

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**LOCAL COMMITTEE (MOLE VALLEY)**

DATE: 2 March 2016
LEAD OFFICER: MATTHEW JEZZARD, TRAFFIC MANAGER



SUBJECT: UPDATE ON DORKING TOWN CENTRE

DIVISION: DORKING HILLS, DORKING SOUTH AND HOLMWOODS.

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

Concern has been expressed over the delays to traffic and congestion within the Dorking Town Centre. There have been a number of investigations, studies and traffic modelling of Dorking Town Centre in the past. There have been recent maintenance works to the town centre, including resurfacing West Street, South Street and Vincent Lane. Unfortunately, this work caused damage to the detector loops on two sets of traffic signals on the Dorking gyratory. An update on the Dorking Traffic Signals was presented at the formal Mole Valley Local Committee on 2nd December 2015. It is proposed to include Dorking Town Centre Traffic Management as part of an expression of interest to the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (C2C LEP), for when and if future Government funding becomes available for a Growth Fund 3. This report outlines and summarises the repairs to the damaged traffic signals in the Dorking Town Centre gyratory, an update on the Dorking Traffic Signals report for the Formal Local Committee on 2nd December 2015 section 3 Options, and the outline of the possible C2C LEP expression of interest.

RECOMMENDATIONS:**The Local Committee (Mole Valley) is asked to agree that:**

Following completion of all of the scheduled repairs/revisions/upgrades to the current signal configurations, a potential Expression of Interest (EoI) is to be submitted to the C2C LEP that would include Dorking Traffic Management and Congestion fixing measures. (Divisional Members are invited to inform this expression of interest, to represent local concerns and needs.)

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

With current Traffic Signal configurations now repaired/reconfigured and providing optimum operation, there is still a further need to seek out funding opportunities to improve traffic flows through Dorking Town Centre, given recent new developments in the Town Centre and anticipated increased traffic volumes in future years.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

1. Concern has been expressed over the delays to traffic and congestion within the Dorking Town Centre. The concerns particularly relate to delays at Pump Corner and also for vehicles travelling eastwards from Westcott.
2. There have been recent maintenance works to the town centre, including resurfacing West Street, South Street and Vincent Lane. Unfortunately, this work caused damage to the detector loops for two sets of traffic signals on the Dorking gyratory.
3. Recently, road works – both planned works and Utility Company emergency works in and around the Town Centre Area, had a further negative impact on traffic movements.
4. There have been a number of investigations, studies and traffic modelling of Dorking Town Centre in the past. These include Dorking De-Congestion Report, Pump Corner Report and Committee Report, and Dorking Area Action Plan.
5. A member/officer meeting about the Dorking Traffic Signals, on 6th November 2015, highlighted the perceptions and observed issues with the traffic signals after recent developments, particularly one small and one medium sized supermarket and the potential for further congestion if other developments go ahead. An update on the Dorking Traffic Signals was presented at the formal Mole Valley Local Committee on 2nd December 2015. An update to that report, Item 3 Options, is given in this report.
6. In the recent Spending Review, Government confirmed it will deliver the commitment to a £12billion Local Growth Fund between 2015 and 2021. There is an indication that the Government may launch a future round of funding to deliver projects, as not all of the £12bn has been allocated. The C2C LEP has launched a call for expressions of interest for growth projects, if future Government funding becomes available. It is proposed to include Dorking Town Centre as part of a Wider Dorking Package, that also includes further connectivity to the train stations and sustainable travel, as an expression of interest to the C2C LEP. There is a tight time scale for this, with the submission deadline of 31st March 2016.
7. The proposed expression of interest to the C2C LEP may require the further development of the traffic model for Dorking Town Centre in the future. This is a complex piece of work, and has been estimated that it would take 18 months to 2 years to deliver at a cost of approximately £100,000. There is a commitment for joint funding between Surrey County Council and Mole Valley District Council for this study, and it will be informed by the outcome of the C2C LEP Expression of Interest, and the Mole Valley Infrastructure Needs Assessment.

2. ANALYSIS:

Repairs to the Dorking gyratory traffic signals.

- 2.1 All the previously damaged detector loops in the town centre have been re-cut and reconnected, removing the problem of green time given to roads where no vehicles are waiting at the signals.
- 2.2 Vincent Lane/Westcott Road is now operating under the upgraded optimum method of operation, 'MOVA' (Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation).
- 2.3 A further issue, identified with the signals operation at A25 junction with London Road (near Pippbrook) affecting the right turn phase in to London Road for A25 Westbound traffic, has also been corrected.
- 2.4 Temporary signs warning of "Signals under new phasing" were placed at both locations and both sets of signals have been under post installation validation.
- 2.5 Observations on Traffic movements post these changes show an improvement in traffic flows through the Town Centre, giving the opportunity for proper analysis of traffic movements in Dorking, following new developments which have taken place, to better inform any potential further mitigation and the associated costs.

Update on the Dorking Traffic Signals report to the Formal Local Committee on 2nd December 2015 section 3 Options.

- 2.6 A number of actions were agreed to try to optimise the working of existing traffic signals in Dorking.
- 2.7 Item (i) was to assess and revalidate the data sets used to run the signals at Reigate Road/London Road and Westcott Road/Vincent Road junctions once the signal loops have been re-cut and checked that they are operating correctly. As detailed above, the installation is completed
- 2.8 Item (ii) was to reassess the signal timings at Pump Corner. This is currently under consideration now that detector loops here are repaired and revisions to other nearby junctions are now completed.
- 2.9 Item (iii) Consider removing approximately two parking spaces in South Street opposite Rose Hill to provide a greater length of vehicles entering South Street from West Street and High Street to merge, assisting westbound traffic flow. This is still being investigated to see if it is feasible, and will be going for consultation with residents and businesses, as part of the next parking review, subject to approval by the Divisional Member.
- 2.10 Item (iv) Approach Surrey Police to request video evidence of the use of Pump Corner by pedestrians and seek their views before further consideration is given to turning off the traffic signals at Pump Corner for a trial period. The Police do not support this suggestion and have stated that

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turning off the signals, even as a trial, would represent an unacceptable and high risk to both pedestrians and vehicular traffic. This suggestion is not going to be developed further.

- 2.11 Item (v) Seek information and past reports covering the introduction of the traffic signals at Pump Corner and the period in 2011 when the signals were not in operation. This investigation is still on-going. (See also The Dorking De-Congestion Report, Pump Corner Report and Committee Report, and Dorking Action Plan)
- 2.12 Item (vi) Consider how best to keep local residents and businesses informed of the work being carried out in Dorking Town Centre to try to reduce congestion. The Surrey Works Communication Team is developing an engagement and communication plan.

Possible C2C LEP expression of interest – Wider Dorking

- 2.13 There is the potential for a Wider Dorking expression of interest to be submitted to the C2C LEP by the Transport Policy Team. This Wider Dorking major project could be a grouping of a Dorking traffic management measures and congestion-fixing package, Dorking STP – phases 2 and 3, A2003 Ashcombe improvements and Pippbrook and Meadowbrook town centre improvements to improve economic viability.
- 2.14 The funding availability for projects, from the potential expression of interest, is not certain. It is also not certain that this expression of interest would be successful and would meet all of the criteria for the C2C LEP. The project, if successful and funding was available and granted, would require match funding.
- 2.15 There is an opportunity for the Divisional Members to input to this expression of interest and to assist in shaping the options for consideration. Unfortunately, the Mole Valley Infrastructure Needs Assessment will not have been analysed before the expression of interest deadline. This local consultation will inform the more detailed options, if the expression of interest is successful.

3. OPTIONS:

- 3.1 Transport Policy Team to put forward an Expression of interest to the C2C LEP in order to seek funds to develop a Dorking Traffic Management Measures and congestion fixing package. Receipt of funding is not guaranteed but relatively little expenditure is required to produce a suitable EoI.
- 3.2 Continue to ensure that current Traffic signal configurations work at optimum efficiency and monitor traffic flows. Business as usual position, but does not future proof Dorking Town Centre for anticipated increases in traffic volumes.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 Surrey Police have been informally consulted on the possibility of turning off the signals at Pump Corner for a trial period, but are not supportive of this suggestion on grounds of pedestrian safety.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 First option progression would be significantly funded by Capital Allocation from C2C LEP, but would require identification of 'Local Contribution' towards any scheme. Second option can currently be managed by existing Traffic Operations Team Revenue Budgets. (Although future level of this budget is uncertain given wider budgetary pressures across the Council).

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 Full EIA not completed as not yet required. All current Traffic Signals Installation and operation designed to National Standards incorporating consideration for those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Should a funding bid be developed, as/when any detailed design commences an EIA may be required for wider scheme considerations.

7. LOCALISM:

- 7.1 Dorking Town Centre residents and businesses primarily impacted, along with motorists travelling through the Town Centre. Proposed recommendation should provide improvements to those affected by current traffic volumes. Neither option encourages local self-reliance other than drivers following the highway code and adhering to any local parking restrictions in place and both motorists and pedestrians showing due consideration to one another.

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 implications

Potential reduction in Carbon Emissions associated with any reduction in traffic congestion.

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8.2 Public Health implications

See 'Sustainability implications' above.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

9.1 Following all of the scheduled repairs/revisions/upgrades to the current signal configurations and with the cessation of roadworks impacting on vehicle movements, recent levels of traffic congestion have improved in Dorking Town Centre. However with anticipated increases in traffic volumes in future years, new developments completed in the Town Centre and the current physical limitations of the road lay out in the Town Centre, it is recommended that the Local Committee agree that Officers in the Transport Policy Team develop a potential expression of interest, to be submitted to the C2C LEP that would include Dorking Traffic Management and Congestion fixing measures. (Divisional Members are invited to inform this expression of interest, to represent local concerns and needs.)

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

10.1 Should the Local Committee support the recommendation in this report an EoI will be developed by the Transport Policy Team and submitted to the C2C LEP for consideration before 31 March 2016. The Local Committee will be kept informed of the progression of this EoI and any subsequent design developments.

Contact Officer:

Anita Guy, Principal Engineer, South East Area Team 03456 009 009
(until 14th March),
then Anne-Marie Hannam (new Senior Traffic Engineer from 14th March)

Consulted:

Surrey Police

Annexes:

Sources/background papers:

Dorking De-Congestion Report, Pump Corner Report and Committee Report, and Dorking Area Action Plan.