



meeting **CABINET**

date **30th April 2008**

agenda item number

REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT

Ollerton Roundabout Improvement : Selection of Preferred Option

Purpose of Report

1. a) To approve a preferred option for the Ollerton Roundabout Improvement Scheme as described in paragraph 17.
- b) To bring forward the Ollerton Roundabout Improvement Scheme into the approved LTP programme (2006/07-2010/11).

Background

2. Ollerton Roundabout is the intersection of the A614, A616 and A6075 and is an important junction on the County Council's Strategic Road Network, see Plan A. Currently around 30,000 vehicles per day pass through this junction.
3. At peak times the existing roundabout has insufficient capacity to cater for the high traffic demands and large queues of traffic develop. The congestion and attendant delays at the roundabout have led some drivers to seek alternative routes to avoid the intersection and significant numbers of vehicles pass through the middle of Ollerton village, even though part of this route is traffic calmed. Planned and committed developments in and around Ollerton are likely to exacerbate the existing problems at Ollerton Roundabout.
4. An improvement scheme to address the deficiencies of the existing junction is considered necessary and this would constitute a 'significant' scheme (schemes defined as costing between £0.25m and £5.0m). Significant schemes are usually funded from the Local Transport Plan (LTP) block allocation for Integrated Transport Measures. Subject to funding availability the selection and priority of these significant schemes is at the discretion of the Council. Although a scheme for Ollerton is not currently named as a priority in the North Nottinghamshire LTP (2006-2011), it is identified as a reserve scheme and there is now a strong case for accelerating the funding and delivery of this important project given the traffic problems being experienced locally and on the Strategic Road Network.

Ollerton Roundabout Improvement – Options considered

5. In view of land, property and environmental constraints a two level interchange would be prohibitively expensive and environmentally unacceptable. Consequently consideration has only been given to possible ground level improvements.
6. Two possible improvement options have been considered as ways of achieving the necessary upgrade to the Strategic Road Network;
 - Option 1 - An enlarged conventional roundabout or;
 - Option 2 - A traffic signal controlled junction.

Both these options provide the necessary (and similar) traffic capacity increases required.

Option 1 (Plan B)

7. Option 1 involves enlarging the existing roundabout from the current 37m diameter to a 60m diameter, which would allow for two lane entries on all approaches and two lanes of circulating traffic on the roundabout itself. In view of land and property constraints this would involve encroaching on to land to the north and west of the existing junction.
8. To simplify turning movements, improve overall traffic capacity and ensure that the footprint of the enlarged junction is kept as compact as possible it is proposed that the Newark Road bus link be realigned to join the A616 Ollerton Road, immediately to the east of the improved roundabout.
9. As part of option 1 it is proposed to include Toucan crossings across both the A614 (south of the junction) and the A6075 Mansfield Road. This would cater for pedestrians and cyclists travelling between the village and the local nature reserve.
10. The projected cost of the enlarged roundabout option is estimated at £2.37m (2006 prices).

Option 2 (Plan C)

11. Option 2 involves a proposed traffic signal controlled junction, which would bring positive control to the intersection for all arms, except the A616 Worksop Road and the A6075 Mansfield Road which would continue to operate under priority control. This proposal would require significantly more land than option 1.
12. The introduction of traffic signals would enable cyclists and pedestrians to safely cross the A614 (south) and the A6075 Mansfield Road, where Toucan crossings would be provided. Again this would cater for pedestrians and cyclists travelling between the village and the local nature reserve.
13. The projected cost of the traffic signal controlled option is estimated at £2.63m (2006 prices).

Consultation

14. A public exhibition of both options was held in July 2007 at three venues in Ollerton. A number of key stakeholders and landowners have also been consulted. A total of 382 questionnaires and letters were received from the public and other interested parties. Of these replies 94% were in favour of improving the existing junction, 4% did not think an improvement was needed and the remainder did not offer an opinion. Both options were equally supported by the public, with option 1 receiving more support from stakeholder groups largely because of its reduced impact on the environment.
15. Following the public exhibition further design modifications have been considered, most notably the feasibility of including part time traffic signal operation around the enlarged roundabout option, and providing traffic signal control on all arms of the option 2 scheme. Whilst there is some merit in each of these suggestions the likely disadvantages, particularly the need for much increased junction size and associated environmental impact and cost would outweigh these benefits. Consequently, the choice remains between the options as publicly exhibited.

Ollerton Roundabout Improvement – Option Recommendation.

16. Each of the schemes has been assessed against the Government's New Approach To Appraisal (NATA) criteria i.e. Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration.
 - **Environment.** In terms of environmental impact the main difference between the two options is the likely impact upon the 'Birklands West and Ollerton Corner' Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The traffic signal controlled option (option 2) would have a greater direct impact on the SSSI, it would also involve greater land-take from private residential property. Both options will require some mitigation measures involving additional planting and landscaping in the local vicinity of the improvement scheme.
 - **Safety.** In road safety terms option 1 is likely to result in fewer residual road traffic accidents than the traffic signal proposals (option 2). It should be noted that both schemes are predicted to generate more accidents than currently occur.
 - **Economy.** In terms of economic efficiency option 1 is likely to be both cheaper to construct and give rise to greater overall economic benefits (traffic delay savings) than option 2. In operational terms the traffic signal layout (option 2) is complex and could pose dangers and difficulties for drivers, particularly at times of traffic signal failure. The cost estimates are based upon preliminary engineering designs and due to the complexity of the traffic signal layout there is more margin for error in the estimating process and the actual cost could be significantly higher for option 2.
 - **Accessibility.** Accessibility for travellers on foot and by bicycle between the village and the countryside to the west of the A614 will be improved equally under options 1 and 2.
 - **Integration.** Both scheme options are well integrated with local and national policies and would benefit the delivery of policies within the North Nottinghamshire Local Transport Plan (2006/07 to 2010/11).

17. For the reasons set out in paragraph 16 and having considered the views of the public and key stakeholders it is recommended that the enlarged roundabout (Option1), as shown on Plan B, is approved as the preferred option. This option provides a consistency of approach with the other major junctions on the A614, is considered more suited to the semi rural location and is likely to be less intrusive in the distinctive local landscape.
18. It is proposed to undertake further public consultation on possible additional traffic restrictions within Ollerton village and, that subject to the necessary public acceptance, that these be implemented if possible to coincide with the completion of the Ollerton roundabout improvement scheme. Any such measures would be funded separately through a traffic management budget allocation.

Delivery timetable / funding arrangements

19. It is intended to prepare this project for delivery within the life of the current North Nottinghamshire Local Transport Plan i.e. by 2011. Advanced design work will need to commence as soon as possible to accurately identify the land requirements, provide a detailed cost estimate, and allow sufficient time for compulsory purchase procedures, should these prove necessary.
20. The delivery of the project is dependant upon the availability of funding, although the availability of third party land may also influence project delivery. The County Council has identified the Local Transport Plan and developer contributions (Sherwood Energy Village and Bilsthorpe Colliery redevelopment) as potential sources of funding. However neither of these sources are sufficient to cover the total expected cost of implementation. The development of the Sherwood Living Legend (SLL) project would, had the bid been successful, have contributed a further £1.5m towards the Ollerton roundabout improvement scheme and this would have made up most of the expected shortfall in funding. There is still the potential of a funding contribution from the Alliance SSP towards the new Visitor Centre and its supporting transport infrastructure.
21. Members will be aware that the Ollerton Roundabout Improvement scheme is included in the LTP programme for 2006/7 – 2010/11 as a reserve scheme. As part of the detailed development of schemes in the programme, evaluation of the value for money benefits of the significant schemes not yet delivered has now been undertaken. This analysis shows that the Ollerton scheme has significantly better economic benefits and returns than the other schemes (schemes complementary to the Mansfield Ashfield Regeneration Route) remaining in the programme. It is therefore recommended that the Ollerton scheme is brought forward in the programme to utilise available funding of £1.5m. The deferred schemes will be given early consideration for inclusion in the LTP (2011/12 – 2015/16) programme.
22. Developer contributions totalling £280,000 are currently deposited with the Council towards the cost of a scheme at this location. The developer contributions must be spent on the scheme by 31st March 2011 or they will have to be returned. The aggregate total of re-prioritised LTP monies and developer contributions is £1.78 million.

23. The cost of option 1 is estimated at £2.37m at 2006 prices. This is based on a preliminary engineering design and includes broad estimates for service diversions. At out-turn costs (2010 prices) it is expected that the cost of implementation will be over £3.1m. This would require additional funding of £1.32 m.
24. A separate report will be made to Cabinet and a bid for County Capital submitted, if necessary, once the advanced design and costings have been completed. In the meantime to enable the advanced design of the roundabout improvement scheme to commence £100,000 has already been approved from the LTP budget for 2008/09 by Cabinet on 20th February 2008.

Key Decision

25. This report leads to a Key Decision as expenditure of more than £1 million would be incurred and/or there would be a significant effect on communities in two or more electoral divisions in the County Council area. Notice of intention to make the decision was published in the County Council's Forward Plan on 10th March 2008.

Statutory and Policy Implications

26. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, personnel, crime and disorder and those using the service. Where such implications are material, they have been described in the text of the report. *Members' attention is however, drawn to the following:-*

Equal Opportunities Implications

27. Appropriate consideration will need to be given in the detailed design of the scheme to the requirements / facilities for non-car users and those with restricted mobility.

Human Rights Act Implications

28. The Head of Legal Services advises that three rights under the Convention of Human Rights needs to be considered when taking the decision:

Article 1 of the Convention provides that every natural or legal person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of his possessions.

Article 2 of the Convention is an unqualified right to life and to positive protection of that right by public authorities.

Article 8 of the Convention provides that "everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life and his home". The implementation of a traffic regulation order could interfere with these rights for nearby residents, but the Council may interfere with such rights in accordance with the law as contained in the transportation and highways acts and, where it is necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of, amongst other things, public safety and the general interest. The decision maker may conclude that implementation of a traffic regulation order is necessary in a democratic society to enable residents and road users to make safe journeys thereby protecting public safety and will in environmental terms also be in the general interest.

The County Council has therefore a primary duty to protect life and a secondary duty not to interfere with Article 8 or 1 rights, except in certain circumstances. The benefit of greater road safety and environmental benefits may perhaps be considered to outweigh any intrusion there may be to Article 8 or 1 rights.

Proportionality

29. The decision maker needs to consider whether the benefits of implementing any necessary traffic regulation orders outweigh any adverse effect on the human rights of nearby residents or road users. The provision of road safety is necessary in a democratic society and statutory powers exist to make such provision. The decision-maker must weigh any competing interests and decide which are more appropriate taking all of the above into account.

RECOMMENDATIONS

30. It is RECOMMENDED that:
- a) the preferred scheme for the improvement of the A614/A616/A6075 Ollerton junction is an enlarged conventional roundabout as illustrated for indicative purposes on Plan B, and
 - b) authorisation be given to reprioritise the North Nottinghamshire LTP programme of significant schemes to 2010/11, such that the Ollerton roundabout improvement scheme is accelerated in priority.

COUNCILLOR STELLA SMEDLEY
Cabinet Member for Environment

Legal Services' Comments

[initials and date]

Financial Comments of the Strategic Director (Resources)

The financial implications are set out in the report. It should be noted that this scheme is not currently included in the approved capital programme. As such further reports will be needed to secure NCC funding (if required) and to formally include the scheme in the capital programme, in line with Financial Regulations, Section 4.2. [KRP – 09/04/08]

Background Papers Available for Inspection

Ollerton Roundabout Improvement Scheme public consultation leaflet, questionnaire and display material.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

1. Ollerton and
2. Rufford