroft Lane, Newbury – Pedestrian Improvements – Supporting Information

	Reply from	Comments made	Officer comment
5.	Local resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Support not stated</li> <li>b) Single lane may make access for large vehicles more difficult, particularly for certain events.</li> <li>c) Access for residents at no. 43 will be stepping out of their property directly into the carriageway where there will be a greater hazard of vehicles from both directions.</li> <li>d) Rubbish collection will increase traffic on Northcroft lane around the priority area. Also reduced area for properties behind no.43 to store bins for collection.</li> <li>e) Increase of traffic in this area caused by narrowing of road and proposed priority give way.</li> <li>f) Reduced parking bays unacceptable, existing parking is inadequate for the task as if, reduction will make the situation worse.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Support not stated</li> <li>b) Route has been checked that large vehicles will still be able to fit down Northcroft lane – this is why the parking spaces would have to be removed.</li> <li>c) Noted</li> <li>d) In narrow roads, refuse collection vehicles can have a short term effect on traffic flow but this is not considered to be a significant problem.</li> <li>e) Noted</li> <li>f) Noted</li> </ul>
6.	Local resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Supportive</li> <li>b) Turning circle of Northcroft lane and West Street currently tight.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Noted</li> <li>b) Proposed dropped kerb access will improve the turning radius.</li> </ul>
7.	Local resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Not supported</li> <li>b) Reduced parking bays unacceptable, existing parking is inadequate for the task as if, reduction will make the situation worse.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Noted</li> <li>b) Noted</li> </ul>
8.	Local resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Support not stated</li> <li>b) Reduced parking bays unacceptable, existing parking is inadequate for the task as if, reduction will make the situation worse.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c) Support not stated</li> <li>a) Noted</li> </ul>
9.	Local resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Supportive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Noted</li> </ul>



	Reply from	Comments made	Officer comment
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) Concern of wider pavements being used for people to park on.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) The footway's width will not likely encourage people to park as there will be double yellow lines.</li> </ul>
10.	Local resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Not supportive</li> <li>b) Reduced parking bays unacceptable, existing parking is inadequate for the task as if, reduction will make the situation worse.</li> <li>c) Increase of traffic in this area caused by narrowing of road and proposed priority give way.</li> <li>d) Resident's no. 43 and no.41 would find it difficult to access their existing off road parking due to reduced manoeuvring area in carriageway.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Noted</li> <li>b) Noted</li> <li>c) Noted</li> <li>d) Noted</li> </ul>
11.	Local resident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Supportive</li> <li>b) Concern of bollard being removed from drop kerb at junction, potential damage to over-hanging building.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Noted</li> <li>b) Bollard will be relocated to prevent larger vehicles cutting the course.</li> </ul>
12.	Local residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Supportive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Noted</li> </ul>
13.	Newbury Town Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Generally supportive</li> <li>b) Members were concerned at the narrowness of the existing footpaths as elderly people and parents with pushchairs are forced to walk in the road. Pedestrian safety should take priority.</li> <li>c) Members welcomed the proposed improvements to the footpath.</li> <li>d) The entrance to the multi-storey car park should be reinstated to Pembroke Road as soon as possible.</li> <li>e) The two on-street parking places that are to be lost could be relocated further along the road near the car park, where the road is wider.</li> <li>f) Some concerns were raised at the "One Way" aspect of</li> </ul>	<p>All comments noted, however, it would not be easy to relocate the "lost" parking elsewhere, especially on grass verges or where parked cars would obscure visibility from side roads or private accesses.</p>

Northcroft Lane, Newbury – Pedestrian Improvements – Supporting Information

	Reply from	Comments made	Officer comment
		the proposals as traffic to and from Northcroft Park can be heavy at times.	