



Title: **Minor congestion Relief Schemes 2012/13**

Public Agenda Item: **Yes**

Wards Affected: **All wards in Torbay**

To: **Transportation Working Party.** On: **10th May 2012**

Key Decision: **No** How soon does the decision need to be implemented **May 2012**

Change to Budget: **No** Change to Policy Framework: **No**

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1. What we are trying to achieve and the impact on our customers

1.1 To determine schemes for the forthcoming financial year to continue the current programme of Minor Congestion Relief Schemes in Torbay.

2. Recommendation(s) for decision

2.1 That the current programme of Minor congestion Relief Schemes continue with the progression of schemes 1 to 4 as detailed in this report.

3. Key points and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The Transport Working Party approved the priorities for Minor Congestion Relief Schemes in June 2011.

3.2 Whilst operational improvements were approved for some of the junctions highlighted in the previous report, four junctions were also identified as requiring studies into potential improvements, with results to be presented to future working party meetings for consideration.

- 3.3 Approval is now being sought to continue the current programme of congestion relief schemes following the completion of studies on some of the junctions.

For more detailed information on this proposal please refer to the supporting information attached.

Patrick Carney
Service Manager – Streetscene and Place

Supporting information

A1. Introduction and history

- A1.1 The current Local Transport Plan (LTP3) includes a proposal to implement 'Localised Minor Congestion Relief Schemes and Junction Improvements' as part of its 'Key Elements of Torbay Transport Strategy' to 'Enable Economic Growth and Development'.
- A1.2 The Transport Working Party considered a report titled 'Minor Congestion Relief Schemes' at their June 2011 meeting. The purpose of the report was to establish a strategy to determine priorities for schemes to be funded under the LTP3 allocation for Minor Congestion Relief, based on information gathered from the previous Local Transport Plan and a Development Strategy Report commissioned by the TDA and journey time surveys carried out on the network.
- A1.3 Whilst there is no official definition of congestion, a number of junctions were identified as currently operating at 'over capacity' levels at peak periods or have deemed to be reaching a point where 'over capacity' will be reached within the next 15 years. Some of these junctions are however already subject to either being part of current planned improvements, potential improvement by other sources in the future or have been improved in the interim period.
- A1.4 At the June 2010 meeting the working party considered other junctions highlighted and approved progression of the following:
- a) Torquay Road/Manor Road (Manor Corner) - implementation of MOVA (Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation).
 - b) Dartmouth Road/Whitstone Road, Paignton - Consider other options for junction and report back to future Working Party.
 - c) To carry out a SCOOT (Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique) validation to a number of junctions which currently operate SCOOT.
 - d) Dartmouth Road/Penwill Way/Tanners Road, Paignton – to re-model junction with additional pedestrian facilities and report any proposed improvements as a result to a future Working Party.
 - e) Abbey Gates, Torquay – Junction to be re-modelled and re-designed with proposed improvements to be reported to a future Working Party.
 - f) Shiphay Lane/Newton Road, Torquay – Junction to be re-modelled with proposed improvements to be reported to a future Working Party.
- A1.5 Following the approvals listed in A1.4, the actions in (a) and (c) were completed in the 2011/12 financial year and the outcomes are currently being monitored. The junction in (b) has been subject to an internal study and the junctions in (d) and (f) have been subject to a junction studies carried out by the Council's partner consultant 'Jacobs'. Due to its complexity the junction in (e) has yet to have a study commissioned. As a result of the studies and in order to continue the programme the following proposals are recommended:

Scheme 1

For the Junction of Dartmouth Road/Whitstone Road, Paignton, the internal study showed that the current layout as a mini roundabout was the most appropriate due to physical site constraints. It was clear however that at peak times traffic does stack back from the junction on the Whitstone/Roundham

Road approach.

Vehicles approaching the roundabout in this direction need to wait for a break in traffic in the Brixham bound direction along Dartmouth Road. In order to alleviate this it is proposed to install a detection loop to detect queuing traffic on Whitstone Road, which in turn will extend the red light time on the nearby junction with Dartmouth Road and Sands Road to provide additional breaks in Brixham bound traffic to allow the queue to clear.

Scheme 2

The junction of Dartmouth Road/Penwill Way/Tanners Road has been assessed by the Council's partner consultant using computer modelling techniques. Although this junction has been identified in previous studies as being potentially 'over capacity' at peak times, the study has shown that in its present form the junction will have sufficient capacity to cope with traffic growth for the next 15 years. It is likely therefore that queuing to this junction, which has been witnessed at peak times, especially in the summer, is mainly due to the queuing back of traffic from Windy Corner, causing traffic to have difficulty in leaving the junction in the Brixham bound direction.

As part of the study the junction was assessed for the addition of pedestrian facilities across Penwill Way and this showed that this could be added in the future without significant loss of capacity. This may therefore be considered as a future improvement under a different programme.

The Council's Traffic Control Systems Officer has proposed that the addition of MOVA to this junction is likely to give some improvement to the operation of this junction and therefore is the only likely improvement that should be considered in the short term.

Scheme 3

The junction of Shiphay Lane/Newton Road has been assessed by the Council's partner contractor using computer modelling techniques. The junction suffers from peak time queuing however it has physical constraints which may make a long term solution difficult to deliver.

The study has however highlighted that an additional phase to the signals which would allow a left turn filter to be added to the Shiphay Lane approach will deliver some improvement to the junction capacity in the short term. It is recommended therefore that this improvement could be implemented during the current financial year, subject to some further assessment work to check the suitability of the existing traffic signal apparatus.

Whilst the above improvement offers a short term congestion relief option, members should be mindful that allowing a left turn filter out of Shiphay Lane may impede the opportunities for pedestrians to cross this junction. This may therefore be contrary to previous requests to place a controlled crossing facility at this location. In view of this the junction was further modelled to assess the impact of the addition of a pedestrian phase, which showed that the junction capacity would be beyond its working limits if this was added and therefore should not be considered at the present time.

Scheme 4

The remaining junction within the current programme is the Abbey Gates junction, Torquay. The junction will require a major scheme to alleviate the problems encountered. It is proposed to move this forward by carrying out a re-design and junction modelling exercise to identify the improvements required.

The study can be carried out during the current financial year with a scheme anticipated to be presented to the Working Party in early 2013, in time for a scheme to be implemented within the 2013/14 financial year subject to the approval of funding.

A2. Risk assessment of preferred option

A2.1 Outline of significant key risks

A2.1.1 If the current programme of minor congestion relief schemes is not progressed then Torbay Council may not achieve one of the main objectives within LTP3, which may impact on future funding levels.

A2.1.2 To discontinue the programme of minor congestion relief schemes could affect the opportunities for future investment and economic growth within Torbay.

A2.2 Remaining risks

A2.2.1 If traffic growth continues at or above expected levels then the improvements listed may not be sufficient in the longer term. The junctions may therefore require revisiting to assess larger scale improvements in the future.

A2.2.2 There may be instances where improvements to current identified problem junctions could have 'knock on' effects to the capacity of other nearby junctions, which currently operate within capacity.

A3. Other Options

A3.1 Members may choose not to continue with the current programme for Minor Congestion Relief Schemes.

A3.2 Members may choose not to continue with one or more of the remaining minor congestion schemes listed in this report.

A4. Summary of resource implications

A4.1 The schemes would be implemented by officers within the Streetscene and Place business unit with computer modelling carried out by the Council's Partner Consultant 'Jacobs'.

A4.2 Funding for the schemes will be provided from the LTP3 capital allocation for Minor Congestion Relief Schemes. The budget allocated for 2012/13 is £45,000.

A5. What impact will there be on equalities, environmental sustainability and crime and disorder?

A5.1 Improvements to vehicular traffic through junctions may adversely affect the safety of pedestrians and other vulnerable users when crossing the junctions.

A6. Consultation and Customer Focus

A6.1 No consultation will be required to implement schemes 1, 2 and 3 to this report although the appropriate community partnerships and ward members will be informed. Any future proposals for scheme 4 will require consultation with stakeholders prior to progressing to implementation.

A7. Are there any implications for other Business Units?

A7.1 No

Appendices

None

Documents available in members' rooms

None

Background Papers:

The following documents/files were used to compile this report:

Report to Transport Working Party, June 2011

LTP2

Development Strategy Report by Atkins, 2010

Penwill Way and Shiphay Lane LINSIG Junction Assessments by Jacobs, 2012