

Cabinet Member for Property, Waste and Infrastructure

28 November 2023

TITLE: A320 OTTERSHAW ROUNDABOUT SCHEME REDESIGN**Statement:**

We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to Redesign the Ottershaw Roundabout to provide a solution to the current flawed design. AND to have a full and meaningful public engagement on a revised design presented in a new planning application.

Justification:

Surrey County Council (SCC) approved the planning application for the roundabout in July 2022. This had many serious flaws pertaining to veteran trees and hedgerows amongst other issues which made it a very bad solution for our village. In October 2022 the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) amendments and Side Road Orders (SRO) were published which materially affect the approved scheme to a significant degree.

The scheme has been affected to such a degree since approval was granted, it now needs further re-engagement with the public for consultation and a new planning application submitted.

The so-called public engagement through SCC Commonplace is not fit for purpose and is trying to elicit public opinion on landscaping details before a design is established. Most people are unaware of the process and the options are just 'tick boxes' which DO NOT constitute meaningful engagement with the community. We believe this to be a deliberate and cynical attempt by SCC to bypass the democratic process by using a technical loophole to achieve the least line of resistance to their plans.

Despite strenuous efforts by the Ottershaw residents groups, SCC have not fully engaged with the community, and in fact have repeatedly ignored our pleas for information. They have also chosen to ignore alternative suggestions of design which would work best for the community and residents. We believe SCC has no intention of listening to the community or changing the scheme as it currently stands.

The issues which need to be urgently addressed through redesign and re-approval include.

Veteran Trees and hedgerows will be lost.

Local traffic congestion will not be resolved.

Cycling and pedestrian routes drastically reduced.

No A320 crossing north of the roundabout.

Drainage ponds close to the village centre to become stagnant muddy eyesores.

Submitted by Gemma Pickett - 387 Signatures (84 Paper Signatures + 303 Electronic Signatures)

Response:

This petition sets out concerns predominantly regarding the design of the scheme and a lack of engagement, but also raises a number of individual issues to be addressed.

Design

For the reasons set out below, the County Council do not consider that the design for the Ottershaw Roundabout element of the A320 scheme is flawed; and as such will be preparing to construct the scheme, as approved through the planning process, in accordance with the Decision Notice issued on 27 January 2023.

i] The scheme as presented and awarded planning was fully developed through Feasibility and Preliminary design stages, with numerous options and iterations being sequentially created, reviewed and tested in order to arrive at the current, final Detailed [Works] design now being prepared for construction.

[ii] As with elsewhere within the A320 scheme, the Ottershaw proposals meet the principal purpose of the HIF scheme i.e., to improve the capacity of the Highway network in order to cater for the anticipated increases in traffic resultant from the 2030 RBC local plan Housing developments. The proposed Ottershaw junction design meets the future peak time [worst] case traffic capacity needs in line with requirements of the 2030 Local Plan development. The junction has been tested in Paramics and LinSig. bringing substantial peak flow improvements to circulatory traffic capacity, approach stacking and movements through the junction. With regard to the main circulatory, numerous preceding development iterations led to a reduction in circulatory size bringing the Ottershaw scheme footprint to a minimum whilst also moving the roundabout northwards as far as practicable away from local housing, yet still delivering necessary capacity. This enabled Surrey to create the much-required northbound entry stacking space south of the new roundabout, not possible until now given the narrowness and constricting nature of the A320 Guildford Road / A319 Chobham Roads at this point.

[iii] The solution as presented and awarded planning is a compliant, effective design, engineered with safety in mind including: -

- a 30mph proposed speed limit*
- additional, wider, pedestrian footways*
- additional crossing points for pedestrians*
- local widening and improvements to the existing [national] cycle route*
- improvements for Buses and users of public transport*
- an enlarged public village car park with electrical charging points*
- improved, safer emergency exit facilities at the Ambulance Station*
- a design compliant with relevant UK Highway Design standards*

The alternative design suggestions were dealt with as part of the planning application process and reasons were given to the County Planning Officer as to why they weren't

suitable. The proposed scheme has not been affected in any way since the award of planning; Surrey County Council are thus correctly preparing to construct the accepted scheme.

It should be noted that the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) process and planning are two distinctly separate processes and are not linked. CPO has no effect on the planning outcome and vice-versa. Further, the CPO for this scheme does not in any way change the planned highway alignment for the scheme as presented to planning; moreover, it is there to effect its future construction by making necessary land available.

Engagement

The County Council has engaged with residents throughout the scheme design and planning process. This has included, but is not limited to:

- a survey seeking information on road use in early 2021;*
- a subsequent survey in 2021 on indicative designs for the scheme advertised through newspapers, leaflet drops and our website;*
- a dedicated website where views and feedback are actively encouraged to be provided to the project team;*
- and a specific campaign on the Ottershaw roundabout to inform interested stakeholders about the planning application process and how to have their say.*

Consultation and publicity in respect of applications for planning permission is undertaken in accordance with the County Council's Statement of Community Involvement [Statement of Community Involvement 2019 \(surreycc.gov.uk\)](https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/consultation-and-publicity). 330 residential addresses were notified of the planning application for the Ottershaw roundabout, and a number of representations were made by community groups which would illustrate that the planning application consultation was sufficiently wide and robust.

The current consultation invites residents to share their views and opinions on the shaping of the proposed landscaping scheme. The provision of a Landscaping Scheme is a planning condition but it does not require the Council to consult on the scheme, this was the Council's own decision as we are keen to engage with the public and invite their views and gain opinion as to how they would wish to see the village from a landscaping perspective once the highway works are complete.

We have extended the engagement period and are also dropping a letter to all residents with a link to the website to invite their participation. Commonplace is an important platform that allows residents to share their views. This allows us to more easily view and correlate a large number of responses. The intention is to use this feedback to help shape a Landscaping plan that will be presented back to residents in a virtual meeting later this year. The virtual meetings will provide an opportunity for residents to ask any final questions about the landscaping proposals, prior to submitting it to the County Planning Authority.

In response to the individual issues outlined:

Veteran Trees and hedgerows will be lost.

Response: Throughout the design process, a key objective has been to minimise impact on the trees and the current design has similarly sought to achieve this.

- *The scheme provides additional compensatory planting at strategic locations to retain the local character.*
- *The trees were assessed under BS5837:2012 framework and no veteran trees were identified.*
- *The loss of hedges and their replacement are clearly discussed within paragraphs 6.2.19 to 6.2.24 in the EclA. In addition to hedgerow replacement, woodland planting is specified with the aim of replacing lost habitat and maintaining connectivity as far as possible.*
- *The current landscape design includes significant new tree and hedgerow planting. The new hedgerow and woodland planting will be planted as small stock however it is proposed that the individual trees are planted as extra heavy standards which would have an immediate impact. As part of the scheme the Council are proposing extensive (160m) new linear hedgerow planting.*

Local traffic congestion will not be resolved.

Response: The proposed Ottershaw junction design meets the future peak time [worst] case traffic capacity needs in line with requirements of the 2030 Local Plan development. The junction has been tested in Paramics and LinSig. bringing substantial peak flow improvements to circulatory traffic capacity, approach stacking and movements through the junction. With regard to the main circulatory, numerous preceding development iterations led to a reduction in circulatory size bringing the Ottershaw scheme footprint to a minimum whilst also moving it northwards as far as practicable away from local housing, yet still delivering necessary capacity. This enabled Surrey to create the much-required northbound entry stacking space south of the new roundabout, not possible until now given the narrowness and constricting nature of the A320 Guildford Road / A319 Chobham Roads at this point.

Cycling and pedestrian routes drastically reduced.

Response: Cycling and pedestrian routes will be improved by the implementation of the scheme. A proposed Toucan crossing immediately south of the proposed roundabout will help provide a safe connection across Guildford Road. A further toucan crossing has been proposed across A319 Chobham Road which provides a safe connection from Fox Hills Road / Chobham Road towards the Village Hall and the parade of shops (for non-motorised users moving in an east-west direction). Based on accident records, there have been various conflicts between vehicular traffic and pedestrians and cyclists at the current junction. Through the provision of a series of controlled crossing points at suitable locations, a safe means of access will instead be provided east-west across the route for all pedestrians. In addition to the above the scheme is looking to provide a shared 4m footway/cycleway from the northeast corner of Trident cars northwards through the Junction, which is an improvement on the existing facilities incorporating the national cycle route.

No A320 crossing north of the roundabout.

Response: There is no pedestrian/cycle crossing proposed North of the roundabout as it is not expected that there would be a significant pedestrian/cyclist demand at this location. The current proposed crossing location to the north of the existing roundabout encourages unsafe movements across the carriageway increasing risk of conflict points with vehicles. It is not

possible to introduce a signal-controlled crossing to the north of the roundabout as it will cause a negative effect and exacerbate future peak congestion and therefore signal controlled crossings have been provided south of the junction to allow east/west movements.

Drainage ponds close to the village centre to become stagnant muddy eyesores.

Response: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) provide multiple benefits including environmental and biodiversity and water quality improvements while managing surface water flows and reducing the risk of flooding. They aid highway drainage flows, encourage early infiltration /attenuation and filtration back into the immediate local soil. By drawing storm water immediately from the highway, they help prevent highway flooding and associated hazards, improve water quality, and help enhance the local environment by reducing flow rates, increasing water storage capacity and reduce the transport of pollution to the water environment. As a highways asset they will be maintained appropriately.

Natalie Bramhall

Cabinet Member for Property, Waste and Infrastructure

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