

De-trunking of A259

A report by the Divisional Director, Transport Operations, to the Highways Advisory Board on the 11 May 2004

Introduction

1. Following extensive discussions between the County Council and the Highways Agency the A259 was finally 'de-trunked' on 1st October 2003. In its place the A2070 between Brenzett and the M20 was 'trunked'. A number of reports were submitted to Members during the discussions to keep them up to date with progress. The principle adopted was that the County Council would have no sustained objection provided that the A259 was brought up to broadly the same standard of the current A2070 before 'de-trunking' took place.

Issues for consideration

2. The following were the key issues:
 - Future maintenance costs of the A259.
 - Additional traffic on A2070, particularly south of Ashford.
 - Development control issues on A2070 south of Ashford.
 - The best arrangements for success in achieving a new Junction 10 on the M20.
 - Possible severance effects due to the A2070 corridor south of Ashford.
 - Local control of A259 gained.
 - Tourist routeing and impact on businesses.
3. The additional traffic would be minimal as most long distance traffic already uses the A2070. Further discussions are on-going with the Agency concerning a limited number of new accesses onto A2070 after it has been 'trunked' in order to fulfil the aspirations of the current Development Plan. As the traffic on the A2070 will be little changed due to the 'trunking' then, in the short term, severance will be no greater. Local control of the A259 will be gained which will broadly benefit the local communities along it, subject to funding being available for any required works. Tourist routeing will need to be an integral part of the signing strategy. Financial matters have been of paramount importance in the discussions with the Agency, and are discussed below.
4. Discussion with the Highways Agency sought to agree a programme of improvement for the A259 in order to bring it up to a standard whereby the County Council's future maintenance liabilities would be broadly similar to those for the A2070. The Highways Agency adopted a positive approach to these negotiations leading to a significant programme of works which has now largely been undertaken. A Special index linked Grant has been agreed of around £230,000 per annum for additional day to day maintenance of the A259. Some of this money will be allocated to the Highway Unit to cover both works and fees. Some £80k is needed for County operational costs for the road. Any balance will be used to fund work on the road in future years as maintenance needs become clearer. The capital maintenance programme by the Highways Agency that was agreed is identified in Appendix 1.

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Conclusions

5. A satisfactory package of additional maintenance funding and capital works has been concluded with the Highways Agency allowing the 'de-trunking' to proceed, and these works are nearly completed. The 'de-trunking' will allow more local control of this part of the A259, potentially offering benefits to the local communities along it.

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Background document - DETR Roads Review Report, 'A New Deal for Trunk Roads in England', July 1998.

Carriageway

High Knocke to St Marys Bay: re-conditioning scheme complete at a cost of around £325,000.

East and West of Dymchurch: Structural works to rectify defects completed at a cost of around £75,000.

Structures

Outstanding minor maintenance identified in the Principle Inspection Reports was agreed at £40,000.

Queensway Retaining Wall: We have requested a re-build of the existing and a further length of wall, all at an estimated cost of £355,000. The Agency is to undertake a special investigation of the existing wall, and has also arranged for a geotechnical investigation of that section which may require a further retaining wall due to the proximity of the carriageway to a ditch.

Churchill Avenue Subway Retaining Wall: We have requested a re-build of the wall at an estimated cost of £50,000. The Agency has arranged for an inspection of the suspect section of wall.

Jesson New Cut Bridge: The Agency will complete all necessary identified remedial works, including re-waterproofing, and re-surfacing the deck, at a cost of £60,000.

New Romney Subway: This structure has a poor loading capability, and we have asked for re-construction / strengthening at an estimated cost of £150,000. The Agency has agreed to re-assess the structure and seek to achieve the loading capability that we require i.e. up to the required standard for a 'principle road'.

Warren Bridge: The loading capability of this structure is only just below the 'principle road' standard and thus we have now confirmed that we are happy to accept it as for Jesson New Cut.

Reassessment of all Structures for Heavy Load Movements to the Power Station: The Agency have agreed to complete the assessments at a cost of £25,000.

Parapets: The Agency has funded a risk assessment for parapets in the whole of Area 4. They have agreed to give the A259 priority.

Street Lighting

The Agency have agreed to re-place the lamp columns between Churchill Avenue / Canterbury Road roundabout and Cheriton Road / Radnor Park Road roundabout as they are 40 years old and electrically unsafe due to there being no earth connection to the supply. The erection costs have been funded by the County Council. The other major issue is the necessary re-placement of 91 lanterns on Dymchurch Road/Military Road/Scanlons Bridge Road. All at a cost of around £120,000.

Traffic Signal Control Equipment

A number of minor works have been agreed at a total cost of around £60,000.

Signing

A programme of revised signing has been planned at a cost of around £15,000.

General: In addition to the above it has been agreed that the Highways Agency will fund speed and safety measures at £160,000, and other small works at £100,000. The speed and safety measures include the right turn lane at Hammonds Corner, the puffin crossing at Blackbull Road, and speed the mitigation measures between Dymchurch and St Marys Bay. They will also complete their programme of Safer Routes to Schools work and cycle crossings.