



Report to Leader (Transport portfolio)

Decision Date:	1 May 2024
Reference number:	TR05.24
Title:	Castlefield Traffic Calming Measures
Cabinet Member:	Cllr. Steve Broadbent – Cabinet Member for Transport
Contact officer:	Josh Tomlinson
Ward(s) affected:	Booker, Castlefield & Cressex - Cllr. Majid Hussain, Cllr. Karen Bates, Cllr. Mohammed Ayub

Recommendations:

The Leader notes the outcome of the public engagement and statutory consultation for the traffic calming measures.

The Leader delegates authority to the Service Director of Highways and Technical Service to complete detailed design following consultation. If necessary, change the scope to fit within the available budget, in line with the statutory process.

Service Director of Highways and Technical Service is delegated to approve contractual commitments including construction up to the value of the released capital-funded budget of £1,100,000 to deliver the Castlefield traffic calming scheme.

Reason for recommendation:

To enable the implementation of the Castlefield traffic calming scheme using corporately available capital funding and Council reserves.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This project is a proactive initiative, forming part of the wider Opportunity Bucks programme that has been introduced by Buckinghamshire Council, helping to improve opportunities for people in Buckinghamshire.
- 1.2 Castlefield, High Wycombe has been subjected to significant anti-social driving behaviour in recent years. Local Castlefield community representatives and Thames Valley Police (TVP) neighbourhood police teams have provided reports to the Council outlining occurrences and concerns.
- 1.2 The proposals have been designed to deter vehicle speeding and/or reduce anti-social driving occurrences along the following roads.
- Rutland Avenue
 - The Middleway
 - Spearing Road
 - Booker Lane
 - Cross Road
 - Whitelands Road



Fig 1. Location plan of the Castlefield roads to have traffic calming measures

2. Main body of report

2.1 This project aims to reduce vehicle speeds and discourage anti-social driving along roads identified by the Castlefield local community with the help of the TVP Neighbourhood team.

2.2 The following roads and traffic calming measures are proposed for delivery in the Financial Year (FY) 2024/25. The proposed measures consist of asphalt raised tables and junctions of a maximum height of 100mm and bolt-down pre-formed speed cushions of a maximum height of 75mm, the maximum heights specified within current highway design guidance.

2.2.1 Rutland Avenue

- 3 table-top junctions with Rutland Avenue, Cross Road and Spearing Road
- 8 raised tables, including replacement of existing road humps
- 1 existing crossing to be rebuilt adjacent to Castlefield Mosque
- 3 round-top speed humps
- 1 chicane north of the junction with Spearing Road

2.2.2 The Middleway

- 1 table-top junction with Spearing Road outside the school entrance

2.2.3 Spearing Road

- 3 table-top junctions with Rutland Avenue, Cross Road and The Middleway
- 2 raised tables
- 7 pairs of speed cushions at regular intervals

2.2.4 Booker Lane

- 1 road hump near the junction with Rutland Avenue

2.2.5 Cross Road

- 2 table-top junctions with narrowing to T-junctions, enabling the provision of additional highway verge
- 1 pair of speed cushions between the junctions

2.2.6 Whitelands Road

- 8 pairs of speed cushions at regular intervals

2.2 The general arrangement drawings for the traffic calming schemes are attached in Appendix A.

- 2.3 The first stage of community engagement took place between 15 and 29 September to seek feedback from the wider Castlefield community, developed in close liaison with the local community group and TVP community liaison team. Following further technical design of the scheme the Council held a statutory consultation between 1 December and 22 December 2023.
- 2.4 The project team has collated the responses received during the consultation periods and the results are summarised in section 7 of this report. There have been some minor adjustments to the overall design following the statutory consultation.
- 2.5 These have been undertaken to reduce design complexity and achieve better value for money when constructed and are not a reduction of the traffic calming features proposed as part of the recent consultation.

3. Other options considered

- 3.1 Two other options were considered for the project:
- 3.2 Do Nothing - The project team does not progress with the project and instead funding is returned to the capital reserves for reallocation in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). This would result in significant reputational damage to the Council's commitments as part of the Opportunity Bucks programme. Castlefield would not be traffic calmed in line with the objectives of the Leader of the Council, Opportunity Bucks, local community action group, members, and residents.
- 3.3 Do Something – Subject to construction cost estimates and contractor tender returns, the Council may not be able to deliver all the measures consulted within the available budget of £1.1M. If necessary, Buckinghamshire Highways would recommend a reduced delivery scope in consultation with the Cabinet Member, Local Members and the Community Group. However, this may achieve a reduced level of traffic calming than originally consulted with the community.

4. Legal and financial implications

- 4.1 The project finance summary is presented in the table below:

	Budget £'000	Actuals YTD £'000	Remaining Spend £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
2023/24	83	83	0	83
2024/25	1,017	98	919	1,017
Total	1,100	181	919	1,100

Actuals to date cover the detailed design and consultation costs. The total budget available for the delivery of the Castlefield traffic calming scheme is £1,100,000.

Budget Description	Total (£)
Feasibility/Preliminary Design	29,646
Consultation	337
Detailed Design/Procurement	132,898
Construction (Estimate September 2023)	630,246
Supervision	63,025
Staff Costs	50,000

Total Forecast Expenditure (excluding Contingency/Risk)	906,152
Total Capital Funding (Budget)	1,100,000
Remaining Funding (for Contingency/Risk)	193,848

- 4.2 The most recent construction cost estimate was produced in September 2023. A contingency risk pot of £193,484 has been set aside to try to ensure that a scheme is delivered within budget. The construction cost information for the scheme has been provided by Buckinghamshire Highways Term Consultant Contractor Atkins. Once the final detailed design is complete an updated price will be confirmed following a competitive tender exercise.
- 4.3 The anticipation is that the scheme construction cost will be of a similar value to the feasibility design estimate. In the event the total forecast exceeds the available budget, Officers will explore options to value engineer the scheme and liaise with the community group and Members regarding the prioritisation of the scheme/roads with the view to descope measures, if necessary.
- 4.4 **Budget Changes:** The capital budget of £1,100,000 has been allocated for financial years 2023/24 & 2024/25 as part of the MTFP. It was included in the Quarter 3 Cabinet Capital Update for formal approval in November 2023.
- 4.5 Subject to agreement to the recommendations in this report, Buckinghamshire Highways will be completing the detailed design and tender for the proposed traffic calming measures during Quarter 4 FY 2023/24. Subject to sufficient budget, construction is expected to commence in Quarter 2 FY 2024/25.
- 4.6 **Legal Implications:** The proposed traffic calming measures are within existing highways which are adopted and maintainable at the public expense. The statutory consultation necessary under Sections 90A – 90F of the Highways Act 1980 and the Highways (Traffic Calming) Regulations 1999 have been complied with.

4a. Director of Legal & Democratic Services comment

4.7 The Director of Law and Governance nominee notes the legal advice is incorporated within the body of the report and therefore has no further comments to add.

4b. Section 151 Officer comment

4.8 The S151 Officer has read and noted the recent submitted report.

5. Corporate implications

- a) Property: All land required for this project is already within the adopted highway boundary or in ownership of the Council and therefore maintainable at public expense. If third-party land is required for temporary use, a commercial agreement will be negotiated on that basis.
- b) HR: There are no foreseen HR implications in agreeing to the recommendations of this report.
- c) Climate change: The introduction of traffic calming features in Castlefield will likely discourage speeding associated with anti-social driving. Vertical measures such as the raised tables are expected to result in slower speeds and resulting lower emissions.
- d) Sustainability: The anticipated reduction of anti-social driving can potentially lead to more people walking and cycling, providing a reduction in carbon emissions and benefiting the climate in the local area.
- e) Equality: In progressing the scheme and carrying out consultations the Council has considered the needs of persons with protected characteristics as set out in equalities legislation. The latest Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) is attached in Appendix B.
- f) Data: There are no foreseen data implications in agreeing to the recommendations of this report. This project will not require a data protection impact assessment.
- g) Value for money: The professional services and construction contracts will be let via the Buckinghamshire Highways framework or other procurement-compliant tendering process. The project will be assessed for value for money against similar schemes.
- h) Health & Safety: There are no foreseen H&S implications in agreeing to the recommendations of this report. The scheme is designed to current highway standards and will be subject to independent Road Safety Audit Stages 1 to 4.

6. Local councillors & community boards consultation & views

6.1 Local councillors for Booker, Cressex and Castlefield provided the following feedback.

6.1.1 **Cllr. Karen Bates** – *'It is good to know that at last we are able to progress this project. I am in full support of this action. It has been of great concerns to everyone in the community and the source of many emails to me from residents. The high speeds of many vehicles have caused distress and a very real risk to other road users. The community have worked hard in campaigning for change. The completed alterations will have a positive impact and help to restore the quality of life for all in the community. They will improve the level of safety and hopefully prevent the kind of collisions, and indeed tragedies, that have occurred in the past. Thank you for your assistance in making this happen, there has been a great team involved with a good understanding of the need for action.'*

6.1.2 **Cllr. Majid Hussain** – *"Thank you very much for this great news! After decades of high-speed car collisions and campaigning for many years I am very pleased and fully support the proposed traffic calming measures in Castlefield. The proposed solutions should help restore quality of life in Castlefield where speeding is a huge concern and a very high risk to the community.*

In addition, I can now inform the Castlefield School teacher, who lost her unborn child due to a high speeding car smashing into hers outside the school, that we are finally implementing traffic calming measures that will not only protect her but all the students/teachers and parents attending Castlefield School!"

6.1.3 **Cllr. Mohammed Ayub** – *'I am pleased to hear the good news on a longstanding issue, this will definitely alleviate the concerns residents have and also play a major role in bringing safety to the area. I would like to thank you for your assistance on this matter as well as the urgency.'*

7. Communication, engagement & further consultation

7.1 The consultation for the scheme was run over two stages. The first phase of community engagement took place between 15 and 29 September 2023 to seek feedback from the wider Castlefield community on the concept designs, developed in close liaison with the local community group and TVP community liaison team.

7.2 During this consultation, Officers displayed the plans at the following locations, dates, and times:

- 15 September 2023, Castlefield Mosque
- 19 September 2023, Castlefield School
- 22 September 2023, Castlefield Community Centre

- 24 September 2023, The Avenue Methodist Church, Castlefield

7.3 The consultation materials were available via:

- The project webpage, www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/castlefield
- A consultation webpage was set up on Your Voice Bucks accessible via: yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/roads-parking/castlefield-traffic-calming-measures

7.4 The project team received 54 responses via event feedback (14), emails (29) and the Your Voice Bucks online form (11). In summary, the overall response has been very supportive of the traffic calming proposals, with 34 (63%) of responses specifically in support of the scheme.

7.5 Several considerations were also captured for potential future phases of traffic calming and parking enforcement in the surrounding roads. However, the focus of the traffic calming remained on those locations already targeted as part of the consultation. Post-construction monitoring would be used to assess the effectiveness of the delivered measures before looking at further works in the area.

7.6 As a result of the earlier engagement, minor changes to the design were implemented, with the removal of the proposed bus stop build-outs on Cross Road and Spearing Road, and replaced with speed cushions.

7.7 A final statutory consultation was then carried out between 1 December and 22 December 2023 under Sections 90A – 90F of the Highways Act 1980, The Highways (Traffic Calming) Regulations 1999 and after consultation with the Chief of Police.

The relevant regulations Highways (Road Humps) Regulations 1999/1025; also state that the highway authority should consult with organisations (if any) representing persons likely to be affected by any provision in the order as the order-making authority thinks it appropriate to consult.

- A consultation webpage was set up on Your Voice Bucks accessible via: <https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/roads-parking/castlefield-area-traffic-calming-high-wycombe>

7.8 The Highways Authority notified 73 internal and external consultees outlined in Appendix F. Including the Chief of Police, other emergency services, bus operators as well as other representative bodies for the area. The email was issued on 30 November 2023.

- 7.9 The Authority sent 876 letters to frontages notifying residents and businesses within the proposed traffic calming area. A copy of the letter is attached in Appendix G.
- 7.10 From the emergency services and bus operators, only TVP have responded to the consultation and are in support of the consulted proposals. The TVP consultation response is available to view in Appendix C.
- 7.11 The council received a total of 87 responses via emails (14) and the Your Voice Bucks online form (73) to the statutory consultation the majority of which were residents. In summary, the overall response has been very supportive of the traffic calming proposals, with 72 (83%) of responses in support of the scheme.
- 7.12 A consultation response document has been prepared to respond to key themes raised in Appendix D. Responses from both consultations are summarised in Appendix E – Consultation Response Log with all the responses received.
- 7.13 As a result of the statutory consultation and subsequent design review by Buckinghamshire Highways. Further refinements to the scheme have been made to ensure buildability and achieve value for money.
- 7.14 In summary, the design team have undertaken a review following the substantial completion of the design to remove unnecessary construction works, reduce highway drainage requirements and reposition some traffic calming features to maintain access for emergency vehicles and private vehicles.
- 7.15 The project team has and will continue to engage with the local Councillors and community working group, and issue regular updates on the scheme's progress. The project webpage will be updated as the next stages of the project take place.

8. Next steps and review

- 8.1 If the recommendations of this report are agreed, the project team will:
- a) Complete the detailed design and finalise procurement of a contractor
 - b) proceed with the construction of the Castlefield Traffic Calming scheme subject to funding.

9. Background papers

Appendix A - Castlefield Traffic Calming General Arrangement Drawings

Appendix B - Equalities Impact Assessment - Castlefield Traffic Calming Measures

Appendix C - TVP Statutory Consultation Response

Appendix D - Castlefield Consultation Response Document

Appendix E - Consultation Response Log

Appendix F - Statutory Consultee List

Appendix G - Consultation letter to frontages

10. Your questions and views (for key decisions)

- 10.1 If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report, please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the Leader to consider, please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by email at democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk by 5pm on 29 April 2024.