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Meeting: SEFTON EAST PARISHES AREA COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 19 JULY 2007

Title of Report: A506 PRESCOT ROAD / BANK LANE (PEAR TREE JUNCTION), MELLING – PROPOSED JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT

Report of:
Alan Moore
Strategic Director of Regeneration &
Deputy Chief Executive

Contact Officer:
Andrew Barr - 0151 934 4634

This report contains	Yes	No
CONFIDENTIAL Information/		√
EXEMPT information by virtue of paragraph(s).....of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 (If information <u>is</u> marked exempt, the Public Interest Test must be applied and favour the exclusion of the information from the press and public).		√
Is the decision on this report DELEGATED?	√	

Purpose of Report

To seek Members support to a proposed junction improvement at Prescott Road / Bank Lane, Melling.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that: -

- (i) Members support the proposed junction improvement.
- (ii) The scheme be included as part of the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme for future years, subject to approval by the Cabinet Member for Technical Services.

Corporate Objective Monitoring

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Corporate Objective		Positive Impact	Neutral Impact	Negative Impact
1.	Creating a Learning Community		√	
2.	Creating Safe Communities		√	
3.	Jobs and Prosperity		√	
4.	Improving Health and Well-Being		√	
5.	Environmental Sustainability		√	
6.	Creating Inclusive Communities		√	
7.	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening local Democracy		√	
8.	Children and Young People		√	

Financial Implications

	2007/ 2008 £	2008/ 2009 £	2009/ 2010 £	2010/ 2011 £
<u>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</u>				
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure		50,000	280,000	
Funded by:				
Sefton Capital Resources		50,000	280,000	
Specific Capital Resources				
<u>REVENUE IMPLICATIONS</u>				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton funded Resources				
Funded from External Resources				
Does the External Funding have an expiry date? Y/N	When?			
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

Departments consulted in the preparation of this Report

None

List of background papers relied upon in the preparation of this Report

None

1.0 INTRODUCTION

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- 1.1 Members will be aware that over the last fifteen years there have been many requests to improve or make modification to the junction of Prescott Road / Bank Lane, Melling. This has been in response to concerns regarding safety and the levels of congestion that are experienced, particularly at peak hours.
- 1.2 During the last three years there have been a total of sixteen recorded injury accidents at the junction, all involving slight injury. Over the last fifteen years there have been a total of sixty-four recorded injury accidents at the junction, one involving fatal injury, three involving serious injury and the remaining sixty accidents involving slight injuries.
- 1.3 Over the long term an average of 4.25 injury accidents per year are likely to occur at this junction. Based upon figures published by HM Government in its Highways Economic Note 1, the average cost to the community of these accidents at 2005 prices is in the region of £368,943 per year.

2.0 OPTIONS PREVIOUSLY INVESTIGATED

- 2.1 Over the years a variety of different engineering options have been investigated to provide a cost-effective solution to the road safety issues and improve the congestion that occurs at peak hours.
- 2.2 The following options have been considered previously: -
 - Mini Roundabout;
 - Traffic Signals;
 - Ghost Island;
 - Changed Priorities;
 - Approach Speed Control by Traffic Calming (Entry Treatment); and
 - Street Lighting Improvements.

The options have a number of detrimental issues to either road safety or the capacity of the junction and an explanation follows.

2.3 *Mini Roundabout*

Due to the location of the access / egress points of the petrol station, a layout cannot be progressed, which safely accommodates both turning movements at the junction and those into and out of the petrol station. Whilst this layout will improve the congestion that occurs at peak hours, it has not been considered for further evaluation based upon the safety issues.

2.4 *Traffic Signals*

In considering the possible introduction of traffic signals at the junction, the relative location of the existing garage access points again presented a major problem. Under a signal-controlled arrangement at the junction, vehicles leaving the garage forecourt area would have to enter uncontrolled (i.e. without signal control) into the junction area. The junction arrangement was modelled using a computer package entitled LINSIG. This revealed that only

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at peak times would a traffic signal controlled junction benefit the operation of the junction, however, outside of these times a traffic signal system is not the most appropriate system of controlling traffic flow. This, together with the safety issues associated with the uncontrolled nature of access from the garage forecourt area meant that this option was not considered for further evaluation.

2.5 *Ghost Island*

A ghost island arrangement incorporated into a locally widened carriageway on the major road is likely to address some of the problems at the junction. It would assist in reducing the delays in the a.m. peak by enabling the right turning traffic from the Prescott Road (N) approach to segregate from the straight ahead traffic thereby reducing the potential queue as a result of conflict with northbound traffic on Bank Lane. The presence of a ghost island would also enable the right turning traffic from Prescott Road (S) to make the manoeuvre more safely. However, the analysis of the potential junction operation using the PICADY program suggests that significant queuing delays will still occur during the a.m. peak on the Prescott Road (N) and (S) approaches. This arrangement also will not affect the speed of traffic along Prescott Road (N) and Bank Lane. As a result of these issues this option was not considered for further assessment.

2.6 *Changed Junction Priorities*

To change the priorities of the junction to make Prescott Road (N) and (S) the through route with northbound traffic travelling along Bank Lane having to give way at Prescott Road (N) and (S) is very likely to cause serious delays to traffic northbound on Bank Lane particularly during the p.m. peak. There are on average over 5500 vehicles per day travelling northbound towards the Pear Tree Inn that would have to give way at a new junction. This layout would not be in accordance with the policy to retain Prescott Road (N) to Bank Lane as the principal route. As a result this option was not considered further.

2.7 *Speed Reduction by Traffic Calming – Village Entry Treatment*

The introduction of vertical traffic calming measures could not be introduced without the reduction of the speed limit to 30mph. Also, there is a considerable usage of the route by Heavy Goods Vehicles, which based upon experience, would preclude their usage on a road of this nature. Also, the introduction of vertical traffic calming together with roadmarkings and signage would have an effect on the accident rate however this would not address the congestion that is currently experienced. Based upon these issues this option was not given further consideration.

2.8 *Street Lighting Improvements*

The current street lighting arrangement along Prescott Road (N) and Bank Lane is poor. The lighting columns are situated on the east side of the highway and are 6 metre high concrete columns. A number of the latest accidents have taken place in the hours of darkness, although they have not been directly attributed to the poor lighting. There is no street lighting along the length of Prescott Road (S). Should Members support the preferred

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proposal as highlighted in paragraph 3.0, this would include for improved street lighting.

3.0 PROPOSED JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT

- 3.1 Having discounted the options discussed earlier in this report, the preferred proposal is to progress a conventional roundabout. The proposed layout is included as Annex A.
- 3.2 Members will note that as part of the layout included as Annex A, the access / egress arrangements to the garage forecourt can be safely accommodated. This arrangement also breaks up the existing straight section of Prescott Road (N) / Bank Lane and will force road users to slow down to negotiate the roundabout. This proposal also has the benefit of being able to not only improve safety, but also improve the flow of traffic and the existing congestion that occurs, particularly at peak hours.
- 3.3 Members attention is also drawn to the fact that left turning movements for Heavy Goods Vehicles from Bank Lane into Prescott Road (South) cannot be accommodated without such a vehicle conducting a u-turn movement about the proposed roundabout. Current demand for this movement is low and has not been observed by any of the Traffic Management Team whilst on site. If this movement does currently occur then traffic in all directions would have to stop to allow the full turning movement of such a vehicle. Under the proposed arrangement the u-turn movement, whilst non-standard, would be accommodated in a safer manner than currently exists.
- 3.4 There is also the issue that a significant amount of land, which is not owned by the Council, would have to be acquired before this layout could be progressed. Whilst the Council could enter into negotiations for the land to be acquired, there is no guarantee that it would be secured. This would result in a Compulsory Purchase Order / Procedure being progressed, which should objections be received would result in a public enquiry. The current estimate for this proposed scheme is £330,000. This does not make an allowance for the cost of a public enquiry and advice from the Legal Director is to allow £40,000 for such a procedure to take place.

4.0 TIMESCALES

- 4.1 The following is an indicative timetable for delivery of the scheme: -

2007/08	-	Completion of Preliminary Design Work
2008/09	-	Acquisition of Land & Site Investigation
2009/10	-	Completion of Detailed Design & Construction

5.0 PROPOSAL

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- 5.1 It is proposed that Members support the junction improvement included as Annex A.
- 5.2 Should the scheme be supported it is proposed that the scheme be included as part of the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme for future years, subject to approval by the Cabinet Member for Technical Services.

Alan Moore

Strategic Director of Regeneration & Deputy Chief Executive

