

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**LOCAL COMMITTEE (EPSOM & EWELL)**

DATE: 8 December 2014
LEAD OFFICER: Steve Howard
 Project Manager, Transport Policy
SUBJECT: Epsom Plan E highway improvements, major scheme
DIVISION: Epsom Town and Downs

**SUMMARY OF ISSUES:**

This paper is to update members on the current status of the Epsom Plan E highway improvements scheme in Epsom town centre and obtain member approval to carry out a public and business consultation Jan - Feb 2015.

- The business case has been progressed to a stage ready for submission to the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (C2C LEP); at the time of writing, the business case is due to be submitted on 1/12/14.
- The scheme is now at a stage where it is necessary to carry out public engagement to raise awareness of the proposals and allow the public to give us their views. The engagement will build on the consultation on the scheme which was carried out in 2008/09 as part of the development of the Borough's Plan E Area Action Plan (AAP).

The Plan E highway improvements scheme has been progressed from the results of the consultation carried out on 2008/09, and has focused on the preferred option resulting from the consultation to convert South Street to two-way working. Therefore, it is not intended to consult on the South Street two-way of the scheme, but rather inform the public about how this has been developed.

RECOMMENDATIONS:**The Local Committee (Epsom & Ewell) is asked to:**

- (i) Note the progress made so far with the major scheme submission (Annexes 1 and 2 provide supporting information)
- (ii) Note the draft proposals for Epsom Plan E highway improvements scheme (Annex 3&4)
- (iii) Agree that officers undertake public engagement for a minimum period of 6 weeks from mid January (exact dates to be confirmed), and report the feedback to the Major Schemes Member Task Group in April 2015.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To ensure that the Local Committee is kept informed, the Local Committee is asked to note the progress made so far with the major scheme project and the draft proposals for the scheme located in Epsom town centre.

To fully inform the public of the scheme, assist with the development of the project and help us gauge support and forewarn us of any potential issues, which could potentially be designed out during detailed design, it is recommended that we carry out a consultation with both the public and businesses at the first opportunity during early in 2015, to enable the scheme's detailed design to be progressed, with the aim of starting construction in September 2015.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 The Local Committee received a report at their meeting on the 17 July 2013 which provided a briefing on the development of major schemes within the borough, including Epsom Plan E highway improvements.
- 1.2 The Plan E highway improvements scheme is rooted in the Local Plan (2000) and is supported by the Borough's Core Strategy, from which more detailed policy documents stem i.e. the Plan E Area Action Plan.
- 1.3 The Government and LEP announced during week commencing 7 July 2014 the funding allocations, and Epsom Plan E highway improvements were included as a named scheme.
- 1.4 As the Epsom Plan E highway improvements scheme is well advanced, this has been included within the 2015/16 bids for funding within the C2C area.
- 1.5 The scheme has now progressed to a business case submission; at the time of writing, the business case is due to be submitted on 01/12/14 at the request of the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (C2C LEP) Local Transport Board (LTB).
- 1.6 The C2C LEP have recently agreed that schemes that cost less than £5 million could be submitted using a 'light-touch' or 'mini' business case, avoiding the resource intensive economic case required in the full business case, as prescribed by the DfT. However, in order to demonstrate a positive benefit-cost ratio (BCR), analysis to support a more detailed economic case was commissioned from independent consultants WYG (Transport), using the recently updated traffic model. Demonstration of a positive benefit to cost ratio is a requirement of the LEP before funding can be awarded.
- 1.7 The Epsom Plan E highway improvements scheme comprises part of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council's 'Plan E' Area Action Plan (AAP), adopted by the Borough Council in April 2011. The principles behind the highway improvements have been consulted on before, during the extensive consultation carried out for the Area Action Plan.
- 1.8 Previous consultation on the scheme took place as part of the extensive public consultation event in 2008/09, held for the Borough Council's Area Action Plan of the same name. At the time, the public were asked to comment on three options available to improve the highway environment and

congestion in Epsom town centre. From this consultation, 'Option 2' was taken forward, that which favoured making South Street two-way. This forms the basis for the Plan E major scheme, and we would now like to engage with the public, to provide further information on more detailed aspects of the scheme.

- 1.9 The consultation carried out as part of the development of the AAP provided three potential options to improve the highway network in Epsom town centre. These were:
- (1) Re-route the A24 around Station Approach, away from the High Street;
 - (2) Revert South Street to two-way; and
 - (3) Revert Ashley Avenue and Ashley Road to two-way.
- 1.10 Due to pinch points on the carriageway on Station Approach preventing the route from accommodating existing flows on the A24, Option 1 was not progressed.
- 1.11 Similarly, Option 3 was not progressed due to the need for expensive property purchase to overcome pinch points in the carriageway. Option 2 has consequently progressed into the scheme we have developed to date.
- 1.12 As a result of this, Option 2, the option to make South Street two-way, has been progressed. Consultants WYG (Transport) have provided an updated traffic model of the town centre, which has been audited by the SCC Transport Studies team.
- 1.13 Along with the notes and information provided to the Member Task Group held 6 October 2014, this Committee Report updates the Local Committee on the traffic modelling and the subsequent progress to the scheme development, which has culminated in achieving a positive benefit to cost ratio allowing the business case to be submitted to the LEP (see Section 2, below).

2. ANALYSIS:

Epsom Plan E highway improvements – scheme development progress

- 2.1 The latest Epsom and Ewell Major Scheme Member Task Group was held on 6 October 2014. Consultants WYG (Transport) presented the traffic model which has been developed to consider the impacts of the proposed scheme.
- 2.2 Following the presentation, members were provided with a summary note explaining the journey time analysis carried out to assess the benefits of the scheme. This note is included as **Annex 1** to this Committee Report for information.
- 2.3 Members requested details of the existing traffic flows surveyed in the town centre which informed the modelling; flow diagrams presenting these figures are included as **Annex 2** to this report.
- 2.4 Since the member task group in October, WYG (Transport) have completed the economic analysis of the scheme, building on the journey time analysis

ITEM 10

described at the member task group. The findings have been included in the business case for the scheme, submitted to the LEP. They show that the scheme will deliver a benefit to cost ratio (BCR) greater than 4.

- 2.5 This calculated benefit to cost ratio exceeds the LEP's criteria for the scheme to provide a benefit to cost ratio greater than 2. The BCR has been calculated using assessed journey time savings resulting from the scheme and has also included accident savings. The calculations used to calculate these savings are compliant with the Department for Transport's WebTAG guidance.
- 2.6 The fact that the calculated BCR is over and above the level required should satisfy the LEP, but the business case will be independently assessed by C2C LEP LTB's assurance framework transport consultants before funding is secured. The high benefit to cost ratio of >4 h, provides an opportunity for the benefits to be 'rebalanced' during the detailed design stage to provide greater benefit to pedestrians and other sustainable transport modes in the town centre. The revised diagram attached at **Annex 3** provides an overview of the scheme and shows how it is intended that these wider benefits will be delivered, in concert with the highway benefits. For example, the diagram includes walking and cycling measures which can be included as part of the scheme, as well as complementary public realm improvements to the marketplace, and improved bus infrastructure.

Epsom Plan E highway improvements – proposed public engagement

- 2.7 The scheme is now at a stage where it is necessary for us to undertake public engagement. The purpose of this is as follows:
 - to inform and update the public on the scheme
 - provide an opportunity for the public to give their views on some aspects of the scheme
 - Provide opportunity to engage with businesses, particularly those on South Street, to understand a bit more of the detail around the scheme and how we can develop it to help them i.e. revised waiting restrictions and agree loading times to minimise delay on the network whilst still supporting business needs.
- 2.8 Feedback obtained from the engagement will inform the detailed design of the scheme.
- 2.9 It is proposed to engage with businesses and members of the public in Jan – Feb 2015 (exact dates to be determined), following submission of the business case. The consultation will provide information about the scheme and provide an opportunity for the public to give feedback.
- 2.10 The consultation will be well advertised, with posters displayed on site, press releases, inviting local groups, schools, retail outlets and businesses directly and via social media. Information stands will be set up at key locations within the borough, and are expected to include locations such as the Epsom market place, Epsom Town Hall, Ebbisham Centre, the Ashley Centre and Bourne Hall.

- 2.11 Exact details are to be confirmed and **feedback and guidance is welcomed from members as to how the engagement should be carried out.**
- 2.12 It is intended that information panels displayed to the public will provide: the background to the scheme; the intended layout(s); the benefits of delivering the scheme; and an explanation of the how the scheme will progress.

3. OPTIONS:

- 3.1 Previous consultation on Plan E included three highway options: (1) Re-route the A24 around Station Approach, away from the High Street; (2) Revert South Street to two-way; and (3) Revert Ashley Avenue and Ashley Road to two-way. Due to pinch points on the carriageway on Station Approach preventing the route from accommodating existing flows on the A24, Option 1 was not progressed. Similarly, Option 3 was not progressed due to the need for expensive property purchase to overcome pinch points in the carriageway. Option 2 has consequently progressed into the scheme we have developed to date.
- 3.2 WYG (Transport) has assessed two principal sub-options within the agreed Option 2. These are: (i) South Street two-way (no other significant changes to highway) and (ii) South Street two-way plus a banned right turn from High Street West into Ashley Road at the Spread Eagle junction, for all vehicles except buses and taxis. Economic analysis of both options considered found that sub-option (ii) did not deliver the journey time saving benefits required of the scheme for it to be feasible, as it reduced cross town permeability. The proposed public engagement will therefore **not** offer this arrangement as an option for comment. Instead, the consultation will focus on option (i) South Street two-way working which has been assessed to provide the best overall benefit to the town as proposed in business case submission.
- 3.3 **Annex 4** attached contains the revised layouts from the feasibility design process of the proposed changes to the current junctions and High Street Marketplace area. The proposed changes to High Street does not inhibit the borough councils ambitions to improve the market place area.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 As described above, the scheme has been subject to public consultation as part of wider consultation for the Borough Council's Area Action Plan.
- 4.2 Officers now propose carrying out public engagement to provide information and give an opportunity for the public and local businesses to provide feedback to inform the detailed design of the scheme.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The detailed business case for the schemes that are to be submitted will require, as part of the business case, a value for money statement, derived through the calculation of the benefit cost ratio.
- 5.2 The current estimated cost for the scheme is £2.7 million. Subject to the LEP approving funding, £2.16 million will be provided from the Local Growth Fund. The remaining (20%) balance of £0.54 million will be secured via a (20%) local contribution as agreed between Surrey County Council Cabinet and

ITEM 10

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council including £80k from existing developer contributions will fund the remainder of the scheme cost.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

6.1 It is the objective of Surrey Highways to treat all users of the public highway equally and with understanding. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA's) will be carried out for each Major scheme as part of the detailed design process.

7. LOCALISM:

7.1 The headline benefits of the Epsom Plan E highway improvements major scheme are as follows:

- Boosting economic growth by;
- Tackling congestion
- Improving journey time reliability
- Reducing journey times
- Improving pedestrian connectivity from Epsom station to the town centre

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	Set out below
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report
Public Health	Set out below.

8.1 Sustainability and Public Health implications

Increased walking and cycling, where it replaces motorised forms of transport such as the car, will improve air quality and reduce carbon emission levels, which is a key objective of the Surrey LTP. Passenger transport and modal shift from the car to buses/rail are a further key objective of the Surrey LTP.

Transport is responsible for one third of carbon emission in Surrey. Surrey's Local Transport Plan has a target to reduce carbon emissions from (non-motorway) transport by 10% (absolute emissions) by 2020, increasing to 25% reduction by 2035 from 2007 baseline of 2,114k tonnes.

Increased walking and cycling has a positive impact on the health of a person. The NHS identifies cycling as an activity which provides significant health benefits.

It is also expected that increased levels of walking and cycling to and around the town centre will have a positive effect on Epsom's retail economy with recent studies suggesting that pedestrians and cyclists actually spend more on a trip into a town than a motorist.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 9.1 Work has been carried out on the Epsom Plan E highway improvements major scheme to a feasibility design stage, to ensure that the schemes is feasible in terms of build-ability and delivers the necessary traffic benefits including reducing congestion, reducing accidents and providing better facilities for pedestrians, within the constraints of the existing highway boundary and SCC officers would now like to carry out public engagement to inform and raise awareness of the scheme.
- 9.2 The Local Committee are asked to note the progress of the development of scheme made so far, and agree that officers undertake public consultation for a minimum period of 6 weeks from mid January (exact dates to be confirmed), and report the feedback to the Major Schemes Member Task Group in April 2015.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 Subject to the approval of this Local Committee, details for the public engagement will be worked up with member involvement and engagement will commence in January 2015. The results of the engagement will be reported to the Major Schemes Member Task Group in April 2015.
- 10.2 The business case for the scheme is due to be submitted to the C2C LEP by the end of November 2014, and if successful works should commence next financial year.

Contact Officer: Steve Howard
 Job title: Project Manager, Transport Policy
 Contact number: 03456 009 009

Consulted:

Surrey County Council officers:
 Epsom & Ewell Borough Council officer(s):
 Epsom & Ewell Major Schemes Member Task Group (6th October 2014).

Annexes:

Annex 1: Summary of Journey Time Analysis
 Annex 2: Modelled Traffic Flow diagrams – Base v Do-Something (Opt i)
 Annex 3: Epsom Plan E highway improvements – scheme measures
 Annex 4: Epsom Plan E highway improvements – Feasibility design layouts

Sources/background papers:

C2C LTB Major schemes submissions (July 2013)
 C2C Expressions of Interest (March 2014)
 Notes of Member Task Group (October 2014)

This page is intentionally left blank