

# ENVIRONMENT CABINET MEMBER MEETING

## Agenda Item 127

Brighton & Hove City Council

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Woodingdean Crossroads</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>26 March 2009</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Director of Environment</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Andrew Renaut</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 29-2477
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<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Forward Plan No. N/A</b>	
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>Woodingdean</b>		

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The junction of the B2123 (Falmer Road)/Warren Road/Warren Way, known locally as Woodingdean crossroads, was identified and agreed as being one of 26 high risk casualty reduction sites by the council's Environment Committee in November 2006. In considering how to address the road safety problems that have occurred at the junction, officers have taken into account a number of other needs/factors in designing appropriate improvement measures. These include improving safety for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users, upgrading the ageing traffic signal equipment, undertaking some essential road maintenance and reducing delays to local traffic at busy times.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to notify the Cabinet Member of the emerging proposals for the junction and the need to seek permission to consult with the local community about those proposals, and to identify the funding to enable the continued development of the proposals.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 (1) That the Cabinet Member for Environment notes the emerging proposals that are being developed to improve Woodingdean Crossroads.
- 2.2 (2) That the Cabinet Member for Environment agrees to the inclusion of an appropriate level of funding in the 2009/10 Local Transport Plan capital programme to enable consultation and construction of the Woodingdean crossroads scheme.
- 2.3 (3) That the Cabinet Member for Environment authorises the Director of Environment to finalise the engineering design for the junction and to report the outcome of that work to the May 2009 Environment Cabinet Member Meeting for further consideration.

### **3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:**

- 3.1 Falmer Road is a well-used route connecting the A27 Trunk Road with the A259 coast road, and links those routes with the east of the city, especially key destinations such as the Brighton General and Royal Sussex County Hospitals and the Marina. Concerns have been expressed over a long period of time about the safety problems and traffic congestion experienced by local drivers and pedestrians at this busy junction. These have been acknowledged in the past, but have not been able to be prioritised within transport capital investment programmes. The combination of the number of collisions and casualties at the site, when compared to other locations in the city, together with other factors, have now presented the opportunity to address a number of issues in a single scheme. A brief outline of these issues is set out below and a location plan is attached at Appendix A.

#### **Road safety**

- 3.2 In 2006, an analysis of collision and casualty data for 2003-2005 in Brighton & Hove indicated that there were 12 collisions resulting in 19 casualties at the Woodingdean crossroads junction. Therefore, the site was agreed as being 'high risk' that warranted inclusion in the provisional Local Transport Plan [LTP] programme for Road Safety Engineering works between 2007/08 and 2009/10, which was drawn up in accordance with the approved priorities in the second LTP for 2006/07-2010/11 [LTP2]. Collision/casualty data for the period 2005-2007 show that the level of collisions and casualties has not changed significantly and that problems still exist.

#### **Traffic signals/Pedestrians and cyclists**

- 3.3 The LTP2 includes a planned programme of investment to improve and upgrade traffic control equipment. The age of the traffic signals at Woodingdean crossroads means that this equipment is nearing the end of its useful life and that the probability of increased failure/problems will increase over time.
- 3.4 The traffic signals also provide safe crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists at this busy junction. Nearly 1800 pedestrian (500 of which are children) crossing movements take place over a 12 hour period between 07.00 and 19.00 on a typical weekday. Although cycle flows are light, improved provision for cyclists will be beneficial, and consistent with the city's Cycling Town designation.

#### **Road maintenance**

- 3.5 There are some particular problems associated with water collecting on the road surface near to the shops in Warren Way. Improvements to the level of the road surface will correct this. It will also be beneficial to undertake some additional works to renew road surfaces within the junction after the revisions to the road layout have been completed.

#### **Traffic congestion**

- 3.6 Surveys show that during an average 24 hour day, Falmer Road is used by between 18,000 – 19,000 vehicles. Both village side roads are also busy. Surveys show that queues in excess of 500 vehicles can occur during busy

'peak hour' periods on all approaches to the junction, affecting local drivers and bus passengers, and some longer distance journeys. Delays can create impatience and affect driver behaviour and lead to risk-taking at junctions. There are opportunities to ease some of this queuing by amending the road layout, whilst acknowledging that the route could appear more attractive to some drivers as a result.

### **Links to Falmer Community Stadium**

- 3.7 Significant concerns were expressed about the potential effects of the Community Stadium on the Woodingdean crossroads junction, when considered in June 2002. Any changes to the junction should contribute towards addressing some of these problems, should they arise when the stadium is in use.

### **Emerging design of proposed improvement scheme**

- 3.8 Work has begun to design a safe and comprehensive improvement that primarily addresses road safety issues and concerns, and improves the junction for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users. A number of measures are under investigation in order to address their feasibility, given the significant differences in ground levels that exist at the junction. Some examples of these measures are described below and illustrated in Appendix A. These include:

- Changing the southbound, B2123 Falmer Road approach to the junction from one to two lanes by utilising part of the existing verge (and slightly relocating part of the footway), south of 558 Falmer Road, to reduce delays. This does present particular issues in terms of gradients and requires further rigorous analysis of the preliminary design.
- Upgrading the ageing traffic signals with the latest energy efficient equipment, and including the use of 'rotating cones' at crossing points for pedestrians who are visually impaired.
- Addressing delays that occur to local traffic at busy times through new traffic signal technology that will optimise the control and movement of people and vehicles through the junction. This more efficient form of control is able to deliver substantially reduced delays without the need for regular re-setting of the signal timings, and is known as MOVA (which stands for **M**icroprocessor **O**ptimised **V**ehicle **A**ctuation).
- Improved crossing facilities at the junction for pedestrians, across the busy Falmer Road, Warren Road and Warren Way.
- Additional Advanced Stop Lines (ASLs) for cyclists at stop lines will conform with current practice and deliver commitments that have contributed towards achieving the city's Cycle Town designation.
- Maintaining road surfaces in the immediate vicinity of the junction.

## **4. CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 Initial discussions have taken place with local members about conditions experienced by road users at the junction, which have informed the development of the scheme. If the emerging proposals are considered acceptable, it is

proposed that wider consultation is undertaken to engage with, and gain the views of the local community. It is intended to report the outcome of the initial feasibility work to the May 2009 Environment Cabinet Member meeting, prior to undertaking public consultation, and agreeing a preferred scheme if one is supported, at a future Environment Cabinet Member meeting.

- 4.2 On this basis, an indicative timetable for developing the proposals during 2009 and 2010 is set out below :-  
Spring 2009 – finalise preliminary engineering design  
Spring/summer – seek permission to consult on proposals  
Early autumn - public consultation on proposals  
Autumn - analysis of consultation response and any associated design changes  
Winter – approval of preferred scheme by Cabinet Member  
Late winter 2009/early spring 2010 - further detailed design of scheme, including advertisement of Traffic Regulation Orders  
Spring – construction  
Late 2010/early 2011 – monitoring of changes.

## **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

### Financial Implications:

- 5.1 Capital – Work undertaken to date on developing these proposals has been funded through the allocation of funding for Traffic Control Equipment Improvement in the 2008/09 Local Transport Plan capital programme. The current estimated cost of public consultation and implementation of a design that includes the more significant engineering changes that could be made to the junction on Falmer Road will be between £350,000 and £400,000. The allocation of funding within the 2009/10 LTP capital programme is the subject of another report on the agenda of this meeting. The further development of the proposals required during 2009/10 could be funded from a number of different LTP budget headings such as Road Safety Engineering, Traffic Control Equipment, and Walking and Cycling Facilities.
- 5.2 Revenue - The introduction of new traffic signal equipment will reduce future maintenance and power costs funded out of revenue budgets.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Karen Brookshaw Date: 06/03/09*

### Legal Implications:

- 5.3 There are no direct legal implications associated with outlining the emerging proposals to improve the crossroads junction. All relevant procedural requirements will need to be undertaken, such as the advertisement of Traffic Orders and consideration of any representations and objections, before any final decision is taken to implement any proposals. There are no human rights implications to draw to the Cabinet Member's attention at this stage.

*Lawyer Consulted: Elizabeth Culbert Date: 05/03/09*

### Equalities Implications:

- 5.4 There are no direct equalities implications associated with outlining the emerging proposals to improve the crossroads junction. Future consultation material will be

designed in accordance with council standards and an appropriate, accessible venue will be sought for the consultation.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.5 There are no direct sustainability implications associated with outlining the emerging proposals to improve the crossroads junction. The proposals being developed incorporate measures that should improve conditions for the use of more sustainable transport such as walking and cycling and reduce the effects of congestion on some local traffic and bus services.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.6 There are no direct crime and disorder implications associated with outlining the emerging proposals to improve the crossroads junction.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.7 There are no direct risk and opportunity management implications associated with outlining the emerging proposals to improve the crossroads junction. An initial safety audit has been carried out, and further audits will be required to ensure that safe designs are implemented.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 By seeking to improve road safety and address some local traffic congestion, these proposals will contribute towards the corporate priority to 'protect the environment while growing the economy'. Combining a number of different measures into one scheme will result in achieving 'better use of public money'.

**6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

- 6.1 Having been identified as a road safety priority in 2006, it is considered essential that measures are developed and introduced at this junction. The proposals that are being developed are considered to be the most appropriate to address the problems that have been identified. Subject to finalising a safe and satisfactory engineering design, further changes may be necessary as a result of future consultation, prior to the approval of any preferred scheme. The measures being developed should address a number of issues in a comprehensive manner and therefore minimise the level of disruption and inconvenience that may be caused during any work.

**7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 It is considered important to notify the Cabinet Member of the emerging proposals for this junction to ensure that they are considered acceptable prior to seeking formal approval to undertake public consultation, and to ensure that an appropriate level of funding is made available from the LTP during 2009/10 to progress the development of the proposals.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

1. Location plan

### **Documents In Members' Rooms**

1. None

### **Background Documents**

1. Road Safety Engineering Programme – Report to November 2006 Environment Committee