



WOKING TOWN CENTRE ACCESS STUDY - PROGRESS

LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR WOKING 14 JULY 2004

KEY ISSUE:

To consider interim proposals to improve pedestrian access within Woking Town Centre.

SUMMARY:

The Town Centre Access Study has identified a number of locations where improvements could be made to improve pedestrian access, particularly those with mobility impairments. A general lack of crossing facilities has been identified at the eastern end of Broadway, at its junctions with Locke Way and Stanley Road. It is proposed to make improvements at these locations which can be carried out quickly and funded during the current financial year.

CONSULTATIONS:

Stakeholders and groups representing cyclists, pedestrians and the mobility impaired have been involved in the Town Centre Access Study from its commencement in early 2003.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to agree

- (i) that improvements to crossing facilities are made at the eastern end of Broadway, in Locke Way and at the Broadway/Stanley Road/Maybury Road junction, as shown on Drawing No. 11780.

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

1. The Woking Town Centre Access Study began in early 2003, its principal aim being to improve accessibility for all vulnerable highway users within the study area, particularly by providing facilities that ease the movements of those with mobility impairments. The study will dovetail with the findings of the Sustrans study of pedestrian and cycle movements to and from Woking Station. (A report on the Sustrans study appears elsewhere on this agenda).
2. The Town Centre Access Study is in its infancy and is a long-term project which will require funding year on year. However, the funding available this year can be used to make improvements which, although minor in themselves, will make a major improvement in accessibility for the mobility impaired.
3. A series of Town Centre “walkabouts” was carried out with stakeholders and representatives of groups representing cyclists, pedestrians and those with mobility impairments in May 2003. This resulted in a list of desirable improvements in the study area, ranging from reconstruction of dropped kerbs to comprehensive footway resurfacing and kerb replacement.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

4. There are a number of areas within the town centre where dropped kerbs and/or tactile paving are lacking. One particular location which is poorly served is Locke Way, which contains two bus stands and also gives access to public conveniences near Addison Road, and the eastern end of Broadway. Dropped kerbs are lacking within Locke Way and at its junctions with Broadway and Duke Street. In addition, the nearby junction of Broadway/Stanley Road/Maybury Road has no proper crossing points. Improvements at these locations would improve access between the bus stands in Broadway and in Locke Way, access to the public conveniences and access to the town centre from Maybury. All of these points were included in the list of desirable improvements mentioned in Para. 3 above. It should be possible, within the budget available for the current year, to make improvements in these locations relatively quickly. (See Drawing No. 11780 attached at Annex A).
5. If the Committee approves the proposals, it will be necessary to produce more detailed plans and agree them with stakeholders before obtaining detailed cost estimates and carrying out works on site.
6. In more general terms, as the Town Centre Access Study progresses, and further proposals are agreed with stakeholders, these will be brought to the Committee for approval at further meetings.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7. £5,000 has been set aside in the 2004/5 work programme for town centre access improvements.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

8. The proposals will improve pedestrian access within and to the town centre, encouraging more journeys on foot, in line with Local Transport Plan targets.

CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9. There are no crime and disorder implications.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10. The proposals will assist movements within and to the town centre for the mobility impaired, particularly wheelchair users.

CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

11. The Town Centre Access Study has identified a number of locations within the town centre where improvements are needed to enable pedestrians, particularly the mobility impaired, to travel to and within the town centre. Some of these are long-term aspirations, but others can be done quickly and relatively cheaply. The area at the eastern end of Broadway has been identified as a location with poor pedestrian crossing facilities. Improvements here will help access between the bus stands, to the public conveniences in Locke Way and between Maybury and the town centre. As these problems can be tackled swiftly and cheaply, it is recommended that funds available for this financial year are targeted at this location.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

Version No. 2 Date: 28 June 2004 Time: 12.00 Initials: JM No of annexes: 1