

Great Langborough Residents' Association

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GLRA and WBC Highways Department meeting 6th August 2019

Present

Chris Easton: Principle Engineer, Highways and Transport WBC

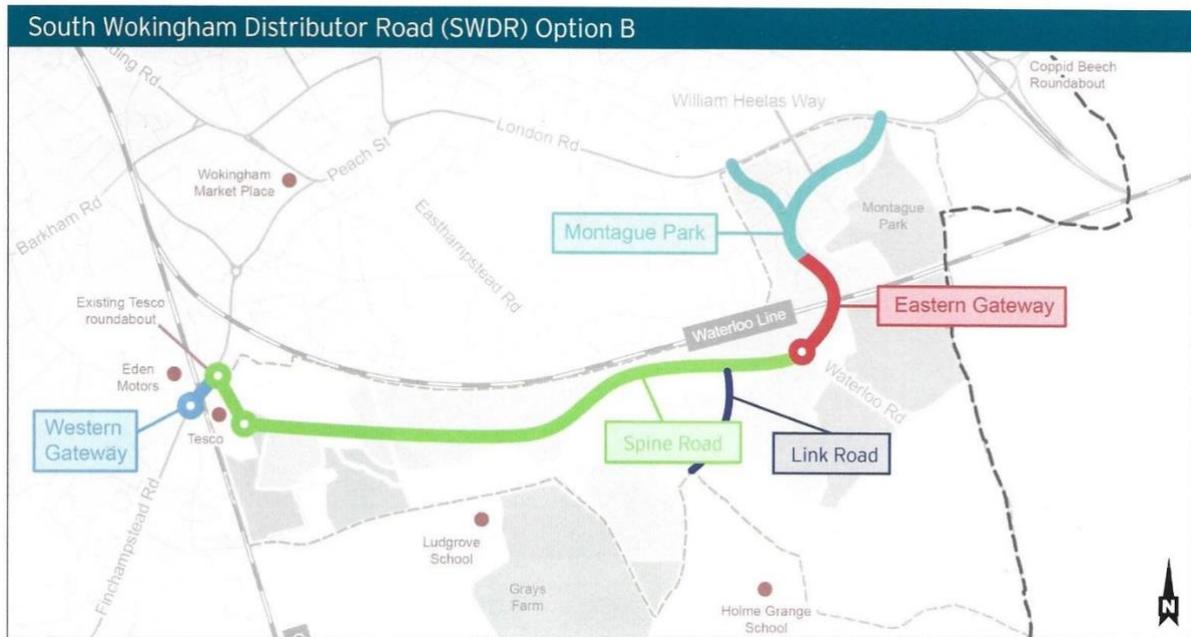
Ian Haller: Contract Manager for Highways WBC

Robin Cops: Committee Member GLRA

David Nash: Secretary GLRA

Representing Resident Issues to WBC

Meeting called to understand progress and current timings of the South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR) and in particular the Western Gateway and issues around the exit onto Finchampstead Road



South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR)

- Eastern Gateway phase due to commence in October. Site compound currently being established along with site clearance etc. Final legal agreements associated with Network rail and land owners to be completed shortly also. Scheme to be finished during 2020.
- Developers planning applications submitted and being reviewed by the Council, alongside standard public consultation. Housing scheme to include upgrade of

Peacock Lane improving alternative modes of transport from new development (including cycleway).

- Spine Road: This (and the Western Gateway) are currently programmed for completion late 2021. There is potential for some houses to be delivered around the Eastern Gateway once completed. However, the road will be built with connections through to the Tesco junction before the completion of any houses on this section of the South Wokingham Strategic Development Location (SWSDL).
 - One bridge to be built over the Emm Brook, other tributaries to be culverted
 - Easthampstead Road will be severed by the SWDR. An additional link connecting back in with Easthampstead Road will be provided. This will encourage through traffic to use the SWDR instead of the level Crossing and local links within the town.

Western Gateway

GLRA Concerns: -

The GLRA expressed concerns of residents about future congestion in the area of the three roundabouts – Wellington Road (North), Tesco (Middle), Molly Millars Lane (south)

- Congestion in this area can already be bad at rush hour. The following factors will exacerbate this in the future:
 - Traffic at South roundabout, turning into and out of Molly Millars Lane causes delay on Finchampstead Road. Molly Millars Lane has over the last several years been increasingly used for mixed developments
 - Western Gateway brings diverted traffic from London Road (Western Gateway) and ~ 2000 houses in the SWSDL to Middle roundabout
 - Constriction under the railway bridges
 - North roundabout will take traffic from Carnival Hub (550 car park, new swimming pool and multi-use centre, Westgate development of 52 apartments, railway link road, Elms Field houses and shops (particularly Aldi), Premier Inn hotel (no parking or stop-off at the hotel)

WBC comments as follows: -

- Victorian Railway Bridges:
The northern bridge (Reading – Waterloo) is the taller of the two and is not considered restrictive for traffic. Discussion around the southern bridge (Reading - Gatwick) showed that a replacement square bridge would provide more width enabling better pedestrian / cycle links, but would not significantly alter the traffic movements as HGV use is low and has reduced over recent years. The delivery of a replacement bridge in this location would require both lowering of the road, heightening of the rail track, generating significant works which could take approximately 18 months to undertake.
- The Wellington Road Roundabout has recently been upgraded, along with improvements to the widening of Denmark Street south on approach to this roundabout.
- The Tesco Roundabout is also being upgraded. The traffic levels at this junction will alter the most due to the connection of the SWDR. The change in movements will reduce the through traffic within the town and local roads.

- The existing Molly Millars Lane Roundabout will see the largest change with a significant change to this junction which will affect third party land owners. The Council is currently in talks with the identified land owners and once all parties have been met, the Council will share the plans for this junction. Details of this will also be included within the Planning Application for the SWDR which is due to be submitted within the next 2 months.

Western Gateway Traffic Modelling

- Various assumptions have been made in looking at the traffic modelling utilised with WBC using worse case scenarios in all cases: -
 - [TRICS](#) (A national database of Trip Rates, based on survey information, used by over 600 organisations within the industry). This standard has been used to assess and validate the assumptions of transport impacts from new developments.
 - A Trip Rates number for 'Privately Owned House' has been used to provide a robust level. It is not broken down to flats, rented/affordable properties, etc.
 - No mode share reductions have been allowed. Therefore the identified Trip Rates number is not reduced by anticipated percentages achieved by promotions of cycling / walking. This provides a worst case assessment and ensures that junction mitigations are based on the highest trip generation levels per development.

Modelling Results and WBC Decisions: -

- Modelling results show that an improved roundabout solution is the best scheme to mitigate and improve this part of the highway network. It does not preclude a bridge replacement in the future if that was still found to be necessary. It is currently being programmed, subject to third party land negotiations, to construct this junction either alongside the SWDR or directly following on from the construction of the SWDR.