



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of an **INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION** will be held at the Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham on **THURSDAY 30 APRIL 2015 AT 11.30 AM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Couldrick', written in a cursive style.

Andy Couldrick
Chief Executive
Published on 22 April 2015

Our Vision

A great place to live, an even better place to do business

Our Priorities

Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

Invest in regenerating towns and villages, support social and economic prosperity, whilst encouraging business growth

Ensure strong sustainable communities that are vibrant and supported by well designed development

Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough

Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services

The Underpinning Principles

Offer excellent value for your Council Tax

Provide affordable homes

Look after the vulnerable

Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life

Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency

Deliver quality in all that we do

For consideration by

John Kaiser, Executive Member for Planning and Highways

Officers Present

Susan Coulter, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Ian Haller, Service Manager, Highway Delivery

| IMD NO. 2015 | WARD | SUBJECT |
|-------------------------|-------------|--|
| IMD17 | Ewendons | FINCHAMPSTEAD ROAD / EVENDONS LANE 5 - 16 JUNCTION IMPROVEMENTS To note of the revisions to the original scheme in response to consultation comments received and to agree to progress the proposed scheme as shown on the drawing attached to the report. |

CONTACT OFFICER

Susan Coulter
Tel
Email
Postal Address

Senior Democratic Services Officer
0118 974 6059
susan.coulter@wokingham.gov.uk
Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1BN

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Agenda Item IMD17

NOTICE OF INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| ITEM NO. | IMD 2015 – 17 |
| TITLE | Finchampstead Road / Evendons Lane Junction Improvements |
| DECISION TO BE MADE BY | Councillor John Kaiser, Executive Member for Planning and Highways |
| DATE AND TIME OF DECISION | Thursday 30 April 2015 at 11:30am |
| VENUE | SF1 Meeting Room, Council Offices, Shute End, Wokingham |
| REPORT TO BE PUBLISHED ON | Wednesday 22 April 2015 |

**INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION
REFERENCE IMD: 2015 – 17**

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| TITLE | Finchampstead Road / Evendons Lane Junction Improvements |
| FOR CONSIDERATION BY | Councillor John Kaiser, Executive Member for Planning and Highways |
| ON | Thursday 30 April 2015 |
| TIME | 11:30am |
| WARD | Evendons and Wescott |
| STRATEGIC DIRECTOR | Heather Thwaites, Director of Environment |

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Improvements for vulnerable road users in the vicinity of the Finchampstead Road junction with Evendons Lane and Evendons Primary School.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Executive Member for Highways and Planning:

- takes note of the revisions to the original scheme in response to consultation comments received and;
- agrees to progress the proposed scheme as shown on the drawing.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

A scheme was proposed at the junction with Finchampstead Road and Evendons Lane that satisfied the requirements set in the S106 agreement. The scheme was given approval to proceed despite having received some objections. The implementation of the scheme has been unavoidably delayed due to significant highway works in relation to gas and water services. Officers have now further consideration to the scheme and, following the opening of Evendons Primary School now have a revised proposal. Consultation on the initial IEMD generated a number of requests for the scheme to be altered. This report presents these requests, provides officers responses to them and as a result also presents the new proposals for approval.

BACKGROUND

Section 106 money was secured in the mid 1990s for an extension to Manor Road which was to be used on improvements to the junction of Finchampstead Road and Evendons Lane, Wokingham.

A scheme was developed to provide new warning signs and road markings, improved pedestrian crossing facilities, improved durability to the red coloured road surface and junction alterations to simplify vehicle movements. Refer to drawing 5049/1252. The scheme was given the approval to proceed even though during consultation the scheme received several objections.

The implementation of the scheme has been delayed several years because of continual works on the highway in relation to Gas and Water services. During this

period officers have continued to receive representations from local residents and Town & Borough Councils on the appropriateness of the scheme. In addition the existing Whitehouse School has reopened as Evendons Primary School.

In view of the continued concerns with the scheme and the opening of the new school, officers have reconsidered the proposals and now propose the scheme which excludes the changes to the junction alignment but include a new controlled crossing point across the Finchampstead Road

The main highlights of the scheme prior to IEMD consultations where as follows;

- The originally proposed changes to the junction alignment including an overrun area have been removed. This was the one element of the scheme that caused the most concern from objectors
- A new traffic signal controlled crossing is to be provided north of the junction. This has been carefully positioned so that it is as close as possible to the junction whilst providing a safe and convenient crossing point for pedestrians wishing to get to Evendons Lane and the new primary school. This also supports a proposal by the school to run a walking bus aka 'park and stroll' from The Two Poplars public house.
- The scheme retains all the originally proposed footway extensions along Evendons Lane but adds additional dropped kerb crossing points in the vicinity of the school and proposes to rationalise the footway provision around the junction of St Helier Close.
- Retain the red colour road construction - This would improve durability of the existing coloured surface and reduce future maintenance costs normally associated with a surface dressings
- Provide additional Warning signs and road markings to provide more advance warning of the junction and alert road users of the presence of the school.

The proposed scheme had been through a stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit and no concerns have been raised.

CONSULTATION

Consultation was undertaken during September 2014. The comments received along with officer comments are reported in appendix A.

The majority of the responses supported the principle of the scheme however specific questions were raised and suggested changes were proposed as detailed below:

- To relocate the traffic signal controlled crossing to the south of the junction.
- To relocate the existing speed camera to the south of the junction.
- Provide a dropped kerb by the school entrance and not to install the proposed dropped kerbs located near number 7 Evendons Lane.
- To leave the existing footway around the mouth of St Helier Close as it is.
- Not to implement the proposed new footway to the north of Evendons Lane at the junction with A321 because pedestrians already use the existing, safer, footway in front of nos.1-9 Evendons Lane.
- If possible, widen the pavement from Finchampstead Road (south) around the corner into Evendons Lane.

With regard to moving the pedestrian crossing to the south of the junction there are a

number of issues or reasons why the crossing should not be moved from the currently proposed position:

1. Moving it to the south is likely to result in the facility being under-used as it will be too far away from the identified desire line for pedestrian crossing movements. We understand the school has some desire to operate a walking bus from the local public house car park and the location as proposed provides is the better option;
2. The footway adjacent to the school is too narrow to accommodate a crossing without widening; and
3. The proximity of the bends on the approach to a crossing on the south side of the junction would reduce the advance visibility of the signal making it a less safe place to install the crossing

It is also not possible to relocate the existing speed camera to the south of the junction as part of this scheme due to limited budgets, in addition, this location is likely to be too close to the bend on Finchampstead Road for effective enforcement. Any new location would need to be assessed and agreed with TVP, and whilst there is scope to investigate this separately if the Council wished, it is likely that TVP would not agree to this proposed location.

Finally with regard to the widening of the footway from Finchampstead Road into Evendons Lane. This is unachievable without the purchase of third party land which is likely to prove a lengthy and prohibitive process.

However the remaining suggestions can be incorporate into the proposals, namely:

- Removal of the new proposed length of footway from the pedestrian crossing into Evendons Lane
- Retaining the existing footway layout at the junction of St Helier Close
- Providing a dropped crossing near to the school entrance

The retention of the existing footway at the junction of St Hellier Close requires the proposed crossing and tactile paving to be relocated nearer to the mouth of the junction. Currently there is insufficient footway length to accommodate this provision therefore the amended scheme proposes to extend the existing footway into St Hellier Close.

RECOMMENDATION

It is therefore recommended that the Executive Member for Highways and Planning approve the amended scheme as shown on drawing 5049/EVEN/001 and authorise officers to proceed with the scheme incorporating the changes as shown:

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

| | How much will it Cost/ (Save) | Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall | Revenue or Capital? |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Current Financial Year (Year 1) | £75,000 | Yes | Capital – S106 |
| Next Financial Year (Year 2) | £0 | | |
| Following Financial Year (Year 3) | £0 | | |

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

Don't progress the scheme Give back money with approx. 20 years of interest estimated to be a repayment of circa £80,000

Cross-Council Implications (how does this decision impact on other Council services and priorities?) Improve access for refuse vehicles.

Road Safety for vulnerable road users, particularly young pedestrians, encourages active travel, improves health and Wellbeing.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES – FINAL RESPONSE

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Strategic Director - Resources | No response |
| Monitoring Officer | No response |
| Leader of the Council | I fully support this scheme |
| Town and Parish Councils | Following WBC's explanation of the amended proposals WTC members accepted them (albeit with reservations) as a compromise solution, with the possibility of some modifications to the junction design if it proved necessary later on. |
| Local Ward Members | |
| Dianne King | Attended meeting with WBC on 18 th February and are in agreement with comments made above by WTC. |
| Chris Bowring | As above |
| Mark Ashwell | As above |
| Bob Wyatt | No response |
| Julian McGhee Sumner | No response |
| Thames Valley Police | TVP have no objection to this scheme |

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

N/A

List of Background Papers

N/A

| | |
|--|---|
| Contact Matthew Gould | Service Environment |
| Telephone No 0118 974 6460 | Email matthew.gould@wokingham.gov.uk |
| Date 1 st October 2014 | Version No. 1 |
| Date 20 th November 2014 | Version No. 2 |
| Date 9 th April 2015 | Version No. 3 |

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APPENDIX A

Evendons Lane-Finchampstead Road Improvements – COMMENTS & OBJECTIONS SUMMARY

| Letter/Email from | Comment/Objection | Officer Comment |
|-------------------------------|---|--|
| <p>Wokingham Town Council</p> | <p>The Town Council welcomes the proposal to improve pedestrian safety at this junction but believes that the proposed scheme could be improved, on the basis that the proposed siting of the controlled junction on Finchampstead Road is potentially unsafe. Due to the splay of the junction, drivers turning left out of Evendons Lane tend to be looking to their right as they emerge from the junction and may not be able to stop in time if the signal is on red, especially if they have only slowed down at the junction, instead of stopping fully.</p> <p>The Town Council therefore proposes an alternative solution:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relocate the traffic signal controlled crossing to the south of the junction. 2. Relocate the existing speed camera to the south of the junction. 3. Provide a dropped kerb by the school entrance and don't install the proposed dropped kerbs shown on the drawings near 7 Evendons Lane. 4. Leave the existing footway (shown in green on the drawings) as is. 5. Do not implement the proposed new footway (shown in blue on the attached plan) because pedestrians already use the existing, safer, footway in front of nos.1-9 Evendons Lane. 6. If possible, widen the pavement from Finchampstead Road round into Evendons Lane as shown in red on the attached plan. | <p>Thank you for passing on the comments from the Town Council's Planning & Transportation Committee.</p> <p>Having looked at the comments, it is certainly possible to incorporate some of the suggestions in the proposals, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Removal of the new proposed length of footway from the pedestrian crossing into Evendons Lane - Retaining the existing footway layout at the junction of St Helier Close - Providing a dropped crossing near to the school entrance <p>However, moving the pedestrian crossing to the south of the junction has a number of issues;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Moving it to the south is likely to result in the facility being under-used as it will be too far away from the identified desire line for pedestrian crossing movements. We understand the school has some desire to operate a walking bus from the local public house car park and the location as proposed provides is the better option. 2. The footway adjacent to the school is too narrow to accommodate a crossing without widening 3. The proximity of the bends on the approach to a crossing on the south side of the junction would reduce the advance visibility of the signal making it a less safe place to install the crossing <p>It is for these reasons the crossing location should remain as proposed. The concerns regarding traffic exiting Evendons</p> |

Lane have been noted and any improvements to reduce the potential for conflict will be investigated and implemented as part of the scheme. It should be noted that the current proposals have been through a Stage 1/2 Safety Audit undertaken by independent safety advisors who made not adverse comments regarding the proposals.

Unfortunately, it will not be possible to relocate the existing speed camera to the south of the junction as part of this scheme due to limited budgets, in addition, this location is likely to be too close to the bend on Finchampstead Road for effective enforcement. Any new location would need to be assessed and agreed with TVP, and whilst there is scope to investigate this separately if the Council wished, it is likely that TVP would not agree to this proposed location.

Finally, widening of the south-west footway from Finchampstead Road into Evendons Lane would not be possible without the purchase of third party land which is likely to prove a lengthy and prohibitive process. It is therefore recommended to proceed with the proposals as outlined, incorporating the above changes.

The Town Council's Planning & Transportation Committee comments will be reported in full to the Executive Member for Highways and Transport along with the officer comments as noted above. Our recommendation will be to proceed with the scheme as proposed incorporating the following changes;

- Remove the new proposed length of footway from the pedestrian crossing into Evendons Lane from the scheme
- Retain the existing footway layout at the junction of St Helier Close

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | <p>- Provide a dropped crossing near to the school entrance</p> <p>I hope this response provides you with enough explanation as to enable the committee to support the delivery of the scheme with the suggested amendments</p> |
| Cllr Dianne King | <p>The Town Council Planning Committee have met and made their comments, which I believe you should have received.</p> <p>Also Evendons Borough Councillors, Chris Bowring, Mark Ashwell and myself have discussed aspects of the scheme with some local residents and the NAG (including Evendons school).</p> <p>Comments received are that the footpath should stay as is, the retention of the facility of a left hand turning lane has been welcomed, but there is concern that the crossing may be too close to the junction.</p> <p>I hope this can be taken into account when the decision is made.</p> | Officer comments above cover the issues raised by Cllr. King. |
| Council Leader | I fully support this scheme | |
| Thames Valley Police | TVP have no objection to this scheme | |
| Head of Governance and Improvement Services | I have no specific comments to make on this report | |
| Wokingham Town Council | <i>Following WBC's explanation of the amended proposals at a meeting on 18th February WTC members accepted them (albeit with reservations) as a compromise solution, with the possibility of some modifications to the junction design if it proved necessary later on.</i> | |

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