



A245/A320 Transportation Study

11 September 2002

KEY ISSUE:

The route from the Brookhouse roundabout in Woking to the Painshill junction of the A3 is heavily congested and considerable development is expected to take place in the future. The volume and speed of the traffic makes movements across the route difficult and divides the communities on either side. There are safety issues, poor public transport and little opportunity for moving around on foot or by bike.

SUMMARY:

The study, running for the last year, has identified a package of measures. The improvements attempt to offer something to all who live, work along and use the corridor and to provide the basis for future further investment. Importantly the groundwork has been completed for the development of a transport system that does not prevent further development in the area. The key elements of the recommendations meet the aims of the study and address Surrey's Local Transport Plan requirements in the following way:-

- Reduce excessive traffic delay by improving selected junctions.
- Improve the operational efficiency of buses by reducing traffic delay and equipping buses and routes with transponders.
- Attract and increase bus usage by improvements and investment in specific routes through partnership with bus operators.
- Use the improved junction layouts to assist in pedestrian and cycle movements and tie this in with continuous and high quality off-road provision for both.
- Improve railway station facilities to the benefit of all categories of users.
- Work in partnership with major local employers to identify ways in which less car-intensive systems of travel can be employed, hopefully with benefits from a “joined up” approach bringing major employers together.

The total capital cost of the options outlined is estimated to be £4.5 million.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to agree

- (i) that those elements of the package of measures within Woking detailed in the supporting documentation be approved in principle (the remainder of the scheme, to the east of River Wey, will be put to the Elmbridge Local Committee in October)**
- (ii) that those elements of the recommendations, which might be funded from capital sources, be submitted as a package bid for transport funding for Woking and Elmbridge**
- (iii) that officers investigate options for funding the package as a whole.**

1. INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Woking Movement Study identified the need for studies to look at all of the radial routes serving the town. These studies were to look at the full range of options that might solve the problems of the routes themselves and assist access to and from Woking.
- 1.2 This study looks at the corridor running from the Brookhouse Roundabout at the edge of Woking, along the A320 to Six Crossroads and then following the A245 through West Byfleet and Byfleet to the Painshill junction of the A3 (but excluding that junction).
- 1.3 The study is supported by a considerable amount of technical work and is underpinned by an exceptional level of consultation. The initial recommendations have been discussed in considerable detail with the steering group and were approved at a meeting on 23 August where the remaining issues were finalised.
- 1.4 The study has not sought to make recommendations for the part of the route covered by the Section 278 agreement for the Broadoaks development, aside from additional schemes. This covers the area from Oyster Lane in the east to the junction of Old Woking Road and Sheerwater Road in the west.

2. ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

Road Traffic

- 2.1 The route is generally congested throughout the day, with particular problems related to the busiest morning and evening periods. The main contributors to the congestion are:-
 - Painshill Roundabout.
 - Seven Hills Road junction.
 - The stretch of road between the Brooklands Road and Chertsey Road junctions.
 - West Byfleet from Byfleet Corner through to the mini-roundabout junction with Old Woking Road.
 - Sheerwater Road/Albert Drive junction.

Buses

- 2.2 The area has a number of low frequency, circuitous, tendered bus routes. Peak frequencies are low and there are a large number of providers, resulting in a low quality service overall. The facilities provided at stops are generally good. Buses are not given priority over other traffic and are

caught, with all other vehicles, in general congestion. This results in a lack of reliability and increased expense for operators who must maintain a larger bus fleet to allow for unreliability. Delays are worse along those areas of the route that are most heavily congested.

Rail

- 2.3 Accessibility at the stations is poor, especially for the disabled, and parking (both cycle and car) facilities are limited. The rail services are generally considered to be acceptable, although the limited number of services that stop at West Byfleet and Byfleet & New Haw are an issue in terms of local accessibility.

Cyclists and Pedestrians

- 2.4 Both cyclists and pedestrians suffer from a lack of continuity in routes. The volume and speed of the vehicles on the route divide the communities on either side. The additional distance involved in using the limited crossing points available is a key consideration for most pedestrian and cyclists.

Environmental Issues

- 2.5 A key issue with any improvement options along this route is the potential environmental impact, both local and further afield. The route runs through a predominantly urban area but is fringed by tree belts and green areas. There are a number of sensitive areas, some with national and local designations.

Socio-economic Issues

- 2.6 Socio-economic issues affect the level and type of transport provision in the area. The main considerations are that the Sheerwater estate is a deprived area with low levels of employments and reliance on benefits; and high housing prices as a whole, with limited access to affordable housing.

Services

- 2.7 An analysis of the location of services such as schools, doctors, leisure centres and local shops indicates that the area has a mixed level of provision and access. The best coverage is for post offices (offering local banking facilities and access to social security payments) and local retail outlets. There are still significant areas with no local provision. This results in a greater need to travel by car to access services.

Recommendations

- 2.8 The problems along the route are interdependent. The recommendations therefore present an integrated solution that will only be realised if all the elements are delivered.
- 2.9 A large number of schemes are identified for the route, covering all modes of travel. In summary these are:-

Highway schemes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dedicated left turn lane from the A245 (from Woking) to the A3 northbound. • A new arrangement for access/egress to Feltonfleet School from the A245. • A new signalised junction at Green Lane to assist in entering and leaving both Byfleet village and the Weymede estate. • A signalised junction at Sopwith Drive. • Road widening associated with the two junction improvements above. • Improvements to the operation of the Byfleet Corner junction. • A new, larger junction on Albert Drive where it meets Sheerwater Road.
Cycle and pedestrian schemes
<p>Comprehensive network covering the entire area, including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared use route on the southern side of the A245 between Seven Hills Road and Brooklands Road. • Addition of a new crossing facility on the westbound approach to Byfleet Corner. • A new puffin crossing located in the proximity of the petrol station in the centre of West Byfleet. • A new bridge for pedestrians and cyclists on the northern side of the canal bridge near Albert Drive. • New pedestrian refuges along Woodham Lane.
Bus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new service from Woking through West Byfleet, Byfleet and Brooklands, possibly terminating at Weybridge station, at 4 to 6 buses per hour. • Signalised junctions along the route with transponder equipped buses to provide priority. • Bus priority provided at Albert Drive/Sheerwater Road and Sheerwater Road/Madeira Road. • Maintaining existing services. • Quality Bus Partnership to improve overall perception of the route • Real-time passenger information.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved interchange at West Byfleet station.
Commuter plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment from Surrey County Council to assist in the development of travel plans. • Development of car share databases, cycle user groups etc.

3 CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 Consultation has identified the problems at all stages. This has been reinforced by other discussions and site visits. Key activities were:-
- During the preliminary phase, 11,687 questionnaires to local residents and a further 1000 to local businesses generated a substantial database of problems from the local perspective.
 - Discussions with local stakeholders identified specific problems in relation to local areas, businesses or particular user groups.
 - Responses from public exhibitions.
- 3.2 From the outset this study has been overseen by a task group consisting of local County and Borough Councillors together with County Officers and representatives from the consultant.
- 3.3 The consultations have been used as a very significant element of scheme development.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The scheme cost has been estimated to be £6million. The majority is capital. Some revenue support will be needed to launch new bus services.
- 4.2 The cost means that it may be most appropriate to try to get funding through the major scheme process, whereby the funding is independent of Surrey County Council's normal Local Transport Plan allocation. Alternatively it might be funded through the Local Transport Plan block allocation. Officers will need to investigate the most appropriate means of funding for the package.

5 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The proposals for a significant improvement in bus services and cycle links within the corridor will provide choice in the mode of travel and reduce dependence on the car at the new office spaces being constructed.

6 CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct implications. Indirectly, reducing the barrier created by the road will increase community cohesion.

7 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The improved bus services will serve the disadvantaged area of Sheerwater where unemployment levels are very high.

8 CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 'The way forward' as presented represents a significant investment in the transport infrastructure and services along this highly congested route. It is recommended that the measures outlined be accepted in their current format to provide a balanced and long-term approach to dealing with the problems experienced along the route.
- 8.2 The package has been founded upon detailed consultation and as such has the general acceptance of local people. The package will also make a positive contribution to meeting the County's Local Transport Plan objectives.

Report by: Mohammad Nezam, Principal Engineer, Sustainable Development CTS

LEAD/CONTACT OFFICER: Mohammad Nezam

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 020 8541 7165

BACKGROUND PAPERS: Final Report (WSP)

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