



**SHEETS HEATH BRIDGE
ENVIRONMENTAL WEIGHT
& WIDTH RESTRICTION**

**LOCAL COMMITTEE (WOKING)
2 NOVEMBER 2006**

KEY ISSUE:

The existing private bridge over the Basingstoke canal is in need of repair and Woking Borough Council have opted to carry out the necessary repairs, but have requested that the Highway Authority place a Weight and Width Restriction Order on this bridge to prolong the life of the structure.

SUMMARY:

The existing private bridge over the Basingstoke canal is in need of repair. Its ownership is unknown and the bridge is within a private road that has acquired Highway Rights. Woking Borough Council has opted to carry out repairs to this bridge, which requires a weight limit to extend the life of the structure and a width restriction to physically enforce the weight restriction.

Woking Borough Council has confirmed that the Residents Association

is in favour of this approach and the Borough Council will pay for all the relevant costs of making and signing of the appropriate weight and width restrictions.

CONSULTATIONS:

Woking Borough Council

Chairman

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to agree

- (i) That the proposed Weight and Width Restrictions are approved.**
- (ii) That the necessary Traffic Orders required are made, (including advertising)**
- (iii) That the resolutions of any objections that are received are made by the Local Transportation Manager (Woking) in consultation with the Chairman and Electoral Division member.**
- (iv) That subject to there being no sustained objection the Order is made.**

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

1. On the 6 January 2005, Woking Borough Council received a report relating to the status and condition of the bridge in Sheets Heath Brookwood.
2. Sheets Heath Lane and Bridge represent the primary vehicular access to Sheets Heath. A secondary vehicular access is available via Brunswick Road, Pirbright, and Sheets Heath Common. The latter is the only access for large vehicles, which cannot negotiate the very tight turn at the northern end of Sheets Heath Bridge, Annex 1 indicates the access arrangements for Sheets Heath area.
3. Sheets Heath Lane and the access across the common are designated as private streets, but have Highway Rights and are therefore open to the public to use.
4. The lane and bridge are in unknown ownership, and no single party has been prepared to take responsibility for their repair. In the past, Woking Borough Council has agreed, on a 'without prejudice' basis to undertake works of repair to the structure provided that the Sheets Heath Residents' Association paid a 40% share of the costs. It is not known how the 60:40 split was calculated.
5. At Woking Borough Council's Executive meeting on the 6th January 2005 three options were considered:
 - to continue with the existing ad hoc arrangements;
 - for the Woking Borough Council to take on full responsibility for the bridge, and to seek a contribution from the Residents' Association on each occasion that works are undertaken;
 - to pedestrianise the bridge, and thus make all vehicular traffic to/from Sheets Heath use the access over the Common.
6. The Executive of Woking Borough Council agreed that the Council take full responsibility for the bridge, subject to local residents agreeing to contribute a minimum of £15,000 towards the capital costs of the currently-proposed works of repair, and a contribution of £200 per annum towards the revenue costs of maintenance thereafter.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

7. Following a meeting between Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Council (Area Transportation West) officers, whereby Woking Borough outlined their plans for the repair of this bridge, commencing at that time in the near future and on completion requested that the Highway Authority, namely Surrey County Council, make a Weight and Environmental width restriction Order for this bridge.
8. The bridge currently displays signs depicting a weight limit, but this is not

backed up by any legal Order.

9. The Weight Restriction Order is required to limit only vehicles which are acceptable in weight terms to cross the bridge. The Environmental Width Restriction Order is required to enforce physically the weight limit on this bridge.
10. Woking Borough Council officers have implied that the Residents Association is happy with the above arrangements, which would mean that all traffic would use this bridge, except where the weight exceeded 3 tonnes and or width of the vehicle exceeded 6 foot 6 inches.
11. The County Council as Highway Authority would need to advertise and make appropriate Traffic Regulation Orders for these proposals and to manufacture and install all appropriate signing for both restrictions, including a suitable alternative route using Brunswick Road (Pirbright) and Sheets Heath Common.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

12. There are no financial implications from this report as Woking Borough Council will pay for all relevant costs in the making and signing, on site, of the appropriate Traffic Orders.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

13. The use of a suitable weight / width limit on this bridge will extend the life of this structure.

CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

14. There are no crime and disorder Implications

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

15. There are no equalities Implications

CONCLUSIONS AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

16. The bridge is within a private road that has acquired Highway Rights. Woking Borough Council has opted to carry out repairs to this bridge, which requires a weight limit to extend the life of the structure and a width restriction to physically enforce the weight restriction.
17. Woking Borough Council has confirmed that the Residents Association is in favour of this approach and the Borough Council will pay for all the relevant costs of making and signing of the appropriate weight and width restrictions.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Woking Borough Council Executive Meeting 6 January 2005

Version 1

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Annex 1