



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (SPELTHORNE)

BID TO THE DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT FOR CYCLE SAFETY SCHEMES

21st January 2013

KEY ISSUE:

As part of its commitment to reducing cycling casualties and securing a cycling legacy from the London 2012 Olympic Games, Surrey County Council is developing a programme to encourage more people to cycle, more often, safely and conveniently. This report seeks the committee's comments and approval to proposals for two off-road segregated cycling path schemes in Spelthorne. The schemes form part of a bid submitted to the Department for Transport's (DfT) cycle safety scheme fund.

SUMMARY:

In July 2012 the DfT announced a £15m fund for cycling infrastructure in order to tackle cycling casualties and reduce barriers to more cycling. Following analysis of cycling collisions across Surrey, the county council has submitted a bid for funding for five cycling schemes, two of which were highlighted as a priority offering best fit with the DfT fund evaluation criteria. One of the two priority schemes includes proposals within Spelthorne for a link on the A244 between the new cycle paths on Walton Bridge to Gaston Bridge, Upper Halliford.

The Surrey County Council bid to DfT also includes three other schemes in order to demonstrate the scale of the county council's ambition, and in case any further funding is made available by the DfT. One of these includes proposals for cycle paths along Kingston Road, Staines-upon-Thames.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to agree:

- (i) that the Walton Bridge Links, off-road segregated cycle paths scheme is approved, subject to the outcome of the funding bid.**

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- (ii) that the Kingston Road, Staines-upon-Thames, off-road segregated cycle path schemes is approved, subject to the outcome of the funding bid.

1. INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

1.1. In July 2012 the DfT announced a £15m fund for cycling infrastructure to be administered by Sustrans. The fund was set up due to growing concern about the number of cycling casualties across Great Britain. Local authorities were invited to submit bids by 30 November 2012, and the DfT will announce the outcome in February 2013. In November 2012, the DfT announced further funding of around £10m to augment the fund. Scheme implementation is required to be complete or largely complete by December 2013.

1.2. As part of its commitment to reducing cycling casualties and securing a cycling legacy from the London 2012 Olympic Games, Surrey County Council is developing a programme to encourage more people to cycle, more often, safely and conveniently. Increased cycling will provide health benefits to participants, and will help to reduce congestion and carbon emissions on Surrey's roads. Therefore Surrey County Council has submitted a bid to the DfT fund for five schemes, two of which were highlighted as a priority offering best fit with the fund evaluation criteria:

Priority Scheme Name

- Walton-on-Thames Bridge Links
- Leatherhead Town Centre

Borough/ District

Elmbridge & Spelthorne
Mole Valley

1.3. The bid also includes the three other schemes in order to demonstrate the scale of the county council's ambition, and in case any further funding is made available by the Department for Transport:

Additional Schemes

- Leatherhead Wider Links
- Kingston Road, Staines-upon-Thames
- Egham, The Causeway

Borough/ District

Mole Valley
Spelthorne
Runnymede

2. ANALYSIS and COMMENTARY

Cycling Casualties

- 2.1. While the overall number of road casualties has been decreasing in Surrey, the number of cycling casualties has increased sharply in recent years, over and above the increase that has also been seen across Great Britain. The number of seriously injured cyclists in Surrey has more than doubled since 2008, whereas the increase in seriously injured cyclists across Great Britain over the same period was 26 per cent. The number of seriously injured cyclists in Spelthorne has also increased, though the numbers are much smaller and therefore more susceptible to random fluctuation from year to year.

Cycling Casualties in Surrey 2008 to 2011*

Severity	2008	2009	2010	2011
Fatal	1	2	4	1
Serious	49	78	93	106
Slight	367	390	353	422
Total	417	470	450	529

* At the time of writing the number of cycling casualties in 2012 had not yet been confirmed, however emerging results indicate a similar or greater number countywide than in 2011.

Cycling Casualties in Spelthorne 2008 to 2011

Severity	2008	2009	2010	2011
Fatal	0	1	1	0
Serious	3	5	11	14
Slight	42	51	27	47
Total	45	57	39	61

- 2.2. It is thought likely that the increase in cycling casualties is due to an increase in the overall levels of cycling. However we cannot assume a simple direct relationship between the level of cycling and casualties, because there is wide variation across the county. For example there has been a large increase in cycling in Woking town centre following the Woking Cycle Town project, but there has not been any increase in cycling casualties there. This shows that investment in high quality cycling infrastructure, promotion and training can result in increased cycling, without increased casualties.

Scheme Design Principles

- 2.3. The five schemes submitted by Surrey County Council were developed following analysis of cycling casualties taking place across the county to identify locations and stretches of road with a concentration of cycling casualties. The proposals were then refined and prioritised in light of feedback received from Sustrans. The schemes were designed to offer a strong fit with the fund evaluation criteria set by the DfT:

- Evidence of perceived or actual risk to cyclists
 - Evidence of match funding
 - Deliverability within timescale
 - Clear demand for stakeholders for proposed solution
 - High quality design and innovation
 - Potential demand including connectivity and promotion
 - Commitment to monitor proposed scheme before and after
- 2.4. Outline design of the schemes has been undertaken following the principle of providing continuous cycle paths separated from motor vehicles along busy roads so that people who are not able or willing to mix with heavy traffic (i.e. most people) can get around by bike and so that people who already cycle find them convenient. Furthermore, segregated paths provide benefits to other road users and motorists by separating cyclists from the main carriageway.
- 2.5. This approach is based on attitudinal survey research that was carried out in Walton-on-Thames and Leatherhead as part of the bid development. This research clearly indicated that Surrey residents would be far more likely to cycle if they had access to segregated cycle paths, and that sharing busy roads with vehicle traffic is a major barrier to more cycling.

3. PROPOSED SCHEMES IN SPELTHORNE

Walton-on-Thames Bridge Links

- 3.1. Drawings describing outline proposals for this scheme (which includes elements within both Spelthorne and Elmbridge), are contained within Annexe 1. It can be seen that the scheme will provide continuous cycle paths segregated from motor vehicles and pedestrians adjacent to busy roads. Following analysis it was identified that 35 cyclists have been injured, 3 of them seriously, between January 2008 and July 2012 on these roads.
- 3.2. The scheme is innovative because it includes continuous, separate cycle paths on both sides of the carriageway in a town centre location with narrower roads. This is the type of environment where in the past it has often been perceived as “too difficult” to provide dedicated continuous cycle facilities.
- 3.3. The scheme will improve access and reduce risk along the desire line to reach Walton-on-Thames town centre, and will link to the new cycle paths on the new Walton Bridge. This in turn links to the National Cycle Route 4 “Thames Valley Cycle Route” which runs underneath Walton Bridge alongside the river Thames.
- 3.4. Within Spelthorne the scheme will provide continuous segregated cycle paths along the A244 Walton Bridge Road and Gaston Bridge Road linking the cycle paths on the new Walton Bridge to existing cycle lanes on

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Gaston Bridge Road in Upper Halliford. It will also enhance safe cycle access to Thamesmead School. Carriageway narrowing and widening of the footway will create a segregated cycle path on both sides of the road.

- 3.5. The scheme will also include narrowing of the circulatory width and alteration of the geometry of the Marshalls Roundabout junction with Fordbridge Road in order to provide room for a perimeter cycle path, and to reduce entry and exit speeds of motor vehicles. As well as improving the safety of cyclists, this will also reduce the number of collisions involving only motorised vehicles. (In the three years to the end of September 2012, there were a total of 12 collisions resulting in personal injury, including one resulting in serious injury at this roundabout). Raised tables will be considered where the cycle path crosses side roads.

Kingston Road, Staines-upon-Thames

- 3.6. Drawings describing outline proposals for this scheme are contained within Annexe 2. It can be seen that the scheme will provide continuous cycle paths segregated from motor vehicles and pedestrians adjacent to the busy Kingston Road. Following analysis it was identified that 16 cyclists have been injured, 2 of them seriously, between January 2008 and July 2012 on this road.
- 3.7. The route links residential areas to local shops, Staines-upon-Thames town centre, The Matthew Arnold School, and the community facilities and public buildings at Knowle Green. The scheme also provides formal parking bays along the Kingston Road where presently vehicles park illegally upon the wide footway.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1. Two general attitude surveys have been completed in Walton and Leatherhead in order to inform Surrey's future cycling programme activities. This showed that sharing busy roads with vehicle traffic is a major barrier to more cycling, and that there was support for fully segregated cycling facilities.
- 4.2. The Local Committee Chair, Vice Chair and relevant Divisional Members were provided with a copy of the council's initial expression of interest on 3 September 2012. They were also provided with a copy of the outline scheme drawings on 20 November 2012 and have been invited to site meetings scheduled for early January 2013.
- 4.3. Should the bid be successful then detailed design will proceed and residents and businesses directly affected by the proposals will be consulted prior to construction. For the Walton-on-Thames Bridge Links cycling scheme it is envisaged that consultation with residents and businesses could be incorporated into the ongoing communications regarding the construction of the new Walton Bridge.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Walton-on-Thames Bridge Links

- 5.1. Excluding the cycle paths that form part of the Walton Bridge project, it is estimated that the scheme will cost approximately £1,409,000. This will be met by the bid to the DfT for £984,000 along with match funding of £225,000 section 106 developer contributions and £200,000 capital investment by the county council, subject to approval by county council cabinet on 26 March 2012.

Kingston Road, Staines-upon-Thames

- 5.2. It is estimated that the scheme will cost £795,000. This will be met through the bid to DfT for £556,000 but will require match funding of £238,000. Further work will be required to identify potential sources of this match funding pending the outcome of the bid.

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. Increased cycling rates will impact positively on the health of the individual. The NHS identifies cycling as an activity which provides significant health benefits. Marketing will be undertaken to promote the new routes to businesses and residents and training will be offered to those less confident to encourage take up of cycling and maximise the benefit of the new infrastructure.
- 6.2. Increased cycling rates, where it replaces motorised forms of transport, will improve air quality and reduce carbon emission levels in the county. 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 a 2007 baseline of 2,114k tonnes.

7. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. None identified.

8. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. In developing the county council's Cycling Programme we have identified the following impacts and actions:

Key impacts

Younger people – more reliant on cycling as a mode of transport

Older people – less likely to cycle due to mobility and other concerns; could be adversely affected by cycle routes that impact on pedestrian routes and access.

Gender – our research suggests women are less confident cycling in busy traffic although cycle casualty rates amongst males are higher than amongst females.

Disability – people with mobility problems and visual impairment adversely affected by cycle routes where they interact with pedestrian routes

Actions

Identify key routes that link school destinations

Segregation of routes from pedestrians wherever feasible

Development of segregated cycle routes designed with least confident cyclists in mind

Achieve full segregation wherever feasible.

9. CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1. As part of its commitment to reducing cycling casualties and securing a cycling legacy from the London 2012 Olympic Games, Surrey County Council has submitted a bid to the Department for Transport for five off-road segregated cycling path schemes. Two of these are within the Borough of Spelthorne and were developed following identification of routes throughout Surrey suffering higher numbers of cycling casualties.
- 9.2. The schemes were developed following attitude surveys that showed that sharing the road with busy traffic was a major barrier to more cycling, and that there was support for off-road segregated cycling facilities.
- 9.3. It is recommended that the proposals for Spelthorne are approved as they will reduce cycling casualties and other road casualties, and will encourage more and safer cycling. Increased cycling has benefits to the health of participants, helps reduce traffic congestion and will reduce carbon emissions where it replaces other motorised transport. If successful the bid will result in additional investment to increase accessibility to Staines-on-Thames and Walton-on-Thames town centres, which would help maintain their economic success.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS:

**Annexe 1: Walton Bridge Links – route plan
Walton Bridge Links – junction layouts**

Annexe 2: Kingston Road, Staines-upon-Thames – route plan

Version No. Date: Time: Initials: No of annexes: