



Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
Aylestone
Rowley Fields

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:
Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet

20 December 2000
29 January 2001

Evesham Road - Saffron Lane link

Report of the Director of Environment and Development

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report deals with a resolution of the Planning and Transportation Committee that "a decision on the Evesham Road/Saffron Lane Link be deferred for a further report."

2. Summary

- 2.1 The report indicates that there are a variety of reasons why the Council should not abandon the improvement line at present. There are a number of potential uses for the land currently reserved, as follows:
- a) for a modern tram-line or other public transport route
 - b) for a new road forming part of the City's main road network
 - c) for a new road to provide access to Bede Island South and other land with development potential

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 The views of the Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee are sought.
- 3.2 Cabinet is recommended, until the matters referred to in the report have been investigated, to take no decision to abandon the Evesham Road/Saffron Lane reservation.

4 Financial and legal Implications

Investigating the various possible uses for this corridor will require funding. Requests that the Government funds some of these investigations have been submitted, and a response is expected in mid December.

- 5. Report Author/Officer to contact:** Mike Pepper - Head of Traffic (Extn No: 6520)

Supporting Papers

1 Report

- 1.1 Planning and Transportation Committee, at its meeting on 8 March 2000, was asked to consider the future of various Highway improvement schemes and reservations.
- 1.2 In the matter of the Evesham and Saffron Lane Link, I recommended that the reservation be retained, because of its potential use as a route for a modern tram system or other Light Rapid Transit route, for the possibility that the route might provide a valuable route for public transport (even were it not needed for LRT), and for the potential it offered to improve facilities for cyclists and pedestrians.
- 1.3 The Committee, however, decided that more information was needed before it considered whether or not the reservation be retained. It was resolved that "a decision on the future of the ... scheme ... be deferred for a further report."
- 1.4 The Chair of Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee has asked me to report on the current position, which is as follows.
- 1.5 The current status of the road is:
 - a) it is a proposal of the Highway Authority to build the link as a strategic road
 - b) it appears in both the Structure Plan and the Local Plan, but discussions are taking place on whether it should appear in the replacement plans
 - c) it does not appear in the Deposit Draft Replacement Structure Plan, but does appear in the Draft Replacement Local Plan, because of the potential uses described in paragraph 1.2 above.
- 1.6 The current status of the improvement line is that it has been retained pending further research, with an indication that it might be of value as a public transport link. This decision was taken by Planning and Transportation Committee at its meeting on 8 March 2000, a copy of which is attached.
- 1.7 There are a number of potential uses for the land currently reserved:
 - d) for a modern tram-line or other public transport route
 - e) for a new road forming part of the City's main road network
 - f) for a new road to provide access to Bede Island South and other land with development potential
- 1.8 Public Transport link. Previous research for the Council into the viability of Light Rapid Transit suggested that the most successful tram route would be one linking the Fosse Park area with Syston, via the City Centre. Because of the crowded nature of

Narborough Road between Imperial Avenue and Hinckley Road, it seems likely that the best tram line would avoid this section, and one possible route is via the Evesham-Saffron link and Aylestone Road.

- 1.9 Funding to carry out the necessary research into the best route is not currently available. However, an indication has been given to Government that, in the event of a satisfactory Local Transport Plan settlement, the Council would use some of the available funding to pay for an engineering study, which should confirm whether or not the link is needed as part of the route between Fosse Park and the City Centre.
- 1.10 Main Road. Whilst the County Council may have decided not to construct a strategic road along the Evesham-Saffron link as an addition to the existing network, a new factor may suggest that the City might wish to review the decision.
- 1.11 The condition of the metalwork in the Upperton Road viaduct is giving rise to concern. The viaduct probably needs either extensive repairs or replacement. A request has been made to Government for funding to carry out a feasibility study to determine the best option for dealing with the problem. One possibility is the closure of the viaduct to some or all classes of vehicle. If this were the preferred option, this could affect the need for a road to be provided along the Evesham-Saffron link.
- 1.12 Local access road. There is land with development potential which could be accessed from the Evesham Road-Saffron Lane corridor. No funding has been identified to determine whether a road along this corridor would be the best or only way for releasing this potential.
- 1.13 I recommend that Cabinet considers these potential uses for the reservation before taking a decision on the need or otherwise to retain it. A report will be brought to Cabinet in the new year, following the announcement of the Local Transport Plan settlement in December. Amongst other issues, this will report on whether or not funding is available to carry out the studies to determine the value of the Evesham/Saffron Lane link as an LRT or other public transport route, and whether or not the Government is willing to fund the investigations into the future options for the Upperton Road viaduct.
- 1.14 In the meantime, I will investigate further the potential requirements for development access in the area, with a view to having at least an interim statement available at the same time.

2. Details of Research & Consultation.

- 2.1 No research or consultation has taken place since March because of the lack of funding. It is recommended that considerable research is needed, and that extensive consultations should take place before any firm decision is taken by the Council.

3. Implications.

3.1 Equal Opportunities Implications

These will be considered as an integral part of each piece of research.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	PARAGRAPH REFERENCES WITHIN SUPPORTING PAPERS
Equal Opportunities	YES	3.1
Policy	NO	
Sustainable and Environmental	NO	
Crime and Disorder	NO	
Human Rights Act	NO	

4 BACKGROUND PAPERS

4.1 Report to Planning and Transportation Committee on 8 March 2000

CD/TG/MJP/00000/139
07 November 2000

EXTRACT FROM HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION MINUTES OF 20 DECEMBER 2000

22. EVESHAM ROAD - SAFFRON LANE LINK

The Director of Environment and Development submitted a report that dealt with the resolution of the Planning and Transportation Committee that "a decision on the Evesham Road/Saffron Lane Link be deferred for a further report". The report indicated that there were a variety of reasons why the City Council should not abandon the improvement line at present. It was reported that there were a number of potential users for the land currently reserved, as follows:-

- a) for a modern tram-line or other public transport route
- b) for a new road forming part of the City's main road network
- c) for a new road to provide access to Bede Island South and other land with development potential

Opinion as to the retention of the Evesham Road-Saffron Lane Link Highway Improvement Scheme was divided, between retaining the Link until the matters identified in the report had been investigated and for the revocation of the Link on the grounds that a road link could not be justified and issues surrounding Light Rapid Transit (LRT) should be covered in a separate report, submitted at a later date.

Voting for and against the revocation of the Evesham Road-Saffron Lane Link was recorded as follows:-

For the revocation - Councillors Honiball, Metcalfe, Mugglestone and Thompson

Against the revocation - Councillors Bhatti, Dunphy and Thomas

RESOLVED:

that the report be referred to Cabinet with the recommendation that the Evesham Road-Saffron Lane Link Highway Improvement Line and Scheme be revoked.