

Travel and Transport Committee 18/2/2025

Pedestrian Safety and Active Travel Measures for Future Consideration

This paper includes a number of proposals for improvements to pedestrian safety and accessibility as well as encouraging more active travel. It is intended as a discussion paper which will provide a basis for the Travel and Transport Committee's future work programme.

A. Matters for OCC Highways

A.1 Manor Road/High Street Junction

Issue: The junction has a wide splay for the benefit of traffic entering and leaving the High Street. A pedestrian crossing is provided at the widest part by dropped kerbs on opposite sides of the junction; this is a long crossing exposing pedestrians, particularly those with limited mobility, to a greater risk than would be the case in most road crossings. Vehicles are often illegally parked on the crossing points impeding access to the pavement.

Action Required: Installing a 'build out' at the junction would enable a shorter crossing to be provided, would prevent parking at that point and, additionally would cause vehicle to reduce speed entering and leaving the junction.

Progress: Travel and Transport Committee to consider details, feasibility and likely cost, engaging with OCC Highways. Subject to their advice consider seeking Council approval and budget if OCC Highways unable to fund.

A.2. High Street/Red Cross Road/Upper Red Cross Road junction

Issue: An identified need for a safe crossing at a point where visibility is limited and where traffic speeds exiting the Village are excessive. Possibly to form part of a safe, circular pedestrian route in the Village.

Action Required: Various measures have been suggested to limit vehicle speed and provide a crossing point. These included a raised table (to limit speed but which could also include a pedestrian crossing) at a likely cost in excess of £100K; a pedestrian crossing to allow safe access to the Surgery and Station Road (and possibly to link with circular walking route) not costed; and three way traffic lights at the High Street/Wallingford Road junction, possibly pedestrian controlled (to reduce speeds, provide a crossing point at the Red Cross Road junction and reduce the risk to pedestrians on the railway bridge approaches.

Action Required: A practical solution would be a raised table, as previously considered by the Committee in the past, with a pedestrian crossing. However, the latter may give rise to objections on the grounds of 'urbanising' the Village environment.

Progress: Travel and Transport Committee to consider details, feasibility and likely cost, engaging with OCC Highways. Subject to their advice consider seeking Council approval and budget if OCC Highways unable to fund.

A.3. High Street Raised Table

Issue: The raised table was installed to limit the speed of traffic on the High Street, a pedestrian crossing could be put in over it to provide a safe crossing, further reduce traffic speed and provide a route when linked with A.1 above.

Action Required: Travel and Transport Committee to consider details, feasibility and cost and seek Council approval and budget if agreed. OCC Highways agreement would also be required.

Progress: Travel and Transport Committee to consider details, feasibility and likely cost, engaging with OCC Highways. Subject to their advice consider seeking Council approval and budget if OCC Highways unable to fund.

A.4. Reading Road – Access to Farm Road footpath

Issue: A pavement runs on the south side of the Reading Road from the junction with Wallingford Road/Gatehampton Road past Whitehills Green. The path stops short of the steps further up the Road, on the north side, accessing the footpath between Farm Road and Fairfield Road requiring pedestrians to walk on the road. This route is used by people going to the station and Sheepcot Field, and is used by frequent and fast moving traffic.

Action Required: The existing pavement could be extended or a new pavement on the northern side added with a 'build out' but would require cutting into the embankment and/or narrowing what is already a narrow road. Cutting into the embankment may go into private property. A 'build out' at the bottom of the steps would provide some protection at that point and help reduce speeds.

Progress: Travel and Transport Committee to consider details, feasibility and likely cost, engaging with OCC Highways. Subject to their advice consider seeking Council approval and budget if OCC Highways unable to fund. Likely to be expensive due to the need to cut into the embankment.

A.5. Speed restriction measures

Issue: Speed surveys were conducted in Cleeve Road, Manor Road, Elvendon Road and Gatehampton Road in December last year. An analysis of the results was presented to Council in February and the Council requested that the Travel & Transport committee consider appropriate measures to mitigate speeding in residential roads and make recommendations to the next Full Council meeting.

Action Required: Travel and Transport Committee to consider what measures would be necessary in consultation with OCC Highways

B. Matters for the Parish Council

B.1. Pavement Outside Pierrepont's Cafe

Issue: East of the Café frontage the pavement becomes very narrow because of a large tree; pedestrians cannot pass without going into the road and wheelchair and pushchair access is difficult because of the narrowness and the tree roots.

Action Required: The tree should be retained, The possibility of widening the pavement and/or creating a build out has been previously explored, but the need to protect the tree roots and maintaining a safe access/egress to the car park behind Pierrepont's . Alternatively a pedestrian crossing/dropped kerb could be provided by the steps opposite the café and a safe route on that, southern, side of the road could be formed using the revised crossing and 'build out' in A.1 above and the new crossing at A.3 above. New dropped kerbs and preventing parked vehicles from blocking the way outside the Village Hall would be needed to maintain the route.

This site also would be suitable for the creation of a 'Parklet' – an extended pavement occupying one or more of the current parking spaces providing more space for pedestrians before making a crossing of the road, cycle racks (the café is much used by cyclists) and, possibly, additional seating space for the café. A cheaper option would be to board over the parking space level with the pavement to the same effect.

Progress: Travel and Transport Committee to consider details, feasibility and likely cost of installing dropped kerbs and/or creating a Parklet, engaging with OCC Highways. Subject to their advice consider seeking Council approval and budget – assuming Highways unlikely to fund.

B.2. Wallingford Road to the Station

Issue: The pavement running from the railway bridge to the station is, at points, too narrow to allow pedestrians walking in opposite directions to pass each other and requiring them to step into the busy road. The fencing has been moved to provide more space in some stretches, but presumably only where it was practical to do so.

Action Required: Widening the footway at the narrowest point is unlikely to be possible because of the steep drop to the railway line immediately behind the fence – otherwise it probably would have already been done. An alternative approach would be to encourage greater use of the western Station entrance, both for access from the Village and into it, by improving signage within and outside the Station. This could reduce the number of pedestrians using the Wallingford Road, but because of the number of people living to the north and east of the Wallingford Road and accessing the station that way, the reduction may not be that significant.

Progress: Signage is a low cost option and, although the impact may not be significant, it will have some effect. To be added to the Committee's Action List.

B.3. Safe Walking Routes/improving the visitor offer

Issue: There are potentially a number of places in the Village where minor modifications and works could provide walking routes that would enable pedestrians, wheelchairs and, on a shared basis, cycles to avoid traffic and so encourage active travel. New routes, and any existing footpaths that they join up with, would need to be properly surfaced, suitable for wheelchair use and appropriately signed.

Marked pedestrian/cycle routes, including a circular route around the Village, and including the improvements suggested at A.1-A.3, B.1 and B.4 would be an added attraction for visitors. The provision of map/information boards and a visitor information hub using the old phone box by Pierrepont's café would add to the visitor experience.

Action Required: Possible routes to be surveyed and the need to obtain any permissions from landowners assessed. Once routes have been identified, the design and location of signage would follow with the Committee and the Places and Assets Group working on the restoration and fitting out of the old phone box. Council agreement to a budget for the work to be sought.

B.4. Ferry Lane footpath.

Issue: The path through the Ferry Lane open space is muddy and inaccessible for wheelchair users. A board walk has been proposed, connecting Ferry Lane and the Thames Path. This would make an all-weather circular walk, accessible for wheelchairs and push chairs, via Station Road, the Thames Path and back along the High Street.

Action Required: Details of the scheme would need to be worked up, including materials to be used and quotes obtained for the work. Planning permission and Environment Agency agreement would be required.

B.5. Cycle Routes.

Issue: Parish councils have been asked by OCC Highways to develop Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans. The need to re-classify the footpath from Lockstile Way to Elvendon Road as a shared bath for both pedestrians and cyclists has been identified, This would encourage children attending the Primary School to cycle rather than be taken by car. Connections with other long-distance routes can be made, including the route north from the Village parallel to the Wallingford Road, through South and North Stoke.

Action Required: Progress work on the Infrastructure Plan and the Lockstile Way/Elvendon Road reclassification to be added to the Committee's Action List.