

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**LOCAL COMMITTEE (MOLE VALLEY)****DATE:** 11 September 2013**LEAD OFFICER:** Lesley Harding**SUBJECT:** Leatherhead to Ashted Cycle Safety Scheme**DIVISIONS:** Leatherhead and Fetcham East
Ashted**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Following a bid to the Department for Transport for two cycle safety schemes in Mole Valley, the County Council was awarded funding of £595,000 for one of the schemes, linking Leatherhead to Ashted in April 2013. The County Council cabinet have allocated a further £255,000 of match funding to complete the scheme within the current financial year.

At the last meeting of the local committee on 12 June 2013 the consultation plan was agreed. This report provides an update on the consultation responses so far, and contains responses from officers to some of the main issues that have been raised. The scheme drawings will be displayed at the meeting and can be viewed on the council's website via www.surreycc.gov.uk/leatherheadashtedcycling

RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

- (i) Consultation on the scheme design has been undertaken in accordance with the plan approved by the local committee at their previous meeting.
- (ii) Officer's have provided a response to the main points raised in the consultation.
- (iii) The final detailed designs and traffic modelling for the scheme will proceed, taking into account the comments received in the consultation. The final designs will be agreed with the Chair, Vice Chair and Divisional Members (Leatherhead and Fetcham East, and Ashted) in due course, prior to construction.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

This report provides an update on the consultation responses so far, and contains responses from officers to some of the main issues that have been raised. Detailed design and traffic modelling will proceed, taking into account the detailed consultation responses.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 In July 2012 the Department for Transport announced a £15m fund for cycling infrastructure in order to tackle cycling casualties and reduce barriers to more cycling. An additional £5 million was added to the fund in November 2012. Following analysis of cycling casualties across Surrey, the county council submitted a bid on 30 November 2012 for funding for five cycling schemes, two of which were within Mole Valley. One scheme was located within Leatherhead Town Centre, the other was for a scheme linking Leatherhead to Ashtead.
- 1.3 The outline proposals were presented and approved by the Mole Valley Local Committee on 6 March 2013. On 15 April 2013 the Department for Transport announced the bid winners which resulted in Surrey County Council receiving the second highest award of all local authorities in the country. The Leatherhead to Ashtead scheme was one of two schemes awarded funding in Surrey, for which DfT are providing £595,000. The county council cabinet have allocated a further £255,000 of match funding towards the scheme.
- 1.4 At the last meeting on 12 June 2013 the local committee for Mole Valley agreed the public consultation activities that would be undertaken to ensure that local resident and road user views would be taken into account when designing the scheme. The consultation exercise was scheduled for the period from 16 July to 27 August, and at the time of writing had one more week to run. The consultation activities included the following:
 - a website showing the scheme drawings with accompanying explanatory text and an electronic feedback form:
www.surreycc.gov.uk/leatherheadashteadcycling
 - a two day exhibition on Friday 19 July and Saturday 20 July at Leatherhead Theatre in Leatherhead town centre. This exhibition included a display of the scheme drawings with explanatory text to describe the proposals, and a feedback form. Officers were in attendance to answer questions on the proposals too.
 - leaflets were delivered to approximately 4,400 addresses along the route and neighbouring roads to advise of the consultation, the exhibition and website.
 - the consultation was advertised in the Dorking Advertiser, the Leatherhead Advertiser, the Surrey Mirror and on the associated websites:
www.dorkingandleatherheadadvertiser.co.uk, www.surreymirror.co.uk and www.thisissurreytoday.co.uk.
 - the consultation was advertised on posters on the platforms of Leatherhead and Ashtead train stations.
 - the consultation was highlighted on the Leatherhead Residents' Association website and the Ashtead Residents' Association website.
- 1.5 As well as the general public consultation activities described above, the following groups and organisations were contacted to advise them of the consultation and to offer any additional explanation from officers if required.

- Mole Valley Cycle Forum
- Ashtead Resident's Association
- Leatherhead Resident's Association
- Leatherhead and District Chamber of Commerce
- Surrey Police Road Safety and Traffic Management Team
- St John's School
- Downsend Pre Prep School
- Downsend Prep School
- St Andrew's Catholic School
- St Peter's Catholic Primary School
- West Ashtead Primary School
- Ashtead Hospital
- Leatherhead Hospital
- Exxon Mobil
- Leatherhead Community Association
- Christ Church United Reformed Church
- Managers of Ashcroft Place Sheltered Housing Development
- Managers of Pegasus Court Sheltered Housing Development
- Managers of Lime Tree Court Sheltered Housing Development
- Managers of Griffin Court and Warren Court Sheltered Housing Development

- 1.6 This report provides an update on the consultation responses so far, highlights some of the main issues that have been raised and officers response to these. The scheme drawings will be displayed at the committee meeting and can be viewed on the council's website via:

www.surreycc.gov.uk/leatherheadashteadcycling

2. ANALYSIS:

- 2.1 At the time of writing the consultation period (from 16 July to 27 August) still had one more week to run. Therefore the analysis presented here is interim, and provides an update including all responses to the end of 20 August. It is expected that the majority of responses will have been received, and that most of the main issues will have been raised by this date. The report containing all text responses received to the end of 20 August is included within Annex A. The consultation report will be updated to include all the responses received after 20 August and will be made available on the consultation website in due course.
- 2.2 A total of 172 people had responded to the consultation by the end of 20 August. Of these 164, had replied in an individual capacity and 4 indicated that they had replied on behalf of an organisation (4 others did not reply to this question).
- 2.3 A total of 158 answered the question "Would the scheme encourage you to start cycling/ cycle more often?". Of these 71 (45 per cent) said "Yes", and 87 (55 per cent) said "No".
- 2.4 A total of 155 answered the question "Are you male or female?". Of these 98 (63 per cent) said they were male and 57 (37 per cent) said they were female.

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2.5 The following tables shows the number of respondents by age group, disability, and how often they currently cycled.

Table 1: Which age category do you come into?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
under 18	0.0%	0
19-30	4.4%	7
31-45	18.1%	29
46-60	31.3%	50
60-75	32.5%	52
75+	8.1%	13
Prefer not to answer	5.6%	9
	answered question	160
	skipped question	12

Table 2: Do you consider yourself to have a disability or illness / ailment that affects how you live?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
No	86.0%	135
Yes - mobility problems	5.7%	9
Yes - visual impairment	0.6%	1
Yes - hearing impairment	4.5%	7
Yes - other	3.2%	5
Prefer not to answer	4.5%	7
	answered question	157
	skipped question	15

Table 3: How often do you currently cycle?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
5 or more times per week	19.3%	31
1-4 times per week	29.8%	48
2-4 times a month	9.9%	16
Monthly or less frequently	18.0%	29
Never	19.9%	32
Prefer not to answer	4.3%	7
	answered question	161
	skipped question	11

3. OPTIONS:

- 3.1 The following provides a summary of the main issues including those that were raised most frequently within the consultation responses so far, along with a response from officers.

Suggestions for developing an alternative Linden Pit Path route

- 3.2 A number of respondents suggested that a route via the Linden Pit Path should be developed either instead of, or in addition to the proposals along the Epsom Road/ A24 Leatherhead Road. There is a local campaign led by some local cyclists to promote the Linden Pit Path as an alternative.
- 3.3 When developing the bids to the Department for Transport last year, county council officers considered the possibility of submitting a bid for a developing a route along the Linden Pit Path via the footbridges over the Leatherhead bypass and M25. This included visiting the site with the County's design consultants.
- 3.4 It was concluded at an early stage that a satisfactory scheme could not be implemented within the timescale set by the Department for Transport to qualify for funding. For this reason, the Linden Pit Path route was identified as "possible future link" in the submission to the Department for Transport. This was shown on the plan comprising Annex 2 on the report to this Committee of 6 March 2013.
- 3.5 The reason for the difficulty with the timescale was the need for widening of significant parts of the route. In particular, the bridge over the M25 is only 2m wide, with the effective usable width of the bridge being narrower due to the parapets. Given the very close proximity to schools and the existing density of use at school times, the bridge would need to be wider. It was not possible for the county council to provide a commitment that a scheme to widen the bridge could be developed and implemented within the space of a year, because the bridge over the M25 belongs to the Highways Agency, not the county council. There are also other parts of the route where it would be preferable and possible to widen the path but negotiation with adjoining landowners would be required.
- 3.6 Sustrans (who are managing the bids for the Department for Transport) have subsequently confirmed that while they would consider proposals for alternative options to the A24 Epsom Road/Leatherhead Road scheme, they would still need to meet their technical appraisal, and would still need to be implemented before the end of the current financial year. An alternative scheme along the Linden Pit Path would not meet this criterion and so therefore could not be implemented using the budget provided by the Department for Transport.

Shared space between pedestrians and cyclists

3.7 A number of respondents expressed concern over the provision of shared cyclist-pedestrian paths with people concerned particularly over the possibility of fast cyclists increasing the risk of injury to vulnerable and elderly pedestrians.

3.8 The Department for Transport provides advice within their document Local Transport Note 1/12, "Shared Use Routes for Pedestrians and Cyclists" (September 2012) and refers to research that 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 people and disabled people" (paragraph 6.7)

3.9 It is worth emphasising that the new path is not aimed at and is unlikely to be used by high speed sports cyclists. Rather it is aimed at, and more likely to be used by slower "every day" ordinary cyclists including children and less confident cyclists who would not wish to ride in the road within busy traffic. For much of route the pedestrian use is low and therefore the risk of conflict between pedestrians and cyclists is low. None-the-less officers were aware of the likelihood of concerns being raised over shared cyclist-pedestrian paths, and had considered measures with the scheme designers to mitigate such fears as much as possible.

3.10 The plans shown at public exhibition included options for some sections to be either shared or segregated by a white line. IN response to the consultation responses the segregation option will be pursued. It is proposed that the extent of additional segregation elsewhere on the route will be considered in the detailed design in conjunction with the Chair, Vice Chair and local members. Care will also be taken to de-clutter the route and to reposition street furniture, lighting and bus stops to improve the route for both pedestrians and cyclists.

3.11 The provision of ramps to slow traffic on the entrances of side roads will improve the safety for both pedestrians (especially those with mobility impairment) and cyclists, as there will no longer be any dropped kerbs to negotiate and vehicles speeds will be reduced. The provision of signalised crossings across the Leatherhead Bypass arm of the Knoll Roundabout and at the Ermyn Way/Grange Road junction will also improve the facilities and accessibility for pedestrians as well as cyclists where previously the roundabout and the bridge with ramped steps would not have been easy to negotiate for those with mobility impairment, (for example, those using mobility scooters).

Impact on congestion

3.12 A number of respondents expressed concern that the provision of the signal controlled "Toucan" crossing on the Leatherhead Bypass on the northern arm of the Knoll Roundabout and the provision of signalised crossing facilities at road level at the junction of Ermyn Way/Grange Road could increase delay for motorised road users passing through these junctions.

3.13 It is acknowledged that the proposed "Toucan" crossings could contribute to increased delay for some motorised road users (though the delay for some

motorised road users on other arms of the Knoll Roundabout may be reduced). The potential dis-benefit in increased delay for some motorised road users will need to be balanced against the improvements in accessibility and safety for cyclists and pedestrians, including those with mobility impairment who are currently disadvantaged by the current lack of suitable facilities. At the time of writing micro-simulation computer modelling of the junctions to assess the extent of the impact of the proposals on the capacity of the junctions is being completed and it is expected that the results will be available at the end of September for consideration by the Chair, Vice Chair and local Member.

Options for the bus stop lay-by on Epsom Road near the junction with Leret Way

- 3.14 There were two options presented within plan 1 issued for consultation (and which will be available to view at the meeting):
- To retain the bus stop lay-by. This would require removal of the tree to the west of the lay-by to create sufficient space for pedestrians and cyclists.
 - To “fill in” the bus stop lay-by to create more space for pedestrians and cyclists, and so require buses to stop on the main carriageway instead. The mature tree could be retained with this option.
- 3.15 The latter of the two options is preferred. This is because this allows the mature tree to be retained (a number of respondents expressed regret over the removal of any trees). This option would also result in improved positioning for buses alongside and parallel to the kerb line at the bus stop which will ensure that bus users with mobility impairment can alight safely (sometimes this is not achieved successfully when a bus is required to manoeuvre within a lay-by and is not able to position close enough or parallel to the kerb). This arrangement will also help the bus service reliability as it will be easier for the bus to pull out and rejoin the traffic. This arrangement is similar to the other bus stops further along the Epsom road. Following consultation with Mole Valley District Council Officers, it is envisaged that the grass verge shown in the plan 1 will not be included.
- 3.16 A perceived disadvantage of the preferred latter option to “fill in” the lay-by is that it could cause congestion by holding up vehicles that are unable to pass the bus when it is stationary at the bus stop. However this bus stop is a “request stop” rather than a “timing point stop” (buses will only stop there if there are passengers hailing the bus or wishing to get off). At its most frequent the bus services provided here equate to two buses per hour, so any such scenario is likely to be rare and short in duration.
- 3.17 Another perceived disadvantage highlighted by a visitor to the exhibition was that the bus lay-by is used occasionally by coaches to pick up people for day trips and holidays. Strictly speaking the use of a public bus lay-by in this way is not approved, as it could hinder public bus service users. It is hoped that the coach operators could find an alternative location following the removal of the bus lay-by.

Greenery

- 3.18 A number of respondents expressed regret over the removal of any trees and the loss of greenery along the route. Officers have been mindful over reducing the impact of the scheme in this respect and have worked with the designers to

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keep the need to remove trees to an absolute minimum. A total of 5 trees are shown on the plans as requiring removal over the length of the scheme (approximately 2 km).

- 3.19 Where possible a grass verge margin of 1m width will be provided on the path to separate pedestrians and cyclists from the road. This is shown on plan numbers 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, and 13.

Cyclists won't use it/Waste of money

- 3.20 A number of respondents expressed sentiments that spending money on improving cycling facilities was a waste of money, and that money should be spent on other local priorities instead. However because the majority of the funding for the project has been awarded by the Department for Transport as a result of a bid competition, it is being invested in addition to, not to the detriment of other local highway schemes funded from the usual local budgets. This additional funding from the Department for Transport was awarded following technical assessment by Sustrans on behalf of the Department for Transport and cannot be used for other purposes.
- 3.21 Observations have shown that cyclists are already cycling along this route. A manual count was conducted on Thursday 27 June 2013 at Knoll roundabout, showing a total of 101 pedal cyclists on the road and 16 pedal cyclists using the footway between Epsom Road and Leatherhead Road over a 12 hour period. A number of visitors to the exhibition commented that people already cycle along the pavement. Furthermore, 45% of questionnaire respondents stated the proposed route would encourage them to cycle more, with some expressing strong support for the proposals.
- 3.22 The scheme will improve the safety and accessibility for cyclists and other road users on the route between Leatherhead and Ashtead. Increased cycling has benefits to the health of the participants; helps reduce traffic congestion and will reduce carbon emissions where it replaces other motorised transport. If successful the bid will result in improved accessibility to Leatherhead and Ashtead town centres and adjacent local employers, benefiting the local economy.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 Described within section 1 above.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The council has been awarded funding of £595,000 from the Department for Transport for the scheme between Leatherhead and Ashtead. The county council cabinet have allocated a further £255,000 of match funding to complete the scheme.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

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

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.

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

7. LOCALISM:

- 7.1 The cycle safety scheme proposals have issued for public consultation, and the comments received from local people will be taken into account in finalising the proposals.

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

Traffic modelling will be completed to check the impact of the proposals on traffic flows on the key junctions on the route. Increased cycling, 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

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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 new infrastructure will improve the safety of cyclists and other road users on a route that had previously suffered a number of cycling injuries. Increased cycling has a positive impact on the health of a person. The NHS identifies cycling as an activity that provides significant health benefits. The Surrey Health and Well-being Strategy has identified obesity as one of the priority public health challenges. The new routes will be marketed to residents and businesses and training will be offered to those less confident of cycling to encourage take up and to maximise the benefit of the new infrastructure.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 9.1 Following a bid to the Department for Transport for two cycle safety schemes in Mole Valley, the County Council was awarded funding of £595,000 for one of the schemes, linking Leatherhead to Ashted in April 2013. The County Council cabinet have allocated a further £255,000 of match funding to complete the scheme within the current financial year.
- 9.2 At the last meeting of the local committee on 12 June 2013 the consultation plan was agreed. This report provides an update on the consultation responses so far, and contains responses from officers to some of the main issues that have been raised. The scheme drawings will be displayed at the meeting and can be viewed on the council's website via www.surreycc.gov.uk/leatherheadashteadcycling

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 Detailed design and traffic modelling will continue and will be presented to the Chair, Vice Chair and Divisional Members for approval in due course prior to construction.

Contact Officers:

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Consulted:

See section 1 of the report

Annexes:

Annex 1: Text responses to the public consultation

Sources/background papers:

None
