

Decision Maker: Environment Portfolio Holder

For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Environment PDS Committee on:

Date: 8th November 2016

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Non-Key

Title: CONGESTION IN CROFTON ROAD: IMPROVEMENTS TO ORPINGTON STATION FORECOURT AND NEARBY HIGHWAY

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Chief Officer: Nigel Davies, Executive Director of Environment & Community Services

Ward: Farnborough and Crofton; Orpington

1. Reason for report

This report provides an update on a report that was presented to this Committee on 4th November 2014 that requested approval for the S106 allocation from the Tesco development in Earls Way, Orpington to be used for access and bus stop improvements as part of the Orpington Station car park and forecourt scheme. It recommends that the previous decision to install a bus lay-by is rescinded, that other measures are installed to ease congestion outside the station and that further investigations are carried out regarding other possible congestion measures on this route.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Environment Portfolio Holder is recommended to agree that:

- 2.1 Due to the high cost of the service diversions to provide a bus lay-by and other associated enhancements that the bus stop improvement outside Orpington Station should not proceed as previously agreed (ES14075).
- 2.2 The S106 funds, Borough Cycling Programme and LIP cycling/walking funds are used to improve the Station forecourt, reduce the impact of traffic queuing to enter the Station having a knock-on effect on Crofton Road and for the provision of new high quality cycle parking for 60 bicycles alongside other improvements to cycle parking.
- 2.3 Further investigations are undertaken regarding possible changes to Station Road to address the issues associated with congestion resulting from queueing from the Tower Road/View Road junction.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: The scheme will benefit all highway users.
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Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy:
 2. BBB Priority: Quality Environment Vibrant, Thriving Town Centres:
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated Cost, £120k
 2. Ongoing costs: Maintenance of the Station forecourt and cycle facilities will be paid for by Southeastern railway and their successors.
 3. Budget head/performance centre: S106, 2016/17 TfL BCP (Borough Cycling Programme) and 2016/17 LIP allocation for Cycling and Walking
 4. Total current budget for this head: £82k, £25k and £169k
 5. Source of funding: S106 allocation from the Tesco, Earls Way development, TfL BCP funding for 2016/17 and 2016/17 LIP budget for Cycling and Walking
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Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional):2
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:40
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: None: Further Details
 2. Call-in: Applicable:
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Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications:
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): the proposal will benefit all road users in the vicinity of the Station and will assist with the freer flow of traffic, better safety and management of the Station forecourt, and by improving the quality and number of cycle parking spaces will encourage an increase in the number of cycling trips to the Station and reduce the number of car journeys.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Yes
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments: To follow

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 In November 2014 the recommendations made to ES PDS Committee were approved by the Portfolio Holder, regarding changes to the bus stop arrangements outside Orpington Railway Station (ES14075). The existing bus stop outside the Station requires buses to stop on the main carriageway, which can result in congestion and the proposal to provide a bus lay-by would assist with the free flow of traffic.
- 3.2 Following the approval, work commenced in 2015 to move the scheme forward. During the detailed design stage it became apparent that the costs associated with diverting statutory undertakers' facilities would be far higher than predicted. The Council was made aware that the BT chamber within the current footway would have to be lowered as part of the works at a cost of approximately £145k. This is believed to be disproportionate to the overall scheme cost and predicted benefits.
- 3.3 Evidence from a more recent review of the area appears to show that a stationary bus or buses at peak times are not the only cause of traffic delays. Congestion seems to be as a result of the poorly managed forecourt causing delays to traffic entering the station with a consequent impact upon through traffic on Crofton Road, queuing from the junction at Tower Road/Hill View Road, to the east of the Station and from the Pelican crossing by The Maxwell public house.
- 3.4 A separate study is now underway to examine what improvements can be made in Station Road to the east of the bridge and in particular at the Tower Road/Hill View Road junction to ease congestion and the outcome of that work will be reported to Members in due course.
- 3.5 Since the original proposal for the bus stop improvements was presented, the current poor layout of the existing forecourt has become apparent. The lack of clearly defined crossing points and pick-up and drop off bays creates chaotic and poorly disciplined movements and increased pedestrian/vehicle conflict which has become more apparent and exacerbated since the additional deck was added in the Station car park in 2014.
- 3.6 At the recent September PDS Committee meeting a report detailing the current status of all S106 agreements was presented, including the use of the sum from the Orpington, Tesco development, of £81,977, *'to be used to improve bus stop facilities and relieve congestion linked to increased car parking at Orpington Station, as reported to ES PDS on 01.10.13 (ES12023). A re-design of Orpington Station forecourt has been prepared to better manage vehicle movements to and from the car park, pedestrian movements and provide new cycle parking'*. The Recommendations in the report were agreed, *'to use the S106 funds to meet the costs relating to the schemes identified within Table 1'*.
- 3.7 The latest design (see Enclosure 1), whilst retaining the bus stop in its current position, has now been broadened to fully encompass the Station forecourt and will include the following improvements;
- changes to the existing right turn lane into the station
 - addition of 'Keep Clear' markings to try and prevent through traffic blocking across the right turn lane which, in turn, can result in traffic blocking westbound traffic
 - the separation of the taxi rank and pick-up and drop off bays within the forecourt
 - the provision of high quality secure cycle parking within the forecourt
 - new crossings within the forecourt to better manage safe pedestrian movements

- a layout which will also better manage traffic movements around the forecourt and thereby help reduce delays and congestion in Crofton Road in the vicinity of the Station.
- 3.8 It is therefore recommended that the creation of an inset bus layby is not taken forward, but that other improvements within and immediately outside the station forecourt are introduced, in order to reduce congestion in Crofton Road and to also add benefits to residents using Orpington Station.
- 3.9 It is worthy of note that between 2011/12 and 2014/15, passenger usage of the Station has increased by 17.8% and with general growth across the railways, nationally, the upward trend is likely to continue, hence the need to improve interchange facilities at stations such as Orpington.
- 3.10 Southeastern Railway supports the proposed improvements as does Orpington First.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

A safer environment will benefit all users of the Station.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Environment Portfolio Plan 2014/17 includes a specific commitment to, 'Work with Southeastern and Network Rail to improve parking at Orpington rail station, increasing capacity and improving access'.
- 5.2 In 'Building a Better Bromley 2020 Vision – Quality Environment', two stated issues to be tackled are: (i) Promoting safe parking provision; and (ii) Improving the road network for all users

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The estimated total cost of the proposal is £120k with £25k funded from 2016/17 BCP programme and £13k funded from the 2016/17 LIP budget for Cycling and Walking, which have uncommitted balances of £25k and £169k respectively, along with £82k from the S106 funds from Orpington Tesco development.
- 6.2 Normally funds for bus stop improvements would be passed to TfL and whilst it is still proposed to carry out some improvements to the bus stop and markings in the main road immediately outside the Station there is a risk that if the money is not spent that TfL may ask for those funds to be handed to them. That risk will be mitigated if an improvement at the bus stop is implemented which will still allow the Council to achieve the wider scheme with additional funds from the LIP budget for the new cycle hub.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The works will involve working on third party land, i.e. within the control of the train operating company, Southeastern. As they have given their support for the proposals there is unlikely to be any issue with regard to formal agreements and working consents between Southeastern and the Council.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Personnel and Procurement Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	ORPINGTON RAILWAY STATION: IMPROVED ACCESS AND BUS STOP ENHANCEMENT (ES14075) 04/11/2014