

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Name of Committee**                      **Stratford on Avon Area Committee**

**Date of Committee**                      **16th May 2007**

**Report Title**                              **B4451/07 Harbury Station Bridge -  
Proposed Works**

**Summary**                                      This report summarises recent discussions with Parish Councils and local residents and proposes a way forward in the light of issues raised.

**For further information please contact**                      Stephen O'Connor  
Section Engineer - Bridge Maintenance  
Tel. 01926 412407  
steveoconnor@warwickshire.gov.uk

**Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?**                      Yes/No

**Background Papers**                      None.

**CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-**                      *Details to be specified*

Other Committees                       Stratford on Avon Area Committee – 23rd November 2005.

Local Member(s)                       Councillor B Stevens involved in local meetings – (With brief comments, if appropriate) supports proposals.

Other Elected Members                       .....

Cabinet Member                       ..... (Reports to The Cabinet, to be cleared with appropriate Cabinet Member)

Chief Executive                       .....

Legal                       I Marriott – agreed.

Finance                       .....

Other Chief Officers                       .....

District Councils                       .....

- Health Authority  .....
- Police  .....
- Other Bodies/Individuals  .....

**FINAL DECISION**                      **YES/NO**      (*If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps*)

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :**

*Details to be specified*

- Further consideration by this Committee  .....
- To Council  .....
- To Cabinet  Seek Cabinet approval for consultation – 26th June 2007.
- To an O & S Committee  .....
- To an Area Committee  .....
- Further Consultation  .....

**Stratford on Avon Area Committee - 16th May 2007**

**B4451/07 Harbury Station Bridge - Proposed Works**

**Report of the Strategic Director for  
Environment and Economy**

**Recommendation**

That Area Committee endorses:-

1. The imposition of a temporary 7.5 tonnes weight restriction to protect the bridge's weak edges and substandard parapet.
2. A consultation process to inform a decision on the appropriate permanent solution.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Harbury Station Bridge is a four span bridge which carries the B4451 over the Didcot to Chester railway line. The bridge is owned by Network Rail and was constructed in about 1895. It was assessed in June 2000 and it was found that although the main carriageway had a capacity of 40 tonnes, the footways were only suitable for 7.5 tonnes and the parapets were not to current standards.
- 1.2 Network Rail does not have a legal responsibility for verge strengths or parapets to current standards whereas the County Council has to consider the possibility of a large vehicle straying from the carriageway and overloading the footway.
- 1.3 At the Stratford on Avon Area Committee meeting on 23rd November 2005 the proposal to protect the weak edges of the bridge by the provision of high kerbs and traffic signals was approved.
- 1.4 A contract was prepared for the works and this was put out to tender, with the intention of starting work early in 2007. However, before the tender was awarded, local residents and Parish Councils expressed concern that they had not been sufficiently informed of the proposals. The scheme was therefore put on hold to allow further discussion.

- 1.5 A meeting was held with local people in Harbury on 23rd February 2007 at which various alternative schemes were outlined by officers. Comments on the issues arising from the February meeting were issued to local residents and Parish Councils on 5th April. It was agreed that a further meeting should be held on 27th April to allow consideration of further issues raised at the February meeting.

## 2. Options Considered

- 2.1 The table attached as **Appendix A** includes all the options suggested with the likely costs and the benefits and disbenefits. Of the options, the following are those considered viable to address the weak edges problem:-

**Option 1** High kerb protection and new two span footbridge. Minimum estimated cost £450,000. There are many unknowns in this option, including substantial service diversions and gaining Network Rail approval for bridge supports adjacent to railway tracks. The cost of this option could significantly exceed the estimate.

**Option 5a** Imposition of a 7.5 tonnes permanent weight restriction. This would be contrary to County Council policy and would need approval by Cabinet or Full Council. Estimated cost £5,000.

**Option 7** Original scheme with high kerbs and traffic signals. Tendered works cost £180,000.

**Option 8** Re-deck or re-build bridge. Estimated cost in excess of £1.5 million.

- 2.2 Of the above options, setting aside the benefits and disbenefits, only options 5a and 7 are felt to provide value for money.

## 3. Other Issues

- 3.1 Local residents and Parish Councils have expressed serious concerns about the volume of traffic, and in particular Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) using the B4451 in this area. Traffic counts have shown that levels of traffic and proportions of HGVs are not particularly high for a B road and it is generally expected that B roads should carry a share of HGV traffic.
- 3.2 It should be noted that Option 6 relates to safety barriers on the bridge approaches and that these would be installed in addition to any chosen option for the bridge.

## 4. Proposals

- 4.1 It is clear that there is strong opposition to the proposed scheme and that it may take some time for issues to be resolved. There is a very real concern that no positive action has been taken to reduce the risk that was brought to light by the assessment in 2000 and that the County Council would be found to be at fault should an incident occur. It is therefore proposed that a temporary 7.5 tonnes

weight restriction is imposed as soon as possible to protect the weak edges and substandard parapets.

(Note: The proposed temporary restriction is a structural weight limit and will exclude all vehicles above 7.5 tonnes. Alternative routes will be signed.)

- 4.2 During the 18 month currency of the temporary restriction it is proposed, subject to approval from Cabinet, to hold a consultation with interested parties. The consultation would seek views on the two most economical options, a permanent weight restriction and the introduction of high kerbs and traffic signals (the previously approved scheme).
- 4.3 Based on the consultation feedback and the experience gained from the temporary weight restriction, the chosen option would be implemented.
- 4.4 It should be noted that if the permanent weight restriction were to be chosen, this would have to be approved by Cabinet (or Full Council) and there would be opportunity for formal objection.
- 4.5 Requests for any other traffic controlling measures in the area will be treated as separate issues from the bridge protection and assessed on their merits.

## **5. Reaction to Proposals**

- 5.1 At the meeting in Harbury held on 27th April 2007, attended by Parish Councils and local residents, the imposition of a temporary weight restriction was generally welcomed. Parish Councils asked to be kept fully informed of the consultation process as it is developed. It was accepted that there will be some objections to the weight restriction and that these can be assessed, as part of the decision making process.

## **6. Recommended Course of Action**

- 6.1 It is recommended that the proposals outlined in Section 4 above be endorsed by this Committee.

JOHN DEEGAN  
Strategic Director for Environment and Economy  
Shire Hall  
Warwick

4th May 2007

B4451/07 Harbury Station Bridge - Options					
Option	Description	Estimated Cost (£000)	Pros	Cons	Comments
1	Trief kerbs, 2 lanes of traffic, new 2 span F/B	450	AWL risk reduced	Diversion of services required	
		(min.allowance for services)	Relatively simple realignment of carriageway	Protection is close to weak beams	
			No Traffic signals	Modifications to parapets required	
			No need to widen access road to NE of bridge	Difficulty in gaining approval from Network	
			Allows 2 lanes of traffic	Rail for central pier	
			Footbridge wider than current footway (2.5m)	Rail possessions required	
			allows for cyclists	Long term maintenance of new structure	
			Allows 40T vehicles to use bridge	Increased cost of scheme and delays	
				Network Rail approvals and fees	
				Possible land acquisition.	
2	Trief kerbs, 2 lanes of traffic, new single span F/B	510	AWL risk reduced	Diversion of services required	
		(min.allowance for services)	Relatively simple realignment of carriageway	Protection is close to weak beams	
			No Traffic signals	Modifications to parapets required	
			No need to widen access road to NE of bridge	Single span bridge more costly and larger	
			Allows 2 lanes of traffic	Rail possessions required	
			Footbridge wider than current footway (2.5m)	Long term maintenance of new structure	
			allows for cyclists	Increased cost of scheme and delays	
			Allows 40T vehicles to use bridge	Network Rail approvals and fees	
				Possible land acquisition.	
3	Trief kerbs, 2 lanes of traffic, footpath on south side	N/A	AWL risk reduced	Below standard carriageway width, unable to accommodate two lanes of traffic.	
				Traffic signals required	
4	Trief kerbs, 2 lanes of traffic, footpath on south side, sma	N/A	AWL risk reduced	Smart cameras unable to provide required system	
5a	Structural 7.5T weight limit on bridge	5	AWL risk reduced	All vehicles over 7.5T (including buses) and farm vehicles prohibited.	
		excludes admin costs to resolve objections	Low cost	Vehicles over 7.5T face a diversion of up to 9km	
			Local residents willing to monitor and report overweight vehicles	Police cannot guarantee to enforce	
			Supported by some local residents and Parish Councils	Scheme would be opposed by users of vehicles over 7.5T	
				Not in line with WCC policy on weak bridges	

				Stagecoach bus routes 570/580 use bridge	
				A number of school buses use the bridge	
				(Bishop's Itchington to Southam)	
				Possibility of vehicles over 7.5T driving through	
				Bishop's Itchington village centre to/from M40	
				Could take 12 months or more for process of	
				Traffic Regulation Order.	
5b	Environmental Weight Limit on road	5	AWL risk reduced, but not removed	Vehicles over 7.5T can still use the bridge if	
		excludes admin	Low cost	for access	
		costs to resolve	Local residents willing to monitor and report	Not in line with WCC policy	
		objections	overweight vehicles	Vehicles over 7.5T face a diversion of up to 9km	
			Supported by some local residents and Parish	Police cannot guarantee to enforce	
			Councils	Scheme would be opposed by users of	
				vehicles over 7.5T	
				Could take 12 months or more for process of	
				Traffic Regulation Order.	
6	Approach Safety Barriers (additional measure - required addition to other works)	30	Reduces risk of incursion onto railway from	Barriers may be considered unsightly in a	
			bridge approaches	rural area	
			Part funded by Network Rail		
7	Trief kerbs, single lane traffic, traffic signals	180	Protection for weak edges	Unpopular with local residents and PC's	
			Scheme prepared and tendered - could start o	Possible problems with movement of combines	
			site in short time		
			No weight restriction required		
			Lower cost than bridge strengthening		
			Improved facilities for pedestrians		
			Improved safety at adjacent junctions		
8	Replace/redeck rail bridge	1500	Weak edges problem removed	Very expensive	
		(min.allowance	Deck constructed to full current standard	Long approval process with Network Rail	
		for services)	Parapets constructed to full current standard	Long rail possessions needed for construction.	
			New footway included	Complete road closure during construction	
				Extensive service diversions	