



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE REIGATE & BANSTEAD

A23 LONDON ROAD NORTH, MERSTHAM - PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO PARKING AND CYCLING PROVISION

1 MARCH 2010

KEY ISSUE

To consider options to address the problem of parked vehicles blocking the existing advisory cycle lanes on the A23 London Road North at the M25 overbridge.

SUMMARY

Parking on the A23 London Road North at the M25 overbridge in Merstham between Station Road North and Rockshaw Road has increased significantly and results in the cycle lanes being blocked. Two options have been considered that aim to control where drivers park on the overbridge more effectively whilst at the same time providing for cyclists. Option 1 looks at reallocating road space within the existing carriageway, continuing to provide for cyclist on road. Option 2 provides for cyclists on the existing footway. Technical and cost considerations together with comments received following consultation result in Option 1 being recommended as the option to be taken forward.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Reigate and Banstead) is asked to agree that:

- (i) Option 1 as shown in Annex B is approved for detailed design and implementation.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The A23 London Road North runs from Brighton Road, Hooley to the north to Merstham High Street to the south, crossing over the M25, as shown on the location plan in **Annex A**. There are advisory cycle lanes across the M25 overbridge and further advisory cycle lanes to the north of Gatton Bottom, but these are not continuous.
- 1.2 Parking on the A23 London Road North between Station Road North and Rockshaw Lane has increased significantly and results in the cycle lanes being blocked and so unavailable for use by cyclists. Parking close to side road junctions is also creating visibility problems for drivers exiting onto London Road North. The parking is mainly commuter parking associated with Merstham Station. The station car parks are full and the surrounding roads are struggling to cope with parking demand from both residents and commuters.
- 1.3 Parking in Merstham is currently being reviewed as part of the Southern Villages Parking Review and forms the subject of a separate report on this agenda. The opportunity is therefore being taken to develop a scheme to address both the parking and cycling issues at this location. Options have been considered that aim to control where drivers park on the overbridge more effectively whilst at the same time providing for cyclists. Implementation of any scheme arising from this report would be co-ordinated with the implementation of changes to the waiting restrictions arising from the Southern Villages Parking Review.
- 1.4 The Parking Service Annual Report was considered by Transport Select Committee on 3 December 2009. The Committee was informed that consideration needs to be given for increasing income from on-street parking, including the possible introduction of more widespread charging. Officers will be reporting back to the Transport Select Committee early in 2010. The A23 London Road North is one location that could be considered for future charging.

2 OPTIONS

Option 1: On carriageway cycle lane

- 2.1 Option 1 provides facilities for both parking and cycling on the carriageway by reallocating the road space using road markings. The main elements of option 1 are outlined below and shown on the typical detail drawing in **Annex B**.
 - Formal free parking bays created alongside the kerb
 - Advisory cycle lane moved to the outside of the parking bays
 - Buffer zone between the parking bays and cycle lane
 - Traffic lane moved next to the central reservation
- 2.2 Reallocation of the road space through the use of road markings and signs is a relatively low cost and provides for all road users. Guidance

on the provision of cycle facilities states that it is usually better to cater for urban cyclists on-road if this is practicable.

- 2.3 The inclusion of a buffer zone between the parking bays and the cycle lane minimises the risk to cyclists from car doors being opened. Under the existing road layout where cyclists ride alongside parked vehicles, there have been no recorded personal injury accidents in the last 5 years involving cyclists. This is likely to be because drivers tend to look before opening their car doors as they are expecting approaching traffic.
- 2.4 The proposed 1.5 metre cycle lane meets current guidance for minimum advisory lane widths in a 30mph speed limit area and is the same width as the existing cycle lane. A typical traffic lane width in current highway design is 3.65 metres and the existing traffic lanes in London Road North are 3.7 metres. The proposed traffic lane width of 3.7 metres exceeds current design guidance and is comparable with the existing situation. The cross section of each side of the carriageway is therefore 1.8 metre parking bay, 0.5 metre buffer zone, 1.5 metre cycle lane and 3.7 metre traffic lane.
- 2.5 Consideration has been given to the provision of green coloured surfacing on the length of the cycle lane alongside the parking bays. The accident reduction potential of the use of colour in isolation is unproven and the colour soon becomes familiar to regular road users, thereby quickly diminishing any impact. The cost of providing coloured surfacing would more than double the cost of this option, would have on-going maintenance implications and is unlikely to provide significant safety benefits. It is not therefore proposed to use coloured surfacing on the cycle lane in Option 1.

Option 2: Shared footway

- 2.6 Option 2 provides for cyclists by taking them off the carriageway onto the footway which they would share with pedestrians. The main elements of Option 2 are outlined below and shown on the typical detail drawing in **Annex C**, with a segregated path shown on the north side and a shared path shown on the south side of the carriageway..
- Formal free parking bays created alongside the kerb
 - Traffic lane provided outside the parking bays
 - Hatching of the remaining carriageway between the traffic lane and the central reservation
 - Cyclists taken onto the footway prior to the start of the parking bays and back onto the carriageway a safe distance past the end of the parking bays
 - Cyclists and pedestrians to share the existing footway width, either segregated by a continuous white lane or jointly using the footway
 - Existing areas of grass verge on the shared path removed and a tarmac surface provided

- 2.7 The width of the existing footway is inadequate to provide a segregated facility with cyclists separated from pedestrians by a continuous white line. The footway width varies along its length, from 2 metres at its narrowest point to 2.8 metres at its widest point, with a minimum width of 2.4 metres on the overbridge. For a segregated facility, the minimum widths required are 1.5 metres for the footway, 1.5 metres for a one-way cycle track with a 0.5 metre margin provided between the cycle track and the edge of carriageway. An additional 0.5 metre margin would need to be provided in this instance alongside the footway as it is bounded by railings or hedging, giving an overall minimum width requirement of 4 metres.
- 2.8 The width of the existing footway is also inadequate to provide a shared facility where pedestrians and cyclists jointly use the footway. Guidance on shared facilities suggests that a total footway width of 3 metres should generally be regarded as the minimum acceptable, although in areas with few cyclists or pedestrians a narrower width might be acceptable. As with a segregated facility, an additional allowance should be made if the path is bounded by a vertical feature such as a hedge or railings, as the edge of the path cannot be used.
- 2.9 The existing bridge parapet at the M25 overbridge is 1 metre in height. This would not be sufficient to allow cyclists to safely share the footway. Current standards specify a minimum parapet height on a bridge carrying cyclists adjacent to the parapet of 1.4 metres. The cost of raising the parapet would be very high and could more than double the cost of the scheme. This level of expenditure could not be justified in terms of the benefits arising from the scheme and would effectively rule out consideration of Option 2.
- 2.10 Other considerations to take into account when assessing the feasibility of Option 2 are:
- Safety risk to cyclists from passengers opening car doors without looking as cyclists on the footway were not expected
 - Removal of the grass verge along the section of shared use
 - Relocation of street furniture onto the central reservation
 - Cyclists using the A23 corridor tend to be commuter or experienced cyclists who would be less likely to use an off-carriageway facility as they travel at faster speeds which could not be accommodated on a shared facility. There would be no obligation on their part to divert from the carriageway onto the footway for the short distance proposed.
- 2.11 The legal status of the footway would have to be changed to allow cyclists to use it. This is done by creating a cycle track under the 1980 Highways Act.

Options 1 & 2

2.12 Both options would provide the following benefits:

- The cycle lane would be extended north of the M25 overbridge to link in to the existing advisory cycle lane north of Gatton Bottom
- The cycle lane would continue across the side road junctions of Rockshaw Road and Gatton Bottom, raising driver awareness of the likely presence of cyclists. The use of cycle symbol road markings would help prevent encroachment into the cycle lane by vehicles waiting at side road exits.
- Side road junctions would be protected by 'At any time' waiting restrictions to prevent parking restricting visibility, to be carried out as part of the Southern Villages Parking Review

2.13 The safety camera In London Road North at the southern end of the central reservation acts to reduce vehicle speeds which improves road safety for all users and is particularly beneficial for cyclists. The road markings and detection loops associated with the camera would need to be amended under both options.

Option 3: Do nothing

2.14 The option of doing nothing would result in:

- Parking on the M25 overbridge continuing to block the existing advisory cycle lane
- The cycle lane on the M25 overbridge not connecting with the cycle lane north of Gatton Bottom

2.15 The proposal to restrict parking at the side road junctions would continue to be progressed as it forms part of the Southern Villages parking review, reported elsewhere on this agenda. However, the parking review does not recommended restricting parking on the M25 overbridge as there is no suitable alternative location for the displaced vehicles to park.

3 CONSULTATIONS

3.1 Consultation on options 1 and 2 has been carried out with stakeholders and their views are summarised below.

| Consultee | Comments |
|---------------|--|
| Surrey Police | Both options have their merits in that parking that now occurs in the cycle lane will be formalised in bays and the cycle lane facility will be moved to a location where it will be possible to use it. Concerned that majority of cyclists will not use a shared route and they will continue to use the main road. Possibility that drivers will park across dropped kerb access to shared facility. Preference is that on road facility (Option 1) is adopted. |
| SCC Cycling | Good to see proposals being put forward to overcome |

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| Officer | a hazardous situation for cyclists. Keeping cyclists on the carriageway is the right option in the circumstances and provides the safest solution. A 1.8m wide cycle lane would be even better. Good to see cycle lanes continuing across the minor road junctions. Cyclists on the A23 would be used to cycling on the road and would not use a shared footway. |
| Redhill Cycling Club | Mixing cyclists (who can be riding at 20mph) and pedestrians is not a good idea. Therefore in favour of a cycle lane to the offside of the parking bays although this may lead to problems of car drivers pulling out in front of passing cyclists. The cycle lane should have a solid line to keep motorists out although this could be a legal problem with them having to cross the line to reach the parking bays. As a regular user of the route, the present set up has not presented any problems. |
| Reigate & Banstead Cycling Forum | No comments received to date |
| County Councillor | The cycle lane in Option 1 would potentially leave cyclists 'sandwiched' between a stationary and a moving vehicle. A cycle lane should be painted on the footway (Option 2). Parking should be kept away from side road junctions. |
| Borough Councillors | Cllr Crome – pleased to see Option 2 as it is the idea he suggested to Cllr Grant-Duff. Fully endorse Option 2 as the best way forward. |
| Road Safety Audit Team | Option 1: There have been no Personal Injury Collisions involving cyclists on the A23 carriageways within the scheme limits for at least the last three years, so it appears that currently cyclists are not particularly vulnerable. Option 1 only formalises the existing situation. Parking restrictions recommended at side road junctions to ensure visibility. Option 2: No sufficient footway width over the whole length of the scheme for a shared or segregated footway. This is exacerbated by the presence of the motorway bridge, where I believe the parapet is not more than 1.1 metres high, ie. below the recommended minimum height when adjacent to a cycle lane. There would be pinch points where cyclists and pedestrians would be in conflict with each other. Cyclists would be vulnerable to having a passenger door opened in front of them. If they happened to be crossing the motorway bridge at the time they would be exceptionally vulnerable. |

3.2 Responses to the consultation have indicated support for providing on carriageway cycle facilities as outlined in Option 1, on both technical/safety grounds and from a user viewpoint.

4 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 At its meeting held on 20 July 2009 the Local Committee approved funding of £30,000 from the Local Transport Plan budget for the A23 Merstham High Street Area Review. This funding was subsequently revised to £10,000 to account for the overspend in the 2008/09 financial year. The funding set aside for the Merstham High Street Area Review is available to fund the detailed design and implementation of a capital scheme in the area. The Southern Villages Parking Review is being funded from the Parking Team revenue budget.
- 4.2 Preliminary construction estimates have been provided as follows:
Option 1: £18,000
Option 2: £ 30,000 (excluding cost of raising bridge parapet)
- 4.3 Detailed design could commence this financial year, the cost of which could be met from the Merstham High Street Area Review allocation. Scheme implementation would be dependent on next year's capital budget.

5 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Measures to control where drivers park on the A23 London Road North at the M25 overbridge more effectively whilst at the same time providing for cyclists will assist existing cyclists and may encourage more people to take up cycling.

6 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no crime and disorder implication arising from this report.

7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Parking on the A23 London Road North at the M25 overbridge blocks the existing advisory cycle lane. A scheme to formalise parking on the overbridge by creating free parking bays alongside the kerb, moving the advisory cycle lane to the outside of the parking bays, with a buffer zone between the parking and the cycle lane, and moving the traffic lane alongside the central reservation (Option 1) provides a feasible solution to the existing problems along this section of the A23. Consideration was also given to the feasibility of providing either a segregated or shared facility for cyclists on the footway (Option 2). However, existing footway widths are insufficient to meet even minimum requirements under existing guidance and the height of the existing bridge parapet is too low to safely allow cyclists to formally use the footway.
- 7.2 It is recommended that Option 1 be approved for detailed design and implementation.

8 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

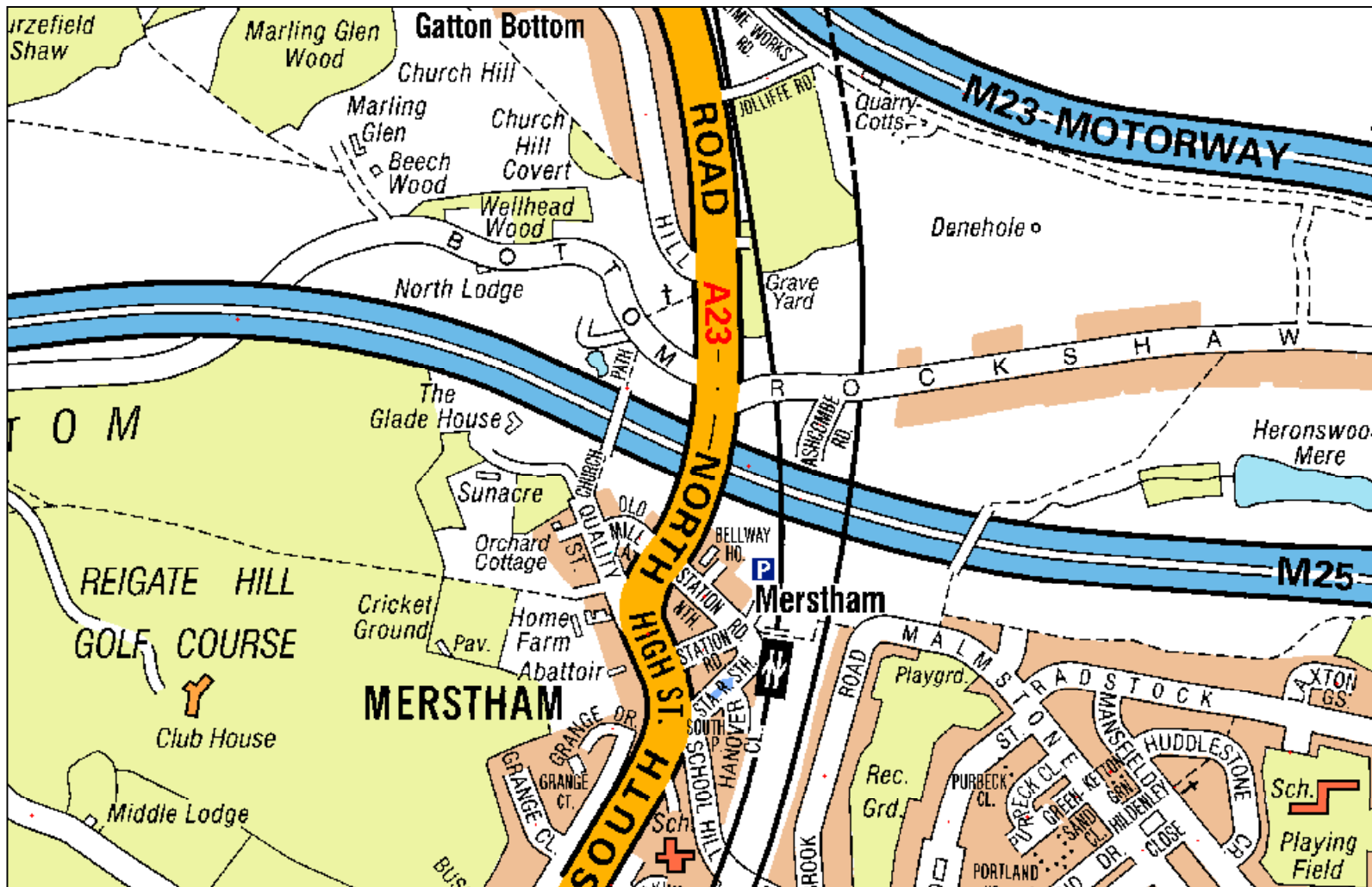
- 8.1 To control where parking on the A23 London Road North at the M25 overbridge takes place by the provision of formal free parking bays.
- 8.2 To provide for cyclists by introducing an advisory cycle lanes alongside the parking bays.
- 8.3 To connect the cycle facilities on the M25 overbridge to the existing cycle lanes north of Gatton Bottom.

9 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 9.1 If the Local Committee approves the recommendation, detailed design of Option 1 could be commenced this financial year. Implementation of the scheme would be co-ordinated with the changes to the waiting restrictions arising from the Southern Villages Parking Review, subject to funding being allocated from next year's capital budget by Local Committee.

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| BACKGROUND PAPERS: | Local Transport Note 2/08 – Cycle Infrastructure Design (DfT) Local Transport Note 2/04 – Adjacent and Shared Use Facilities for Pedestrians and Cyclists (DfT) TD 19/06 Requirement for Road Restraint Systems (DfT) |

ANNEX A



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