

Open Report on behalf of Richard Wills, Executive Director for Environment and Economy

Report to:	Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee
Date:	13 July 2015
Subject:	A17/A151 Peppermint Junction, Holbeach

Summary:

This report sets out the progress towards the delivery of a roundabout at the A17/A151 Peppermint Junction. The report provides some history to the project and sets out the next stages towards delivery. It also identifies the ambition to deliver a wider scheme to create a dual-carriageway link on the A17.

Details of the public consultation exercise are included within this report and feedback from the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee is sought.

Actions Required:

That the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee:

- notes the content of the report relating to the A17/A151 Peppermint Junction.
- provides feedback and comments to be taken into account during future design stages.

1. Background

1.1 Current issues

1.1.1 The junction of the A17 and A151 to the west of Holbeach (known locally as Peppermint Junction) is a 'T' junction with a ghost island right-turn lane. The junction has a history of operational problems which can be addressed through the introduction of a roundabout. These problems include:

- Road safety – being one of the top ten highest ranking collision sites in the county;
- Right turns – drivers turning right from the A151 towards Sutton Bridge find few gaps in traffic to make a safe manoeuvre;
- Diverted journeys – because of the difficulty turning right, many drivers choose to travel through the centre of Holbeach to access the A17 via the Boston Road roundabout;

- Stifling growth – the current junction configuration and its inability to cope with additional traffic demand is restricting the opportunity for growth in Holbeach.

1.1.2 Whilst delivery of a roundabout has been an ambition for the Council, the funding has not been easy to come by.

1.2 Roundabout funding

1.2.1 Opportunity to fund a roundabout has come forward through the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP). In November 2014, a bid for funding from Growth Fund 2 was submitted (Appendix A). This bid was for part funding towards the roundabout and linked this firmly with the growth that the improvements can release. In short, the delivery of the roundabout:

- Improves road safety and traffic problems;
- Provides access to up to 20 hectares of commercial land, in the form of a Food Enterprise Zone (FEZ);
- Provides access to land for up to 1,000 dwellings between the A151 and Holbeach;
- Potentially releases planning consent for a residential development to the south of Holbeach.

1.2.2 The GLLEP funding amounts to £2.415m towards a current estimate of £4m. A further £1m is anticipated to come from local developers through Section 106 agreements, with the remaining £0.6m funded by the Council.

1.2.3 The £4m estimate in the Growth Fund 2 bid covers the Peppermint Junction improvement and access to development. The wider scheme, as described in 1.4 below, will require additional funding.

1.2.4 The GLLEP funding may only become available in 2020/21. Delivery of the junction based on the current programme would require an element of forward funding from the council, with pay-back from the GLLEP in a future year. The council's Executive has indicated support for this principle. The developer funding may also require an element of forward funding, although this will be part of detailed discussions and a legal agreement between developers and the county council.

1.3 Design

1.3.1 During the options review stage a number of junction configurations were considered. Based on the balance of deliverability, traffic and access to growth, a two-roundabout option was selected as the most advantageous. The plan at Appendix B shows the draft layout.

1.3.2 At the A17/A151 interchange, a new three-arm roundabout will be constructed. A second four-arm roundabout will be constructed on the A151, providing access to the development sites on both sides.

1.3.3 The benefits of the two-roundabout option are:

- The two-roundabout option will achieve the objectives of the scheme;
- The three arm junction at the A17/A151 interchange gives a greater level of efficiency for A17 traffic;
- A151 and development traffic, where it meets the A17, will be concentrated onto a single arm;
- The second roundabout avoids the need for either the commercial or residential site to be accessed by a 'T' junction from the A151;
- The land either side of the A151 roundabout is in the ownership of the County Council, thereby ensuring deliverability;
- The layout enables the existing businesses and residences to maintain access during and after works.

1.4 Further improvements

1.4.1 During the early stages of the A17 Route Action Plan (RAP), Peppermint Junction was identified as a high priority for improvement. The RAP also identified that the delivery of a roundabout would create the opportunity to provide a short length of dual carriageway between the new roundabout and the existing Boston Road roundabout. This section of dualling will require modifications to the Boston Road roundabout to accommodate the wider entries and exits.

1.4.2 The short length of dualling, approximately 500 metres, would create an opportunity for drivers to safely overtake slow moving vehicles and would be intended to form part of a series of overtaking opportunities along the A17.

1.4.3 The dualling and modification to the Boston Road roundabout are not included within the current funding packing. However, their delivery remains an ambition. Delivery of these improvements at the same time as the main roundabout works would deliver financial efficiencies and concentrate network-disruption into a single event. Because of these benefits, the wider scheme continues to be pursued and will form part of the public consultation, identified as an ambition. If funding cannot be sourced, the Peppermint Junction scheme could be progressed independently with a design that's future-proofed to enable dualling at a later date.

1.5 Delivery partners

1.5.1 The nature of the scheme means there is a number of organisations that have an interest in the junction being delivered. Frequent and collaborative work is ongoing with delivery partners, including the GLLEP, South Holland District Council, developers and their consultants.

1.5.2 Whilst many of the scheme's benefits are associated with growth, through development, the intention is to submit the highway improvements as a stand-alone planning application. This will enable applications for housing

and the commercial sites to be submitted at the same time, or follow at a later date.

1.5.3 The planning application for the highway improvement will need to recognise the wider impacts that will be created through the commercial and housing growth. As an example, the traffic assessment and environmental assessment will need to take into account the cumulative impact of the road and development.

1.5.4 With respect to the housing land, consultants have been appointed to undertake traffic and environmental assessments. To ensure consistency, the Council is intending to use the same consultants to prepare assessments for the highway improvement.

1.6 Land

1.6.1 The works to deliver the two roundabouts will require land from third parties. Most of this is County Farms land, but small parcels are required from two other land owners. Both are involved in the delivery of the roundabouts and, as a result, we would anticipate obtaining this land through negotiation. As a fall-back position to provide certainty of delivery, Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) for this land would be pursued after planning consent is granted.

1.6.2 Further privately owned land would be required for the dual carriageway scheme. Attempts would be made to obtain this land through negotiation but, again, CPO would be used as a fall-back position.

1.7 Programme

1.7.1 An ambitious programme has been set to deliver the highway improvement in the shortest possible timescale. This would see works starting in the Autumn 2016, thus avoiding disruption during the peak summer holiday period. To achieve this programme the following milestones have been set.

- Consultation – July 2015
- Submit planning application – October 2015
- Serve legal orders – May 2016
- Issue tenders – May 2016
- Works start – Autumn 2016 for up to nine months

1.7.2 The programme assumes that all aspects of the scheme delivery, many of which are outside of the Council's direct control, run smoothly. It does not allow for prolonged periods for approving planning, settling objections or holding a public inquiry, among other programme risks.

1.7.3 There is a desire to minimise the impact of works on the A17 during the peak summer holiday period. A delay to the works start could mean that they have to be postponed for 12 months.

1.8 Consultation

- 1.8.1 The pre-planning public consultation is programmed to take place in July 2015. The consultation includes an exhibition on 21st July, publicised through the local press, and locally distributed letters. The consultation will also be publicised among local businesses and stakeholders. The consultation will display plans of the draft layout, provide text explaining the background to the scheme, and seek views and comments from the public.
- 1.8.2 The consultation material will set out the ambition to deliver the whole scheme, i.e. the roundabouts and the dualling. However, the consultation will also acknowledge that the dual carriageway may need to be delivered as a separate scheme.
- 1.8.3 The statutory consultation will form part of the planning process, and will be conducted when the full planning application has been submitted, towards the end of the year.

At the time of writing this draft report, the intention is to hold the public consultation alongside the consultation for the housing development, which is being prepared by Robert Doughty Consultancy. It is possible that the housing development consultation will be postponed. If that does happen, we will probably need to move our consultation to September, thus avoiding the school holiday period. This can be done without causing delay to the submission of the planning application.

2. Conclusion

- 2.1 The scheme is being developed to provide two roundabouts at Peppermint Junction. These roundabouts will improve safety and traffic problems at the junction and open up opportunities for growth in Holbeach.

The consultation exercise in July will enable public views of the proposals to be gained and influence the scheme, prior to submitting a planning application in the Autumn.

Feedback and comments are sought from the Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee in response to this report.

3. Consultation

a) Policy Proofing Actions Required

n/a

4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Business Case for Funding, Single Growth Fund – Holbeach Peppermint Interchange Development Area
Appendix B	Drawing HRSMG0127/01/008 – Indicative Roundabout Layout. 3 and 4 Arm Roundabouts with Dua

5. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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