

# SHINFIELD ROAD- CHRISTCHURCH ROAD- WHITLEY STREET- UPDATE

MANAGING OUR TRANSPORT - IMPROVING OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

## Thank you for participating

Thank you for being part of the MOTION study on Shinfield Road, Christchurch Road and Whitley Street to improve your neighbourhoods. Over 400 (about 13%) of you responded to the questionnaire we sent out in February with plenty of comments stemming from local knowledge of the roads and local centres.

We also had plenty of views about what it feels like to travel along the route by all types of transport, as 281 respondents usually drive, 209 people usually walk, 140 usually use the bus, and 80 usually cycle. Over half usually have more than one way of getting around – in all sorts of combinations.

## Study Objectives

The Shinfield Road - Christchurch Road - Whitley Street Study aims to improve the Shinfield Road, Christchurch Green and Whitley Street local centres, the road that connects these centres and the adjacent roads in order to:

- Increase road safety for all users;
- Better manage traffic; and
- Improve local access to local centres, particularly by bus and foot.

## What you said

The main results of the public consultation were that:

**80%** of respondents chose *road safety and traffic speeds or traffic congestion and delay* as one or two of the most important issues to address when improving the local centres and adjoining roads;

**64%** of respondents chose *pedestrian safety or poor pedestrian crossings* as one or two of the most important issues to address when improving the local centres and adjoining roads;

**55%** indicated that they would like to see traffic speeds along these roads restricted to *20mph or 30mph*; and

**51%** ticked new *light-controlled pedestrian crossings* and/or new *traffic lights with pedestrian crossings* as appropriate approaches to changing junction design.

Feedback also focused on *parking* issues in Whitley Street local centre; the challenge of the complex Christchurch Green *junction*; the restrictive *road layout* for all road users in the Shinfield Road local centre; and requests for *cycle* facilities corridor-wide. Fewer respondents commented about *bus* facilities or services.



• Shinfield Road



• Christchurch Road



• Whitley Street



## THE WAY FORWARD

Taking account of the public consultation and study objectives, the Council has adopted an approach based on the introduction of location-based packages of transport measures. As we develop these packages, we will identify a short, medium and long-term programme for delivery, subject to the availability of funding and statutory procedures. Packages will also be subject to further consultation. This approach was approved by the Council in July 2008, although the packages and the elements within them have not yet been prioritised.

## CORRIDOR-WIDE PACKAGE

- Change speed limits
- Provide cycle facilities
- Review operation of intermediate junctions
- Improve bus priority

Concern about road safety and traffic speeds was a major reason for undertaking this study and the most important issue identified through consultation. Traffic speeds can be changed through a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) – a legal document allowing enforcement of any limits on the use of the public highway, itself subject to consultation. The Police are included in the consultation and will expect physical measures to encourage compliance and are unlikely to accept speed limit changes too often within a short distance. The potential impact on speed of other elements of the corridor-wide package or the local centre packages will be considered.

## WHITLEY STREET CENTRE PACKAGE

- Change parking restrictions
- Review access to parking

Issues of double-parking, parking/loading restrictions and the location and availability of parking were the most frequent types of comments relating to the Whitley Street local centre. Parking issues, particularly obstruction, loading and double parking, also impact on road safety, traffic management and bus access in the local centre. Addressing the parking issues could result in a safer, less congested and more accessible local centre.

## SHINFIELD ROAD CENTRE PACKAGE

- Design and test options for re-designing the junctions and improving pedestrian crossing facilities
- Review road layout and traffic management
- Improve local area environment

The Shinfield Road or 'The Maidens' local centre is the most likely candidate for a Local Area Enhancement Scheme, revising the area to improve its environment (although this does not preclude developing similar proposals in Whitley Street and Christchurch Green). Speed limits (currently 40mph), lack of pedestrian crossing facilities and the road layout (two mini-roundabouts handling both north-south A-road traffic and rat-running east-west through traffic as well as wide roads and retail accesses) are inappropriate for a local centre providing services to local people. We will develop options starting with the junctions and working into the centre of the area and will consult further on feasible proposals.

## CHRISTCHURCH GREEN PACKAGE

- Test junction design options for all road users
- Consider priority and control of junction
- Review design of space in local centre

Despite the junction's complicated nature, the accident record shows that road safety is much less of a concern here than in the other local centres. Traffic management and access for pedestrians are more important issues, as the consultation showed. There is potential to change the design of the junction to increase the priority given to pedestrians and the flexibility for traffic management. Options will be developed on which we can consult further.

## NEXT STEPS

Through the Local Transport Plan 2006-2011, and subject to funding, the Council intends to progress these packages of measures through the Shinfield Road – Christchurch Road – Whitley Street MOTION study. We are already developing options and will be proposing priorities, timescales and budgets for shorter-term measures to Councillors in the autumn. If you are interested in other transport information, you can find this on [www.reading.gov.uk](http://www.reading.gov.uk). We will be in touch again soon.