



# HIGHWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

18 March 2014

# REPORT

**Subject Heading:**

**ROMFORD MAJOR SCHEME  
BUS STOP AND SPEED TABLE  
PROPOSALS**  
Outcome of public consultation

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**The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives**

Clean, safe and green borough	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Excellence in education and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities for all through economic, social and cultural activity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Value and enhance the life of every individual	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
High customer satisfaction and a stable council tax	<input type="checkbox"/>

## SUMMARY

This report sets out the responses to a consultation for the provision of a fully accessible bus stop outside Old Mill Parade, Victoria Road and a speed table in the entrance of King Edward Road and seeks a recommendation that the proposals be implemented.

The scheme is within **Romford Town** ward.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Committee having considered the representations made recommends to the Cabinet Member for Community Empowerment that the proposals set out in this report and shown on the following drawings are implemented;
  - QM062/1001
2. That it be noted that the estimated cost of £10,000 for implementation will be met by Transport for London through the 2014/15 Major Scheme allocation for the Romford Major Scheme.

## REPORT DETAIL

### 1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Romford Major Scheme seeks to substantially improve the public realm within Victoria Road and The Battis which are two important gateways to Romford Town Centre and will become more so with the arrival of Crossrail.
- 1.2 Transport for London has funded the Major Scheme which is broken down into design and consultation steps and has the following objectives;
  - The design of a secure and safe pedestrian environment at Romford Station and in the surrounding streets;
  - The development phase will be a precursor and catalyst for adjacent development and urban renewal;
  - The design will show an improved transport interchange experience and an attractive and integrated public realm, with consistency in way finding, furniture and materials;
  - A reduction in perceived severance of Romford Town Centre into north and south by the presence of the railway line;
  - Ensure local businesses' in the scheme area are signed up and supportive of the scheme proposals.
- 1.3 The design process has developed over a year of intensive consultation. This included extensive workshops and consultations with local people, local

and statutory stakeholders and local businesses. The following list illustrates the extent of consultation that has informed the development of the project

- Consultation associated with the development of the Romford Station Crossrail Urban Integration Study Urban strategy in 2011/12 recognised the desire to see improvements in the public realm and accessibility of the town centre in Victoria Road and The Battis as key routes linking Romford Station to residential areas,
- Major Scheme consultation with all local stakeholders, including Council officers, Cabinet Members and local Ward Councillors,
- Renting of an empty shop unit in Victoria Road where a wide range of workshops and events were held to engage with local people and businesses,
- Two specific business consultation events where all freeholders and leaseholders were invited to discuss the proposals and have input into the design,
- Follow up mail out to all freeholders and lease holders after the two events with an update on the preferred design,
- In depth one to one conversations and meetings with freeholders and lease holders,
- Regeneration and StreetCare Staff have consulted with other key stakeholders such as Transport for London, London Buses, Crossrail, Network Rail and the emergency services,
- Three UDL/TfL design reviews by (an essential part of the Transport for London Step 2 process).

1.4 The feedback from consultation was that Victoria Road is a difficult environment for pedestrians. These issues are

- That it is felt that the poor pedestrian environment makes customers less likely to shop on Victoria Road, and that footfall is lower than expected so close to a large station,
- That the lighting could be improved and that this would make people feel safer, especially in the evening,
- That there are no trees or benches that could make the street more welcoming and pleasant,
- That the western end of the road (nearest South Street) has a different character to the eastern end (nearest the ring road) and that any scheme to improve the road should take these different kinds of businesses and uses into account.

1.5 This feedback from the consultations has resulted in the proposal which was reported to the Committee in July 2013 which proposed a central parking strip in the south-western end of the street. This option required several freeholders to dedicate areas of their land as public highway.

1.6 Unfortunately, not all freeholders wished to dedicate their land as public highway and so it was not possible to proceed with the central parking area. A baseline option was taken forward to a detailed design and construction stage. The baseline option removed the central parking strip and the requirement for the dedication of land but would still provide;

- An enhanced and integrated public realm experience and approach to the Station, to and from residential hinterlands and streetscapes along Victoria Road;
- An integrated palette of lighting, furniture and paving materials will help link this area to Romford Station. Vehicular and pedestrian conflicts will be reduced by providing clear definition between vehicular and pedestrian areas;
- Repaving and resurfacing including private forecourts (where non-adopting licence agreements can be secured);
- Provision of speed table in the entrance to King Edward Road to provide a level surface for pedestrians;
- De-cluttering of Victoria Road with rationalisation of signing/ lighting onto as few columns as possible, along with the siting of street furniture, trees and lighting into consolidated strips along pavements
- Bus stop accessibility improvement by removal of bus layby and introduction of a bus stop clearway in the street's single bus stop.
- Greening of Victoria Road the use of street trees throughout the centre along with plants to create a more attractive, pleasant street
- New lighting – renewal of lighting throughout Victoria Road to create a more efficient, elegant, white light for the highway, pavement and building frontages
- Cycling facilities

1.7 The works to the bus stop and provision of the speed table in the entrance to King Edward Road require public consultation (with advertisement of the speed table). Drawing QM062/1001 shows the proposals.

1.8 19 letters were delivered to those potentially affected by the scheme on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2013, with a closing date of 24<sup>th</sup> January 2014 for comments.

1.9 In addition, ward councillors, HAC members and standard consultees (London Buses, emergency services, interest groups etc) were sent a set of the consultation information.

## **2.0 Outcome of Public Consultation**

- 2.1 By the close of consultation, 3 responses were received. London Buses Infrastructure indicated support for the scheme. Havering Cyclists requested an advanced stop line at the South Street junction, the shared-use of the footways by cyclists and cycle parking for the area.
- 2.2 A resident of Alexandra Road considered that parking and loading bays should be provided on Victoria Road, raised concerns on the impact on traffic flow by removing the bus stop layby and various comments about the current state of the street.

## **3.0 Staff Comments**

- 3.1 The footways are around 2.1m in width and not suitable for shared-use with cyclists. The provision of an ASL is being considered, but is not an item requiring a committee recommendation. Cycle parking is being provided as part of the scheme. There is no possibility of providing on-street parking and loading bays because almost all locations will have dropped kerbs to parking on the businesses' forecourts. The removal of the layby is required to provide a fully accessible bus stop and has featured in the scheme from the start.

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

### **Financial implications and risks:**

This report is asking HAC to recommend to Lead Member the implementation of the above scheme that the bus stop layby in Victoria Road be removed and a clearway is introduced.

The estimated cost of implementing the proposals as described above and shown on the attached plan is £10,000 This cost can be met from the 2014/15 LIP Allocation for Romford. Spend will need to complete by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 to maximise access to TfL grant funding).

The costs shown are an estimate of the full costs of the scheme, should it be implemented. A final decision would be made by the Lead Member – as regards actual implementation and scheme detail. Therefore, final costs are subject to change

This is a standard project for StreetCare and there is no expectation that the works cannot be contained within the cost estimate. There is an element of contingency built into the financial estimate. In the unlikely event of an overspend, the balance would need to be contained within the overall StreetCare Capital budget.

**Legal implications and risks:**

There are a number of licence agreements that need to be entered into with individual freeholders and leaseholders in order to deliver the baseline option. These are in the process of being executed by the Council.

**Human Resources implications and risks:**

None

**Equalities Implications and Risks:**

The Council has a general duty under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that its highway network is accessible to all. Where infrastructure is provided or substantially upgraded, reasonable adjustments should be made to improve access. In considering the impacts and making improvements for people with protected characteristics (mainly, but not limited to disabled people, the young and older people), this will assist the Council in meeting its duty under the Act.

The provision of fully accessible bus stops assists with making public transport more inclusive to all sectors of the community, but most especially disabled people and people using pushchairs. Accessible bus stops will be of benefit to people using wheelchairs, but also people who have walking, balance and dexterity difficulties; and blind and partially-sighted people.

Consultation has taken place with Havering Association for People with Disabilities and Sight Action and their views have been taken into account when developing the design.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Project file: QM062, Romford Major Scheme