

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

LOCAL COMMITTEE (MOLE VALLEY)

DATE: 1 MARCH 2017

LEAD OFFICER: BRONWEN CHINIEN

SUBJECT: LEATHERHEAD SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT PACKAGE

DIVISION: LEATHERHEAD AND FETCHAM EAST



SUMMARY OF ISSUES:

The Leatherhead Sustainable Transport Package (STP) is a proposal for a series of highways infrastructure schemes to improve accessibility by walking and cycling in Leatherhead. The STP supports the proposed Transform Leatherhead town centre development and regeneration.

Between 31 October and 11 December 2016, Surrey County Council and Mole Valley District Council carried out a public consultation exercise on the Leatherhead STP and town centre parking. This report and the supporting appendix, provide an update on the consultation and the response to the feedback received, in relation to the Leatherhead STP.

A proposed way forward for the scheme is set out in light of the significant determining factors for the scheme; in particular funding availability, deliverability, public feedback and the associated processes of Transform Leatherhead.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Mole Valley) is asked to:

- (i) Note the results of the public consultation on Leatherhead STP and town centre parking

And

- (ii) Agree that a phased approach to scheme development (including funding bid to LEP) is progressed, with the first phase focusing on the shared use pedestrian and cycling shared use off road scheme on Randalls Road.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To ensure that the development process for the Leatherhead STP is transparent and accountable and delivers value for money for residents.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 The Leatherhead Sustainable Transport Package is being developed jointly between Surrey County Council and Mole Valley District Council. It is aligned with the Mole Valley Local Transport Strategy and supports the Mole Valley Local Cycling Plan, in particular one of the plan's priorities (reference V1) to:

“seek to design and build infrastructure that best suits the needs of residents in Mole Valley”.

- 1.2 The scheme is a package of walking and cycling improvements providing links between Leatherhead Station, the business parks at Springfield Drive, Randalls Way and Ronson Way and the emerging Riverside quarter and Leatherhead Leisure Centre. **Annex A** provides a map outlining the routes which were consulted upon.
- 1.3 A key objective for the scheme is to make it easier for employees on the north Leatherhead business parks to access Leatherhead town centre and the station by cycling and walking. Increasing connectivity is anticipated to increase footfall, and provide a boost for the local retail economy and also assist in making/maintaining the north Leatherhead area as a prime commercial location, into the future.
- 1.4 The Leatherhead Major Schemes Task Group has been established to support the Local Committee's steering and decision making on this scheme and also the transport implications of the Transform Leatherhead programme. The task group met on 19 January 2017 to appraise the feedback received from the consultation and other key factors for the scheme. This report reflects the group's discussion and conclusions.

2. ANALYSIS:

- 2.1 A detailed account of the consultation process and description and analysis of the feedback received is provided in **Annex B** 'Leatherhead Sustainable Transport Package Public Consultation Report'.

Summary of feedback received

- 2.2 Participants responded online and by attending the public exhibitions. Over 1,000 pieces of feedback were received, before accounting for multiple communications from a single respondent. Officers and members were impressed by the level of engagement with the proposals and received many examples of helpful and constructive feedback on the proposals.
- 2.3 Overall the majority of responses (80% of short format responses and 62% of long format responses) were positive i.e. in support of the scheme and felt it was either effective or very effective at meeting the stated objectives to encourage more people to make journeys by bike and on foot.
- 2.4 The remodelling of the Waterworks junction on Waterway Road to provide a better crossing facility was well supported by all categories of road users, with no negative concerns raised about this aspect of the Waterway Road scheme.

- 2.5 There was also recognition by some respondents of the value of shared paths to provide a diversity of facilities to cater for younger and less confident cyclists. However, there was also significant concern around the potential conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians on shared-use off-road paths.
- 2.6 Analysis of other comments registering concern with the scheme, were most frequently regarding:
- a. perceived negative impacts on the existing traffic flows from introducing traffic lights on Town Bridge
 - b. insufficient remaining width of carriageway causing congestion / safety issues on Waterway Road
 - c. perceived safety issues from conflict between cyclists and pedestrians on shared use facilities
 - d. possibility that shared use facilities will not be used by cyclists
 - e. bus service and parking issues should be prioritised over improvements for walking and cycling
- 2.6 Furthermore, whilst Randalls Road did not raise negative issues regarding the feasibility of the scheme, there was a concern raised in relation to the level of use of the Randalls Road route by the commuting population, if the 'Frogmore gate' remains closed. If opened (potentially including a new secure access arrangement), this gate could provide direct and convenient pedestrian access for employees of businesses on the Springfield Business Park, taking advantage of the shortest route to the station. An alternative access arrangement currently in place involves providing electronic access cards to a very limited number of employees leaving many frustrated.

Other suggestions made

- 2.7 In addition, other suggestions for infrastructure works to improve cycling and walking were:
- a. More secure cycle parking needed in the town centre
 - b. Importance of good lighting on all new and existing routes
 - c. Value of long distance routes interconnecting towns
 - d. Upgrading and better maintenance of existing routes, in particular:
 - i. Mill Lane bridleway and footway (two routes) which connect Fetcham with Leatherhead town centre / Leisure centre
 - ii. River Lane which connects Fetcham with Randalls Road/Springfield Drive roundabout, crossing the River Mole via two footbridges
- 2.8 Furthermore, suggestions were made regarding improvements to public transport and parking including a bus service linking Leatherhead to Cobham, improvements to timetables for bus services between Leatherhead and Epsom and suggestions for possible sites for additional (multi storey) car parking.

3. OPTIONS:

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- 3.1 The main issues raised and the response to these are set out in the following section, along with consideration of the wider context for the scheme.
- 3.2 A significant factor in determining the way forward for the scheme is the wider Transform Leatherhead context.
- 3.3 Both Section 2 (Waterway Road) and Section 3 (Town Bridge on Guildford Rd) are in close proximity to the Transform Leatherhead 'zone'. Section 3 in particular directly connects to the riverside quarter i.e. Claire and James House, which is currently the subject of master-planning for redevelopment. Therefore sections 2 and 3 of the proposal will be investigated further in line with the proposed transport modelling for Transform Leatherhead. Section 1 (Randalls Road) is outside of the Transform Leatherhead zone and therefore less affected by the various possibilities for redesigning the highway network (including consideration of the needs of all road users and the importance of sustainable travel access improvements).
- 3.4 Therefore, the scheme will be progressed in two phases:
 - a. Phase 1: Randalls Rd (section 1) shared use scheme providing a key link between Leatherhead Station and the business parks at Springfield Drive, Randalls Way and Ronson Way. When Transform Leatherhead addresses transport issues around Bull Hill site, the full value of the scheme to the town centre and businesses will be delivered through a high quality continuous, safe and attractive pedestrian and cycling link between the business quarter and Leatherhead town centre.
 - b. Phase 2: Waterway Road (section 2) and 'town bridge' on Guildford Rd (section 3). Perceptions of potential negative impacts on the existing traffic flows from introducing traffic lights on Town bridge and inadequate width on Waterway Road, should be investigated further in the Transform Leatherhead transport study.
- 3.5 Other sections of cycle routes were highlighted for potential upgrading, in particular Mill Lane and Rive Lane. Officers have considered these options and both face a number of issues which make them unsuitable for including within the scope of the revised STP.

Mill Lane

- 3.6 Mill Lane provides two routes linking Fetcham with Waterway Rd. The southern link is a shared facility (cyclists and pedestrians) but consultation feedback and a subsequent inspection has shown that surface maintenance and some vegetation cut back are needed. The northern most route is currently pedestrian access only, is narrow in parts and is badly affected by flooding in winter. Although a wider, flood resistant surface could be considered, several sections would require elevation to overcome standing water problems which would add considerable cost both for installation and maintenance. Furthermore, options for widening are constrained by a fenced boundary to the railway embankment to the north of the path and a wall separating residential properties at the western end.

River Lane

- 3.7 River Lane provides an out of town link between Fetcham and the north Leatherhead business district. Surface improvements and a consistent path width as well as variations to the current pedestrian bridges would be required to upgrade this to a cycle route, constituting a significant capital scheme. Whilst this would offer a potentially attractive and efficient route from Fetcham to the north Leatherhead business parks, this option is not deemed to offer sufficient value for money in terms of potential uplift in usage which would result, due to the relatively small population catchment area.

Response to issues raised affecting the Phase 1 section

- 3.8 Phasing the schemes also helps towards addressing the immediate issue of match funding, but the council will still need to secure sufficient match funding to gain support from the LEP – see Funding.
- 3.9 In taking forward the Randalls Road scheme, the most relevant issues from the consultation to be considered are as set out below.

Addressing safety concerns for shared space for pedestrians and cyclists

- 3.10 A number of respondents raised concerns about perceived safety issues from conflict between cyclists and pedestrians on shared use facilities, particularly the risk of injury to vulnerable and elderly pedestrians. The Department for Transport states that research has concluded that:

“conflict between pedestrians and cyclists is not a common occurrence... Nevertheless, perception of reduced safety is an important issue for consideration, because it has a bearing on user comfort, especially for older and disabled people”¹

- 3.11 It is noted that the proposed shared use scheme on Randalls Rd, which is relatively short in distance (0.5km) and is not likely to be used by high speed sports cyclists. Rather it is aimed at employees commuting to business park areas and children / new cyclists, who do not wish to ride in busy traffic. In addition to this reassurance, officers will consider options for further addressing these concerns in the detailed design stage, including by de-cluttering paths, careful design at any narrower points and the pros and cons of demarcation for cycling and walking.

Addressing potential underuse of the proposed Randalls Road route

- 3.12 In contrast to the above issue, the consultation also revealed concern about the lack of use by cyclists and the resulting poor value for money. In response to this, it is recognised that sports cyclists are unlikely to use shared facilities however the target group for this scheme is the less confident cyclist who will rarely if at all cycle on the road. The proposed route links key origins and destinations comprising a combined total of 11,000 people working in the business parks to be served by the route and is expected to provide a strategic and useful enhancement for Leatherhead residents and businesses.

¹ Local Transport Note 1/12 “Shared Use Routes for Pedestrians and Cyclists” paragraph 6.7.
www.surreycc.gov.uk/molevalley

- 3.13 However, it is important to recognise and address the issue that access by pedestrians and cyclists to businesses on the Springfield Drive Business Park is currently constrained (only a limited number of access passes are issued) by the current approach to security arrangements. The council is seeking to work with partners to find mutually attractive solutions to address this in order to maximise the effectiveness of the Randalls Road scheme.

Funding

- 3.14 In light of the county council’s extreme budget constraints, the county council is unable to make funding contributions, other than funds secured through developer contributions.
- 3.15 Therefore, the county and district councils will seek to work with local businesses which will benefit from the scheme, in order to attract LEP funding to provide up to 85% match funding, subject to 15% local match contribution being secured.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 The consultation process and feedback has been described above.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The scheme costs have been estimated by Atkins and a value for money assessment has been conducted for the scope of the scheme which was subject to public consultation. This concluded that there was a positive cost: benefit ratio for the scheme, in the region of 1:1.8. This is based on early stage estimates for the scheme, including an allowance for optimism bias and risks, at a scale appropriate to stage in the project development process.
- 5.2 The total cost of the package at the scale which was consulted upon exceeds the £5 million ceiling for bids to LEP, after accounting for allowances for out of hours working to reduce congestion during construction, inflation over 3 years and risk and optimism bias as described above. However, the phased approach, along with value engineering, will ensure that the bid to be submitted is well within the maximum threshold for the LEP Growth Fund and is more affordable to partners in terms of the local match funding.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 In developing the county council’s cycling programme the following impacts and actions have been identified:

Key impact	Action
<u>Disability</u> – people with mobility problems and visual impairment adversely affected by cycle routes where they interact with pedestrian routes	Achieve full segregation wherever feasible.
<u>Younger people</u> – more reliant on cycling as a mode of transport.	Identify key routes that link school destinations

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.

Segregation of routes from pedestrians wherever feasible.

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

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

- 6.2 Road safety audits that consider the needs of all road users, including those who have impaired mobility, will be undertaken as an integral part of the scheme design process.

7. LOCALISM:

- 7.1 The public consultation has enabled comments to be made by local people and these will be taken into account in finalising the proposals, alongside consideration of other matters.

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 a 2007 baseline of 2,114k tonnes.

8.2 Public Health implications

The emerging Surrey Health and Well-being Strategy has identified obesity as one of the priority public health challenges and the NHS identifies cycling and brisk walking as activities which provides significant health benefits.

The monetary valuation of health and safety benefits², specifically reduced mortality, reduced absenteeism and a reduction road casualties, arising from the scope of the scheme which was consulted upon, has been assessed to be £4.3M over the 20 year lifetime of the scheme. This is in addition to health benefits linked to air quality improvements due to reduced vehicle movements.

The improved walking and cycling facilities will be publicised to residents and businesses and cycle training will be offered to those less confident of cycling to encourage take up and to maximise the benefits of the new infrastructure.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Mole Valley) is asked to:

- (i) Note the results of the public consultation on Leatherhead STP and town centre parking

And

- (i) Agree that a phased approach to scheme development is progressed, with the first phase focusing on the shared use pedestrian and cycling shared use off road scheme on Randalls Road.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 Subject to the approval of this Local Committee, work will be undertaken to secure local match funding, resolve other outstanding issues and present a business case for the revised scope of the scheme, to be submitted to the C2C LEP Growth Fund.

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Consulted

- Surrey County Council : Paul Fishwick, Zena Curry, Paul Millin
- Mole Valley District Council : Nick Gray, Paul Brookes
- Local Committee Chairman : Cllr Tim Hall

Annexes:

Annex A: Leatherhead Sustainable Transport Package – Route Plan

Annex B: Leatherhead Sustainable Transport Package Public Consultation Report

Sources/background papers:

None

² Using DfTs TAG Unit A5.1 Active Mode Appraisal guidance to estimate the monetised benefits arising from the scheme.