



Meeting	ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY SELECT COMMITTEE	
Date	Monday, 12 December 2005	agenda item number
From:	Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability	

REPORT FOR THE PERIOD SEPTEMBER 2005

I have reported the following items to Council on 1 December 2005:

- Building Better Communities Progress and Green Apple Award
- Regional Funding Allocations
- Beacon Bid for Waste & Recycling
- Sustainable Energy Open Day
- Award for Sustainable Developer Guide for Nottinghamshire
- Award for Notts Nappy Project
- Civic Awards for Highways

1. Retford Bus Station

My predecessor gave the go ahead for the detailed design stage of the improvements to Retford Bus Station and I am happy to continue this work by approving the next stages in the scheme including work on the transfer of land and planning applications.

The introduction of a new bus station in Retford forms an integral part of the County Council's transport strategy to improve passenger facilities and encourage greater use of public transport. Retford is one of the two main commercial centres in the Bassetlaw District and continued investment in the town is important to maintain and encourage its economic regeneration and status. Improvements to the bus station will also enhance links to the new Robin Hood airport at Finningley.

2. A1 Elkesley Junction Improvement Public Consultation

Access to and from the village of Elkesley is only possible from the A1 trunk road, relying on right turning and U-turning movements through gaps in the central reserve. This arrangement creates hazards for local drivers and there is no provision for pedestrians, cyclists or horse

riders. The Highways Agency (HA) has identified Elkesley as a Priority Action Site and it has put forward two options for consultation.

Option A involves replacing the existing junction with a new split level junction and an bridge across the A1. Option B would provide a new link road through to a new roundabout. Both options have the potential to deliver significant improvements, but on balance, Option A presents an ecologically less damaging scheme and has a greater potential for habitat enhancement works. Option A is also better able to accommodate the residual traffic patterns and volumes within the village. The Authority has asked the HA to look again at Option A to see whether it is possible to include some further work which will improve access to the Elkesley Park Industrial Estate.

I have approved the County Council's response to the HA.

3. **Halloughton Road, Southwell: Weight Limit**

Halloughton Road is a residential road used as a cut through and is currently on the 'through traffic' traffic calming list. However, as it is in 80th place on a list of 110 it is unlikely to ever qualify for special measures. In 1999 a culvert on Halloughton Road was found to be below the required standard and a weight restriction of 7.5 tonnes was introduced. However, following changes to bridge assessments and the availability of more complex software, the culvert has now been reassessed and is capable of carrying loads up to 40 tonnes.

The current weight restriction can now be lifted, but clearly this would be unpopular with local residents who feel that the restriction stops medium and heavy goods vehicles from using the road as a short cut. However, the road is very narrow in some places and is unlikely to attract HGVs, especially as the formal route is much wider and suffers few delays. Furthermore, the 7.5 tonnes weight restriction was abused on a weekly basis by the refuse collection vehicles, and also on occasions by gritters, fire appliances and street cleaning vehicles.

Therefore, despite local opposition, I have agreed that it is appropriate to lift the current restriction and replace it with an 18 tonnes weight restriction. This is essentially a compromise which would allow access to council vehicles, fire appliances and so forth, but would still restrict multiple axle HGVs.

4. **Petition: Installation of HGV Turning Facilities, Tollerton**

I have considered a petition from the residents of Tollerton asking the County Council to reconsider the proposed HGV turn around sites on the A606, Melton Road, through Tollerton. The petitioners believe the locations to be dangerous and suggest improved signing as an alternative solution.

The key aim of this project is to remove the temptation for drivers of over height vehicles to take risks by going under the bridge, there being no opportunity to undertake a safe turning manoeuvres. Drivers who are forced to turn around do so at considerable risk to pedestrians and other road users.

The location of the turning facilities was arrived at only after considerable investigation and research and they are sited at the safest and most suitable locations. The existing signage has been reviewed and is considered to be sufficient. It is doubtful whether the introduction of further signs would significantly reduce the number of over height vehicles reaching the bridge.

I have decided that the proposals should proceed and the petitioners have been informed.

5. **Walk to School Week**

I was very pleased to note that half of all the primary schools in the County took part in International Walk to School Week in October. Pupils were encouraged to walk to school at least one day during the week. A 15 minute walk to and from school every day gives a child half of the exercise they need every day to keep fit and healthy whilst also reducing the number of cars on the County's roads during the morning and afternoon rush hours. Parents who drive their children a long distance were also encouraged to take part by parking further away from school and walking the last part of the journey. School Travel Plan and Road Safety officers visited schools throughout the week to offer advice on getting to school safely.

6. **Road Safety Forum**

The third annual Road Safety Forum took place on 1 December and was organised by the Road Safety Board which includes officers from the relevant service areas across the Environment Department. The Government has set stringent targets to make significant reductions in road casualties by 2010 and the Road Safety Improvement Plan was drawn up to help the Authority focus its resources on this work. The Forum gave partners an update on the implementation of the Plan, discussed current issues and formulated new ideas.

7. **Passenger Transport Forum**

A Passenger Transport Forum was held in November at the International Clothing Centre, Hucknall. This is the fourth year the event has been held and is a valuable way of engaging stakeholders in the development of future business priorities. The theme for this year's event was called 'Mind the Gap' and a number of speakers looked at access to transport and the progress being made in Nottinghamshire as well as hearing about good practice from elsewhere. The event

also included the launch of a guide to accessible transport called "Transport Available to all".

8. **M1 Motorway Improvements: Jct 27 Slip Road**

The Highways Agency (HA) intends to improve the signing on the northbound slip road at Junction 27 approaching the roundabout with the A608. This will include yellow "bar" markings, new chevron boards and "turn left" signs. I have agreed that the County Council can enter into a Legal (Section 4) Agreement to cover the works on the county road.

Councillor Stella Smedley
Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability

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