

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

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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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