

## Individual Decision

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<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Thatcham Railway Station Approaches Environmental Enhancement Scheme</b>		
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	<b>Portfolio Member for Highways and Transportation Cllr. Sally Hannon</b>	<b>on:</b>	<b>16 December 2004</b>
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	<b>ID0890</b>		

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### **Purpose of Report:**

- **To inform the Portfolio Member for Highways and Transportation of the results of the Informal Consultation Process concluded on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2004.**
- **To seek authority to implementation of the scheme including the advertisement of all necessary Traffic Regulation Orders.**

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### **Recommended Action:**

**That the Portfolio Member resolves that:**

- (1) the scheme of Environmental Enhancements to the Railway Station Approaches be approved; and**
- (2) the advertisement of all Traffic Regulation Orders necessary to enable implementation of the scheme also be approved.**

### **Reason for decision to be taken:**

To enable the Thatcham Railway Station Approaches Environmental Enhancement Scheme to proceed.

### **List of other options considered:**

None applicable.

### **Key background documentation:**

See paragraph 3.4 for schedule.

<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Sally Hannon
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### **Contact Officer Details**

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## Supporting Information

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### 1. Background

- 1.1 Thatcham Railway Station which lies to the south of Pipers Lane close to its junction with Station Road is leased by Network Rail to First Great Western.
- 1.2 The east bound platform is accessed from Pipers Lane, whilst access to the west bound platform is for pedestrians gained via an over-rail bridge and for all other traffic via an unmanned crossing between Station Rd. and Crookham Hill.
- 1.3 The Station is served by two pay and display car parks. One, accessed off Pipers Lane to the north of the rail line, is owned by the Council and can accommodate 30 vehicles whilst the other, which is leased to First Great Western by Network Rail and can accommodate 68 vehicles, is located to the south of the rail line and is accessed off Crookham Hill.
- 1.4 Daily parking charges in both car parks are identical:
- |     |                                    |       |
|-----|------------------------------------|-------|
| (1) | Up to 24hours Monday to Friday     | £2.00 |
| (2) | Off Peak 10.00a.m. to Midnight     | £0.90 |
| (3) | Up to 24 hours Saturdays & Sundays | £0.90 |
- 1.5 First Great Western issue season tickets:
- |     |             |         |
|-----|-------------|---------|
| (1) | Per week    | £10.00  |
| (2) | Per month   | £30.00  |
| (3) | Per quarter | £100.00 |
| (4) | Per year    | £360.00 |
- 1.6 Whilst no historic records exist covering usage of the railway car park, usage rates varying between 43% & 71% have been recorded at the Council car park since charging was introduced in April 2004. Counts have confirmed usage of the Council car park as being in the order of 70% on weekdays however occupancy of the Railway car park has rarely exceeded 25% of it's total capacity.
- 1.7 Parked vehicle counts have been undertaken at various times of the day and on different days of the week covering both car parks and on street parking over the past month or so.
- 1.8 On street parking which in the main is confined to Pipers Lane varied considerably throughout the periods monitored from a high of 80 vehicles at 8.00a.m.to 60 at 11.00a.m.
- 1.9 It has been noted that vehicles are virtually abandoned at random on every conceivable vacant space along Pipers Lane with little concern for road safety or the access of others.
- 1.10 The reduction in on-street parking and to some extent pay and display parking which occurs at about 11.00am every day is directly attributable to postal workers clocking off and removing their vehicles at the end of their shift.
- 1.11 There are a considerable number of postal workers based at the local sorting office which has no parking facility. Until the introduction of charges a substantial percentage of them parked in the Council car park. Since then however they have taken to parking anywhere they can find a free space,which includes the footway in front of the station, the car park entrance, highway verges etc.

- 1.12 Although a new fully accessible covered bus stop was included in the initial scheme design it has been deleted from the scheme now proposed as Reading Buses who were consulted as a stakeholder, indicated that neither provision of a new service nor re-routing of an existing service could be commercially justified. Likewise insufficient funding is currently available to enable a contracted service to be provided. The layout proposed has however been designed to accommodate buses should financial circumstances improve in the future.
- 1.13 The scheme provides for the creation of 21 off street pay and display parking spaces on the south side of Pipers Lane to the east of the station entrance where casual free parking presently takes place
- 1.14 It is intended that Traffic Regulation Orders be implemented prohibiting vehicles from parking in the immediate vicinity of the station and along Pipers Lane other than in designated parking bays.

## **2. Drawings of the Proposed Scheme**

- 2.1 Details of the Proposed Scheme have been posted on the Council's web site accessed via the link below:

- [www.westberks.gov.uk](http://www.westberks.gov.uk) (and follow the links)
- Transport, Highways and Engineering, D Crouch, Thatcham Railway Station

## **3. Consultation**

- 3.1 The scheme as detailed on the attached drawings has evolved taking into account the views and opinions of a variety of stakeholders consulted during a lengthy development process.

- 3.2 A schedule of respondents' comments and officers responses is attached as Appendix A.

### **3.3 Consultees**

- Royce Longton - Leader of the Council
- Sally Hannon - Portfolio Member for Highways and Engineering
- Brian Bedwell - Opposition Spokesperson for Planning and Highways
- All West Berkshire Council Members representing Thatcham Wards.

### **3.4 Consultation Timings**

- Initial Consultation letter and draft layout plan to consultees 27 July to 27 August 2004
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Consultation letter and draft layout plan to consultees 27 September to 11 October 2004
- Letter drop to all cars parked in area of station 15 October 2004
- Presentation to Thatcham Area Forum 20 October 2004
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Consultation letter and draft layout plan to consultees 27 October to 10 November 2004

## **4. Proposed Scheme**

- 4.1 The scheme as now proposed comprises the elements detailed below, designed to improve access to and facilities at the station for the travelling public, whilst improving traffic management and road safety in proximity to the station.

- (1) Reconstruction / Resurfacing of Pipers Lane ( Station Rd to Pipers lane Industrial Entrance)
- (2) Creation of a short slip road off Station Rd. into Pipers Lane
- (3) Promotion of a Traffic Regulation Order making the sections of Pipers lane in (1) and (2) above one way in an easterly direction ( from Station Rd to Pipers Lane Industrial Entrance )
- (4) Promotion of a Traffic Regulation Order prohibiting on street parking in Pipers lane other than in designated parking spaces.
- (5) Creation of paved pedestrian areas around the Council car park and in front of the railway station linked by an at grade plateau.
- (6) Provision of a new footway on the south side of Pipers Lane (from the Railway Station to Pipers Lane Industrial Entrance)
- (7) Provision of new street lighting along Pipers Lane ( from Station Rd to Pipers Lane Industrial Entrance ) and in the Council owned car park.
- (8) Provision of 3 disabled parking spaces in the Council owned car park taking the total provision to 33 spaces.
- (9) Creation of a taxi rank in Pipers Lane immediately opposite the station entrance.
- (10) Creation of 21 formal parking spaces on the south side of Pipers Lane immediately to the east of the station entrance, where casual parking currently takes place
- (11) Provision of 2 CCTV cameras to cover the Council car park and station approach linked to Network Rail's central control room.
- (12) Provision of 2 covered cycle parking bays adjacent to the Council car park and a further 6 open air stands adjacent to the station.
- (13) Provision of a Drop off Zone immediately outside the station

## **Appendices**

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Appendix A - Schedule of respondents comments to the consultation process and officers responses.

## **Implications**

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<b>Policy:</b>	SP5 - Ensuring the street environment is clean, well maintained and safe SP8 - Improving transportation
<b>Financial:</b>	The cost of the scheme is estimated at £ 104,000 and will be funded by Section 106 monies secured from local developments
<b>Personnel:</b>	None arising from this report
<b>Legal:</b>	Processing of the Traffic Regulation Orders
<b>Environmental:</b>	The Scheme will environmentally enhance the approaches to and the area in the immediate vicinity of the Thatcham Railway Station
<b>Equalities:</b>	None arising from this report
<b>Partnering:</b>	None arising from this report
<b>Property:</b>	None arising from this report N.A.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	None arising from this report N.A.
<b>Community Safety:</b>	The proposed scheme will considerably improve both road safety and the safety of pedestrians in the vicinity of Thatcham Station

## Consultation Responses

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### Members:

**Leader of Council:** Cllr. Royce Longton is happy with the recommended action provided that the Ward Members support the proposals.

**Select Committee Chairmen:** Cllr. Brian Bedwell has been consulted at all stages in the scheme development and has raised no objection to the scheme now proposed.

**Ward Members:** All West Berkshire Council Members representing Thatcham Wards have been consulted at all stages in the ongoing scheme development process. Their responses which are detailed in Appendix A attached have been taken into account in drafting the scheme now proposed.

**Opposition Spokesperson:** Cllr. Brian Bedwell has been consulted at all stages in the scheme development and has raised no objection to the scheme now proposed.

**Local Stakeholders:** The responses of the stakeholders listed below to the consultation process are detailed in Appendix A attached.

ThatchamTown Council

Network Rail

Reading Buses,

District Hackney Carriageway Association

Spokes

West Berkshire Liaison Group on Disablement

Public

**Officers Consulted:** John Ashworth, Mark Edwards, Derek Crouch, Mark Cole

**Trade Union:** N/A

## APPENDIX A

### Thatcham Railway Station Approaches Environmental Enhancement Scheme Consultation Schedule of Respondents' comments and Officers' Responses

Name	Observations	Response
<b>1st consultation - 27/07/04 to 27/08/04</b>		
Mrs. Janet Parker West Berks Council Access Officer	No dropped kerbs in main car park, or near two designated parking bays	This will be included in the detailed design
	No dropped kerbs or plateau to new bus lay-by	No new lay-by to be included. Bus boarder to existing lay-by
	Possible SLOW sign on entering the one-way?	This will be included in the Lining and Signing schedule
	Will bus stop be suitable for access onto low access buses?	Bus boarder to be included in detailed design for existing lay-by
	Plateau on Station Road to slow traffic down approaching the station and rail crossing	Plateau not feasible on this stretch of Highway
Mr. P. M. Mason	No improvement on the down line	Not within scope of this project as private car park
West Berks Disability Alliance Access Officer	Number of designated disabled parking bays increased to 5 and sited within main car park	BS8300:2001 recommends 5% disabled parking bays in railway car parks, which equates to 3No. Which will be provided in the car park.
	No mention of dropped kerbs	This will be included in the detailed design
	Improved access over tracks	Not within scope of this project- Network Rail jurisdiction
	No mention of dropped kerbs or plateau to new bus lay-by.	No new lay-by to be included. Bus boarder to existing lay-by
	SLOW sign over one-way system	This will be included in the Lining and Signing schedule
	Bus boarder to both bus stops?	Bus boarder to be included in detailed design for existing lay-by.

Name	Observations	Response
Dr.N.P.Tancock	How will improvement plans effect pedestrian access to train station	New footway to be provided along Pipers Lane.
	One-way system will increase traffic along Pipers Lane and make it harder for pedestrians to pass.	
Mr.Kevin Bushell SPOKES Representative	No consideration for cyclists	Improved provisions for cyclists, including additional cycle stands with cycle shelters, Shared footway/cycleway along Pipers Lane
	Does not support addition of left turn lane on northern approach to station.	Would Compromise the Scheme
	Need additional cycle parking facilities.	Additional cycle stands with shelters to be included
	One way system will negatively effect cyclists	Shared footway/cycleway along Pipers Lane
	Cycle parking for south side of railway line.	Not within scope of this project
	Possible false one-way system which does not require a one-way restriction order, to reduce inconvenience to cyclists.	Not agreed. Inherently unsafe. Cyclist will in in any case be served by a shared footway/cycleway facility.
Mr.David Morris	Introduction of a one-way system will stop cars being able to use Pipers Lane for access to the Station, hence leading to more traffic along Station Road.	Acknowledged but cannot be accommodated
	Query over Bus Stop proposals within Station, unsure whether this is necessary due to lack of Bus service operating at the Station.	Bus stop within Station has been omitted from the design
	Would like to see a Traffic Survey done.	Survey Undertaken as part of Cross Kennet Study
Mr.Mike Crane	Concerned that the car parking proposals will be insufficient to meet demand.	Ongoing monitoring to be undertaken
First Great Western	Would like to see a pay and display payment regime.	This will be implemented within the scheme
	Query over Bus Stop proposals within Station.	Bus stop within Station has been omitted from the design
Mr. Colin Thompson Reading Buses	Re-design to allow for southbound stop, with sufficient area for bus to swing round, acting as a terminal point	This is not technically feasible

Name	Observations	Response
Mr. Andrew Garrett	Proposes the car parking bays are angled at 60 degrees.	This is not necessary, minimum distances are achieved with proposed parking formation.
	Road width adjacent to parking bays, east of Taxi Rank should be at least 6.0 m, not 5.5m as measured.	Cannot be accommodated within design
	Situation of pay and display ticket machines could effect pedestrian movement.	Machine is to be relocated
	Disabled bays should be as close to station entrance as possible.	The disabled bays are located within the main car park near to the station
	No provisions for pedestrians between north of the car park and raised tables. No provisions for pedestrians using bus stop on western side of Station Road.	Dropped kerbs to be laid at western point of car park near to ticket machine. Uncontrolled crossing points leading to the station to be installed for pedestrians using bus stop on western side of Station Road.
	Shelter on one-way system seems to be located in the wrong place.	Bus shelter has been omitted from the design
	Road markings on Station Road for "Other Routes" required.	This will be included in the Lining and Signing schedule
<b>2nd consultation - 27/09/04 to 11/10/04</b>		
Mr Kevin Bushell SPOKES Representative	Feels new direction of one-way system would inconvenience cyclists who use this route to access their workplaces from the station I.e. industrial areas	Actioned. The one way system has been reversed.
	Feels there will be conflict with cyclists entering the Station via Station Road and pedestrians/Cyclists coming from the one way system along Pipers Lane	Actioned. The one way system has been reversed.
	Feels we should provide more cycle parking	Additional cycle stands with shelters to be included within scheme.



Name	Observations	Response
Cllr Jeff Brooks	Concerned about the intention to route traffic accessing the Station via Pipers Lane. Feels that this could be dangerous	Actioned. The one way system has been reversed.
	Will there be double yellow lines and other key parking restrictions within the area.	This will be included in the Lining and Signing schedule
	Have we canvassed rail travellers. Have we leafleted the cars who use the station	We leafleted cars on 15th October to invite them to the Area Forum held on 20th October
Cllr.Alexander Payton	Would like to see a drop off/pick up point for car use.	This will be included in the detailed design
	Not convinced that clockwise one-way system will work	Actioned. The one way system has been reversed.
Mr. Colin Thompson Reading Buses	Important to retain the existing southbound stop for use by buses to Brimpton and beyond	This has been noted and will be included in detailed design
Cllr K Woodams	Planting by the cycle stands would not be maintained and feels space would be more useful as additional parking	No room for additional parking within space mentioned. A new taxi lay-by and new cycle shelters are to be included. New trees will be maintained by WBDC.
CSJ Watts	Incorporate footpath along Pipers Way and Pipers Lane	New footway to be provided along Pipers Lane.
Thatcham T.C Representative	Include more cycle lockers	Additional cycle stands with shelters to be included
	Improve tarmac surface of Pipers Lane	This will be included in the detailed design
	Press Network Rail to deal with drainage problems	This will be included in the detailed design
	Why are we putting a pedestrian crossing in front of the existing level crossing?	We are putting an uncontrolled crossing point with tactile paving in front of existing level crossing
	Will there be double yellow lines and other waiting restrictions within the area?	This will be included in the Lining and Signing schedule
	Improve the facilities for cyclists	Improved provisions for cyclists, including additional cycle stands with cycle shelters, Shared footway/cycleway along Pipers Lane
	Have we leafleted the current car users at the station?	This was implemented on 15th October
	Have we been and canvassed rail travellers	No

Name	Observations	Response
Mr.John Carr	Disabled parking in the lay-by would mean disabled passengers getting out of car into traffic flow.	Actioned. Scheme design has changed
West Berks Disability Alliance	Vehicles with rear access would have difficulty in opening rear doors unless disabled bays were correct dimensions	Actioned. Scheme design has changed
	Would be better to provide disabled bays in main car park with dropped kerbs adjacent to plateau	Disabled bays have been moved to main car park. Dropped kerbs will be included in the detailed design
	There is no lighting shown for the plateau crossing and ramp up to platform	New lighting columns will be included adjacent to plateau crossing at back of main car park. This light will be sufficient to cover up to the ramp of station platform entrance
	The chevron parking would involve reversing in to the spaces due to one way system	Actioned. Scheme design has changed
Dr.N.P.Tancock	Concerned about access to the station being from Pipers Lane and the direction of one way sytem	Actioned. The one way system has been reversed.
	Why are we putting a pedestrian crossing in front of the existing level crossing?	We are putting an uncontrolled crossing point with tactile paving in front of existing level crossing
Mr.Mike Crane	Concerned that the car parking proposals will be insufficient to meet demand.	Ongoing monitoring to be undertaken
First Great Western	Will we make the spaces behind the Reading bound platform pay and display	Yes
<b>3rd consultation - 27/10/04 to 10/11/04</b>		
Mr John Carr	Could a road marking be added to the proposed dedicated access lane advising drivers to slow down	The road will be adequately lined and signed. This will be included in the Lining and Signing schedule.
West Berks Disability Alliance	Is it possible to erect an illuminated signpost advising that there is a pedestrian crossing ahead	There will not be a pedestrian crossing within this scheme. We proposed to put an uncontrolled crossing facility near to the station
	Would the blue badge scheme be applicable for passengers travelling by train, as they would be parked for longer than the blue badge would normally allow	No

Name	Observations	Response
Mr. Kevin Bushell SPOKES Representative	Site meeting. Spokes representatives were Kevin Bushell and Ed Cooper	Site meeting held on 17th October. West berkshires representatives were Matthew Golding and Nick Cox
	Would like to see more provisions for cyclists coming along Pipers Lane travelling to the Station.	A shared footway/cycleway will be provided along Pipers Lane
	Feels we should provide more cycle parking	Additional cycle stands with shelters to be included within scheme.
<b>Unresolved Issues</b>		
Mr. Kevin Bushell SPOKES Representative	Does not support addition of left turn lane on northern approach to station.	Would Compromise the Scheme
	Possible false one-way system which does not require a one-way restriction order, to reduce inconvenience to cyclists.	Not agreed. Inherently unsafe. Cyclist will in any case be served by a shared footway/cycleway facility.
Mr. David Morris	Introduction of a one-way system will stop cars being able to use Pipers Lane for access to the Station, hence leading to more traffic along Station Road.	Acknowledged but cannot be accommodated
Mr. Mike Crane	Concerned that the car parking proposals will be insufficient to meet demand.	Ongoing monitoring to be undertaken
First Great Western		
Thatcham TC	Have we been and canvassed rail travellers	No
John Carr West Berks Disability Alliance	Would the blue badge scheme be applicable for passengers travelling by train, as they would be parked for longer than the blue badge would normally allow	No