

HIGHWAY WORKS FOR THE PROPOSED FORGE VALLEY COMMUNITY SCHOOL

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report is to inform Members of representations received following public consultation on proposed highway works in the Malin Bridge area for the proposed Forge Valley School, together with Council officer responses and recommendations about the proposals.

2.0 WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE PEOPLE OF SHEFFIELD

- 2.1 The proposals have been developed to address the requirements of certain conditions applied to the planning consent (09/02999/FUL) for the new Forge Valley Community School which was granted on 12th January 2010. Officers have developed measures with a view to satisfying “City of Opportunity” priorities to empower residents by incorporating their aspirations in the design of their streets. The report contributes to “putting the customer first” by responding to the views expressed during the comprehensive public consultation exercises undertaken during the compilation of the Transport Assessments which accompanied the planning application.
- 2.2 The report will also contribute to the “Protecting and Enhancing the Environment” objective of the Council’s Corporate Plan “A City of Opportunity”, particularly the “Reducing Congestion” priority, with proposals that aim to better manage traffic flows through and around Malin Bridge.

3.0 OUTCOME & SUSTAINABILITY

- 3.1 The main outcome will be addressing the issues outlined in the Transport Assessments which were produced in respect of Forge Valley Community School. This will be achieved by the development and implementation of measures conditioned in the planning consent.
- 3.2 The measures are aimed at accommodating the additional traffic assessed to be generated by the new school. It is anticipated the various proposals in the vicinity of Malin Bridge will help to minimise any delays resulting from increased traffic volumes to avoid compromising the Council in meeting its congestion target.
- 3.3 The proposals are also aimed at improving road safety for students walking and cycling to the new school with a view to further encouraging a shift away from dependency on the private car, whilst encouraging more healthy physical activity amongst the school students.

4.0 REPORT

- 4.1 Planning consent has been granted for proposals to redevelop the existing secondary school known as Myers Grove School at Wood Lane, Stannington. The redevelopment of the site will facilitate the school’s merger with Wisewood School and Community Sports College. The development will create a new school to be known as Forge Valley Community School (FVCS). The location is central to the area to be served by the new school, with 70% of pupils of the two existing secondary schools (Myers Grove and Wisewood) living within a mile of the site.

The proposed school will be built as part of Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme with an opening date of September 2011.

- 4.2 The highway-associated conditions are fairly wide ranging and address travel-related issues throughout the entire catchment area of the new Forge Valley School. Given the size of the area and scope of the measures outlined in the Transport Assessments for the new school, the proposals are being developed in 3 specific area-based packages. The first of these areas to be considered is the Malin Bridge gyratory and certain connecting highways. The other two areas are Walkley/Stannington and Wisewood. This report concentrates on the Malin Bridge area only, with subsequent reports relating to the other two areas to be submitted in due course. The measures included in the Malin Bridge area are shown on drawing no. TM/ED02835/MB/C1 which is included in Appendix A. The key elements of the scheme are:
- Holme Lane/Ball Road junction improvement;
 - Various measures on Loxley New Road;
 - Traffic calming on Taplin Road and Harrison Road;
 - Possible measures to accommodate a Supertram feeder bus service to pick up and drop off passengers in the vicinity of the Malin Bridge tram stop. The tram feeder service is envisaged to connect the Stannington/Loxley Valley areas to the Malin Bridge tram stop (subject to further investigation and assessment).
 - Time-limited parking lay-bys on Home Lane in front of nos 206-242 (subject to further discussion and assessment).
 - Holme Lane/Rivelin Valley Road, junction alterations, improvements to pedestrian facilities;
 - Rivelin Valley Road, signal controlled 'Toucan' crossing;
 - Watersmeet Road to Thoresby Road, enhancements to pedestrian/cycle facilities;
 - Loxley Road, signal-controlled 'Toucan' crossing;
 - Dykes Lane, enhancements to pedestrian/cycle facilities.
- 4.3 In order to obtain the views of residents and businesses potentially affected by the proposals, an explanatory letter, a plan showing the proposals and a response form were delivered to all premises in the general vicinity of Malin Bridge. A pre-paid envelope was provided for return of the completed forms. The emergency services and South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive were also consulted. A copy of each of the consultation documents and plan is included as Appendix 'A' to this report. A plan showing the boundary of the consultation area is also attached as Appendix 'B'. Details of the proposals are provided on the Council's web-site. These will be up-dated as appropriate at various stages of the development and details of proposals to be consulted upon in the Stannington, Walkley and Wisewood areas will be added when available.
- 4.4 A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) will be required in conjunction with certain elements of the proposals shown on drawing no. TM/ED02835/MB/C1. As a number of consultation issues still need to be resolved, (as outlined later in this report), it is proposed to advertise the necessary TRO when these matters have been appropriately addressed.
- 4.5 The consultation information was delivered to 530 premises within the consultation area shown in Appendix 'B'. There were 102 forms returned, giving a response rate of just under 20%.

- 4.6 Together with Ward Members, the Central Community Assembly Manager (responsible for the area in which Malin Bridge is located) were notified about the proposed consultation relating to the highways works. A presentation relating to the development of the Transport Assessments and the recommended mitigation measures was given to Community Assembly Members and Ward Councillors prior to the granting of planning approval. Correspondence relating to the proposed measures and the consultation process was exchanged between Ward Councillors and officers both during and after the consultation period. Following the close of the consultation period officers met with the Chair of the Central Community Assembly to provide an update on progress and to discuss matters arising from the consultation exercise.
- 4.7 Table 1 below gives an indication of the percentage of responses received with regard to each of the questions outlined on the response form.

Table 1 Public responses to the consultation

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not sure	No Response
Q1	"The proposed widening of Holme Lane to two lanes at its junction with Ball Road will be a positive step to address congestion".	30%	39%	8%	8%	12%	3%
Q2	"The proposed widening of footways will improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists especially children making their way to and from local schools".	33%	39%	10%	11%	6%	1%
Q3	"If provided, the parking bays on Holme Lane at the junction with Rivelin Valley Road will assist visitors to local shops and businesses".	31%	41%	10%	10%	6%	2%
Q4	"The proposed signalised (toucan) crossing points will make it easier and safer for pedestrians and cyclists in and around the Malin Bridge area".	44%	37%	7%	5%	4%	4%
Q5	"The proposed changes to the parking restrictions in the area will help the flow of traffic".	2%	34%	10%	11%	12%	6%
Q6	"The proposed junction plateau and road humps will reduce speeds and increase safety on Taplin Road and Harrison Road".	24%	33%	11%	19%	10%	3%
Q7	"By upgrading the footpath between	26%	30%	14%	11%	18%	1%

	Watersmeet Road and Thorsby Road more people especially children will choose to cycle and walk to local amenities and schools".						
		Fully Support	Partly Support	Don't Support	Not Sure	No Response	
Q8	Overall, to what extent do you support the scheme?	28%	55%	14%	1%	2%	

4.8 As can be seen, the responses received indicate a substantial majority of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the proposals. However, many of the respondents expressed comments and a number of issues and concerns were raised. These submissions, together with officer responses can be found in Appendix C to this report.

4.9 No responses to the Consultation were received from the Police or Ambulance Services. South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue objected to the proposed change of priority at Loxley Road/Loxley New Road, on the grounds that this would have a potentially negative effect on their response times. This aspect of the proposals has been deleted and the priority arrangement will remain as existing (see paragraph 5.4).

Financial Implications

4.10 A report outlining the overall principle of the re-investment of capital receipts to allow for contingencies in respect of BSF schemes of this nature was approved by Cabinet on 22nd February 2006. The budget estimate for the whole of the Forge Valley highways-associated works is in the order of £1.4 million. This figure incorporates the cost of measures throughout the area - (Malin Bridge, Walkley, Stannington and Wisewood). The cost of the Malin Bridge element, which is the subject of this report, is included within the overall budget estimate.

Equal Opportunity Implications

4.11 It is considered that all classes of road user will benefit from the proposed measures. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and this indicates that the proposals adhere to stated Council policies as they apply to these types of works in the highway. The disabled, elderly and young children (and their carers) have different needs from a project of this type due to issues of accessibility, usability and road safety. However, these differing needs have been (and will continue to be) fully accounted for as part of the consultation and design of the measures. Therefore the project should be of universal positive benefit to all, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, disability etc. No negative impacts have been identified.

Environmental Implications

4.12 During the preparation of the Supplementary Transport Assessment, an Air Quality Impact Assessment was undertaken to determine the potential impact on air quality as a result of the Forge Valley Community school proposals. The assessment was undertaken by the City Council's Environmental Protection Service and the potential impact determined by use of the Airviro computer model. This investigated the

proposed scenario and assessed the predicted ambient concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and fine particulate matter (PM₁₀) as a result of the proposed development. Exhaust emissions of nitrogen dioxide and nitric oxide (commonly known as NO_x) from traffic associated with the development could potentially affect local air quality.

- 4.13 The assessment results were appraised against the Air Quality Objectives outlined in the Air Quality (England) regulations 2000 (SI928) and the Air Quality (England) (Amended) Regulations (SI3043). Recent reviews and assessments of Sheffield's air quality show that there are areas of the city where NO₂ and PM₁₀ are still likely to exceed the Government's annual objectives. Traffic was the major source of these pollutants.
- 4.14 The air quality impact of the proposed development was determined by predicting the NO₂ and PM₁₀ emission levels for 2009 as the base year and for 2011, the proposed opening year. The results were ratified by comparing predicted 2009 levels with bias adjusted diffusion tube values, measured in a similar location (within 2km of the site) to that of the proposed development. The predicted 2010 emission levels were used as a baseline for investigating the impact of the proposed development.
- 4.15 The results of the assessment suggest that the predicted maximum impact of the proposed development on NO₂ and PM₁₀, in 2011, is likely to be on Wood Lane. However, the predicted increases do not cause breaches of their respective air quality objectives. For NO₂, the predicted increase is significant but of medium priority consideration. In the case of PM₁₀, the predicted impact is small and not likely to be significant. The impact is also unlikely to cause a breach of the National Air Quality Objectives or render unworkable any action on the Air Quality Action Plan. With mitigation, the predicted increases in NO₂ and PM₁₀ concentrations could be reduced by 10% suggesting that further consideration should be given to additional mitigation measures in order to further reduce the proposed development's impact on air quality. If appropriate, those measures could include developing and implementing an effective travel plan, supporting the local Car Club in Sheffield and ensuring that large goods vehicles delivering to the site are of Euro IV standard at the minimum and Euro V by 2011.
- 4.16 The results also show that NO₂ and PM₁₀ concentrations are predicted to fall between 2009 and 2011 at many locations within the area investigated, probably due to the expected improvements from new vehicle and fuel technologies outweighing the air quality disadvantages of additional traffic growth.

Property Implications

- 4.17 In order to accommodate the proposed parking bays in front of property nos. 210 to 242 Holme Lane, it will be necessary to acquire some of the private forecourts fronting those properties. The proposed bays will occupy part of the existing footway and the forecourts of nos. 224 to 242 would be subsequently adopted as public highway to form the new footway. The properties constitute 7 individual premises, 6 of which are owned by the Sheffield Grammar School Trust and one by a private individual. The properties are all leased to individual Traders.
- 4.18 The proposed layout on Holme Lane would not necessarily be totally compromised by not providing the parking bays. However, in order to ensure safe and efficient

traffic flows along this section, it would be necessary to introduce stringent restrictions along the whole length of these frontages (i.e. No Waiting and No Loading at Any Time). This would have a severe impact on all the Traders operating from these premises, and the Council would seek to avoid this course of action if possible.

- 4.19 Early discussions indicate that the School Trust and the private owner are prepared to support the parking bay proposals and dispose of the land to the City Council. As the Trust is a Charitable Body, it will not be possible for the land to simply be dedicated to the Highway Authority and following initial discussions with the Agent acting for the Trust, it appears likely that the Trust will require payment for the land. Additionally, the owner of the remaining property will, of course, need to be compensated in an even-handed manner. Negotiations are not yet finalised, but the anticipated costs are likely to be low in terms of the overall cost of the proposed schemes, particularly in view of the significant benefits gained.

Legal Implications

- 4.20 The Secretary of State has declined to call in planning application 09/02999/FUL (notification by letter of the 3 February 2010) and the conditions setting down these improvement works referred to in paragraph 2.1 (above) therefore have full effect.
- 4.21 The compliance with Air Quality (England) regulations 2000 (SI928) and the Air Quality (England) (Amended) Regulations (SI3043) raise no legal implications with respect to Air Quality.
- 4.22 The legal issues in connection with the acquisition of the third party land referred to above cannot be commented upon at this stage as the acquisition have not been negotiated and Legal Services have not yet been instructed on these.

5.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The Transport Assessments undertaken by external Consultants identified the mitigation measures which subsequently formed the basis of the relevant conditions to the planning consent granted for the Forge Valley Community School development.
- 5.2 During the development of the TAs, a significant level of traffic modelling was undertaken to identify the optimum arrangement in and around Malin Bridge. This modelling included the sensitivity testing of differing percentage increases in traffic using the Malin Bridge gyratory at certain times of the day with and without various mitigation measures such as controlled/uncontrolled pedestrian facilities.
- 5.3 Similarly, the provision of a pedestrian/cyclist bridge over the River Loxley to provide a fully segregated pedestrian route between Loxley Road and Myers Grove Lane was fully investigated. Such provision was ultimately rejected due to difficulties with regard to gradient, personal safety and third party land implications. Additionally, many of the proposed on-highway measures would still have been required to address safety issues of pupils and others choosing to use existing routes.

5.4 Other alternative options considered included:-

- Provision of signal controlled pedestrian crossings at the Stannington Road/Holme Lane junction. The traffic modelling referred to in paragraph 5.2 above identified that the queuing and congestion that would result would have an unacceptably negative impact on the highway network throughout the locality.
- Change of priority at the Loxley Road/Loxley New Road junction. This was put forward to accommodate the signalised crossing arrangement across Loxley Road. Responses to the consultation exercise and from South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service indicated major concerns about the proposed layout. Accordingly, this has been revised and it is proposed to re-locate the crossing slightly to enable the existing priority arrangement to be retained.
- Provision of parking bays outside numbers 208-242 Holme Lane. In order to avoid the introduction of parking and loading restrictions along the frontage of the commercial premises outlined above, a parking bay arrangement was developed. It will, however, be necessary for the Council to acquire various parcels of third party land (that is the forecourt areas fronting some of the specified properties), in order to facilitate such provision. Whilst negotiations with relevant parties have commenced, it is too early to confirm successful completion. Should the negotiations fail for any insurmountable reasons, the proposal to advertise waiting/loading restrictions would need to be pursued.

6.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The comprehensive public consultation in respect of Forge Valley Community School proposals helped to steer the Consultants' development of the Transport Assessments. That documentation was instrumental in defining the highway-related conditions on the planning consent. The measures which were developed for the Malin Bridge area to address the relevant planning conditions have been further consulted upon throughout the immediate area. The recommendation relating to progression of the measures follows an indication of support from a majority of respondents. Additionally, revisions have been made to some of the proposals (where practicable) to address issues and concerns raised by respondents.
- 6.2 In conjunction with some of the proposed measures shown on drawing number TM/ED02835/MB/C1, a Traffic Regulation Order will be required to enable safe and efficient operation of the highway. Any representations received following advertisement of the intention to make the Order will be reported to the Cabinet Highways Committee in due course.
- 6.3 Acquisition of third party land on Holme Lane is key in terms of providing the proposed parking bays. Should the desired acquisition fail for any reason, the fall-back position of introducing waiting and loading restrictions would be pursued. Representations in respect of this would be reported in due course, as outlined in paragraph 6.2.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To approve the series of measures shown on drawing number TM/ED02835/MB/C1 as set out in Appendix A, detailed design be completed and the scheme issued to Street Force for construction.
- 7.2 To authorise the Director of Property & Facilities Management to finalise the terms to acquire third party land to provide the proposed parking bays on Holme Lane and to dedicate the land as public highway and to authorise the Director of Legal Services to negotiate and complete all related legal documentation.
- 7.3 To advertise the necessary Traffic Regulation Order and if no objections are received, the Order be made in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
- 7.4 Any objections to be reported back to this Committee for consideration.

Simon Green
Executive Director, Place

27 August 2010