

# Annex I

## **FTC COMMENTS ON PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION OF FIP MEASURES IN FARNHAM TOWN CENTRE**

SCC are inviting comments on the proposed Traffic Regulation Order for implementation of the proposed FIP proposals for Farnham Town Centre (still to be formally published). These proposals will be discussed at the FIP Board meeting that is being held on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December. There are a number of matters on which FTC needs to agree its collective view on the proposed Traffic Regulation Order at the meeting of Full Council that is being held on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December. FTC's proposed amendments, if adopted, would result in some savings in construction costs.

## **MITIGATION MEASURES IN NORTH AND SOUTH FARNHAM**

Implementation of the proposed FIP measures will result in some traffic being displaced onto other roads in North and South Farnham. It is FTC's view that implementation of the FIP measures in Farnham Town Centre, which should be implemented on a phased basis, should only be after mitigation measures to mitigate the impact of displaced traffic in North and South Farnham are identified and implemented.

## **TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER**

SCC are proposing one Traffic Regulation Order covering all the changes associated with implementation of FIP proposals in Farnham Town Centre. The proposed TRO has still to be published although SCC's proposals for Farnham Town Centre are known and are shown on the attached plan. Also attached is an alternative plan suggested by Cllr Hesse in which some amendments are suggested for consideration.

There are a number of matters on which a collective FTC view is now required including some design issues which are not part of the Traffic Regulation Order. These matters are as follows : -

### **HIGH PARK ROAD**

SCC propose a designated cycleway along High Park Road. Whilst FTC is fully supportive of measures to encourage greater use of active travel this particular cycleway seems unnecessary since it effectively duplicates an existing cycleway through Farnham Park. There is, however, a question over whether cycling is legally allowed in Farnham Park it is prohibited under a 1965 byelaw. In a response to a public question from Libby Ralph (Chair of Trustees of Farnham Park) to the meeting of the WBC Executive Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023 the following answer was given: -

"It is the Council's position that as we have allowed cyclists to ride in the Park on a permissive basis over the years and even reinforced that by creating shared paths then, a "lawful right or privilege" has been created for the public to use these paths for cycling. Therefore, it would be inappropriate to bring any action for breach of this byelaw".

In response Libby Ralph has asked a number of further questions to which, as yet, no reply has been received. The question on which a collective FTC view is required is as follows: -

### **Does FTC support the provision of a cycleway along High Park Road given that a parallel facility is provided along the southern boundary of Farnham Park?**

Even if a cycleway was not provided along High Park Road there would still be accessibility problems for those residents living on the north side of High Park Road given that Park Row is proposed to be restricted for access only and bicycles and if Bear Lane remains one way. FTC would, therefore, like

consideration to be given to providing a turning facility (such as a mini roundabout) for vehicles at its junction of High Park Road with Park Row and Bear Lane.

## **PARK ROW**

FTC has consistently supported restricting Park Row for access by local residents only and for use by bicycles provided that this restriction would not apply on those occasions when Castle Street is closed for use for events organised by Farnham Town Council.

## **BEAR LANE / WOOLMEAD ROAD**

**It is questioned whether there is any real need to widen the pavement on the west side of Woolmead Road from the Royal Deer Junction to its junction with Bear Lane.** Widening the pavement at this location would restrict the ability to eventually introduce two-way traffic along Woolmead Road which would allow East Street to be fully pedestrianised.

## **CASTLE STREET**

SCC propose widening the pavements and road width narrowed – an FTC collective view is, however, required on the following matters: -

- **Does FTC collectively support the suggestion made by Cllr Hesse that widening the pavement outside Castleton Dentists is not required and should be retained to provide parking spaces for residents to partially offset the loss of parking spaces elsewhere on Castle Street?** It has also been suggested that the bus stop on the west side of Castle Street at this location could be removed without replacement due to its low use by passengers but Stagecoach has asked for it to be retained. It is not, however, proposed to provide a bus shelter as shown on the SCC plan.
- **Does FTC collectively support the suggestion by Cllr Hesse that the delivery bay proposed to be located adjacent to the two disabled parking spaces (which would not be moved from their present location) should be moved slightly to the North to avoid any conflict with deliveries taking place outside hospitality venues?** Moving the delivery bay could, however, result in the loss of some car parking bays.
- **A collective FTC view is required on the extent and restoration of the ironstone on the east side of Castle Street. Should the taxi rank be moved to its proposed new location – if yes the ironstone would need to be strengthened by bonding with resin.**

On the east side of Castle Street it is not envisaged that any problems will be experienced with the bus stop being in line of traffic since it is only served by one bus per hour for passengers to alight. No bus shelter is, therefore, necessary.

FTC still has the following concerns over the SCC proposals for Castle Street : -

- SCC's proposals for widened pavements will be kerbed since according to SCC the level of traffic using Castle Street will be higher than would allow flush pavements for safety reasons. This will affect the ability of FTC to organise events such as the Food Festival and Christmas Market that currently use Castle Street which is closed on these occasions. These events provide revenue that exceeds costs which assists FTC in the cost of providing services across the year. There is no obvious suitable alternative to locate these events although in the longer term there is a possibility of using either East Street or Brightwells
- FTC still has concerns over the ability and suitability of a proposed right turn for vehicles from Castle Street into The Borough on which two way traffic is proposed between Castle and Downing Streets. FTC would propose that this element of the FIP proposals should be implemented last in any phasing of FIP implementation

## **THE BOROUGH**

SCC propose to move the bus stop currently located outside The Queens Head slightly to the west to a position nearer to Poundland. The original intention was to have the bus stop in line of traffic which was supported by Stagecoach. With the introduction of two way working along The Borough between Castle and Downing Streets this would inevitably cause traffic congestion – the Queens Head bus stop is well used served by all routes operating through Farnham and there are frequently up to 2 buses at this stop at any one time with a significant number of passengers boarding and alighting. A site meeting was arranged with the Stagecoach Commercial Director and Aldershot Depot Manager following which Stagecoach changed their view and advised SCC that either a full or half bus layby was required. It is understood (although still to be formally confirmed) that the Traffic Regulation Order will be amended accordingly.

It is also understood that the delivery bay located on the opposite south (Boots) side of The Borough opposite the relocated bus stop which could only have been used by vehicles turning right out of Castle Street will also now be on the north (Poundland) side to help create a bus layby that can also be used by delivery vehicles although probably at restricted times.

Attention has already been made to FTC's continued concern over the suitability of the proposed right hand turn from Castle Street into The Borough which is FTC's suggestion should be introduced during the last phase of FIP implementation. FTC also has continuing concerns that the narrowing of The Borough between Castle Street and Royal Deer Junction. A similar scheme has been tried before as a COVID measure but had to be withdrawn due to the traffic congestion and consequential air quality problems created further down The Borough into Downing and West Streets. This was, however when The Borough remained one way along its entire length. FTC would, suggest that the proposed narrowing of The Borough should also only be introduced during the last phase of FIP implementation.

## **DOWNING STREET / WEST STREET / UNION ROAD / VICTORIA ROAD / SOUTH STREET**

FTC has no further comments to make regarding SCC's FIP proposals for these roads. If, however, there are any surplus funds available from not implementing the High Park Road cycleway or building out pavements at certain locations on Woolmead Road and Castle Street then FTC would like consideration to be given to providing a pedestrian crossing at Longbridge. FTC appreciates that this has been considered before and rejected on safety grounds due to the blind corner at Bridge Square. With the introduction (and enforcement) of a 20 mph speed limit the safety concerns should have reduced to allow further consideration to be given to providing a pedestrian crossing at this location.

FTC does, however, appreciate that since all the FIP measures are covered in one Traffic Regulation Order any further significant changes would require the entire Traffic Regulation Order having to be readvertised with another period of public consultation which is likely to further delay the actual implementation of the FIP measures. It is FTC's view that these proposed changes when implemented are "right" for residents and ensure the continued economic prosperity of Farnham.

## **POSITIONING OF PUBLIC SEATING AND BICYCLE STANDS**

SCC requested FTC to consider the location of public seating and bicycle stands in Farnham Town Centre Area and a walkabout was held on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> November. Wherever possible it is suggested that public seating should be provided away from outside seating being provided by hospitality venues and to avoid creating pavement clutter should preferable be placed in between proposed trees particularly in The Borough and Downing Street.