



Judges Corner B2028 West Park Road junction with B2037 Snow Hill and Effingham Road, Cophorne

26 January 2007

KEY ISSUE:

Proposed roundabout scheme for the junction of the B2028 West Park Road and the B2037 Snow Hill, known as Judges Corner.

SUMMARY:

This report reviews progress for the proposed roundabout scheme in light of recent design work and a funding bid. Design work has confirmed that the scheme is achievable but timescales are not certain at this stage. A bid for funding from the County's Local Transport Plan budget for Integrated Transport will be considered by the Transportation Select Committee and the Executive in the near future. Land acquisition will be necessary and work is progressing to secure the necessary land.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to ;

- (i) Approve the outline scheme plan shown at Annexe B.
- (ii) Confirm support for the bid for funding as a LTP Intermediate scheme.
- (iii) Approve the acquisition of land as indicated on Annexe C

1. INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The junction of the B2028 West Park Road with the B2037 Snow Hill and Effingham Road in Copthorne is known as Judges Corner. The Local Committee considered reports on Judges Corner on 3rd December 2004, 27th January 2006 and 24th March 2006. The general layout of the existing junction is shown on **Annex A**.
- 1.2. The existing junction was originally a crossroads that was altered in about 1960 to a staggered crossroads. The junction stagger is substandard and the heavy traffic flows make it a difficult junction to use. Long queues form in the peak periods and some traffic are using other routes to avoid the perceived dangers.
- 1.3. There have been 50 recorded traffic incidents involving personal injury in the 10 year period between 1995 and 2004. These 50 incidents resulted in 92 casualties, of which 11 were classified as KSI (seriously injured).
- 1.4. The Local Committee in March 2006 decided that a revised roundabout design should be progressed and this work is expected to be completed by the end of the current financial year. Remedial measures such as Vehicle Activated Signs were also suggested and following consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and a local County Member, it was decided that the roundabout design should first be completed to ensure that any remedial measures would fit with the new proposals.

2. SCHEME DESIGN

- 2.1. A feasibility report of possible options, produced in 1993, considered a number of alternative schemes. A roundabout option was progressed but not implemented. A low cost scheme of signing, markings and traffic islands was installed in 1998, but accidents continued to occur. More recently, a roundabout design that did not require land acquisition was considered. This design was substandard because the required Department of Transport (DfT) standard could not be met within the land and road alignment constraints. It has been accepted that the substandard design is not appropriate because it would not produce the improvements required. Without the necessary improvements to reduce approach speeds and create safe gaps in traffic to allow safe entry onto the roundabout, the accident frequency might not be reduced.
- 2.2. A more acceptable design to the DfT standard is now being progressed. The County's Constructor, Carillion, is aiming to complete the design of a roundabout to the correct standards by the end of March 2007. An outline scheme plan is shown on Annex B.

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- 2.3. It is noted that a similar roundabout exists about 4 kilometres along the B2028 West Park Road at its junction with the A22 Newchapel. The roundabout is of a similar size to the one proposed for Judges Corner and although the traffic is heavier there are no significant queues and the accident frequency is about a third of that for Judges Corner.
- 2.4. Utilities services will need to be diverted. BT service diversions will be the most costly but most of the companies with plant through the junction will be affected.

3. LAND ACQUISITION

- 3.1. Land acquisition started for an earlier roundabout scheme. Plots were acquired in the south east and north east corners of the junction. Negotiation for the largest plot on the north west corner was started but never completed, as funding was not available.
- 3.2. A land plan for the current roundabout scheme is shown at Annex C. It shows the areas of land needed for the roundabout scheme including land over which a temporary easement would be required.
- 3.3. Investigations to determine land ownership and exact boundaries are continuing. Many of the title plans supplied by the Land Registry are plotted on circa 1970's Ordnance Survey (OS) base, which means the land detail can have changed considerably. In a rural area as in this case, the plans are mainly at a scale of 1/2500. This scale does mean that there is considerable room for interpretation.
- 3.4. Land will need to be acquired for highway purposes from the north west corner and possibly from the south east corners of the junction. Land is not required for the north east and south west corners. The north west corner is agriculture land owned by W T Lamb Holdings Limited. The south east corner is owned by Copthorne Hotel (Effingham Park) Limited.
- 3.5. Negotiation for land acquisition usually takes a minimum of a year and can take considerably more time. As a local authority we cannot buy land for more than the market value, which for agriculture land that has a low value would be a relatively small sum of money. Unless we use compulsory purchase powers we cannot force a land owner to sell. Compulsory purchase procedures can be slow and expensive, so are not usually used for schemes of this size.
- 3.6. Land was acquired from the south east corner in 1995 but was never fenced off. The land to be acquired on the south east corner seems to be part of some common land owned by Copthorne Hotel (Effingham Park) Limited. The common land is shown on a plan, but interpretation of boundaries is difficult due to the small scale (1/10000). Common land cannot be used for highway and its status must be changed first through DEFRA. These procedures have taken about two years for a recent similar scheme.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1. The Chairman, Vice Chairman, local County Councillor and Surrey Police have been sent a copy of this report. The proposals are supported. However, the local County Councillor requests that if the roundabout scheme cannot be completed in the next financial year, the original cross-roads layout be reinstated with traffic signal control on all four arms of the junction.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The Local Committee has approved £40,000 for Judges Corner from the Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2006/07 budget for Tandridge. This funding is being used to progress the design and land acquisition work for a roundabout scheme.
- 5.2. Although the design and cost estimation work is not complete, the expected scheme cost is approximately £900,000. Accordingly it is outside of the budget capacity of the Local Committee and a funding bid as an Intermediate scheme has been submitted. The bid is related to the 2007/08 LTP settlement from central government, which is due to be considered by Transportation Select Committee and the Executive in the near future. Officers may be able to give more information on this at the Local Committee meeting.

6. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1. Judges Corner has a poor accident record. A roundabout scheme to current design standards is being designed and the necessary land acquisition procedures commenced.
- 6.2. It is recommended that the roundabout scheme design be progressed to facilitate construction of the scheme during the next financial year. It is also recommended that the necessary land be acquired and that the Local Committee supports the bid for funding as an Intermediate LTP scheme.

LEAD/CONTACT OFFICER: Derek Poole, Local Transportation Manager

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 08456 009009

BACKGROUND PAPERS: Reports to Tandridge Local Committee dated 27/01/06 and 24/03/06.
