ITEM NO.11

Meeting: **SEFTON EAST PARISHES AREA COMMITTEE**

Date of Meeting: **19th July 2007**

Title of Report: **A59 / NORTHWAY - CLOSURE OF CENTRAL RESERVE BARRIER**

Report of:
Alan Moore
Strategic Director of Regeneration

Contact Officer:
David Richardson - 0151 934 4236

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 is 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 respond to members request for Officers to investigate options for providing a pedestrian crossing point of the A59 adjacent to Maghull Canal Bridge.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that: -

(i) Members note the report.
(ii) The barrier remain in place for pedestrian and vehicular safety whilst monitoring continues.
(iii) Road safety Awareness with schools to continue.

Corporate Objective Monitoring

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

There is currently no funding available for any of the above schemes as the Capital Programme is fully committed, however it may be possible to include the lowest cost Option 3 @ £16,000 plus fees within the Highway Structure Capital Programme for 2008/09. This unfortunately means that no work can be completed until funds become available perhaps this time next year.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	**2006/ 2007 £**	**2007/ 2008 £**	**2008/ 2009 £**	**2009/ 2010 £**
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton Capital Resources			18,000	
Specific Capital Resources				
REVENUE IMPLICATIONS				
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

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Members will recall that during the recent works to Maghull Canal Bridge the the gap in the central reserve barrier was closed for safety reasons raised by the Merseyside Police to prevent pedestrians crossing the busy A59 at this location and for the safety of traffic due to impact to the ends of the safety barriers.

1.2 At the Area Committee of the 24th May 2007 Members requested that officers investigate options for providing a crossing point across or under the A59 adjacent to the bridge at this location.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Following Road Traffic accidents and damage to the safety barriers at both Damfield Lane and Hall Lane junctions Officers from Merseyside Police's Roads Policing Unit brought to the Council's attention the safety situation that existed between these two junctions in that the central reserve barrier at Maghull Canal Bridge did not comply with the current safety standards.

2.2 Should any accidents have occurred at this location the Council would have been seriously criticised for not taking the appropriate action, which has now taken place.

2.3 At members request 4 options have been considered;

1. Provision of a formal uncontrolled crossing.
2. Provision of an informal uncontrolled crossing.
3. Provision of steps to facilitate crossing via the canal towpath
4. Provision of a controlled crossing

OPTION 1 – Provision of a formal uncontrolled crossing.

This requires the removal of approximately 45m of existing single sided tensioned corrugated barrier and its replacement with approximately 70m of double sided tensioned corrugated barrier. This would provide a safe staggered crossing point.

Given the existing width of the central reserve (1.95m) only a narrow walkway of approximately 0.9m wide will be able to be provided between the barriers. To provide this width it will be necessary to have the outside face of the barriers setback 0.3m from the kerb face. This is below the required standard which specifies a minimum setback of 0.6m.

Overall this option whilst providing a reasonably safe crossing for pedestrians is compromised due to the narrow width of walkway between the barriers and the reduced setback of the barriers from the kerbs. To alleviate these problems it would be possible to widen the central reserve by approximately

1.0m to increase both the setback of the barriers and the width available between them.

The estimated cost of this option **is £45,000.**

If widening of the central reserve is included the estimated cost increases to **£63,000** and obviously narrows both carriageways at this location which may have its own potential risks.

OPTION 2 – Provision of an informal uncontrolled crossing.

This requires the removal of approximately 25m of existing single sided barrier and the installation of two new terminals and two new bollards. The bollards are required to ensure that vehicles cannot perform U-turns through the gap in the barrier. As an informal crossing no dropped kerbs or tactile paving would be provided making crossing more difficult for wheelchair users or people with prams.

This option also does not comply with current standards in that it is creating a gap in the central reserve barrier. Also it does not provide a place of safety for pedestrians in the central reserve. Without the provision of dropped crossings and tactile paving it would not comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

The estimated cost of this option is **£18,000.** Due to the non compliance with current design standards, it is recommended that this option is discounted

OPTION 3 – Provision of steps to the canal towpath on the east of the bridge to allow pedestrians to cross under the road via the canal towpath.

There is an existing set of steps leading from the A59 to the canal towpath at the south west corner of the bridge. This option is to construct a set of steps leading from the south east corner of the bridge to the towpath. This option would allow pedestrians to cross the road using the steps and the canal towpath.

This option does not comply with Disability Discrimination Act requirements in that it does not provide a crossing point for people with ambulatory disabilities. It would also be unsuitable for people with prams. It is, however, the safest option as it removes potential conflict between pedestrians and vehicular traffic however it may have risks associated with the canal and is considered a very secluded area in child safety terms .

The estimated cost of this option is **£16,000.** This estimate assumes that the earthworks of the embankment are suitable for the construction of the steps.

OPTION 4 – Provision of a controlled puffin crossing adjacent to the bridge. This option is for the provision of a staggered double puffin crossing adjacent to the bridge. This would be the safest option for providing an at grade crossing that would comply with all DDA requirements.
This would require the widening of the central reserve to allow for a waiting area to allow each carriageway to be crossed separately. It should be noted that current DFT regulations do not allow a straight crossing of both carriageways.

The estimated cost of this option is **£131,000.**

2.4 With regards to the 2 No existing footbridges at Damfield Lane and Hall Lane these structures are currently in a good state of repair and pedestrian access is via a combination of steps and stepped pram ramps.
These bridges have functioned well over many years but are not fully DDA compliant to current regulations.
Bids are being submitted annually for the purpose of commencing a programme of bringing the Council's footbridges up to the DDA standard however no allocations have been approved as part of the LTP funding provision.

3.0 Financial Implications.

3.1 There is currently no funding available for any of the above schemes as the Capital Programme is fully committed, however it may be possible to include the lowest cost Option 3 @ £16,000 plus fees within the Highway structure Capital Programme for 2008/09. This means that no work can be completed until this time next year.

4.0 PROPOSAL

4.1 It is proposed that the current barrier remains in place in accordance with the Highway Standards and that the Road Safety Team continues to monitor this location and liaise with the schools to encourage the schools to ensure new pupil intakes are made aware of the situation and implicit dangers.

A R Moore
Strategic Director Regeneration

Form 104

MERSEYSIDE POLICE
1 OSU
10 JAN 2005
GROUP 2
SEFTON TP

Merseyside Police

Div.	*Operational Support Unit – Traffic*	Div Ref No	
Station	*Maghull*		
From	*Sergeant 7215[T] Danher*	Tel Ext	*73721*
To	*Group Commander – Maghull Traffic Group*		*23rd December 2004*

Subject **Safety Concerns – A59 Northway**

Sir,

I have been attached to Maghull Traffic Group since October 2004 and travel along the A59 Northway to work. I have regularly been confronted with school children of varying ages attempting to cross the dual carriageway, predominantly on the Maghull Canal Bridge, before and after school , but also at the junctions of Damfield Lane and Hall Lane.

As a father I am aware that as part of the 'safer routes to school' project improvements have been made in my own area with regard to the safety of school children travelling to and from school.

The A59 Northway at this location is a dual carriageway with a 40 mph speed limit. It is a popular location for enforcement with officers at Maghull due to excessive speeds. Particularly between Damfield Lane and Hall Lane. Although the safety record here appears to be acceptable the potential is there for a serious or fatal road collision.

At the junction of Hall Lane and Northway there is a pedestrian footbridge over the carriageway. There are no guardrails and there are a wide age spread of vulnerable road users who cross the road at this point. I would ask for the possibility that guardrails be sited with the view to funnelling pedestrian traffic to the footbridge.

Continuing North to Maghull Canal Bridge there is a gap in the Armco on top of the bridge where I am regularly confronted by school children crossing. They run onto the narrow central reservation and when the second carriageway is clear cross the road. Can it be ascertained, why there is a gap in the Armco? Can a section be placed there and failing that some form of safety fencing be erected to stop pedestrians crossing at this point?

Form 104

Continuing on to the junction of Damfield Lane another footbridge is under used. There is a large volume of pedestrian traffic crossing the road using the central reservation. Is it possible for guardrails to be extended running along the A5147, Liverpool Road North, in a southerly direction to just past the salt depot, to funnel pedestrians to the footbridge.

I have spoken to Constable 8885 Hignett, community officer at Maghull. He informs me that he has been made aware of this problem at a community forum attended by local councillors. There are four schools in this immediate area. St Andrews Primary, Deyes High, Maricourt High and Maghull High.

I ask that this report be forwarded to Sefton Traffic Management, for information and action.

JP Danher Sergeant 7215 T

Col Sandall T.M.

For attention and report. Please

24.12.04

TOTAL P.03

3.106 Inspection and maintenance of both the rock retaining system and the safety barrier are essential to ensure correct performance of both the safety fencing and rock netting fencing.

Closing of Short Gaps Between Safety Barrier Installations

3.107 Short gaps between two separate safety barrier installations should be avoided unless they are required for access, as the terminal section of a safety barrier presents more of a hazard to vehicles than the length of full height safety barrier used to close the gap. The longer the gap, the less the benefit gained in closing it. At present, it is required that gaps of less than 50 m should be closed. It might also be practicable to close gaps up to 100 m; this will depend on the site and the proposed end terminals being considered.

3.108 Where a gap between safety barrier installations cannot physically be closed due to the safety barriers being at different offsets, it may be acceptable to overlap the two installations. It is not acceptable if a vehicle (travelling in either direction on two way roads or contraflow situations) that hits the first safety barrier could be directed into the leading terminal of the second safety barrier or into the hazard that the second is protecting.

Guidance on Factors Regarding Choice of Restraint System

3.109 The choice of Restraint System will normally be made by the Contractor based on the performance criteria specified. Any special requirements should be detailed in the contract documentation to ensure that suitable systems are selected.

3.110 When specifying, designing and installing safety barriers, consideration should be given to the following:

(i) Proximity of other services (e.g. drainage, communications and utilities) (See **TD 27 [DMRB 6.1.2]**) and the need to access these for maintenance.

(ii) Maintenance of the safety barrier system, the verge/central reserve (e.g. grass/surface material) and street furniture and equipment, including provision for mounting temporary signs, especially in the central reserve.

(iii) Drainage of the adjacent carriageway, verge and or central reserve, e.g. it may be necessary to provide drainage 'weep' holes through a solid rigid safety barrier. Advice of the System manufacturer should be sought to ensure that such holes would not invalidate the safety barrier Certification or compromise its durability.

(iv) The need to specify the maximum amount of vehicle intrusion over the safety barrier that can be allowed. N.B. it is necessary to identify locations where vehicle intrusion is critical in determining the Working Width and to ensure that the contractor is aware of the need for manufacturer's stated Working Width to include vehicle intrusion when selecting a VRS, (refer to Guidance on Working Width in Chapter 1 of this Standard). The Working Width quoted in the Highways Agency's list of acceptable VRS includes vehicle intrusion unless stated otherwise.

(v) Sightline requirements, e.g. the effect of the height of the safety barrier on stopping sight distance.

(vi) Environmental considerations: e.g. snow, where a solid safety barrier may give rise to unacceptable levels of drifting; or marine environments where steel or aluminium products may be subject to high levels of corrosion.

(vii) The requirement for the system to be readily removed at emergency or maintenance crossing points, see below for guidance.

(viii) The need to limit the dead loading applied by the system to a supporting structure.

(ix) The need to limit the impact loading applied by the system to a supporting structure.