

Consultation Review Panel Agenda/Record

Project Name:	Quality Transport Corridor - Birchfield Road, Widnes	Project File:	M I 047
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Date: Monday 15 January 2007

Present:

Cllr Dave Leadbetter (DL) – Chair
 Cllr Ann Gerrard (AG) – Kingsway Ward Councillor

Ian Stewardson (IS) – Cheshire Police
 Alan West (AW) – Operational Director Highways and Transportation
 Stephen Leng (SL) – Divisional Manager Highways
 Dave Cunliffe (DC) – Section Leader Highways Capital
 Debbie Cragg (DCr) – Senior Engineer Highways Capital

DESIGN STAGE:

FEASIBILITY
 PRELIMINARY
 DESIGN
 DETAILED DESIGN
 (Tick as applicable)

Agenda	Meeting Record	Action
1. Introduction.	<p>Apologies were received from Councillors Fraser, Horabin, Polhill and Hignett.</p> <p>DC introduced the scheme to all present and spoke around the original Consultation plan Drg. No 8329/F/002. DC explained some of the background to the scheme, which originally was envisaged to be a traffic signal junction to help movements of vehicles and pedestrians on Lockett Road, Victoria Avenue and Birchfield Road. This initial scheme was met with a lot of opposition from the local residents affected especially those living in Victoria Avenue who were concerned that the parking would become even worse. The scheme was then put on hold and was revisited as a Quality Transport Scheme to link in the principle of the transport corridors for an extended length of Birchfield Road (between Highfield Road and Lancaster Road).</p> <p>DC explained that the scheme was designed in consultation with internal officers, the Police, Bus Operators and the Schools. The design included the junction realignment of Victoria Avenue and relocation of the pedestrian crossing, and the linking of the existing cycleway provisions by widening the footpath and installing a combined use pathway. Bus stops were to be treated with bus border kerbs and lay bys where proposed to be closed. Road markings were to be used to narrow a section of the carriageway fronting Wade Deacon School to slow traffic and give the appearance of entering a school zone.</p> <p>A pre consultation meeting was held Monday 27 November 2006 with the Councillors of all Wards affected by the scheme being Kingsway, Birchfield, Farnworth and Appleton and minutes were taken recording their comments.</p> <p>A public consultation took place at Wade Deacon High</p>	

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	<p>School – Upper Wing, Victoria Avenue on Tuesday 5 December between 2:00pm – 7.00pm. Questionnaires where issue to all who attended, approximately 20 people attended although all surrounding properties and businesses were leaflet dropped. From the public consultation 8 written replies were received and the issues raised by these are to be discussed.</p>	
<p>2. Review of Design Options and Consultation Issues Raised</p>	<p>Following the consultation event and the return of questionnaires and feedback from Halton Bike Users the following main concerns where raised.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parking - Issues raised include the concerns of parking of parents for the schools – on yellow lines, obstructing junctions and parking in bus lay by and causing safety issues for people using the bus. DC said the parking for the station was being looked at with the various interested parties; Halton Borough Council had Section 106 monies allocated for improvements to the security and parking at the station. The issue of illegal parking was an enforcement issue. The problem with parents parking they are allowed a 10-minute grace and have usually moved on in this time scale. The police will respond to complaints from residents about obstructive parking. DC said the scheme proposals would be parking neutral. 2. Junction Realignment Victoria Avenue and Relocation of Pedestrian Crossing – Concerns raised by realignment of the junction regarding larger vehicles accessing/ exiting and concern it will take longer exiting Victoria Avenue at peak times. DC again said the accessing/exiting would be neutral but the junction would be formalised and safer to cross for pedestrians. Vehicles would be channelled into the correct positioning for the junction operation. DC said the crossing was to be repositioned at the park side of Lockett Road and converted into a Toucan crossing for cyclists and pedestrians, the position linked in with the pedestrian movements especially to the schools. A resident who live adjacent to the position doesn't want the crossing to move fears it will make exiting her drive even worse than it is at present. DC said the scheme could work with the crossing in the same position albeit not the ideal location for movements and if it did stay insitu the realignment of Victoria Avenue would still be carried out. AG was very supportive of the new position, as it would give the greatest benefit to the schools and access to the park. 3. Bus Lay – Bys – the closing of the lay bys had been met with a concerned response from the Bike Users Group due to the vulnerability of a cyclist passing a parked bus on the carriageway. DC said it was felt on this issue to keep the lay bys adjacent to Wade 	

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	<p>Deacon and the Park open but marked with clearway markings to prevent them being parked up and putting bus passengers in danger when alighting or bordering the bus. The Bus lay by adjacent to Lancaster Road is to be part filled and the remainder was left open for parking for the shops and allotments.</p> <p>4. Combined Footway & Cycleway Provision – concerns raised regarding an enlarged footway being used for half on /off parking by parents picking up children. Concern with regard the removal of the guardrail on the bridge. DL / AG didn't think this was anymore of an issue regarding parking than existing. DC explained the guardrail would be staying on the other footpath giving no clear crossing position and that a guard railed footway would restrict down the footway width preventing development of a shared cycleway / footway.</p> <p>Other issued raised from the Consultation</p> <p>5. Can't cycleway be marked on the carriageway like Kingsway – No because of insufficient carriageway width.</p> <p>6. Suggestion of the installation of a roundabout at Victoria Avenue / Lockett Road and Birchfield – this is not feasible due to geometry and levels.</p> <p>7. Issue raised that coaches laid on by the Railway park at present at the bus stop adjacent to 121 Birchfield Road this would not be available as an option. DCr said contact had been made with Network Rail and a coach is only used when they have maintenance works on the network or do not have enough train drivers, they will be contacted and informed that this stop will no longer be an option after the scheme is implemented and coach parking would have to be moved to Lockett Road.</p> <p>8. Have HBC considered additional traffic calming to Victoria Avenue. No - felt speeds would slow down with the realigned junction mouth which will stop left entering vehicles shooting in.</p>	
<p>3. Recommendations made at Consultation Review</p>	<p>The following recommendations were made for AW to discuss with Rob Polhill to sign off the scheme.</p> <p>1. Crossing to be relocated and converted into a Toucan. The properties immediately affected will more that likely object to the position. AG and DL felt it was the best position and was worth pursuing.</p> <p>2. Red marking and hatching fronting the school to be removed to keep road width in response to safety concerns raised by the bike users group regarding being pushed into the channel.</p>	

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	<p data-bbox="539 219 1273 320">3. The bus lay bys would be left open at Wade Deacon and adjacent to the park but marked with clearway markings to prohibit parking other than buses.</p> <p data-bbox="491 338 1278 405">The next PP Board that the note of the Panel meeting can be reported to is on Wednesday 21st March 2007 at 6.30pm.</p>	

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