

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 12 SEPTEMBER 2019

OXFORD, RYMERS LANE JUNCTION WITH LITTLEHAY ROAD & CORNWALLIS ROAD – PROPOSED TRAFFIC CALMING

Report by Director of Community Operations, Communities

Recommendation

1. The Cabinet Member for Environment is **RECOMMENDED** to approve the proposed introduction of a traffic calming raised junction table at the crossroads junction of Rymers Lane, Littlehay Road & Cornwallis Road in Florence Park (Oxford) as advertised.

Executive summary

2. Provision of traffic calming measures is reviewed when there are changes to the road layout as a result of development, when requested by local councils as a result of road safety concerns and as part of the on-going monitoring of reports on road accidents. Specific proposals are assessed applying national regulations and guidance on the use of traffic calming measures.

Introduction

3. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation to introduce a traffic calming raised junction table at the crossroads junction of Rymers Lane, Littlehay Road & Cornwallis Road in Florence Park, Oxford.

Background

4. The above proposal as shown at Annex 1 has been put forward in conjunction with Oxford City Council to help improve road safety for local residents.

Consultation

5. Formal consultation on the proposal was carried out between 01 August and 30 August 2019. A public notice was placed in the Oxford Times newspaper and emails sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, Oxford City Council, and the local County Councillor and local City Councillors. Notices were also placed on site and letters sent to approximately 60 properties in the immediate vicinity adjacent to the proposals.
6. Sixteen responses were received. 4 (25%) objections, 8 (50%) in support, and 4 (25%) neither supporting nor objecting or outlining some concerns. The

responses are recorded at Annex 2 with copies of the full responses available for inspection by County Councillors.

Response to objections and other comments

7. Thames Valley Police did not object.
8. Seven responses were received from members of the public expressing objections or concerns on the proposals. While one objection was on the grounds of the lack of need for the improvement and that it was, therefore, a poor use of public funds. The other responses cited concerns that the proposal was not an adequate or satisfactory way of addressing the problems in the area, with several mentioning the need for a more comprehensive approach to reducing the speed and volume of traffic, noting local aspirations for a Low Traffic Neighbourhood. More specific concerns included queries on drainage and proposed ramp gradient (1:12) which was viewed as being too steep for use by cyclists, the kerb radii at the junction (which were judged to be too large) and the lack of priority for pedestrians and cyclists, with one respondent requesting a formal zebra crossing.
9. The above concerns are noted. It is accepted that this proposal will not in itself address the wider traffic pressures in the area but will, nevertheless, improve safety at a location with a significant accident history comprising 2 serious and 9 slight injury accidents in the past 5-year period, 7 of those involving pedal cyclists. It will also contribute to making this area a less attractive route for 'rat-running' traffic.
10. The design of the junction table in respect of drainage, ramp gradient and kerb radii is consistent with other features of this type which have been found to operate with good levels of safety and to not present any hazard to pedal cyclists.
11. Eight expressions of support were received from members of the public, though many of these also expressed a concern that wider measures were required to address the traffic and safety problems in the area, with some also raising specific queries over the design of the scheme, including in respect of road markings and priority for pedestrians and cyclists.
12. The desire for wider measures is again noted but further funding would be required to develop, consult and implement such a scheme and that is currently not available. It should also be noted again in respect of the other comments that the design is consistent with other junction tables.

How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives

13. The proposals would help facilitate the safe movement of traffic in the area.

Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)

14. Funding for the proposed measures has been provided from the Oxfordshire County Council Capital Programme, and by funding from Oxford City Council.

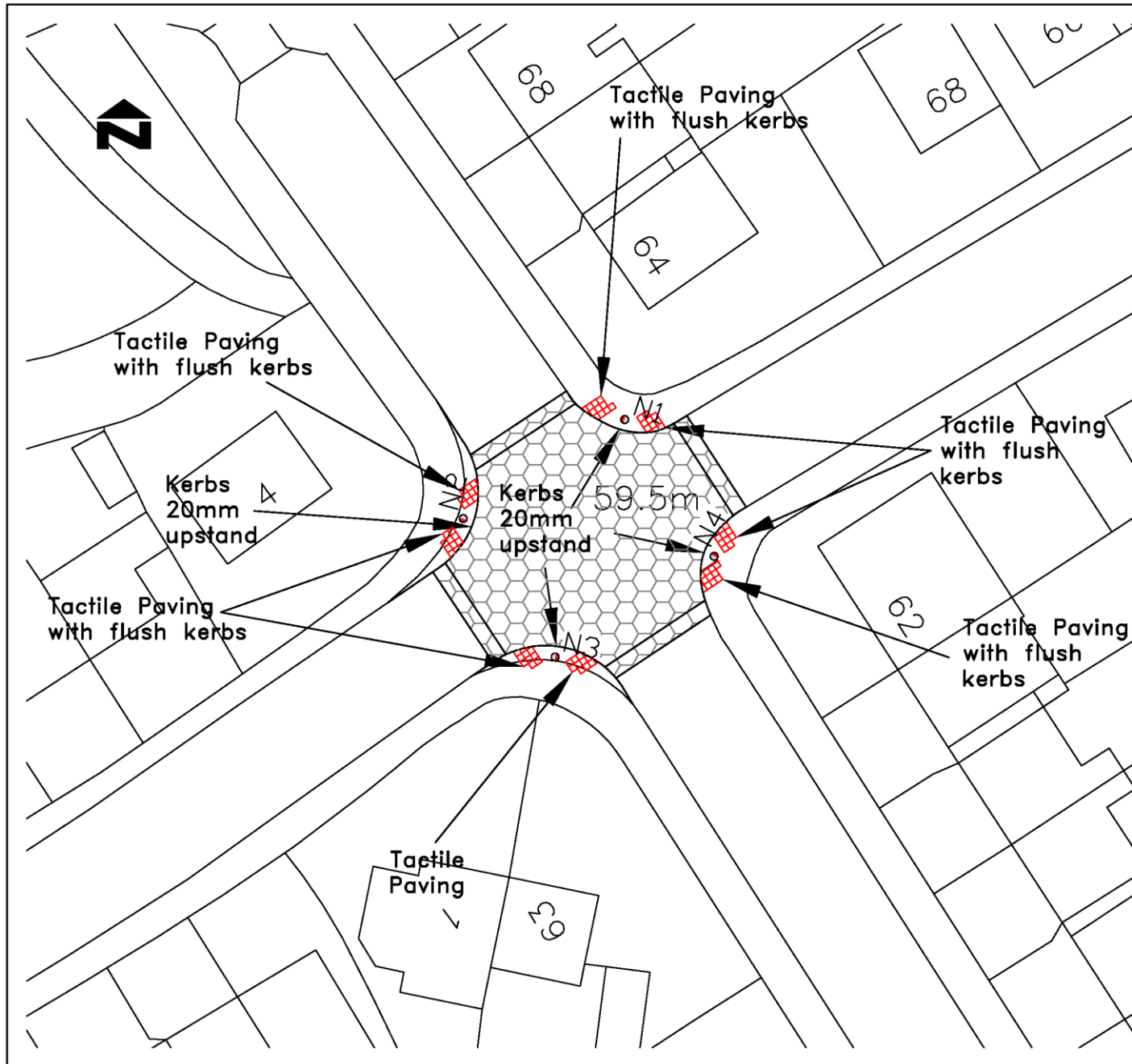
OWEN JENKINS




Director for Infrastructure Delivery

Background papers: Plan of proposed traffic calming measure
 Consultation responses

Contact Officers: Hugh Potter 07766 998704

September 2019



- Notes**
-  Proposed raised junction, nominal 75mm height except at kerb edges. Approach ramp gradient to be 1:12.
 -  Proposed Reboundable Glasdon Neapolitan bollard in White with Red/white reflector (orientation as symbol)
 -  Buff blister tactile paving (for crossing points) each slab 400mm square. Kerbs to be flush across the 1.2m crossing.
- Kerb upstand between crossing points around table to be 20mm.
- New kerbs radius to be 6m either side of Cornwallis Road Junction.

Do not scale this drawing

Rev	Description	By	Date	Chk'd	Auth

Oxford Direct Services
 Marsh Road, Oxford OX4 2HH
 T: 01865 335400
 E: oxforddirectservices@oxfordds.co.uk



Client:

Project:
**Rymers Lane/
 Littlehay Road
 Speed Table
 2019**

Title:
General Layout Plan

Scale 1:500	Drawn By SMA	Checked By DRAFT	Approved By
	Date 03.05.19	Date	Date
Drawing Number 0020/A3/00140	Rev B		

RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	No objection
(2) Local Resident, (Oxford)	<p>Object - I have lived very near to the junction in question for over 12 years, only once during this time have I ever seen an accident/the clean-up, it was not a big accident.</p> <p>The awareness of road users has improved in this area over time and I think these proposed changes constitute a waste of time, effort and money.</p>
(3) Local Resident, (Oxford)	<p>Object - My children cross over Cornwallis Rd at this junction every day on the way to school. This table doesn't solve the problem at this junction as I see it.</p> <p>At busy times (e.g. during the school run) traffic queues up to the junction from all directions making it very difficult to cross the road with children (we have to wait for someone to let us cross, and then weave through queuing traffic with a pushchair + 3 kids under 10). It is also unsafe for cyclists due to the volume of queuing and parked cars.</p> <p>At less busy times cars approach the junction far too fast. Again making it difficult to cross on foot and unsafe for cyclists.</p> <p>I don't see how this table will reduce the amount of traffic (and pollution), make it safer to cross, or safer to cycle.</p> <p>I'd like to see a scheme for this area which actually reduces the number of cars and prioritises walking and cycling at this junction and across the local area.</p> <p>However, if this table does go ahead then an improvement for pedestrians would be to add give way lines for cars before the ramp on each side (e.g. like at the junction of Henley Street and Iffley Road). Better still a zebra crossing over Cornwallis Rd and Littlehay Road would be an improvement.</p>

CMDE5

<p>(4) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>Object - I object on the following grounds:</p> <p>Cost and lack of joined-up-planning. A costed proposal for a low-traffic residential zone for this area has recently been funded by local residents and businesses under the umbrella of the Oxfordshire Living Streets organisation. Any spend of thousands of pounds of taxpayer money should await the publication of this proposal to see if the money can be better invested in conjunction with recommendations of this proposal.</p> <p>Kerb Radius: As a regular user of this junction with my children as pedestrians, it needs further improvements to meet our needs. The desire-lines of continuing from the pavements across the junction (without turning) have pedestrians passing on the inside (closest to the junction) of the proposed bollards. The kerb radius should be reduced to 4.5m. This would keep these desire-lines open and further slow the speed of motor vehicles, whilst remaining accessible for emergency/refuse vehicles/etc. Any modelling of the junction should assume larger vehicles will need to cross both lanes of the Littlehay Road arms when turning, rather than compromising the pedestrian experience.</p> <p>Drainage: No mention of the drainage requirements is in the published documents. Water currently flows from the south of Rymers Lane, around the corner to a drain on the east arm of Littlehay Road. Appropriate drainage works are essential if this is to be a raised table without creating standing water after rain.</p> <p>Approach: I also regularly use this junction with my children as cyclists. A straight 1:12 gradient is not suitable for cyclists, and this should instead be a "sinusoidal" profile, shallow at the bottom and top, and steeper in the middle of the sloping area, with an average gradient of 1:15. The approach from both directions of Littlehay Road need to be longer, to account for groups of cyclists (there are 5 in my family) to be able to give-way without any cyclists being on the slope.</p>
<p>(5) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>Object - The proposed 'traffic calming' will do little or nothing to address the wider road use issues in this part of Oxford, namely 'rat-run' traffic avoiding Cowley Centre, and overuse of cars on the school run to St Gregory's. This type of 'raised table' seems similar in concept to those in use on Magdalen Rd and Howard Street and are completely unsuitable for use on a signed cycle route.</p> <p>Vehicle speed is more effectively managed by lane narrowing, and traffic volume is better managed through modal</p>

CMDE5

	<p>filters. I would commend to you the suggestions by Oxfordshire Liveable Streets in their 'mini-Holland' LTN plan.</p>
<p>(6) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>Neither/Concerns - I am concerned about the proposed traffic calming feature, because it won't slow the rat run on the whole of Cornwallis road. Cars will speed up again as soon as they have crossed the junction, and probably just as they are going past my house.</p> <p>I would prefer traffic calming measures that would be effective on the whole road, such as average speed cameras. It has also become even faster because the 20 mile an hour signs have disappeared.</p>
<p>(7) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>Neither/Concerns - I think this is a waste of money and will not solve the problems of this extremely dangerous junction. I would very much like improvements to the junction though!</p> <p>In my opinion, the danger is not primarily due to speed, but due to the excessive volume of traffic using the junction for rat running, particularly in the morning and at school pick up. This coincides with the time that large numbers of pedestrian schoolchildren are navigating the junction.</p> <p>As a pedestrian crossing Littlehay road, you often need to try and make eye contact with drivers queuing on both sides of the junction to judge if it is safe to cross.</p> <p>I strongly support improvements to the junction, but I don't think this is the right solution to improve it for pedestrians and cyclists. I hate navigating the raised junctions in Howard Street by bike or with a buggy; they make it more dangerous for me on a bike, and no safer as a pedestrian. I would rather the money was saved up for longer so that we could have a better solution. Other ideas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Double yellows running on all sides to improve visibility (currently often greatly impeded by parked cars particularly in Littlehay Road). Trim back the enormous hedge on the corner of Littlehay Road; traffic can only see me and the buggy when we are at the very edge of the pavement. 2. Clear priority for pedestrians and cyclists, probably in the form of Copenhagen crossings over both Littlehay and Cornwallis, where the footway and cycle lanes continue over the junction on a raised strip, making it clear to car drivers that they must let pedestrians cross.

CMDE5

	<p>3. Ultimately, I strongly support the current initiatives being developed for a Low Traffic Neighbourhood around Florence Park, including road blockades to stop the area being used for rat running. I believe that if this was implemented, problems at this junction would greatly improve. But obviously it will take time to develop.</p>
<p>(8) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>Neither/Concerns - While I support speed reduction plans in this area. The plan is self reflects Oxfordshire County Council's 'site-specific' approach and not a holistic or joined up way of thinking. The chicanes on Littlehay road have done little to make this area safer and I worry the table will have a similar affect. Some slowdown by traffic and then a wider acceleration. The plan also does nothing to address the major visibility problem on this junction caused by on street parking.</p> <p>A better use of public money would be to stop this residential road being used as a rat run, perhaps by 'bollarding' one section. The fact that this residential area is being used as a regular through road is the real cause of danger. While I applaud the desire to change this junction, it risks being another wasted opportunity by OCC to genuinely do something to reduce aggressive driving throughout this area. While I cannot object to any traffic calming idea, highway engineers in Oxford have shown an appalling lack of creativity and up to date knowledge in creating appealing road/pedestrian areas in the 10 years I have been in Oxford. Given the proximity of this junction to a major park, I would suggest a radical rethink and the fund to be applied to a bolder scheme such as the low traffic neighbourhood that was proposed by various groups. This would negate the need for site specific actions and address the wider reasons behind the danger on this road. Tough on dangerous roads, tough on the causes of dangerous roads etc.</p>
<p>(9) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>Support - As someone who has been knocked off their bicycle cycling along Rymers Lane by a car failing to stop when it approached this junction from Cornwallis Road, I cannot understand why you don't make it obligatory for cars to stop, rather than give way. Making it a stop junction would make it less likely for accidents at this junction.</p>
<p>(10) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>Support - I broadly support the proposal, as it's clear some traffic calming is needed, but would want the council to monitor the new junction layout and report back on what difference it's making -- and whether problems crop up elsewhere as a result. Working with St Greg's to incentivise car-free transport would also be beneficial as the school run is a major cause of traffic.</p>

CMDE5

<p>(11) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>Support - I'm a cyclist and feel vulnerable here because cars go fast, this is also an area near a park where children play.</p>
<p>(12) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>Support - It would benefit from dedicated cycle lanes/'grooves' through the up stand given the volume of cycle traffic. Trees on the corners may help with aesthetics</p>
<p>(13) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>Support - There should be more of these in this area. There should be more of an effort to reduce traffic in this area rather than just 'calming' it.</p>
<p>(14) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>Support - Traffic in the Florence park area and Oxford road is unsafe. Any incentive to limit car speed would be beneficial to the area.</p>
<p>(15) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>Support - Rymers Lane and Cornwallis Road are both currently dangerous roads, which are unattractive to both cyclist and pedestrians. I welcome the proposed traffic calming feature but consider that it does not go far enough. I would support further traffic calming measures especially 'filtering' by blocking off some roads to vehicular traffic in the Florence Park area and Oxford as a whole. Consideration should be given to a one-way system in this area to make 'rat running' unattractive.</p> <p>The proposed junction could be further improved by making it clear that pedestrians have priority crossing the road. This should include compulsory stopping for vehicles. Furthermore, it is important that the increase in the junction surface is significant enough to actually slow vehicles down and make it impossible for them to speed over it.</p>
<p>(16) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>Support - Anything which improves safety at this dangerous junction is to be welcomed. It is unfortunate that, whilst this junction treatment does give some relief to pedestrians it does almost nothing to improve safety for cyclists. Some of the detail of the scheme is puzzling.</p> <p>A triangular give way road marking is shown on the road as vehicles approach from Cornwallis Road but not the opposite approach from Littlehay Road. Surely that road too should have a give way marking to slow vehicles down as they approach the junction?</p> <p>Narrowing the approach from Cornwallis is a good safety feature but is lacking in the Rymers Lane approach from</p>

CMDE5

the South East even though this is a downhill slope where vehicles will have recently exited onto a fast main road. Could that approach be narrowed too?

Instead of simply narrowing the road approach from Cornwallis Road could the council please consider a build out which constricts traffic whilst giving cyclists a safety lane? Please advise if that can be accommodated with the given road width?

In the longer term a proper solution needs to be found to the problem of rat running through Cornwallis Road/ Littlehay Road and Rymers Lane. I would like to see Florence Park become a low traffic neighbourhood as per the suggestion from Oxfordshire Liveable Streets.