



**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S
LOCAL COMMITTEE IN
EPSOM & EWELL**

KILN LANE LINK

4 December 2006

KEY ISSUE:

To provide an update on the progress of the Kiln Lane Link major improvement scheme and to agree a way forward.

SUMMARY:

In July 2006, the Department for Transport (DfT) announced that the Kiln Lane Link, major improvement scheme, although remaining provisionally approved, would not be funded in the period 2006 to 2011. A decision as to whether the DfT will recommend funding of the scheme in the period 2011 to 2016 is currently awaited. The report invites Members to consider possible courses of action in response to the decision to postpone progression of the scheme.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The committee is asked to agree;

- (a) To request that the County Council write to the Department for Transport to request that they re-consider the decision not to fund the Kiln Lane Link major improvement scheme in the period 2006 to 2011.
- (b) That, if the DfT decline to re-consider their decision not to provide the necessary funding required to progress the scheme, currently estimated at approximately £18 million, the County Council be requested to seek alternative sources of funding for the Major Improvement.

- (c) That, if the County Council fails to secure the necessary funding to progress the major scheme, the Council is requested to support the progression of an Intermediate Transportation Scheme (£500,000 to £5million) to develop and implement a range of measures to mitigate the impact of not proceeding with the Kiln Lane Link. The Intermediate Scheme to be funded from the annual Local Transport Plan settlement from Government.
- (d) That, in its consideration of the development of The Surrey Waste Plan, the County Council gives the highest possible priority to the re-location of the waste management activities at the Blenheim Road site.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Kiln Lane Link is a proposed road crossing under the Epsom to Waterloo railway line linking the A24 East Street with Longmead Road through the Nonsuch and Longmead business and retail parks.
- 1.2 The Link was identified as part of the Epsom and Ewell Movement Study, undertaken by Surrey County Council between 1994 and 1997 and was safeguarded in the Epsom and Ewell District - Wide Local Plan.
- 1.3 The movement study identified that although Epsom and Ewell is a small Borough, it is the one of the most densely populated in Surrey and has the highest estimated cost of congestion per vehicle kilometre. This is, in part, due to the railway, which bisects both Epsom and Ewell and forms a barrier to east to west movement and results in congestion being concentrated on the existing limited and sub-standard railway crossing points.
- 1.4 There is currently no road crossing of the railway line that lies between Epsom and Ewell. In addition some of the existing road rail crossings in Epsom and Ewell are substandard often with height restrictions or a lack of pedestrian facilities. Chessington Road bridge to the north, which provides access to Ewell Village, has limited pedestrian and cycle facilities. Hook Road bridge, to the south, which provides access to Epsom Town centre has limited pedestrian and cycle facilities and consists of a narrow arch bridge carrying the railway, only wide enough to cater for a single heavy goods vehicle, and fed by roads passing through residential areas.
- 1.5 This results in:
 - Poor facilities for pedestrians and cyclists accessing schools, employment areas and local facilities;
 - Delays to public transport; and
 - Environmental damage, such as noise and air quality problems and the impact of existing traffic.
- 1.6 The movement study also found that a high proportion of vehicle trips were local, starting and ending in the Borough. A new high quality crossing of the railway that provided for all road users would help to overcome these problems and would give the potential for the greater use of walking, cycling and public transport.
- 1.7 The scheme received 'Provisional Funding' acceptance from Government at the end of 2001, subject to the satisfactory completion of the Statutory Procedures. Following this decision further initial consultations have been undertaken and the design of the scheme further developed to define the scheme plan submitted in this report.
- 1.8 In December 2004 the Department for Transport (DfT) announced that all major transport schemes that had not received committed funding,

including the Kiln Lane Link, should be re-assessed by the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA). This process, to determine the priority of schemes within the available financial resources, was subsequently undertaken by the Regional Transport Board (RTB), a body established by the Government Office for the South East (GOSE), and supported by SEERA.

- 1.9 At its meeting on 24 January 2005, the Committee were advised that work on the development of the Kiln Lane Link proposals would cease until the government confirms the priority of the scheme. However, it was agreed that work would continue on the development of a package of wider supporting traffic management measures that may be required to take into account the issues highlighted in the public consultation. The development and implementation of some of these measures, however, would be dependent upon a positive outcome of the regional assessment of the Kiln Lane Link.
- 1.10 At its meeting on 31st October 2005, the Committee agreed to form a Working Group to review the proposed package of wider measures.
- 1.11 Following receipt of the priority assessment and advice from the RTB in July 2006, the DfT announced that the Kiln Lane Link, although remaining provisionally approved, would not be funded in the period 2006 to 2011. As a result no further work is currently being undertaken on the scheme; it is effectively 'on-hold'.
- 1.12 A decision on whether to progress the scheme in the period 2011 to 2016 will be made by the DfT in the light of the advice provided by the RTB, who will undertake a further prioritisation exercise in order to recommend schemes to be funded in the period 2011-2016. It is currently anticipated that this response will be received in late 2006/early 2007.

2.0 OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED BY THE KILN LANE LINK

- 2.1 The purpose of the scheme is to improve local accessibility by removing the barrier the railway causes to east-west movement. This would provide a link between residential communities and local facilities for all modes of transport.
- 2.2 Pedestrian and cycle facilities would be provided along the link, widening travel choice, resulting in a safer route to school for pupils who live on the opposite side of the railway to the Glyn and Blenheim schools, and providing improved access for disabled people and cyclists, who are currently prevented from crossing the railway due to the stepped approaches of the existing Gibraltar Crescent and Stones Road footbridges.

- 2.3 By removing the barrier the railway causes, public transport improvements could be made, including development of a circular bus route linking the business and retail parks (and local facilities such as Sainsbury's) with residential areas, giving a more direct bus service for residents and employees. Bus journey times may also become more reliable due to reduced congestion and bus detection technology at the proposed traffic signals that would provide more 'green time' to buses approaching the signals.
- 2.4 The Link would address traffic delays and congestion, environmental damage and safety problems on the roads leading to the two existing rail crossings and on the narrow roads in Ewell Village by re-routing through traffic onto the link, shortening car journeys to the business and retail parks, which would be linked, and widening travel choice through pedestrian and cycle improvements both along the link and in wider areas.
- 2.5 The purpose of the link is not to increase the capacity of the highway network in the area, but to act as an alternative to the two crossing points at Hook Road and Chessington Road, and ensure that traffic uses appropriate roads such as the A240 and A24 rather than adjacent residential roads.
- 2.6 It is recognised that the new road could generate changes to trip patterns and traffic flows on nearby roads on both sides of the railway. Displaced traffic may result in a reduction on some roads but an increase on other roads, such as the A24 East Street, it is therefore important to assess the impact of this displaced traffic. A detailed route study has been undertaken to assess the existing and predicted traffic on the highway network, assess vehicle journey times as a result of the scheme and minimise any negative impacts on nearby roads.
- 2.7 The Link would allow a review of the road hierarchy and wider area signing to ensure that drivers receive the correct information on the most suitable route to use. This may result in some road numbers being changed to make them less attractive to through traffic.
- 2.8 Re-routing through traffic away from Ewell Village and onto the Link would allow the traffic effects of measures identified in Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's Ewell Village Environmental Improvement study to be tested and assessed. The Link would also assist the delivery of Safer Routes to Schools (SRS) by enabling the construction of schemes identified in the Glyn and Blenheim SRS programme that cannot be implemented without re-routing through traffic.
- 2.9 The Link would also allow Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV's) to be re-routed away from unsuitable roads through Ewell Village and surrounding residential areas. HGV's would access both the Nonsuch and Longmead business and retail parks from the A24 and the A240 rather than through sensitive areas.

- 2.10 It is also important to ensure that HGV movements are not displaced onto residential roads between the A24, A232 or A240 and Chessington. The County is therefore currently undertaking a delivery survey of businesses on both business parks. This survey will identify current delivery routes and problems and will be incorporated into the traffic model to establish the current and potential routes that HGV's may take. Measures would then be identified to gain agreement from the businesses (through a Freight Quality Partnership) to use appropriate routes rather than travelling through residential areas.
- 2.11 Measures that could be implemented, either in the short or long term, to dissuade HGV's from using inappropriate routes may include:
- Maps showing preferred HGV routings developed with the businesses so that drivers unfamiliar with the area use the appropriate routes.
 - Improved wider area signing showing appropriate routes and the consideration of HGV bans in certain areas.
 - Physical measures, such as road narrowing, to increase the journey times for large vehicles through unsuitable routes.

3.0 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The Link contributes to all five objectives of the County's Local Transport Plan
- **Accessibility** would be improved by providing a direct route for walking and cycling to local centres, public transport and allowing wider improvements to be made in Ewell Village and residential areas.
 - **Safety** would be improved by removing traffic, particularly HGV's, away from Ewell Village and residential areas such as Hook Road, thereby allowing improvements to be made.
 - The **Environment** would be improved by reducing congestion and by re-routing heavy goods vehicles away from the Ewell Village and residential areas.
 - **Congestion** would be reduced by linking the two business and retail parks to the A24 and reducing severance between residential and employment areas.
 - **Maintenance** costs would be reduced by encouraging traffic, particularly HGVs, to use more suitably constructed roads.

4.0 WIDER MEASURES RELATED TO THE KILN LANE LINK

4.1 The Members Working Group has given preliminary consideration to a range of wider traffic management measures associated with the Link.

4.2 It is important to note that there are three categories of wider measure schemes. These can be defined as follows:

a) **NON KILN LANE LINK DEPENDENT SCHEMES**

Schemes which are located in the area of interest but which are not reliant on the Kiln Lane Link. These schemes could be built at any time and could bring benefits to the local community before the Link is constructed.

b) **OPPORTUNITY SCHEMES**

Schemes that require through traffic to be re-routed onto the Kiln Lane Link. These schemes comprise safety and environmental improvements that become possible if the Kiln Lane Link were in place. It may be that these schemes could be constructed without the Kiln Lane Link, however, this may result in additional congestion in the highway network until the new link is open.

c) **TRAFFIC REDISTRIBUTION SCHEMES**

Schemes that are required to support the Kiln Lane Link to ensure that through traffic, and heavy goods vehicles in particular, use appropriate routes. These schemes include measures to support the Freight Quality Partnership. These schemes cannot be built without the Kiln Lane Link in place.

5.0 BLENHEIM ROAD WASTE MANAGEMENT SITE

5.1 The County Council has a duty to dispose of the waste which the district and borough councils collect from households and which members of the public bring to Community Recycling Centres (civic amenity sites).

5.2 The waste management facilities located at the site in Blenheim Road, Longmead attract a very large number of traffic movements both by the public using the Community Recycling Centre, and by HGVs using the Waste Transfer Site. Currently this transfer site handles waste from not only Epsom & Ewell, but also Mole Valley and Reigate and Banstead. Access to the site is through residential areas.

5.3 The highly detrimental impact of the Blenheim Road site on the surrounding infrastructure and environment, particularly due to unsatisfactory access routes, is well understood by the County Council, and alternative locations for the site have been sought.

- 5.4 The County Council submitted the Surrey Waste Plan to the Government on 30th June 2006. This sets out future waste management strategies for the County.

6.0 THE WAY FORWARD

- 6.1 The provision of the Kiln Lane Link is critical to the delivery of the wide range of improvements throughout the Borough and its loss will compromise the Local Transport Plan for Epsom & Ewell. Many measures that would bring major benefits in safety, decongestion and the quality of life for residents cannot proceed unless the Link is first put in place to allow re-routeing of traffic away from existing unsuitable roads. Such is the tightly inter-dependent nature of the present road network in the Borough, there is increasing difficulty in introducing improvements to one part without the risk of producing adverse effects on another.
- 6.2 If the Kiln Lane Link is to proceed, the Department for Transport will need to be persuaded to change its decision to defer allocation of the necessary funding.
- 6.3 If the Department for Transport cannot be persuaded to change its decision, the County Council might consider raising alternative sources of funding to allow the scheme to proceed. This would need to be done having regard to the County Council's current financial strategies and existing priorities.
- 6.4 If funding for the major improvement cannot be found by either the Government or by the County Council, funding of a package of measures in mitigation of the loss of the Link, might be found from the County Council's programme of Intermediate schemes. These schemes are valued at between £500,000 and £5million, and are funded by "top slicing" part of the annual LTP block allocation for Surrey.
- 6.5 Significant benefits can be achieved, if the Blenheim Road Waste Management Facilities are re-located as part of the development of the Surrey Waste Plan.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The cost of providing the Kiln Lane Link is currently estimated at approximately £18 million. £665,000 of LTP funding has already been spent in developing the scheme.
- 7.2 The cost of an Intermediate scheme providing a package of migration measures is likely to be in the order of £2million, subject to further study work.

8.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Sustainable Development Implications have been identified above.

9.0 CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Opportunities to reduce Crime and Disorder will continue to be identified in the course of developing specific measures.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Equalities Implications will continue to be addressed through schemes to meet Access for All objectives.

11.0 CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 The Kiln Lane Link major improvement scheme is critical to the success of the Local Transportation Plan for Epsom & Ewell. The recommendations set out options to try to secure funding for the scheme.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: Previous Reports to this Local Committee
