

Transport and Countryside

Council Offices
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RG14 5LD

Our Ref: LWCS/PR20251001

Your Ref: n/a

Please ask for: Customer Services

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Dear Town Clerk,

Lower Way, Thatcham – Cycle and Pedestrian Improvements

I am writing to inform you of proposals for cycle and pedestrian highway improvements along Lower Way from the A4 to Green Lane to enhance sustainable travel and support our commitment to tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergency (Priority 3.11 More opportunities for Active Travel in the district).

The Council has developed a deliverable scheme to convert the existing cycle layout on the footway if the south side of Lower Way to a shared cycle facility. This will allow cyclists to continue to use the cycle path to travel along Lower Way to and from the existing cycle infrastructure along the A4 to the West, and improve the links between The Moors, Green Lane and National Route 4 along Church Gate.

The scheme will provide quality of life improvements for pedestrians using the footway on the south side of Lower Way to access: The Nature Discovery Centre; bus stops; Swansdown Walk; the new Lambourn Meadows Development; and crossing the roundabout between Lower Way and The Moors. Existing footways and shared footway sections will be retained at current widths with localised improvements to surfacing.

A description of key scheme elements are as follows:

- **Tactile Uncontrolled Crossings**
 - Crossings will be upgraded to have tactile paving to improve accessibility for the visually impaired, making it easier to use the bus and access The Nature Discovery Centre.
 - Where tactile crossings follow the cycle route, give way markings will be painted to indicate to cyclist to give way to vehicles at the junction/crossing.
 - The kerb height at the dropped crossings will be lowered to improve comfort for riders.
- **Establishing Cycle & Pedestrian Priority**
 - Where possible, such as across minor accesses and private driveways, cycle and pedestrian priority has been provided over vehicular traffic.
- **New Layout for the Nature Discovery Centre Crossing (Drawing 8)**
 - The new crossing will be a set-back crossing for cyclists and pedestrians.
 - Priority will be retained for vehicles at the crossing due to number of vehicles using the junction and in particular the number of longer vehicles such as minibuses and coaches going to and from the Nature Discovery Centre, which would straddle any cycle lane across the carriageway that would be supposed to give way to as they exit the junction, or obstruct traffic heading westbound along Lower Way as they enter the Nature Centre.
 - The set-back crossing will allow cyclists and pedestrians to cross behind a shorter vehicle exiting the junction where they deem it safe to do so, allowing cyclists to continue their journey unhindered most of the time.
- **Route Improvements for Cyclists and Pedestrians across the Roundabout (Drawing 11)**
 - Wider tactile crossings will be provided for pedestrians crossing the roundabout. The crossing locations will be moved to allow more space and greater safety on the islands.
 - The existing cycle route across the east side of the roundabout will be clearly marked to aid cyclists with navigation and safe crossing. The crossing location will be marked to make drivers aware of the potential hazard.
- **New Signage for the Green Lane Junction (Drawing 12)**
 - Signage will be provided for cyclists at the Green Lane Junction to aid navigation for cyclists.
 - Cyclists will be directed along the carriageway if they are continuing along the NR4 or up Green Lane if they are visiting the library.
 - If travelling West, cyclists can access the shared cycle lane from green lane of before the roundabout on drawing 11.

Scheme plans can be reviewed either via our portal link;
<https://www.westberks.gov.uk/lower-way-thatcham>
or using the QR code at the bottom of this letter.

Upon review of the proposals, if you have any comments on this scheme, please email
projects@westberks.gov.uk.

Yours sincerely
Projects Team (Highways)

