

**15<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2007**

---

**SALISBURY TO ALDERBURY AND WILTON CYCLE ROUTE DEVELOPMENT**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To update Members on the status of progress towards the Wilton to Quidhampton and Alderbury to Southampton Road cycle routes, particularly in light of the recent Salisbury District Council (SDC) Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Panel Task Group review on this issue, and summarise future steps that need to be taken before schemes can be inserted into the programme for delivery.

**Background**

2. Ten years ago, Sustrans first unveiled proposals for a National Cycle Network (NCN) for the UK. Subsequently, their proposals were worked on at a local level. This resulted in route proposals being developed by Sustrans for an east-to-west National Cycle Network Route passing through Salisbury that would connect the city with Alderbury to the south-east and Wilton to the west. These two local links would form part of Sustrans' proposed NCN Route 24 (Bath to Southampton). In October 2002, Sustrans' route engineers met with officers of Wiltshire County Council (WCC) and the Joint Transportation Team (JTT) to consider the issues that had to be resolved to progress this scheme. These included issues of third party land ownership which Sustrans agreed to take the lead in resolving.
3. In March 2001, Cycling Opportunities Group Salisbury (COGS), the lead cycling organisation in Salisbury District, made a request to the JTT for a Wilton to Salisbury and an Alderbury to Salisbury cycle route to be developed. It was the intention that the Highways Agency (HA) would fund the sections along the A36 (from its non-core non-safety budget) and the remainder by the JTT. Since then COGS have been working with the JTT through the Salisbury Cycle Liaison Panel to progress provision of a joined-up cycle route from Alderbury to Salisbury and Wilton to Salisbury. COGS have demonstrated high levels of community support for both schemes by way of a petition. In 2002, Sustrans employed a negotiator to investigate obtaining the agreement of local landowners for permissive routes to be developed over third party land. Unfortunately these efforts were unsuccessful and the NCN development manager chose to focus Sustrans' time and effort elsewhere. With the tasking of a new Sustrans Project Manager to oversee and progress Route 24 development in 2005 fresh attempts are now underway.
4. Following a meeting in June 2006 between Sustrans and JTT officers a preferred route for both schemes was agreed. The Alderbury to Salisbury route would follow the A36 through Petersfinger, proceed along Petersfinger Road and follow the new road on the western edge of the Petersfinger Park and Ride site to link up with the existing Southampton Road cycleway. The Wilton to Salisbury route would run from Wilton Roundabout on the south side footway to Park Wall, down the east side of the A3094 then into the city centre via Lower Road, Broken Bridges and Town Path. Both routes have been signed by Sustrans' rangers apart from two sections on the A36. These two sections (Marshmead Close in Petersfinger to the Tesco roundabout and West Street, Wilton to Lower Road, Quidhampton) are deemed too dangerous for cyclists to ride on the main carriageway and footways are too narrow to convert to shared use. Sustrans' proposals involved provision of shared-use off-road cycleway along the A36 (plans attached at **Appendix 1**).

5. Unfortunately, the HA's non-core non-safety budget for the A36 was removed. This was as a result of the decision to de-trunk the A36. The only form of HA funding for non-core roads is safety funding. The HA has informed WCC and the JTT that neither cycle scheme qualifies for safety funding. WCC has corresponded with the HA on several occasions to seek to initiate discussions to formally get the de-trunking process underway. The HA has not responded on this matter. If the HA were to be asked to design schemes for the A36 sections of these routes, the design standards for trunk roads are much more prescriptive than those used by WCC. As a result, were WCC to ask the HA to design shared-use path schemes for the two "missing sections", the cost of delivery would be much higher than if WCC were to conclude the de-trunking process and design the schemes to its standards. To maximise value for money from LTP scheme expenditure WCC would be able to deliver the necessary infrastructure for both these schemes on the A36 sections once de-trunking has been finalised. Experience elsewhere suggests the formal de-trunking process, once commenced, can take around two years to complete.
6. The SDC Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Panel review investigated the barriers preventing delivery of these schemes in its final report produced in December 2006, copies of which are available in the **Members' Rooms**. Officers consider that the Panel report may have misunderstood some of the circumstances surrounding these proposals and as a consequence may have drawn some unreliable conclusions. It was suggested that WCC and the JTT had allowed the issue of delivery of these schemes to stagnate. The review also suggested that no political will exists within WCC to deliver these schemes. Officers do not believe that either assertion is correct.
7. This report aims to update Members on the necessary steps to be completed by Sustrans, the HA and the JTT. These tasks are all prerequisites before these schemes can be included in the works programme for future years. As will be shown, tackling the critical issues of permissions to use third party land and establishing appropriate design standards should be dealt with prior to the implementation stage. Overcoming these barriers before progressing to the delivery stage is a necessary part of good project management.

### **Actions required by the three parties involved**

#### **Sustrans**

8. For the Alderbury to Southampton Road route to be delivered, a shared use path would need to be constructed across third party open land located to the east of Hughenden Manor in Petersfinger. The Wilton to Quidhampton route also relies on a shared use path being constructed across third party land on the eastern side of the A3094, behind the hedge from Park Wall corner down to the Coronation Square residents' car park. There is little point in delivering the sections within the highway without these two links across third party land. Sustrans has considerable experience across the UK of successfully negotiating permissive routes across third party land. JTT officer time cannot be directed towards this task as officers do not have this expertise.

#### **The Highways Agency**

9. The HA needs to supply WCC with the necessary information to allow the Council to initiate the formal procedures required for the A36 to be de-trunked. The HA has yet to do this. At the April 2006 meeting of the Salisbury Cycle Liaison Panel, the HA informed officers that it was considering replacing the control equipment at Park Wall traffic lights. The JTT considered this an ideal opportunity to upgrade the junction at the same time to incorporate an east-west pedestrian phase and deliver part of the missing link. Before this could be undertaken the HA wanted WCC to agree that the crossing would have an acceptable impact on queue lengths. To quantify this, the HA, at the request of the JTT has also carried out modelling work on the A36/A3094 Park Wall junction to look at predicted queue lengths that would be caused on the A36 by installing an east-west pedestrian crossing phase at the junction. The JTT has asked the HA's consultants for this data on several occasions but this has yet to be supplied.

### Joint Transportation Team

10. JTT officers have produced plans showing the route agreed with Sustrans for the two schemes. Once a clear timetable for de-trunking has been agreed JTT officer time can be allocated to producing detailed designs for the A36 sections of the two routes. Officer time can only be allocated towards schemes once the barriers to delivery have been overcome. The main barrier to delivery at present is the need for parts of both routes to be constructed on third party land. Once landowners have agreed in principle to allow new permissive routes to be provided JTT officers can prepare detailed design plans for these sections. These can then be altered to the landowners' satisfaction, if required.

### Conclusions

11. The successful delivery of both schemes is reliant on interdependent partnership working between Sustrans, the JTT and the HA. Each partner has different areas of expertise and each will need to contribute in different ways to produce solutions to enable these schemes to progress. As each organisation has different ways of working and approaches the barriers to delivery from different perspectives, it has proved difficult for overall "ownership" of these projects to be assigned. The meeting in June 2006 allowed Sustrans and the JTT to agree to concentrate on their areas of strength and to attempt to gain the co-operation of the HA, who have proved less than helpful.
12. Neither scheme will be recommended to progress to the delivery stage until all the necessary preparatory work has been completed. In the case of the Alderbury and Wilton to Salisbury schemes, neither project has yet reached this point. Once land negotiations have been concluded and there is more clarity over the de-trunking process all the outstanding preparatory work can be completed. Following this both schemes would be deemed to be "ready" to be delivered and could be included in future years' works programmes.

### Recommendation

13. That this report be forwarded to the Chairman of the Salisbury District Council Environment and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Panel Task Group into the Wilton and Alderbury cycle links as a response to the scrutiny review.

#### **GEORGE BATTEN**

Director of Environmental Services  
Wiltshire County Council

#### **ERIC TEAGLE**

Head of Forward Planning and Transportation  
Salisbury District Council

Report Author

**GEOFF HOBBS**

Transportation Planner

---

**The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:**

None