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## Meeting of Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel

8 September 2008

Report of the Director of City Strategy

### **MANOR SCHOOL - HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS (including Beckfield Lane cycle scheme)**

#### **Summary**

1. This report summarises the outcome of consultation on a package of highway improvements aimed at providing safe and sustainable transport links to the new Manor School located on Millfield Lane. The package includes elements that the school is required to provide as planning conditions, plus other complementary proposals, which would be funded via the Council's Local Transport Plan. Issues arising through the consultation are discussed, and possible amendments to the proposals are considered. Options for providing cycle facilities along Beckfield Lane are also discussed. Approval of a scheme for implementation is sought, along with authorisation to advertise some related traffic regulation orders.

#### **Background**

2. On 5 March 2007 the Planning Committee gave permission for a new and larger Manor School to be constructed on a site off Millfield Lane, subject to a number of detailed conditions being met. These conditions include several highway improvements that are intended to provide the new school with safe and sustainable transport links. **Annex A** provides a plan giving a general overview of the highway improvement scheme, and the more specific requirements of the planning conditions are summarised below:-
  - A 20mph School Safety Zone on Millfield Lane to enhance road safety around the new school frontage.
  - Widening the existing segregated pedestrian/cycle path along Millfield Lane.

- A lowering bollard to facilitate bus and emergency vehicle access through the existing Low Poppleton Lane road closure.
  - Widening the existing footway on the west side of Low Poppleton lane to provide more space for pedestrians.
  - The provision of improved crossing facilities on Boroughbridge Road and Beckfield Lane to serve the main pedestrian and cyclist movements at the junction.
  - Widening the existing footway along Beckfield Lane, for a distance of at least 70m back from Boroughbridge Road, to provide an off-road segregated cycle path.
3. In taking this work forward, it was recognised that the proposal to allow buses and emergency vehicle access between Low Poppleton Lane and Millfield Lane was a key component of the whole scheme. Therefore more detailed feasibility work was carried out, which led to the conclusion that an automatic lowering bollard scheme could be designed to operate at the existing closure position. Following on from this, the necessary Traffic Regulation Order was advertised in September 2007 and a report on objections received was considered by this EMAP on 29 October 2007. A decision was made to implement the proposal as advertised.
4. Following resolution of the bollard scheme, further design work took place to develop a more comprehensive highway improvement scheme for the area, as shown on the revised overview plan provided as Annex B. This includes several enhancements above the basic planning conditions to help achieve increased benefits for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users in line with Local Transport Plan (LTP) objectives. The key additions to the original plan (Annex A) were: -
- Signalisation of the Boroughbridge Road / Beckfield Lane / Low Poppleton Lane junction to provide the enhanced crossings required under the planning conditions, and to facilitate the increased movement of buses in and out of Low Poppleton Lane (linked to the introduction of a lowering bollard at existing road closure point).
  - Providing an off-road segregated cycle path along Low Poppleton Lane, and around into Millfield Lane, to join up with the existing off-road facilities running along the southern side of Millfield Lane.
  - Extending the off-road segregated cycle path along Beckfield Lane beyond the minimum provision of 70m, to at least its junction with Newlands Drive (there is also an allocation within the 08/09 LTP capital programme for developing and implementing more extensive cycle facilities along Beckfield Lane).

- It was proposed to build the off-road segregated paths along Beckfield Lane and Millfield Lane with a 1.8m footway and a 2.0m cycleway. The proposed overall width of 3.8m is slightly wider than the 3.5m required under the planning conditions, as this extra space would make the facilities more comfortable and safer to use.
5. More detailed plans showing the enhanced scheme proposals are provided in the following annexes:-
    - Annex C Millfield Lane - School Safety Zone, pedestrian/cycle facilities, speed limit alterations, and new bus stops.
    - Annex D Low Poppleton Lane / Millfield Lane -bus access and pedestrian/cycle facilities.
    - Annex E Low Poppleton Lane - pedestrian/cycle facilities
    - Annex F Beckfield Lane / Boroughbridge Road - traffic signals.
    - Annex G Beckfield Lane - pedestrian/cycle facilities.
  6. Public consultation was carried out in May/June 2008 on the enhanced package of proposals. This involved a letter and plans being sent to around 185 households and businesses in the local area that would be most directly affected by the proposals. In addition, an exhibition of the proposals was held at the existing Manor School on the evening of 10 June 2008. Details were also sent to various other interested parties for comment, such as Ward Councillors, the emergency services, and road user groups.
  7. The outcome of this consultation exercise formed the basis of a report to this EMAP on 14 July 2008. The report itself, plus representations made at the meeting and subsequent Member debate highlighted a number of concerns and issues about specific aspects of the overall scheme. In particular these focussed on the provision of cycle paths on Beckfield Lane and Low Poppleton Lane, the position of the proposed bus stop on the north side of Millfield Lane, and issues linked to the proposed new traffic signals on Boroughbridge Road. Therefore it was agreed to defer consideration of the scheme to allow officers to re-examine some of the specific proposals in light of the comments received.
  8. Following the 14 July EMAP meeting officers have developed a number of scheme amendments for consideration, and where appropriate further local consultation has taken place. In light of this additional information, each element of the original scheme is discussed below, leading to recommendations on an amended package of measures for implementation.

## **Updated Proposals**

### **Millfield Lane**

#### **Original Proposals**

9. The original proposal (see Annex C) involved; creating a traffic calmed 20mph School Safety Zone, introducing 30mph speed limits either side of the 20 Zone, improving the existing shared use paths on the south side of Millfield Lane, and providing two new bus stops near the new school.

#### **Initial Consultation Feedback**

10. The main concerns raised by local residents, Councillors, and other consultees are summarised below :-
  - Possible adverse effects on local residents from increased noise and vibration linked to the proposed traffic calming measures (e.g. speed tables).
  - Additional measures are needed at the new school entrance to ensure motorist's enter/exit the site slowly and are aware of the off-road cycle path. Similar concerns were also raised about the access to Villa Court.
  - The proposed bus stop on the north side of Millfield Lane could be located in a better position to improve road safety and reduce the impact on nearby residents.

#### **Discussion / Revised Proposals**

11. Physical traffic calming measures are considered to be essential to ensure a slow speed and safe environment around the school frontage. Although the local resident's concerns over possible increased noise and vibration are understandable, this is thought very unlikely to be a problem in reality. Firstly, the two residential properties in question are both set back a long way from the road which will diminish the effects of any ground-borne vibrations. Secondly, it is proposed to construct the speed tables with 'S' shaped ramps, which include lower gradient sections for large vehicles to ride over and are a proven way of minimising traffic vibration and noise effects.
12. Suitable warning signs and road markings around the main school entrance, and the access to Villa Court, will be included in the detailed design to make sure that both cyclists and motorists are aware of each other.

13. The options for positioning a bus stop along the north side of Millfield Lane are very limited due to potential conflicts with the many accesses to commercial premises along this side of the road. At the feasibility stage, two main options were identified. One was to locate the bus stop directly opposite the main vehicular access to the school, and the other was to put it between the level crossing and the first side road junction. The first option presented problems in terms of the physical space available to fit in a standard bus lay-by, and Officers were also concerned that having the stop in this position could tempt pupils to take a direct route through the school car park, with all the increased road safety risk that would entail. The other location did not have these problems, and was therefore chosen as the preferred location to include in the scheme layout put forward for consultation.
14. In looking again at the position of this bus stop on north side of Millfield Lane, Officers re-examined all the possible locations where one could be fitted in. This confirmed the previous view that the only alternative location worth serious consideration is directly opposite the school entrance. This led to discussions with a representative of the school over the concern that pupils might use the car park area as a route to and from a bus stop in this position. The school representative thought that walking through the car park would not be very attractive because pupils will mainly be using an access located on the west side of the school building (the front access will just be for visitors to the school). Furthermore, it was confirmed that the school would be able to put a local rules in place to ensure that pupils do not do this. Given this re-assurance, officers felt it appropriate to look at this option in more detail, which led to the development of an alternative layout for the School Safety Zone as shown in Annex H. It is important to note that the lay-by would need to be about 2.0m shorter than the usual recommended length to enable it to be fitted into the space available. However, the approach speed of buses will be lower than usual because of the traffic calming measures, and this should reduce the space needed to manoeuvre into a kerbside position within the lay-by area.
15. It is important to point out that the plan shows revisions to the layout of the traffic calming features to ensure that the speed table crossing points are positioned where they will be attractive for users of the bus stop to use.

### **Further Consultation / Conclusions**

16. The alternative School Safety Zone plan was distributed to local residents/businesses and Ward Councillors for comment. No responses were received up to the point of finalising this report. Any subsequent feedback will be presented at the EMAP meeting.
17. Officers' main concern over the alternative position for the bus stop and lay-by could be overcome by the school taking action to prohibit pupils from

using the car park as a route to and from the bus stop. The alternative position also has the advantage of there being slightly less motor traffic on Millfield Lane east of the first side road, which should make it a little easier and safer to cross the road near the bus stop. However, there is still a small concern that any pupils crossing between the bus stop and the eastern pedestrian access to the school will need to also cross two vehicular accesses to commercial premises. One of these serves several businesses and is quite busy. This access also has poor visibility as drivers leave the site, due to a high hedge, which would be a safety problem if pupils were walking in this area. Fortunately, the numbers going this way should be low because the main pupil access to the school will be on the west side of the school. Also, it is hoped that the visibility at the commercial accesses could be improved through negotiation with the business operators about removing a section of hedge and replacing it with a suitable fence.

18. Any late consultation feedback on the alternative layout will be presented as an update at the EMAP meeting, but given residents' concerns over the bus stop position initially proposed, the alternative scheme would appear to offer the best way forward.

## **Low Poppleton Lane**

### **Original Proposals**

19. The original plan (see Annex D) shows the provision an off-road segregated cycle path, which mainly runs along the east side of Low Poppleton Lane before switching to the west side near the Millfield Lane end. Crossing between the two sides of the road would be aided by a raised crossing point. The proposals also include widening of the existing footway over the remainder of the west side of Low Poppleton Lane to provide more space for pedestrians.

### **Initial Consultation Feedback**

20. The main concerns raised by local residents, Councillors, and other consultees are summarised below: -
  - The crossing will be close to a business entrance, which has many vehicles going in and out during the day, which could pose a risk to pedestrians and cyclists.
  - Residents felt that there was no need to widen the footway on the residential side of Low Poppleton Lane, and expressed concern that the loss of grass verge could add to existing flooding problems.
  - The proposed off-road cycle facilities on the east side of Low Poppleton Lane are unnecessary, given the low levels of traffic experienced there.

## **Discussion / Revised Proposals**

21. To address concern over the proximity of the raised crossing point to the business entrance a revised proposal has been developed (see Annex I). This puts the speed table a little further towards Boroughbridge Road, and provides more clear space for drivers associated with adjacent business to interact safely with the crossing point.
22. The proposed widening of the western footway seeks to provide an adequate facility for the increased pedestrian movements expected when the school relocates, and is a specific condition within the planning consent. It is unlikely that removal of a narrow strip of the verge would significantly increase drainage run-off, but steps will be taken to address the existing drainage issue in this area as part of the detailed design of the proposed footway widening.
23. The proposed cycle facilities on Low Poppleton Lane seek to provide a convenient and safe link between the off-road facilities on Millfield Lane and new crossing facilities proposed at the Boroughbridge Road junction. Therefore, although not specifically required as part of the planning approval for the school, officers feel that these facilities would help to minimising potential conflicts between cyclists and traffic and enhance the overall safe routes to school provision.
24. It is acknowledged that existing traffic levels in Low Poppleton Lane are very low, and will remain so even when a small number of buses begin to use this as a through route when the school opens. Perhaps of greater concern is the conflict cyclists could face from on-street parking and vehicles turning in the street if Low Poppleton Lane becomes a popular location for parents to drop off and pick up children by car. However, if this was to become a significant problem it could be addressed by consideration of additional parking restrictions.
25. If off road cycle facilities were not provided along the east side of Low Poppleton Lane, there would need to be alternative provision made for cyclists to facilitate access to and from the crossing facilities proposed at the new Boroughbridge Road traffic signals. The plan provided in Annex J shows how ramps could be provided to allow cyclists to get on and off the road in Low Poppleton Lane. These would be fairly straightforward to build, but there would be some concern over potential conflicts with motor vehicles where cyclists enter the carriageway.
26. Another consequence of not providing the proposed off-road facilities along the east side of Low Poppleton Lane is the likelihood that many cyclists will choose to cycle on the existing footway in preference to returning to the

road. It is thought that cyclists would find it even more attractive to stay on this footway if the proposed raised crossing point is retained. Hence it is recommended that this should be removed from the scheme if provision of the eastern off-road cycle path is not supported by Members.

### **Further Consultation / Conclusions**

27. Information about the revision of the proposed speed table position (as shown in Annex I) was sent out to local residents, businesses and Ward Councillors. No responses were received up to the point of finalising this report. Any subsequent feedback will be presented at the EMAP meeting.
28. No additional consultation has been carried out on the option of not providing off-road cycle facilities on the east side of Low Poppleton Lane, or removing the associated raised crossing point from the scheme. However, the issues linked to this option have been examined in detail by Officers and are presented to Members above for consideration.
29. It is now very important that a decision is made on this so that the design of a preferred package of highway improvements can be finalised and taken forward for implementation before the school opens.

### **Boroughbridge Road/Low Poppleton Lane/Beckfield Lane**

#### **Original Proposals**

30. Following a feasibility study, traffic signals were considered to be by far the best way of achieving enhanced crossing facilities for both pedestrians and cyclists at this junction. Traffic signals also provided the best option for facilitating the movement of buses in and out of Low Poppleton Lane (linked to the introduction of a lowering bollard at existing road closure point). Computer modelling based on peak hour traffic conditions showed that the traffic signals would require two-lane approaches on Boroughbridge Road to ensure that drivers waiting to turn right do not block and delay the main straight ahead flows. This requires the carriageway on Boroughbridge Road west of the junction to be widened, and the original proposed layout of the signalised junction is shown in Annex F.

#### **Initial Consultation Feedback**

31. The main concerns raised by local residents, Councillors, and other consultees are summarised below :-
  - A larger roundabout instead of traffic lights would be more beneficial to traffic flow.
  - Drivers may choose to “rat-run” through Newlands Drive to avoid delays at the traffic signals.



- Residents close to the junction on Boroughbridge Road will have increased difficulties accessing their properties due to queuing traffic forming in two lanes, and reduced visibility when exiting driveways due to the reduction in verge width.
- The existing out-bound bus stop on Boroughbridge Road just west of the junction needs to be re-located to the east of the junction to enable it to be used by Service 10 when it starts to run via Low Poppleton Lane.

### **Discussion / Revised Proposals**

32. The option of a larger roundabout was considered as part of an initial feasibility assessment into possible ways of improving this junction. However, traffic signals were strongly preferred because they provide the opportunity for controlled crossing facilities to be introduced for both pedestrians and cyclists. A roundabout solution would only provide refuge islands to help people cross the road in two halves, but would not offer any priority over traffic.
33. Local concerns about drivers cutting through Newlands Drive to avoid the traffic signals are understandable, but this is though unlikely to develop into a significant problem. Under the existing mini-roundabout arrangement the junction currently experiences significant queuing at peak times, so any people who would find it attractive to cut through Newlands Drive are probably already doing so. However, before and after monitoring would be carried out and if a significant problem was identified then counter-measures could be considered. The options could include traffic calming or a point road closure.
34. As mentioned earlier, the high traffic demands on the junction make it essential that two stacking lanes are provided on Boroughbridge Road approaches to ensure that the straight ahead flows are not held up by a small number of right-turners. This will make access a little more difficult for adjacent residents, but it should be noted that they already experience queuing traffic in front of their homes at peak times, and it is a common difficulty for people living near busy junctions. In practice, drivers in queues will usually stay back or pull forward a little to allow other drivers to get in or out of adjacent driveways, and residents faced with such difficult traffic conditions at peak times often develop their own personal strategies for dealing with the situation. Therefore this is something that would be monitored after the scheme was implemented. If serious problems were being experienced then consideration could be given to measures such as "Keep Clear" markings. However, these markings do need to be employed with caution because they can affect the efficient discharge of a traffic queue through the junction when a green light appears. They also result in

longer queues which might present other problems further away from the junction.

35. In response to local residents' concerns over restricted visibility when exiting driveways on Boroughbridge Road west of the junction, an alternative layout for this part of the junction has been developed. The drawings in Annex K shows the original proposal for this arm of the junction, plus an amended layout which involves some widening on the south side of the road to reduce the amount need on the north side. This amended layout improves visibility for all the driveways on the north side of the road, whilst maintaining an adequate sight line for the single driveway located on the south side.
36. Options for re-locating the existing out-bound bus stop on Boroughbridge Road to a point east of the junction have been assessed. The preferred location is outside Nos. 223/221/219 (see the plan in Annex L). The verge area here is long enough for a bus to stop without blocking nearby driveways, and there is plenty of space available for locating a hard standing and footpath link to the stop. When a bus stops here it is likely to hold up the flow of outbound traffic for a short time, as happens at most other bus stops on Boroughbridge Road, but it will then be easier for the bus to move off again and access the right turn lane at the new traffic signals. Positioning the bus stop closer to the junction, where the road is wider and traffic could overtake the bus, was also considered. However, in this situation a bus driver would find it difficult to move across from the side of the road to access the right-turn lane.
37. The other major issue affecting the layout of the traffic signal junction is the way the final design will need to tie in with whatever cycle facilities are provided on Low Poppleton Lane and Beckfield Lane. At the moment both of these issues are unresolved, and it is recognised that Members have many issues to consider in deciding how to proceed. Given this situation, and bearing in mind the importance of having traffic signals in place before the school opens, a revised layout for junction has been developed (see Annex M). Importantly the revised layout provides the flexibility to provide combined pedestrian/cycle crossing facilities across all arms of the junction if necessary. The layout on the plan shows how it would work if there were no connecting off-road facilities along Low Poppleton Lane or Beckfield Lane. However, this design could easily be modified to fit in with whatever connecting cycle facilities are provided now or in the future.

### **Further Consultation / Conclusions**

38. Plans showing the proposed revised layout of the Boroughbridge Road (west) arm of the junction were distributed to local residents and Ward Councillors for comment. No responses were received up to the point of

finalising this report. Any subsequent feedback will be presented at the EMAP meeting.

39. Information showing the proposed position of the out-bound bus stop on Boroughbridge Road was distributed to local residents, Ward Councillors, and the First bus company for comment. No responses were received up to the point of finalising this report. Any subsequent feedback will be presented at the EMAP meeting.
40. Plans showing how combined pedestrian/cycle crossing could be provided on all arms of the junction were distributed to local residents and Ward Councillors for comment. No responses were received up to the point of finalising this report. Any subsequent feedback will be presented at the EMAP meeting.

## **Beckfield Lane**

### **Original Proposals**

41. The original proposal (see Annex G) involved creating a segregated shared use path along the east side of the street between Boroughbridge Road and Newlands Drive. This would be achieved by widening the existing path from around 2.2m to 3.8m and then allocating 1.8m for footway and 2.0m for the cyclepath. Cyclists would be positioned on the carriageway side of the path.

### **Initial Consultation Feedback**

42. The main concerns raised by local residents, Councillors, and other consultees are summarised below :-
  - There will be increased conflict with pedestrians, and facilities should be provided to encourage cyclists to use the road.
  - There will be potential dangers for cyclists from vehicles entering /exiting driveways.
  - There will be dangers for cyclists where the cycle path terminates at the Newlands Drive
  - Some cyclists will need to cross Beckfield Lane to access the off-road path if it is only provided on one side, so need to provide a path on both sides or at least a crossing facility at some convenient point.
  - The wider proposals for Beckfield Lane need to be developed before making a decision on this part, to make sure they all tie together.

## Discussion / Revised Proposals

43. In developing the original proposal Officers had to consider many factors. These are outlined below:-

- On-road cycle lanes – The carriageway width along most of Beckfield Lane is only around 6.8m. Given that the recommended minimum width for an on-road cycle lane is 1.5m, and for roads carrying HGV and bus traffic we would look to provide traffic lanes of 3.0m for each direction of travel, the overall road width required would be 9.0m. This means that Beckfield Lane is significantly too narrow for cycle lanes to be considered. Widening the road by the necessary amount (ideally by 2.2m) would be extremely expensive (probably in excess of £500,000) and necessitate the loss of most of the existing trees along the street. Hence this is not thought to be a viable option for most of Beckfield Lane.
- Off-road cycleways – The provision of off-road cycle facilities on Beckfield Lane generally looks to be a feasible option because of the wide verge areas which exist on both sides of the road over most of its length. However, these would be very expensive to construct. Initial estimates indicate that it would cost in excess of £500,000 to provide paths on both side of the street over its full length. Furthermore, there are many localised restrictions on the available verge width cause by trees, street furniture, and previous highway alterations. Indeed part of the west side of the street, close to the Ostman Road junction, has no verge space available and insufficient footway width to enable an off-road cycleway to be created, which means that it would be impossible to provide a continuous facility on that side of the street. The potential for providing off-road cycleways is also complicated by the high number of side roads and private vehicle cross-overs which exist along both sides of Beckfield Lane. It is also thought likely that any proposals to create more extensive off-road facilities along Beckfield Lane will generate strong local opposition, similar to that arising from the Boroughbridge Road to Newlands Drive proposal.
- Notwithstanding the problems outlined above, it would clearly be more convenient for cyclists to have paths on both sides of the road wherever possible. However, this would effectively double the cost of providing a facility over a given length of the street, and therefore the cost/benefit ratio of doing so needs to be carefully looked at. Or put another way, for a fixed amount of money, there is a choice between having a facility on both side of the road for a certain distance, or having a facility extending perhaps twice as far along just one side of the street. In making this choice the potential use generated from either side of the street needs to be looked at, as well as the difficulty cyclist may have crossing the road to access a path on the other side.

Due to the larger residential areas which link into the east side of Beckfield Lane (see the plan in Annex N) it was considered that this should be the priority side for providing an off-road cycle facility. This option was also recommended by Sustrans who carried out a Safer Routes to School Study for Manor school a few years ago.

- In built-up areas, and especially where a cycle path is being introduced alongside an existing well-used footway alongside a road, most nationally accepted design guidance recommends the provision of segregation between pedestrians and cyclists. Unsegregated shared use is generally considered more appropriate for more lightly used paths situated away from the road-side, which are often in more rural situations with more of a leisure purpose. The main advantage of a segregated approach in a situation like Beckfield Lane is that potential conflict between pedestrians and cyclists can be kept to a minimum, and also by positioning the cycle side of the path towards the carriageway potential conflicts between fast moving cyclists and vehicles pulling out from driveways can be minimised.
44. The above considerations all contributed to the development of the proposal put forward for consultation (Annex G). Officers consider that a wider scheme for Beckfield Lane should certainly include this section of off-road path, even if a subsequent decision were taken to provide a similar facility on the other side of the road as well. Therefore it is felt that this proposal does stand up as a beneficial facility in the short term, which should fit in with whatever is decided for the rest of Beckfield Lane. If the proposed cycle facility between Boroughbridge Road and Newlands Drive is not approved for implementation, there would still be a need to consider the provision some short sections of off-road path to allow cyclists to leave and re-join the carriageway to take advantage of crossing facilities within the new traffic signals. The plan in Annex M shows how this would be achieved. However, officers do have particular concerns about the potential for conflicts where cyclists would be led back onto the carriageway soon after the junction. On busy roads this manoeuvre is usually done under the protection of a kerbed build-out leading to an on-road cycle lane, but the narrow width of Beckfield Lane would not facilitate this approach. Officers think that this problem gives strong justification for providing an off-road facility at least as far as Newlands Drive. This would provide cyclists with several opportunities to rejoin the carriageway, using one of the many vehicle crossovers, whenever a suitable gap in the traffic flow was spotted. Failing this, they would ultimately need to rejoin the carriageway at the Newlands Drive junction. However, this is a quiet side road where it should be relatively easy to move to the far side of the road and wait for a suitable opportunity to safely enter the traffic flow on Beckfield Lane.
45. There is currently £150,000 in the 08/09 capital programme for implementing a wider Beckfield Lane cycle scheme. As discussed above,

the costs involved in providing facilities over the full length of the street are very substantial and it would probably need to be tackled in discrete phases. Based on value for money in terms of potential usage and benefit gained, it is felt that the first priority should be to provide an off-road link on the east side of Beckfield Lane from Boroughbridge Road to either Almsford Road or Ostman Road. This would achieve an important link to the residential streets in the Danebury Drive area, where many Manor school pupils live (see Annex N). Many currently walk to the existing school site, but the demand for cycling is likely to increase significantly because of the extra distance to the new school site.

46. It is also relevant to note that a Zebra crossing proposal near the Almsford Road junction is currently being looked at as a possible safe routes to school measure for Carr Infant and Junior schools. If implemented, this could double up a crossing facility for cyclists progressing along the west side of Beckfield Lane to cross over and access the proposed off-road cycle facility on the east side of the street.

### **Further Consultation / Conclusions**

47. No additional consultation has been carried out at this stage on options for providing more extensive cycle facilities on Beckfield Lane. However, the broad issues involved have been identified by Officers in this report. Given the difficult issues involved, Members are asked to provide a steer on way forward.
48. In the short term, Officers consider that there is a strong case for providing the proposed off-road cycle facility on the east side of the street, extending initially as far as the Newlands Drive junction. However, there would also be many advantages in extending this as far as either the Almsford Drive or Ostman Road junctions, depending on the outcome of further consultation.
49. If Members decided not to approve the introduction of off-road cycle facilities at this stage, preferring to see a wider scheme developed first, then it would be recommended that at least local provision is made close to the Boroughbridge Road junction to facilitate use of the signalised crossing facilities (as shown in Annex M).

### **Options**

50. Following on from the development of amended proposals and further consultation, there are several key decisions for Members to make on options relating to discrete elements of the overall scheme. However, in a broad sense, there are two basic options for the way forward :-

- Option One is to approve the original highway improvement proposals, as consulted on, for implementation with no changes (i.e. as per the plans in Annexes C to G).
- Option Two is to approve a revised highway improvement scheme for implementation based on various changes Members would like to see made to the original proposals.

## **Analysis**

51. Consultation on the original scheme proposals highlighted significant concerns and issues, and also generated many helpful comments. This has led to some additional proposals being developed. These changes have potential to address many of the issues raised and enhance the overall highway improvement scheme. Hence the option of approving all the original proposals (Option One) cannot be recommended as a way forward.
52. It is therefore recommended that Members follow Option Two by agreeing a revised scheme they wish to see taken forward for implementation. To ensure that the new school is served by safe and sustainable transport links when it opens in Spring 2009, it is essential that agreement on this matter be reached at this meeting. It is also important that the scheme to be implemented meets, as far as is reasonably possible, the basic requirements of the relevant planning approval conditions. To assist Members in making the necessary decisions, the key choices are summarised below, along with officer recommendations :-

- Millfield Lane (School Safety Zone) - The options are to choose the original scheme layout shown in Annex C, or the alternative layout shown in Annex H.

*Officer recommendation – to approve the alternative layout shown in Annex H for implementation.*

- Low Poppleton Lane (Cycle Facilities) – The options are to choose the original scheme layout shown in Annex E (with the revised raised crossing position shown in Annex I), or to opt for not providing any off-road cycle facilities along the east side of the street (except for the short sections close to the Boroughbridge Road junction as shown in Annex J).

*Officer recommendation – to approve the scheme layout shown in Annex E, including the revision shown in Annex I, for implementation.*

- Boroughbridge Road / Beckfield Lane/Low Poppleton Lane (traffic signal junction) – The options are to choose the original proposed layout as shown in Annex F (with or without the proposed amendment

to the Boroughbridge Road (west) arm as shown in Annex K), or approve the alternative layout shown in Annex M (which provides for combined cycle and pedestrian crossing facilities on all arms of the junction, and could be modified to tie in with whatever cycle facilities are approved for Low Poppleton Lane and Beckfield Lane).

*Officer recommendation – to approve the revised layout shown in Annex M for implementation, with delegated authority for Officers to modify this as necessary to fit in with whatever connecting cycle facilities are approved.*

- Beckfield Lane (Cycle Facilities) - The immediate options are to either approve implementation of the original proposal as shown in Annex G (an off-road cycle facility on the east side of the street between Boroughbridge Road and Newlands Drive), or just to provide off-road cycle links close to the Boroughbridge Road junction to facilitate access to and from signal controlled crossing facilities at the junction, as shown in Annex M.

*Officer recommendation – to approve the proposals shown in Annex G for implementation.*

Members are also being asked to give a steer at this meeting on the preferred way forward for developing a wider cycle scheme for Beckfield Lane, and in particular what the priorities should be for utilising the £150,000 budget allocation within the 2008/09 LTP capital programme.

*Officer recommendation – to approve, in principle, a long term aim of introducing off-road cycle paths along either side of Beckfield Lane where practical, and agree to the development of detailed proposals for providing a path on the east side of the street extending as far south as Ostman Road as the priority for 2008/09.*

- Boroughbridge Road (Outbound Bus Stop) - The options are to approve the proposed relocation of the bus stop as shown in Annex L, or to approve an alternative position for further consultation with local residents and the bus operator.

*Officer recommendation – to approve the relocation of the bus stop as shown in Annex L*

## **Corporate Priorities**

53. The scheme will help towards achieving the council's priority of increasing the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport. It



will also help with improving the health and lifestyles of many people by providing facilities to encourage walking and cycling.

## **Implications**

54. This report has the following implications:

### **Financial**

55. The scheme is being funded by a combination of sources. A substantial proportion of the scheme, being linked to planning conditions, will be paid for via the funding arrangement for the construction of the new school.
56. Within this, the planning conditions state that a specific contribution of £45,000 has to be made towards the provision of improved crossing facilities at the Beckfield Lane /Boroughbridge Road junction. The proposed signalisation of the junction is estimated to cost around £350,000, and will be primarily funded using Section 106 money linked to development of the former Donnelly's site, which was obtained by the Council for making transport improvements along Boroughbridge Road. The remaining funding will be provided by a contribution from the Local Transport Plan.
57. The off-road cycle facilities along Low Poppleton Lane, Beckfield Lane (beyond the 70m length covered by the planning conditions), and Millfield Lane (above the basic requirements of the planning conditions) will be funded from the 08/09 Local Transport Plan capital programme.

### **Human Resources**

58. There are no human resources implications.

### **Equalities**

59. The proposed measures will benefit vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists. In particular improved crossing facilities will benefit the young and the elderly as well as the mobility and visually impaired, whilst more reliable public transport services will benefit non-car owners who tend to be low-income families or the elderly.

### **Legal**

60. The City of York Council, as highway authority for the area, has powers under the following Acts and associated Regulations to implement improvements to the highway and any associated measures:
- The Highways Act 1980

- The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
  - The Road Traffic Act 1988
61. New or amended Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) will be required to cover some elements of the overall scheme. The main ones will cover:-
- Changes to the existing speed limits on Millfield Lane (including the proposed 30mph limit and 20mph Zone near the school – see Annexes C and H).
  - The introduction of new parking restrictions on Millfield Lane close to the new school (double yellow lines and enforceable “School Keep Clear” markings – see Annexes C and H)
  - The removal of some existing parking bays from Low Poppleton Lane to protect visibility at the new raised crossing point (see Annex I).
62. These would be advertised in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act and, in accordance with the delegation scheme under the Council’s Constitution, any objections would be considered by the Director for City Strategy in consultation with the Executive Member for City Strategy.

### **Crime and Disorder**

63. Where practical and appropriate the proposed improvements would include measures to enhance the safety of all road users, in particular vulnerable users such as pedestrians and cyclists, as well as minimising the risks of crime.

### **Information Technology**

64. None.

### **Land & Property**

65. All the proposed works would be within the adopted highway.

### **Risk Management**

66. In compliance with the Council’s risk management strategy, the main risks linked to this report are discussed below:-

### **Strategic**

67. The new school is programmed to open on 29 March 2009. There is a risk of not meeting this strategic objective if the conditions on the planning approval are not met. To avoid this possibility, it is considered essential

that decisions are made at this meeting that will enable a preferred highway improvement scheme to be implemented by February 2009.

### **Physical**

68. The main physical risk to achieving implementation on time is thought to be the need to move or protect services in the ground, where the layout of the highway is being altered. Close liaison with the Utility companies is taking place to identify and programme any necessary works to fit the overall implementation timetable.

### **Financial**

69. There is also a potential risk that the scheme costs may exceed current estimates. Again, the need to move or protect underground services poses the main area of financial uncertainty about the overall cost of the scheme.

### **Organisation/Reputation**

70. Some local residents are known to be unhappy with aspects of the school re-location and associated highway improvements. However, consultation has taken place via the planning process and the more recent consultation on the detail of the highway proposals. Of greater significance would be the reputational issues the Council might face if the school could not open as planned because the required highway scheme was not implemented in time.
71. Measured in terms of impact and likelihood, the risk score for all these risks has been assessed at less than 16 (see table below). This means that at this point the risks need only to be monitored as they do not provide a real threat to the achievement of the objectives of this report.

| Risk Category           | Impact | Likelihood | Score |
|-------------------------|--------|------------|-------|
| Strategic               | High   | Unlikely   | 10    |
| Physical                | High   | Possible   | 15    |
| Financial               | High   | Possible   | 15    |
| Organisation/Reputation | High   | Unlikely   | 10    |

### **Recommendations**

72. That the Advisory Panel consider the various options and recommendations summarised in paragraph 52, and advise the Executive Member to:-

- (1) Approve the following as the preferred package of measures for implementation, subject to resolution of any Traffic Regulation Order issues and possible minor amendments required by further detailed design and the road safety audit process.
- *the alternative School Safety Zone layout on Millfield Lane shown in Annex H*
  - *the arrangements around the Millfield Lane /Low Poppleton Lane junction shown in Annex D*
  - *the scheme layout shown in Annex E, including the revision shown in Annex I*
  - *the revised layout of the Boroughbridge Road/ Low Poppleton Lane / Beckfield Lane junction shown in Annex M*
  - *the proposals for Beckfield Lane shown in Annex G*
  - *the relocation of the bus stop on Boroughbridge Road as shown in Annex L*

Reason: To provide safe and sustainable transport links to the new Manor School, deliver the required highway improvements as conditioned within the planning approval, and to respond to issues and concerns raised through consultation on the detailed scheme plans.

- (2) Authorise the advertisement of any Road Traffic Regulation Orders associated with the preferred highway improvement scheme and, subject to no objections being received, the Orders be made. Any unresolved objections to be referred to the Director of City Strategy to consider in consultation with the Executive Member for City Strategy.

Reason: To enable any necessary restrictions on parking, use of any section of carriageway or footway, and changes to speed limits to be introduced.

- (3) To approve, in principle, a long term aim of introducing off-road cycle paths along either side of Beckfield Lane where practical, and agree to the development of detailed proposals for providing a path on the east side of the street extending as far south as Ostman Road as the priority for 2008/09.

Reason: To provide officers with direction on how to progress the Beckfield Lane Cycle Route scheme, and make best use of the funding currently available to take this forward.

## Contact Details

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Report Approved

Date 18 August 2008

### Specialist Implications Officer(s)

#### Financial

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Wards Affected: Acomb and Rural West York

All

For further information please contact the author of the report.

### Background Papers:

- “Proposed Manor Church of England School Site, Millfield Lane, Nether Poppleton, York” - report to the Planning Committee dated 5 March 2007.
- Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 5 March 2007 (which contains full details of the planning approval decision, including the specific highway related conditions).
- “Millfield Lane / Low Poppleton Lane Traffic Regulation Order Objections” - report to the meeting of the Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel held on 29 October 2007.
- “Manor School – Highway Improvements” - report to the meeting of the Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel held on 14 July 2008.

### Annexes

(Annexes A to N are available on the Council website attached to this agenda item)

Annex A Original overview plan showing highway improvement scheme agreed at planning approval stage.

Annex B Revised overview plan showing the more detailed and comprehensive highway improvement scheme proposals.

- Annex C Millfield Lane - School Safety Zone, pedestrian/cycle facilities, speed limit alterations, and new bus stops.
- Annex D Low Poppleton Lane / Millfield Lane - bus access and pedestrian/cycle facilities.
- Annex E Low Poppleton Lane - pedestrian/cycle facilities
- Annex F Beckfield Lane / Boroughbridge Road - traffic signals.
- Annex G Beckfield Lane - pedestrian/cycle facilities.
- Annex H Alternative School Safety Zone Layout (including revised bus stop position).
- Annex I Proposed scheme amendments in Low Poppleton Lane.
- Annex J Proposals to facilitate cycle movements between the footway and carriageway in Low Poppleton Lane if continuous off-road cycle facilities are not provided.
- Annex K Boroughbridge Road (west) approach to new traffic signals - original and revised proposals.
- Annex L Proposed re-location of out-bound bus stop on Boroughbridge Road.
- Annex M Beckfield Lane / Boroughbridge Road traffic signals - revised layout providing the flexibility to provide combined pedestrian/cycle crossing facilities across all arms of the junction if necessary.
- Annex N Beckfield Lane cycle scheme – area plans

MJD/GE

14 August 2008

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