

ASH ROAD BRIDGE - HIGHWAY QUESTION & ANSWER MEETING

Wednesday 4 July 2018

Parking	
Questions	Answers
<p>1. I am in favour of the scheme, however, the parking in and around the station will be a big issue for many people, particularly those traveling from our village (Tongham) and in fact for all on that side of the new road; should the car park remain as it currently is, this would mean a very long detour indeed to access it, and in any case the car park is way too small. In my opinion, the car parking provision should be increased on both sides of the station.</p>	<p>1. We are working closely with Network Rail (NR) and they have agreed to undertake a review of station access and car parking requirements in relation to the proposed road bridge and footbridge. NR own the current car park but lease it to the train operators. The train operators have a requirement from the Regulator to provide a certain number of spaces. Any changes to the current car parking or train services will require a review of parking allocation. Your feedback that NR should share their car parking assessments with the public and commuters will be shared with NR.</p>
<p>2. For this plan to succeed, double yellow lines are going to need to be put in place along the widened Foreman Road between Ash Station and the new roundabout. What provision is going to be made for increased station parking to accommodate the cars that park along Foreman Road at present.</p>	<p>2. As per item 1, we will share your feedback with NR and await their review on car park capacity/need. Parking issues would need to be addressed before any works or yellow lines on Foreman Road.</p>
<p>3. Parking was the subject of some debate at the meeting, specifically the parking both at the station and along Forman Road. I recall that there was a comment from the panel that yellow lines would be painted along Foreman Road. Can you confirm this, and state when this is likely to occur? There was considerable debate about parking at the station where it was said that this is being discussed with</p>	<p>3. Yellow lines on Foreman Road would have to be implemented prior to the road bridge opening and would be a requirement for the new road layout. As set out in Answer 1 NR only have to provide a certain number of spaces. We could investigate provision of a car park within a development site; this could be in the form of lay-by parking areas between carriageway and footway so as not to impact</p>



Network Rail and APC. What plans have been or are being considered to increase the car parking capacity at/near the station.

on pedestrians or future occupiers of the site. This is not currently being pursued.

4. It has been stated that, regarding parking at the station and the parking currently occurring in Foreman Road, that it will be the developers' responsibility to liaise with GBC and SCC to agree measures for controlling speed, parking and signage on the new road. Can you confirm that neither council is taking responsibility for the parking issue on this or surrounding new roads from the proposed developments?

4. The Ash Road Bridge scheme will include for the provision of parking controls and any speed changes on Foreman Road. These would be implemented in coordination with delivery of the bridge. Alongside this, Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council both take responsibility for parking within development sites and on surrounding roads through the planning process. The comments at the Forum regarding the need for additional parking were noted and we will take this request forward in consultation with Network Rail, SCC and the Parish Council.

The Thakeham development adjacent to Foreman Park has put in pavements and partial double yellows with roadside parking.

SCC have secured S106 contributions from the Foreman Park development, which could go towards the implementation of double yellow lines on Foreman Road. GBC and SCC will ensure the necessary parking restrictions are in place prior to the road bridge opening. Contributions are due to be paid 18 months after commencement of development and would need to go through the Traffic Regulation Order process and go out to public consultation. Note that GBC enforce on behalf of SCC and if parked cars are blocking roads, accesses or sight-lines, this should be referred to the police.

5. It has been stated that parking at the station does not form part of this application but will be pursued separately. What progress has been made on this?

5. The Council is taking this request forward in consultation with Network Rail; consultation is ongoing.



6. It was stated that the current parking along Foreman Road would be prohibited. Many of us who drive that road might well be relieved but no thought has been given to where vehicles might be parked. Currently many of these cars are parked in Foreman Road all day whilst their drivers access the train at Ash Station. Whilst I agree that they are currently a hazard; there has been no thought as to where they will be parked in the future (one might assume that further inappropriate carriageway parking will be attempted). Whilst I applaud the view that train users will walk or cycle to the station, realistically this is not really a viable option.

6. As per answer 5



Foreman Road

Questions

Answers

1. Whilst I support the development of the bridge, I have concerns about its end point at Foreman Road. This road is too narrow to take the sorts of heavy vehicles that would be using it. This is especially true of the section to the south of the proposed junction, which is even narrower and has no pavement. It is quite likely that a significant proportion of the total traffic will use the southern part of Foreman Road and Grange Road as a short cut, avoiding congestion around Ash Manor school, and when stuck behind slower vehicles. Please confirm that your plan will include the necessary adjustments to Forman Road to allow safe passage for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.

1. In relation to Foreman Road, the section from the level crossing to the new roundabout that connects to the new road and Road Bridge will have to be widened and the speed limit reduced to 30mph. The opportunity for informal parking along that section of Foreman Road will be removed, and this will most likely be delivered through double yellow lines. The amendments to Foreman Road are likely to include a new shared footway / cycleway on the eastern side of the carriageway. Furthermore, the new development to the west of Foreman Road bordering Grange Road includes for a footpath/cycleway through its development connecting into the Thakeham development that is currently underway adjacent to Foreman Park, and from here there is footpath access along Foreman Road to the station. The existing layout does not prevent HGV's from using Foreman Road, if they are avoiding Ash Manor they can currently turn left after the level crossing. As the design of the new road and road-bridge is progressed, we will be undertaking further traffic surveys and a full Transport Assessment and reviewing any additional measures that may be required on Foreman Road and Grange Road to manage traffic and to deter rat-running.

2. Will Foreman road be widened and realigned to accommodate HGV traffic?

2. Foreman Road will become the new A323 up to the roundabout that connects to the new link road over the new road bridge. It will be widened along this length with the appropriate allowances made for all vehicle types.



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3. Will Foreman Road be widened as we can see it becoming an extremely busy road?

3. As per answer 2

4. Where actually will be the new roundabout where the new Road Bridge will meet Foreman Road? - will it be at the junction with Grange Road

4. The new roundabout is proposed to be located between Grange Road and the current access to the Thakeham development adjacent to Foreman Park.



Footbridge	
Questions	Answers
<p>1. Regarding the footbridge, please will you confirm that it will include provision for wheelchairs, prams, etc.</p>	<p>1. It is our view that the footbridge must make allowance for all users including the disabled, prams and cyclists.</p>
<p>2. <u>Access by pedestrians</u> - Can you confirm that it is solely Network Rail's responsibility to install a footbridge over the railway line if the bridge scheme is to go ahead? Does GBC have any powers to make sure that access across the railway will be available to foot and cycle traffic to and from the Chester Road area?</p>	<p>2. The proposed new road bridge is intended to provide a legitimate and convenient alternative route avoiding the congestion issues caused by the existing level crossing. We are currently reviewing whether provision for the closure of the level crossing should be incorporated into the planning application for the road bridge. Our productive discussions with Network Rail to-date indicate that they very much want to close the level crossing, but they are not in a position to do so until suitable mitigation (in the form of our new bridge) is in place. As part of the level crossing closure, a suitable alternative facility for pedestrians and cyclists would be required and GBC will work with all partners including NR and SCC to facilitate this. SCC have confirmed that they wish the public right of way across the railway for all users to be maintained. The stopping-up of the level crossing will include for this. A feasibility study into the form of the footbridge is required once NR's station and platform access requirements are understood and they are currently reviewing these. A feasibility study will consider all options for access by all users to be compliant with legislation, given the constraints of the site and space available.</p>



3. Trains - At the meeting it was said that the rail companies considered the station to be unsafe, but also that they were planning on increasing the number of trains. In the local plan supporting documents, the rail company states that they hope to increase the number of trains stopping at ASH by only one train per hour. What, if any, discussions have GBC had with the service provider regarding any increase in stopping trains per hour through ASH?

3. At the meeting, we reported Network Rail's view on the impact of the Local Plan spatial strategy on the potential safety of the level crossing. We understand that only one additional train per hour will stop at Ash but the potential increase in downtime of the level crossing is from proposed increases of through trains using this rail line. With regard to future additional trains, this is a matter for the Train Operating Companies (TOCs) and GBC has no influence on rail timetabling.

4. It has been stated that the closure of the crossing is a matter for Network Rail and does not fall into the scope of this proposal. Residents feel that both motorised and non-motorised transport across the railway should be considered together by the council. What powers do the council have to enforce provision of a foot/cycle crossing to enable residents close to the railway to cross safely? What consideration will the council take regarding non-motorised traffic?

4. Guildford Borough Council will consider requirements for all users, motorised and non-motorised. We are currently in discussion with NR and SCC to understand the requirements and constraints of the level crossing closure and provision of a footbridge as part of the overarching scheme and in terms of NR station access requirements.



Development	
Questions	Answers
1. There will need to be a footbridge across the railway track, presumably adjacent to Ash station. What facilities will be in place for disabled and wheelchair users?	1. The requirements of all users will be considered during the feasibility and design of the footbridge.
2. The proposed road will cut across the public footpath, which links Harpers road to the railway station, what provision has been made for a pedestrian crossing?	2. The footpath will need to be retained by the developer as part of their scheme as it passes through their land. We anticipate a pedestrian island to allow pedestrians to cross the new road; however, this will be considered further as part of the design development process to ensure appropriate provision.
3. In a similar vein there may be significant additional traffic generated by new development approved/proposed in both Tongham and, to a lesser extent at the moment, in Ash Green. Will the approach down Foreman Road to the access roundabout be able to cope with this as the current proposed layout stands?	3. SCC will have assessed the impact of additional trips on surrounding highway network from all proposed developments. Where improvements are deemed necessary, they are secured through planning permission and planning obligations (Section 106). As part of the proposed scheme, Foreman Road will be widened between the new roundabout and the A323 Guildford Road with informal parking opportunities removed to ensure road widths are sufficient for two vehicles to pass. Improved pedestrian connections along Foreman Road and through Foreman Park should improve pedestrian linkages.



Road Bridge	
Questions	Answers
<p>1. It will need to be lit to enable it to be safe. Light pollution, particularly for those of us who are in Dean Close will be considerable. One officer talked about screening trees but the bridge is 6 metres high and on a bank, ... I cannot see how trees will be able to screen either the street lights or the lights from road traffic.</p>	<p>1. The road will have to be lit. Assessment will be undertaken and appropriate mitigations to reduce impact on residential areas proposed during the design development, where relevant. There will also be housing between Dene Close and the embanked road and Road Bridge as a result of a development. Vegetation will take time to establish and trees are not proposed solely for this purpose but also to create habitat and green space.</p>
<p>2. The new road is planned to be built on an embankment across a flood meadow, what provisions have been made to prevent flood water from backing up to Harpers road?</p>	<p>2. All developments must have a drainage strategy and flood risk assessment, these are being developed as part of the planning application. A solution will be developed such that any issues are dealt with and not transferred elsewhere.</p>
<p>3. Where will bus stops be located for the railway station?</p>	<p>3. Bus stops and routing will be reviewed with bus operators and SCC passenger transport team during the planning application preparation to ensure appropriate provision and access to services is retained.</p>
<p>4. Traffic noise will be much greater as the road will be on an embankment, a natural barrier will take years to develop, what plans are there to kill this pollutant from the day the road is opened?</p>	<p>4. A noise assessment will be prepared as part of the planning application, and if impacts are identified then appropriate mitigation measures will be proposed. In addition and at a qualitative level, idling traffic at the level crossing is likely to generate a sustained and frequent level of noise and air pollution in the existing case immediately adjacent to properties on the A323 Guildford Road. This annoyance will be removed as part of the proposed scheme, with the road relocated away from existing</p>



	properties.
5. Would you please provide some detail around the other options you considered, and why they were rejected?	<p>5. As set out in an earlier Local Plan consultation, we initially considered a shorter route that went through the traveller site. However, this was rejected for two reasons. Firstly that it would not meet highway design standards (due to the very tight bend, geometry, vertical alignment) and secondly because the site has permanent permission for four traveller pitches that we would need to find a replacement site for within the borough, which would be a significant challenge. The other options considered were longer routes further away from the level crossing and further into the green fields where development is proposed. The length of these alternative routes would increase cost and land take and the number of developers we would have to negotiate with, complicating and extending the programme (which is time bound by the funding). These routes would also have significantly increased journey times, which would not encourage use of the new bridge. Option 2 that has been selected as our preferred route is the optimum length, keeping the route as short as possible to ensure it will be used once the level crossing is closed. It also avoids the traveller site and will be acceptable to Surrey County Council (SCC) (approval in principle from SCC having now been received). Final approval is subject to further design development and assessment of required mitigation.</p> <p>A tunnelled option was rejected early in the process due to the cost, complexity and long timescales for delivery.</p>
6. One reason given for selecting Option 2 was that it would “not meet highway design standards” and cites the “very tight bend” amongst	6. The current junctions do not prevent use by any vehicles. All junction improvements will be designed to meet standards, will be



<p>other criteria. The rerouting of the A323 (Ash Church Road) into Foreman Road will have a right-hand turn of more than 270 degrees, and a left-hand turn of less than 90 degrees. The other end of the bridge will meet the Guildford Road and Ash Hill Road with similar tight turns. How will these meet the design criteria in Manual for Streets?</p>	<p>subject to Road Safety Audit procedures and will need to achieve SCC approval.</p>
<p>7. Pavements are not shown on the published version of the design. What are the plans for these?</p>	<p>7. Pavements – it is currently proposed to install a shared footway and cycleway on the embanked road and road bridge, which will tie in with Guildford Road and a new shared footway and cycleway provision on the west side of Foreman Road. The sections of road either side will be designed and installed by developers and will need SCC approval that they meet standards.</p>
<p>8. What is the plan for the entrance/exit to and from the Kendal Car site next to the current crossing (West side)?</p>	<p>8. Access will have to be maintained and a compatible layout will be developed as part of the design development.</p>
<p>9. What plans are there for crossing the road to access the station on foot (when approaching from the West)?</p>	<p>9. Pedestrian facilities will be considered in conjunction with the realignment of the road and the proposed pedestrian footbridge to ensure a coordinated scheme is delivered. Any crossing on the A323 Guildford Road would be located on the desire line if deliverable ensuring suitable visibility for pedestrians and vehicles is provided. There should be limited requirement for diverting traffic during the construction of the embanked road and Road Bridge as the level crossing route will remain open until the bridge scheme is completed. A traffic management plan will be developed to support delivery of the proposed road bridge scheme, and similarly it is expected that developers delivering the roads and junctions either side will have to develop traffic management plans. SCC, as highway</p>



	authority, will be consulted on these.
10. What arrangements will be made for diverting traffic during the build?	10. There should not be any requirement for diverting traffic during the construction of the embanked road and Road Bridge as the level crossing route will remain open until the bridge scheme is completed. The developers delivering the roads and junctions either side will have to develop traffic management plans and implement minor traffic management during their works , SCC and GBC will be consulted on these.



Wider Traffic Impacts

Questions

1. Currently there is some attempt by drivers to avoid Ash Crossing (an understandable decision) but with a free-flowing bridge that will not be the case. So the traffic 'pinch-points' and particularly those at Wyke/Normandy traffic lights, Ash Hill roundabout (to be enlarged) and Ash Street (due to inadequate parking facilities) will result in tail-back and delay. The presenting councillor made it very clear that there is no funding to improve Wyke/Normandy lights at the moment so the current very definite traffic congestion will simply be moved along the road but could well result in stationary traffic on the new bridge during peak times.

Answers

1. The purpose of the scheme is to:
 - Remove an existing high/medium risk level crossing;
 - Alleviate congestion and delay associated with the level crossing;
 - Manage the impact of the proposed housing within Policy A29 of the submitted Local Plan; and
 - Encourage existing traffic to stay on the A323 rather than 'rat-running' along the roads mentioned

Separately to this project, Guildford BC has recently submitted a bid for funding to address the A323/A324 signalised Junction, which it is assumed is the "Wyke/Normandy lights" referred to in the question. If this funding is approved, we would expect to deliver improvements at around the same time as the new bridge being implemented.

The planning application will be supported by a Transport Assessment and will appraise an agreed study area determined from scoping discussions with SCC. Local impacts will be considered and where impacts from the proposed road bridge are determined, appropriate mitigation will be designed and proposed. All documents submitted as part of the planning application will be made public.



2. The road structure around the bridge will mean that whilst any carriageway redesign will take place within the remit of this project may well be fit for purpose, the linking roads will not. Foreman Road is a prime example. Once the immediate project carriageway has been provided the road will then narrow to its current minor road status and condition as it approaches the A31 Hog's Back. Grange Road, currently described as a 'rat run' at the Forum meeting will continue to provide a convenient short cut for motorists and with increased traffic this will become an issue both for residents there but also for those accessing Ash Church Road. The presenting councillor stated that this 'was not the intention' but those attending the Forum were unable to ascertain whether any thought had been given to preventing this.

2. It is likely that vehicles accessing White Lane already use Foreman Road, rather than continue on the A323. As with answer 1, the Transport Assessment will set out the impact of the bridge on surrounding junctions and links for the agreed study area. Depending on the results of the traffic impact assessment further highway improvement works could be requested at the planning stage if deemed necessary. This will include for example reviewing the potential impacts arising at Grange Road, the associated junctions and what mitigation may be required.

3. What plans are in place to stop traffic from Guildford getting to the new roundabout in Foreman Road and turning left and first right down Grange Road, thereby using Grange Road as a cut-through or shortcut. The same would apply to traffic coming from Aldershot. Drivers will use this route rather than go the long way round via Ash Church Road, thus avoiding Ash Grange School and its major traffic issues at school time.

3. As per answer 2, the impact will be modelled and any mitigation required incorporated into the overall scheme design, with the options and proposals discussed with Ash Parish Council as part of the planning process.



4. Traffic - As a local resident I am concerned that local traffic could become much worse as a result of the bridge. What analysis and modelling has been done to assess the impact on the local streets specifically Ash Street, Ash Hill Road, Grange Road, White Lane, South Lane, Ash Lodge Drive, The Street (Tongham) and Guildford Road. Will copies of the models and the parameters be available to the residents?

4. An initial traffic assessment has been completed for the feasibility stage based on a cordon survey of the of the Ash area, in order to determine the routing and level of vehicle movements through the level crossing and local area and how this may change with the implementation of the road bridge. This will now be developed as part of the preparation of the planning application. Alongside this, it is the intention that SCC's strategic transport model (SINTRAM), which includes the road networks of Surrey and surrounding local authorities will be updated to allow a future year 'with' and 'without' bridge scenario to be modelled to review the wider reassignment effects of the bridge (if any). Once the application is made, the relevant documents will be available to the public.

The current modelling work is a Strategic Assessment to inform Guildford Local Plan. There has not been a separate analysis undertaken on specific developments or group of developments such as the Ash and Tongham area. The SINTRAM model does include the sites within policy A29 of the Local Plan and the bridge has been incorporated into the model with the assumption it would go forward as mitigation for development in Ash and Tongham area.

5. The plan does not reference the existing problems with the traffic lights at the Guildford Road/Pirbright Road junction. Given that there are also plans for 3 additional sets of traffic lights (A331/A323 junction, A331/A31 junction and in The Street Tongham) it is possible that the traffic situation on the A323 will become worse with the additional houses included for this area in the current version of the local plan. The only entrances/exits to the Ash Green and Tongham area, which will remain free of traffic lights, will be

5. As per question 1, Guildford BC has recently submitted a bid for funding to upgrade the A323/A324 signalised Junction. In addition to this, the plans referred to for signalling the A31/A331 junction have also been submitted for a grant. Rather than exacerbating the problem, these would improve the flows through the area; the A331/A31 works are intended to keep traffic flows on the A31/A331 corridors rather than rat-run through Tongham/Ash, thus improving conditions. The A331/A323 junction is similarly intended to improve



North through Ash Hill Road or Shawfield Road, or South through White Lane. These are likely to become “rat runs”. In addition, it is possible that individual route will change as a result of the removal of the obstruction currently caused by the crossing. Has the proposal for the bridge been conducted in isolation, or has any consideration been made of the impact of both future developments and this change?

flows, particularly for those on the A323 who are cut off from entering the roundabout at peak times by a heavy flow from the southbound A331 heading towards Aldershot. It would also improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. The A331/A323 junction does not currently have funding identified though, as described below, it is likely that future development would be asked to fund any work which is required to mitigate its impact.

The initial traffic assessment work has considered a number of scenarios for a future year of 2033 for the Ash area. This includes an appraisal of the A29 Policy Area development with and without the road bridge scheme. The work will be developed further as part of the planning application work and will be supported by strategic modelling completed by SCC, which will consider the wider reassignment effects of implementing the bridge, and will include committed highway schemes, committed development and Local Plan allocations. Where delivery of the Road Bridge is shown to have a negative impact on the performance of a junction relative to the future baseline then it will be the responsibility of the proposed scheme to address and mitigate this. Where an impact is determined to arise from proposed development, then it will be the responsibility of the developer to make appropriate contributions as part of any future planning application and this will be monitored by SCC and discussed with GBC as part of the highway review process. Furthermore, if proposals for signals are put forward within the vicinity of the site they will be modelled and audited by the SCC Signals team to ensure they are fit for purpose and do not compromise the operation of the A323 corridor.



<p>6. Has any traffic modelling for the Ash Area been carried out?</p>	<p>6. Yes, as per answer 4</p>
<p>7. The effect the bridge would have on the flow of traffic from the A331 along Aldershot Road and then into Ash Street. Where before the level crossing may have been acting as a deterrent, once the bridge is in place it may serve to encourage more heavy vehicles to leave the A331, proceed along Ash Street to use the bridge to access route to Woking via Pirbright Road. Due to the need for some parking in Ash Street this road can already get quite snarled up at busy times with traffic and my concern is that with more large vehicles being tempted to use it there would be an escalation of the problem. Is there any possibility that Highways can put something in place on the A331 to draw "through traffic" heavy vehicles away from this particular route?</p>	<p>7. The modelling undertaken as part of the TA for the bridge will determine any requirement for mitigation arising from specific identified impacts on the surrounding highway network. GBC will discuss this issue further with SCC as highway authority and if appraisal and discussions determines a potential issue with Heavy Goods Vehicles re-routing then measures will be considered to deter the use of the A323 by this vehicle class. Note that the proposed work to the A31/A331 junction should improve traffic flows on this route with the aim of encouraging heavy vehicles to stay on this route rather than divert through Ash and Tongham.</p>
<p>8. The possibility that some vehicles may cut through from Ash Street/Ash Church Road down Grange Road to access the new bridge roundabout on Foreman Road, particularly at certain peak times, e.g. school drop/pick up, when the stretch of road up to the Ash Grange School is very busy. Grange Road is already used as a cut through to get to Ash Green and the A31 Hogs Back junction at the top of White Lane and more houses are due to be built at the junction of Grange Road/Foreman Road which may cause an access problem for a left turn towards the roundabout. Is Grange Road, already subject to traffic calming cushions, up to withstanding any amount of additional traffic, which may occur?</p>	<p>8. The potential for additional trips using Grange Road and associated junctions as a result of the proposed scheme will be assessed within the Transport Assessment that will support the planning application for the road bridge scheme. This will determine if mitigation is required on Grange Road.</p>