

Statement of Reasons

Wokingham Borough Council (Bus Lanes) Order 20**

Proposal

Wokingham Borough Council proposes to introduce bus lanes on A4 London Road, Earley, Reading.

Background

Providing attractive bus services which are frequent, reliable, connected and affordable enables residents to have greener travel choices to the things they want and need to access, including jobs, education, social activities and support groups.

Officers have worked with partners and residents to identify ways bus services can better serve local communities. Residents with lived experience have highlighted the difficulties that late buses cause for travelling to work and medical appointments. To maximise the benefits of investment in transport services it is important to ensure buses can travel fast and reliability.

Discussions with partners and residents led to a series of proposals for improving bus journey times and reliability that included the A4 corridor and includes improvements to the existing bus gate onto the A4, the A3290 corridor and providing bus priority measures that connect with those provided by Reading Borough Council on the A4 corridor.

Traffic modelling shows average journey times can vary by 88 seconds on London Road east and by 113 seconds on for vehicles travelling from the A3290 to Cholmeley Road with the current highway layout. For buses the average modelled delay is slightly less, however bus operators have reported instances of up to a 9-minute variation between Shepherd Hill and Cemetery Junction.

The London Road bus lane is intended to improve bus journey times and reliability of service on the westbound approach to Sutton Seeds Roundabout and through part of the roundabout by providing road space dedicated solely for use by buses.

The proposal will also enable the re-routing of buses from the London Road service road, removing the conflict of buses using the single lane service road that also serves local businesses and a place of worship.

The expected outcomes of the proposals are:

- Improved journey times for both general traffic and bus passengers.
- A reduced need for buses to divert from their normal route due to the route being impassable.
- Improved accessibility and an improved waiting area at the London Road, The Drive bus stop.
- An improved bus service which is more reliable and convenient, increasing the opportunities for travel for work and education purposes.

Reasons

This Order is being proposed for the following reasons:

This proposal is made in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, which under Section 1 provides, generally, for Orders to be made for various reasons, and in the case of this Order specifically for the following reason:

(a) for facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic.

Having balanced the various matters and considerations, the Council has concluded that it is appropriate to progress the proposed Order.