

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT – 17 NOVEMBER 2011

HIGHAM WAY ADOPTION SCHEME: BANBURY

Report by Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Highways and Transport)

Introduction

1. Higham Way is currently private carriageway. This report discusses its adoption together with provision of new access points to Marshall Road and, due to the nature of the road, traffic calming features. The aim of the scheme is to provide new access points for entering and exiting the cattle market development (one vehicular and three pedestrian). Informal consultation was carried out in November 2010 and then formally in January 2011. This report sets out the comments received and seeks authority to proceed with the adoption process/land transfer and approval for the highway improvement scheme and new accesses to the Cattle Market development by 2012. The proposed funding is from developer contributions from the adjacent Cattle Market development and the Integrated Transport fund.

Background Information

2. The residential development on the former Cattle Market site is nearing completion and preparations are in hand for transferring many of the highway areas within the development to Oxfordshire County Council. Higham Way runs adjacent to the Cattle Market site and is in private ownership.
3. Presently Alma Road is the only main road access in and out of the development. Not only does this cause significant congestion in Merton Street but there is concern that the single access point could compromise the ability of emergency services to get quickly into and out of the development. Often a development the size of the Cattle Market may have at least two points of entry and egress. The additional access proposed from Higham Way to Marshall Road was always planned as part of the original master plan for the site.
4. The new road link between the Cattle Market site and Higham Way is proposed adjacent to numbers 91 to 114 Marshall Road at the southern end of Higham Way. In order to create this access Higham Way requires adoption and improvement. Additionally, traffic calming measures are proposed on Higham Way to maintain low vehicle speeds.
5. The principles behind these proposed permanent arrangements are contained within the master plan for the site, which was the subject of public consultation as part of the process of preparing the Supplementary Planning Guidance

adopted by Oxfordshire County Council in 2004 and was used to inform the design of the development.

6. As Higham Way is not currently public highway a fence was constructed separating the road and the development to restrict access, this scheme would see the removal of this fence to enable the new accesses to be created.
7. The landowner has agreed to dedicate Higham Way to Oxfordshire County Council for a nominal value if the scheme identified in this report is approved.
8. It is proposed to transfer ownership and adopt as highway the existing access to the Grundon's Waste Operation Site (to be known as Higham Way). The road is used by Grundon's (the landowner) with others (Cemex, Network Rail, Royal Mail) having the access rights along it. The road will serve as an access to the adjacent Cattle Market development and, as such, will have a dual function as a residential road as well as be an access to the waste site and other local businesses. Grundon's has entered into an agreement in principle with Cherwell District Council to relocate to another site in Banbury within the next three years, but no firm commitment to a date has been identified as the timescale for relocation can be extended by Grundon's. That has had to be taken into account in the scheme design.
9. Whilst the waste site is still in operation, the road will be subject to regular use by HGVs. However, once Grundon's relocate and the site redeveloped, this is likely to alter the traffic levels and heavy vehicle loading.
10. The existing carriageway has a limited strength and life span. The road is currently substandard and Grundon's spent £30,000 last year on repairs. The road drainage is also inadequate. If ownership were to be transferred to OCC without the planned improvements, there is a very high risk that major maintenance would be required in the near future. It is considered more cost effective to carry out the improvements as part of the adoption process.

Public Consultation

11. On 22 November 2010, 517 letters were sent out to all residents living in the Cattle Market development, local businesses and statutory consultees, informing them of the outline scheme. This was followed by a more detailed letter which included a plan of the proposed scheme illustrating the proposed entry/egress points and traffic calming features to promote lower speeds along Higham Way. The consultation invited comments on the proposal and ran between 12 January 2011 and 4 February 2011.
12. A full summary of the comments received during the consultation is available at Annex 2. The consultation responses highlighted particular concerns from local residents regarding speeding, parking problems on Higham Way, the negative environmental impact of removing the fence and the proximity of the new road link to a play area.

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13. This scheme is supported by Cherwell District and Banbury Town Councils and local County Councillors Ann Bonner and Kieron Mallon.
14. The scheme includes proposed traffic calming features to help ensure speed is restricted.
15. With regard to car parking, double yellow lines are being proposed along the length of Higham Way, which will provide greater control in terms of controlling speed of traffic and the potential adverse parking impact that could lead to operational concerns for Grundon's. It is intended that this will come to the Cabinet Member for Transport in January/ February 2012, following the necessary consultation processes for a traffic regulation order.
16. It has always been the intention that the fence between the properties within the development and the carriageway of Higham Way would be removed. Environmental enhancements such as trees and sympathetic materials will form part of the scheme.
17. The layout of the Cattle Market development has been designed using the principles laid out in the Manual for Streets and this ensures speeds remain low. The road was always intended to be an exit / egress from the development and the recreational area was located there with this knowledge and is not unusual in its location.

Proposed Scheme

18. Key features are:
 - (a) Strengthening the existing carriageway.
 - (b) Three new traffic islands and speed cushions along the length of Higham Way to break up the flow of traffic and encourage lower speeds.
 - (c) Three new pedestrian and cycle entrance points onto Higham Way from the Cattle Market development, one of which is for pedestrians only.
 - (d) One new vehicular entrance point onto Higham Way from the Cattle Market development at the southern end.
 - (e) A bay for short stay parking outside the Royal Mail delivery office.
 - (f) New waiting restrictions (double yellow lines) along the entire length of the road to discourage indiscriminate parking.
 - (g) The existing vehicular access into Marshall Road at the Merton Street end of Higham Way will be maintained.
 - (h) A new drainage system will also need to be installed as part of the works.
19. The proposed scheme is to strengthen the road and cater for the existing traffic use including the high HGV content from the Grundon's site. Once Grundon's vacate their site, the strength of the road will be reassessed and it is envisaged that a nominal overlay will be required when their site is redeveloped. This will minimise the initial cost whilst providing a road fit for purpose and with minimal future maintenance requirements. The theoretical

remaining carriageway life should be in the region of 30 to 40 years, which is in line with current design standards.

20. If approved then the adoption along with carriageway improvements, traffic calming and access would be completed by 2012.

How the project supports LTP3 objectives

21. This project meets Local Transport Plan objectives, especially;
 - (a) Improving the condition of local roads, footways and cycleways, including resilience to climate change.
 - (b) Reducing congestion.
 - (c) Improving accessibility to work, education and services.
 - (d) Securing infrastructure and services to support development.

Equality and Inclusion

22. The scheme proposals are not considered to have the potential to affect people differently according to their gender, race, religion or belief or sexual orientation, age or disability.
23. However, during the detailed design process liaison with local inclusive mobility and access groups will continue in order to inform on the final design, including choice of materials, in order to offer the most advantageous design for all users.

Financial and Staff Implications

24. Staff resources from the Highways & Transport Service along and with Legal Services will be required to deliver the project.
25. The total budget for this scheme is £200,000 - £140,000 from developer contributions from the Cattle Market development (this funding is flexible monies from S106). The remaining £60,000 from the Integrated Transport Block fund.

Risks

26. If the cost of the scheme increases beyond the contingency already built in then additional funds would need to be sought from the Integrated Transport Block funding.
27. The legal transfer of land from Grundon's to Oxfordshire County Council may take longer than expected. If so that could impact on timescales and available budget.

RECOMMENDATION

28. **The Leader of the Council is RECOMMENDED to:**

- (a) **proceed with the adoption process/land transfer;**
- (b) **approve the scheme for delivery in 2012, and**
- (c) **delegate authority to the Deputy Director of Highways and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport, to deal with any specific matters relating to detailed design.**

STEVE HOWELL

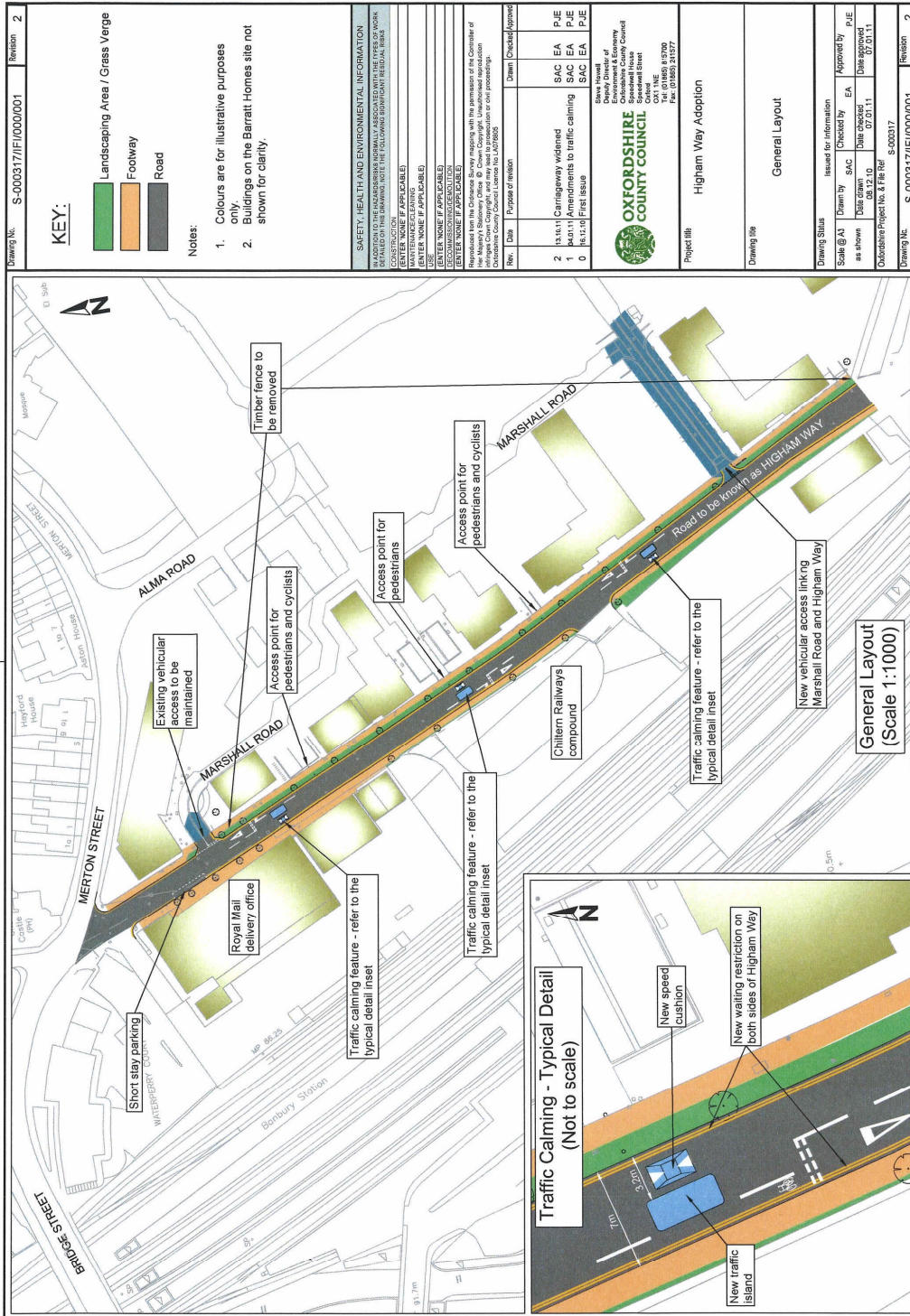
Deputy Director E&E – Highways & Transport

Background papers: Consultation documentation

Contact Officer: Jo Sage, Assistant Transport Planner

October 2011

Annex 1: Proposed Layout Plan



Annex 2: Response to Consultation

Address	Summary of comments	Comments by the Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Highways & Transport)
Resident, Marshall Road	<p>Who will maintain the landscaping areas?</p> <p>Unofficial access between Alma Road and Marshall Road already exists – gravel surface.</p> <p>Not a convenient route for people living on Alma Road.</p> <p>Where will people park that live in the flats adjacent to the new link?</p> <p>Will the new link have waiting restrictions?</p> <p>The new link is adjacent to the playing area – conflict possible.</p> <p>The existing fence hides the access road from the new development.</p> <p>Cost of maintaining Higham Way, especially a problem whilst it's being used by Grundon's lorries.</p>	<p>Higham way will become public highway, therefore landscaping will be maintained by the highway authority.</p> <p>This provision has always been unofficial and has now been removed.</p> <p>The junction between Higham Way and Marshall Road will be in keeping with the characteristics of the Cattle Market development, which has been designed to incorporate the principles of the Manual for Streets.</p> <p>Designated parking areas at the rear of each block of flats have been provided as part the development.</p> <p>It is proposed to introduce waiting restrictions (double yellow lines) on both sides of Higham Way. Parking restrictions within the extents of the Cattle Market development site fall outside the scope of this project.</p> <p>The layout of the Cattle Market Development has been designed using the principles laid out in the Manual for Streets – which seeks to remove segregation between different highway uses. Overall, the situation would be no different to any other recreational area located next to a road.</p> <p>It has always been the intention to remove the fence on completion of the Cattle Market development.</p> <p>As part of the adoption process, Higham Way will be treated to bring it up to normal highway standards and this treatment will be designed to take</p>

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Address	Summary of comments	Comments by the Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Highways & Transport)
	Does not support the scheme.	into account the volume and type of traffic associated with Grundons. Noted.
Resident	Supports the scheme. Concerned about access to the development from Thorpe Way.	Noted A separate project has been identified to investigate junction capacity along the north-south routes in Banbury. The Windsor Street / Bridge Street junction will be included within this new project.
Royal Mail	Extend waiting restriction into the Royal Mail access.	The existing no waiting restriction extends across the frontage and access to the delivery office. Enforcement issues are dealt with by the Police.
Resident	First letter mentions link between Marshall Road and Alma Road – no mention in second letter.	Alma Road will be indirectly linked to Higham Way via the side roads leading off from Marshall Road.
Resident	Objects to the scheme Plans for Higham Way and the new development should have been agreed at the planning application stage. Possible conflict between the existing play area and the new access link. Removal of the fence will compromise security and privacy. Possible increase in noise when the fence is removed.	Noted It has been a long term objective of both the County and District councils to provide an alternative link between Merton Street and the Cattle Market development, subject to negotiations with Grundons. These negotiations were entered into after the start of construction of the development. The layout of the Cattle Market Development has been designed using principles laid out in the Manual for Streets – which seeks to remove segregation between different highway uses. Overall, the situation would be no different to any other recreational area located next to a road. The fence between the Cattle Market development and Higham Way has always been intended to be a temporary feature which would eventually be removed. Flats and houses on the development have been

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	<p>The link road area is used as a car park already. Possible conflict between parked vehicles and vehicles using the new link road.</p> <p>Proposals for Higham Way will affect the re-sale value of properties.</p>	<p>built with double glazing which meet the requirements of the Building Regulations.</p> <p>Designated parking areas at the rear of each block of flats have been provided as part the development.</p> <p>Noted</p>
Resident	<p>Does not think the scheme will solve the congestion at the Merton Street junction with Bridge Street / Middleton Road.</p> <p>Concerned about wider traffic impact and congestion in central Banbury.</p>	<p>Widening of Merton Street has been investigated by Officers in the past and it has been concluded that this would be unfeasible. Although the adoption of the highway will not reduce the overall volume of traffic using the Merton Street / Middleton Road / Bridge Street junction, it may help to balance the flow on each arm of the junction.</p> <p>A separate project has been identified to investigate junction capacity along the north-south routes in Banbury. The Windsor Street / Bridge Street junction will be included within this new project.</p>
Resident	<p>Concerned about level of traffic re-routing into quiet parts of the development.</p> <p>Indiscriminate parking on Alma Road is currently a problem which will be made worse by the proposals to up a link between Higham Way and Marshall Road.</p> <p>Possible problems with commuter parking.</p> <p>Apparently poor levels of street lighting on the development.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Enforcement of any parking restrictions are carried out by the Police and fall outside the scope of this project.</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Street lighting on the Cattle Market development would have been designed to adoptable highway</p>

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	<p>Existing access provisions are adequate.</p> <p>Objects to the scheme</p>	<p>standards.</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>
Resident	<p>Supports the scheme.</p> <p>When will Thorpe Way be closed off?</p> <p>Will more parking be provided on the development?</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Thorpe way has been closed to vehicular traffic since this consultation exercise was carried out.</p> <p>The proposals to adopt Higham Way will not include the provision of additional parking spaces on the Cattle Market development.</p>
Resident	<p>Removing the fence will compromise privacy and security.</p> <p>Objects to the removal of the fence.</p>	<p>The fence between the cattle Market development and Higham Way has always been intended to be a temporary feature which would eventually be removed.</p> <p>Noted</p>
Resident	<p>Waiting restrictions will be ignored.</p> <p>Removing the fence will increase the level of noise pollution from the railway.</p> <p>Removing the fence will increase the level of sound pollution from the access road.</p> <p>The proposals will cause an increase in traffic at the Merton Street junction.</p>	<p>Enforcement of waiting restrictions is carried out by the Police.</p> <p>The fence between the Cattle Market development and Higham Way has always been intended to be a temporary feature which would eventually be removed. Flats and houses on the development have been built with double glazing which meet the requirements of the Building Regulations.</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>The volume of traffic using the Merton Street / Middleton Road / Bridge Street junction will not be affected by these proposals.</p>
Resident	<p>The width of the new link will not be sufficiently wide</p>	<p>The layout of the Cattle Market Development has been designed using</p>

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	<p>enough.</p> <p>Thorpe Way should be used for access.</p> <p>Nothing to address the problems at Merton Street junction.</p>	<p>the principles laid out in the Manual for Streets – which seeks to remove segregation between different highway uses. Narrow carriageways and restricted forward visibility will assist in encouraging slower than normal speeds and these principles have been used throughout the Cattle Market development.</p> <p>It has always been the intention to close off the junction between Thorpe Way and Alma Road to general vehicular traffic.</p> <p>Although the adoption of the highway will not reduce the overall volume of traffic using the Merton Street / Middleton Road / Bridge Street junction, it may help to balance the flow on each arm of the junction.</p>
Chiltern Railways Ltd	<p>The land shown on your map as the “Chiltern Railways compound” has three present and/or future uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the site of Chiltern Railways’ Integrated Control Centre (ICC), which supervises all our services and operations. It is thus essential that pedestrian and car access for staff, and HGV access for tankers carrying fuel for the ICC generators, is maintained 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. • It gives access to Banbury Cattle Market sidings. These are used by Chiltern Railways for stabling and servicing trains overnight, by Network Rail for stabling 	<p>The alignment and layout of Higham Way have been designed to accommodate the movement of larger vehicles. Waiting restrictions will be provided along both sides of Higham Way. The Council will liaise with Chiltern Railways over the final layout of the traffic calming features; maintain access to all businesses located on or accessed from Higham Way during the construction phase of the project and liaise with these businesses during the preparation of the construction phasing for the works and ensure the appointed contractor is aware of these requirements.</p>

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	<p>track maintenance machines during the day, and for access to the railway for engineering work at all times. Access for pedestrians, cars, light commercial vehicles and HGVs, is thus required 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The northern part of the site is zoned for a future railway station car park. This is shown in Cherwell District Council's draft Supplementary Planning Document for Banbury Canalside (November 2009), and Cherwell District Council's Local Development Framework draft Core Strategy (Policy BAN 1) (February 2010). The potential parking capacity is 600+ spaces in a multi-storey car park, with a possible initial development of an at-grade car park with circa 150 spaces. The nature of railway station car parking means that traffic flows along "Higham Way" will be strongly tidal, and concentrated in line with train departures and arrivals. <p>In addition, Network Rail have an additional access point south of the Chiltern compound (i.e. beyond the proposed end of the adopted road). Should the station car park be constructed this will become the main access</p>	

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Address	Summary of comments	Comments by the Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Highways & Transport)
	<p>point for track engineering work.</p> <p>Chiltern Railways welcome the Council's proposals to adopt Higham Way. However, in view of the present and future uses of our site it is important that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the traffic calming features do not result in tailbacks for traffic to/from the future station car park; • carriageway widths will allow operation of HGVs; • parking restrictions are put in place for the length of the road; • the location of the traffic islands does not preclude a second entrance to /exit from the future car park at the north (Bridge Street) end of our site; • 24 hour access is maintained to the Chiltern compound at all times, including during highway works. • 24 hour access is maintained at all times to the Network Rail access point south of the Chiltern compound. 	
Resident Alma Road	<p>Blocking up the unofficial cut through between Alma Road and Marshall Road.</p> <p>New waiting restrictions for Alma Road.</p>	<p>The unofficial link between Alma Road and Marshall Road has been removed since this consultation exercise took place.</p> <p>The provision of new waiting restrictions on Alma Road falls beyond the scope of this project.</p>
Resident Marshall	Request new waiting restrictions at both the	It is proposed to introduce waiting restrictions along the length of Higham

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Road	<p>existing and proposed junctions between Higham Way and Marshall Road.</p> <p>Request some sort of junction entry treatment be incorporated into the new junction between Higham Way and Marshall Road.</p> <p>Request the unofficial cut through between Alma Road and Marshall Road be blocked off.</p> <p>Request traffic calming is introduced on Marshall Road.</p>	<p>Way. There are no plans to extend these restrictions into the Cattle Market development.</p> <p>It is proposed to incorporate a raised junction treatment at the new junction between Higham Way and Marshall Road.</p> <p>The layout of the Cattle Market development has been designed using the principles laid out in the Manual for Streets – which seeks to remove segregation between different highway uses. Narrow carriageways and restricted forward visibility assist in encouraging slower than normal speeds and these principles have been used throughout the Cattle Market development.</p> <p>The provision of additional traffic calming features on Marshall Road is beyond the scope of this project.</p>
Cherwell District Council	<p>These proposals have the whole-hearted support of Cherwell District Council including our relevant ward Members. Please ensure that the Cabinet Member for Transport is aware of this very strong support when he formally considers this matter.</p>	Noted
Resident Fulwell Close	<p>Not opposed to the scheme, but concerned that it will not tackle the congestion at Merton Street / Bridge Street / Middleton Road junction.</p> <p>Considers that Thorpe Way should be kept open.</p>	<p>Although the adoption of Highway will not reduce the overall volume of traffic using the Merton Street / Middleton Road / Bridge Street junction, it may help to balance the flow on each arm of the junction.</p> <p>It has always been the intention to close off the junction between Thorpe Way and Alma Road to general vehicular traffic.</p>

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Address	Summary of comments	Comments by the Deputy Director for Environment & Economy (Highways & Transport)
Banbury Town Council	The Planning Committee met last night and welcomed the County Council's proposals regarding Higham Way. They were also pleased that the proposal included provision for short stay parking adjacent to the Royal Mail delivery office.	Noted
Thames Valley Police Traffic Management	<p>There is no information about the signs that will accompany the features. These must conform to the appropriate national regulations.</p> <p>The plans show trees on either side of the proposed vehicular access linking into Marshall Road. These trees should not interfere with the sightlines to the junction.</p>	<p>New signing for the traffic calming features will accord with the current edition of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions.</p> <p>The final layout of any planting and landscaping will be determined during the detailed design stage of the project.</p>