

**LOCAL COMMITTEE (WAVERLEY)**

**DATE:** 11 March 2022

**LEAD OFFICER:** Alison Houghton, Senior Transport Officer,  
Strategic Transport Group

**SUBJECT:** Godalming Station Accessibility Improvements

**DIVISION:** Godalming North

**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

The current footway provision for pedestrians walking to and from Godalming Station is compromised by narrow or missing pavements, with few formal or informal crossing points to access the station pedestrian area, and pedestrians having to negotiate around two-way traffic that is itself negotiating narrow roadscape in places.

Improving pedestrian accessibility to and from Godalming Station will provide a better, more accessible, and safer walking environment for pedestrians to walk to and from the station, promote active travel and encourage safer practices for all users of the roads and pavements in the vicinity of the station.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Local Committee (Waverley)** is asked:

- (i) to support the proposal to improve pedestrian accessibility to Godalming Station and to progress with the feasibility work for this scheme
- (ii) to support a public consultation on the scheme to seek the views of stakeholders
- (iii) that approval for the advertising of any Traffic Regulation Order required to enable the scheme is given by the agreed relevant delegated authority in consultation with the local divisional member.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The current footway provision for pedestrians walking to and from Godalming Station is compromised by narrow or missing pavements, with few formal or informal crossing points to access the station pedestrian area, and pedestrians having to negotiate around two-way traffic that is itself negotiating narrow roadscape in places.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 The Godalming Station pedestrian accessibility improvement scheme is seeking to offer far greater accessibility to and from Godalming Station, providing considerable benefit to local residents and users of the station.
- 1.2 The scheme has the following objectives:
  - a) to improve pedestrian accessibility and safety to and from Godalming Station, from Station Road, Mill Lane and Station Approach.
  - b) to integrate with previous Godalming Station forecourt improvements undertaken by South Western Railway
  - c) to improve integration with other sustainable forms of transport, including local bus services
- 1.3 Surrey County Council's Passenger Transport Projects Team submitted a bid for funding for this pedestrian accessibility scheme to the South Western Railway's Customer and Communities Improvement Fund, and were successful in receiving an award of £175,000.
- 1.4 The South Western Railway's Customer and Communities Improvement Fund is provided to connect people and communities to local stations. Surrey County Council is working in partnership with South Western Railway to ensure that the pedestrian accessibility scheme has good integration with Godalming Station. By improving the walking routes passengers are not compromised as they walk to and from the station and also they will be encouraged to reduce car usage.
- 1.5 In July 2018, the Department for Transport (DfT) released 'The Inclusive Transport Strategy: achieving equal access for disabled people' policy, which aims to create an all-inclusive transport network for everyone by 2030 and contribute to getting an additional one million disabled people into work by 2027. There is a requirement for public transport infrastructure to be accessible to all.
- 1.6 In 2021 the New Rail Strategy for Surrey received approval from the Cabinet. The strategy sets out how rail can contribute to a greener future, growing a sustainable economy, empowering communities and tackling health inequality. This pedestrian accessibility improvement scheme meets a number of criteria within the Surrey Rail Strategy; increasing access for all, encouraging modal shift, decarbonising access to stations by promoting public transport and active travel.
- 1.7 Surrey County Council's Greener Futures Programme has followed the declaration of a Climate Emergency in Surrey in 2019, with improvements to sustainable transport modes such as public transport, walking and cycling being part of the resultant Climate Change Strategy.
- 1.8 The Community Vision in Surrey for 2030 is a desire for journeys across the county to be easier, more predictable and safer, enabling well-connected communities, with effective infrastructure to grow sustainably and improving accessibility and integration

- 1.9 Surrey County Council's No One Left Behind ambition embraces a greener future by providing access to more environmentally friendly forms of transport and changing the way that individuals travel.
- 1.10 Surrey County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 will be considered by Cabinet in the next few months. The ambition of the plan is to increase the use of sustainable modes of travel and improve accessibility and safety. The plan establishes a Sustainable Travel Hierarchy which provides a decision making framework to prioritise measures to increase levels of walking and reduce car use.

## **2. ANALYSIS:**

- 2.1 Pedestrian access to Godalming Station is currently inadequate and not accessible. Passengers accessing the station on foot have to negotiate narrow footways or walk in the road, due to the footway provision being sub-standard and, in some places, non-existent. There are no suitable obvious crossing points, visibility of oncoming vehicles can be poor in places and there are areas where priority is unclear or compromised.
- 2.2 This scheme seeks to address the issues that pedestrians face by providing a significant upgrade to the pedestrian facilities. These include the provision of a 66 metre footway on the north side of Station Approach directly connecting the footpath from Westbrook Road to Station Approach, to Godalming Station and the station car park entrance. Observations have been made that many pedestrians choose to walk in the road along Station Approach to access the footpath. Improved pedestrian facilities (uncontrolled crossing points) will be provided at the exit from the station, and onto the new northern footway on Station Approach.
- 2.3 Safety will be greatly increased as currently individuals have been observed walking in the road of Station Approach. Providing better pedestrian accessibility will also encourage safer practices.
- 2.4 The footway on the northern side of Mill Lane will be widened to a minimum of 2 metres from the current sub-standard width in places. At one point the pavement on Mill Lane only measures 0.7 metres. Widening the footway will allow parents with small children/buggies and electric scooter/wheelchair users to access the station using the pavement without having to walk in the road, which they are having to do at the present time.
- 2.5 Uncontrolled crossing points will be installed to assist pedestrians, especially those who may have visual or physical impairments, to access Godalming Station without trip hazards such as full height kerbs and other obstacles. These will provide a more formalised area to cross the road which is of benefit to both pedestrians and drivers.
- 2.6 Adding a more formalised dropping off point for cars on the road adjacent to Godalming Station will add a natural traffic "calming" measure. The dropping-off point will enable any car passengers to access Godalming Station without having to cross Mill Lane.
- 2.7 At this stage of the design, it is proposed that Mill Lane & Station Approach be made one way for all or part of the road. These measures will be achieved by making the traffic flow in a one-way direction clockwise on Mill Lane from the

junction with Mint Street, then north up Mill Lane, along Station Approach and south down to meet Station Road. At one pinch point in Mill Lane the total road width is 3.0 metres leading to conflict between two-way vehicles approaching the narrow roadway at the same time. It is proposed that two-way traffic will remain on Mill Lane, between Station Road and Mint Street, to enable access for vehicles from The Mint.

- 2.8 Comments and views on the suggested improvements will be sought from local residents, local businesses, users of Godalming Station and other stakeholders. This will provide valuable feedback from those that use the area and enable us to seek both local and wider viewpoint from all users of the roads and pavements which provide access to the station.
- 2.9 Consideration of this feedback, and how the scheme will affect all users of Mill Lane, Station Approach and the area of Station Road, will enable the draft design to be shaped to provide the best solution within the scope and objectives of the scheme.
- 2.10 Directional traffic count surveys, together with analysis of pedestrian movements will be undertaken in March to understand fully the nature of both vehicle movements and those wishing to use the pavements to access Godalming Station. This information will assist with the decision-making of the final scheme.
- 2.11 A further benefit of the pedestrian accessibility scheme will be to enhance the accessibility of bus links to Godalming Station.
- 2.12 Mill Lane has a structure which currently has a 7.5 tonne weight restriction. Since the introduction of this weight restriction, which was put in place over 25 years ago, the bridge has undergone strengthening works. A load assessment investigation to confirm capacity calculations will be carried out to inform the feasibility of the pedestrian accessibility scheme.
- 2.13 A traffic regulation order to change the routing of the highway would be required which would be approved under the relevant delegated authority at the time of advertising.

### **3. OPTIONS:**

- 3.1 To do nothing is an option. However based upon the reasoning expressed above as to why improving pedestrian accessibility is essential on the approaches to Godalming Station, this is not a suitable option. The option of doing nothing does not support the provision of accessible public transport, the National Bus Strategy and Greener Futures agendas or Surrey County Council's Climate Change Strategy.
- 3.2 Design a scheme to meet the objectives of the South Western Railway Customer and Communities Improvement Fund and deliver the identified improvements to pedestrian accessibility to Godstone Station in line with current Surrey County Council and national strategies.

#### 4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 High level consultation has been undertaken and we are now wishing to consult more widely with all stakeholders. Comments and views on the suggested improvements will be sought from local residents, local businesses, users of Godalming Station and other stakeholders. This will provide valuable feedback from those that use the area and enable us to seek both local and wider viewpoint from all users of the roads and pavements which provide access to the station.

#### 5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The funding for the improvements to pedestrian accessibility at Godalming Station will be funded through the South Western Railway Customer and Communities Improvement Fund. This pedestrian accessibility improvement scheme was awarded £175,000. The funding is ring-fenced to works related to this scheme. Initial budget estimates indicate that the scheme can be delivered within the available funding envelope.

#### 6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 It is considered that there are no negative direct or indirect impacts on protected characteristics. This scheme will provide accessibility enhancements for all pedestrians.

#### 7. LOCALISM:

- 7.1 This scheme will enhance accessibility by pedestrians and local residents to Godalming Station and enable the local community to be well-connected to the station.

#### 8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	Making the approaches to Godalming Station more accessible by pedestrians, as well as improving the accessibility of the nearby bus stops, will reduce car use which will contribute towards reduced carbon emissions and overall environmental benefits.
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	The proposed measures should encourage the use of public transport which can contribute towards a more sustainable lifestyle with increased walking to/from Godalming Station. Reduced

	<p>carbon emissions and environmental benefits should have a positive impact on public health. The scheme will make it easier and safer to walk to and from Godalming station</p>
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**9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

9.1 It is recommended that members support the proposal to improve the pedestrian accessibility to Godalming Station and support a public consultation to seek the views of stakeholders. It is also recommended that approval for the advertising of any Traffic Regulation Orders required is given by the relevant delegated authority.

**10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

10.1 The designs and concept will be put forward for public consultation. Following the closure of the period of feedback, any comments will be summarised and considered with recommendations as to any amendments that should be made to the design. Final designs will be agreed with relevant local divisional members. Once this stage has concluded, the construction design can be finalised and a works programme agreed. At the same time any Traffic Regulation Orders will be advertised as appropriate in agreement with the relevant delegated authority. It is anticipated that the scheme will be completed by December 2022.

**Contact Officer:**

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**Consulted:**

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 South Western Railway

**Annexes:**

Draft feasibility design  
 Location plan