

# **A228 Snodland Bypass Dualling**

## **Red Lion Public House**

A report by the Capital Programme Manager to the Highways Advisory Board meeting on 18 September 2007.

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### **Introduction**

1. An outline design for the future dualling of A228 Snodland Bypass was approved in 1992. The scheme is generally contained within the highway boundary except that it would require the demolition of the Red Lion Public House that was acquired by the County Council under blight many years ago. The scheme is not programmed and the property is a deteriorating asset and not capable of beneficial use. See Fig.1. This Report proposes an amended outline design for the bypass dualling that will allow the property to be declared surplus.

### **Discussion**

#### **Dualling Proposals**

2. The A228 is a key strategic route within the County and has been incrementally improved over the years. A single carriageway bypass of Snodland was constructed in 1983. The A228 is of such significance that it was considered prudent in 1992 to approve a dualling scheme for Snodland so that a proposal existed in the event of development coming forward that would require its funding and construction to be a S106 planning obligation. In 1992, traffic flows were quoted as 23,000 vehicles per day (vpd) and a future dualling need was predicated on the basis that future flows would grow to between 31,000 and 37,000 by 2006. In the event, flows in 2006 are about 20,000 and this is no doubt in part due to the nature of the A228 generally between the M20 and M2 and the physical and operational constraints. Counts undertaken from Peters village proposals have confirmed this figure and forecasts for 2022 are 28,600 without Peters village and 31,800 with Peters village. Operational capacity assessments concluded that dualling was not necessary under these conditions and that the existing single carriageway road is sufficient to safely and efficiently accommodate the predicted future year flows. The County Council does not have proposals to secure Government funding through the Local Transport Plan to dual the bypass and the scheme would not achieve a high priority on the criteria used for regional prioritisation. The intent has always been that the scheme would only proceed in the event of full developer funding being secured.
3. Dualling the bypass would be an expensive scheme and could only be justified or imposed on a very substantial development. Over the years, the requirement or opportunity to secure such funding to dual the bypass has not arisen and on present knowledge it is unlikely this will happen in the foreseeable future. However, the A228 remains a key route and it is considered appropriate to retain proposals for the dualling of the bypass.

#### **Red Lion Public House**

4. The public house is located at the end of the High Street. Maintaining a reliable tenancy has always been difficult and maintenance liability has been an increasing concern. In early 2004 increasing concern about criminal and anti-social activity led to the tenants being evicted and the property boarded up. This has inevitably led to a visual blight on the lower end of the high street with the increasing derelict appearance of the property and deterioration in the structure and fabric of the building.

## A228 Snodland Bypass Dualling Red Lion Public House

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5. In commercial terms, the County Council is holding a significant capital asset that is deteriorating, with an annual security and maintenance liability and no rental income. At the same time, the County Council is seeking to maximise its use of its estate to support the Property Enterprise Fund so that capital receipts can be released to support more immediate and deliverable projects to the benefit of Kent residents and its business community.

### **Amended Scheme**

6. Our consultant, Jacobs, has been commissioned to see whether an amended scheme for a future dualling of the bypass that does not affect the public house can be achieved. By locally amending the alignment, constraining the overall cross section and with a retaining wall along the flank of the public house such a scheme is possible. In the event of the bypass dualling proceeding, the amended alignment would require a 50mph speed limit. While the Police often have reservations about such limits it is probable that such a limit would be considered in any event. The corridor through Snodland is semi-urban in nature, only about 2.5km between roundabouts and with intermediate junctions at Rocfort Road and Brook Street.
7. As there is no immediate likelihood of the scheme being progressed the general principles of the 1992 approved scheme have been retained and the focus of investigation has been limited to avoiding the public house. In the event of the scheme being progressed, it could be envisaged that the junction layout at Rocfort Road and Brook Street would be reconsidered to possibly provide some positive control to deal with the issue of HGV turning movements and the desire for pedestrians to cross at grade.

### **Financial Implications**

8. The financial implications for the County Council are the ability to realise a significant capital receipt and to be released from an ongoing maintenance and security liability. The construction cost component of dualling the bypass has not been estimated but a broad view has been taken about the cost difference between the existing scheme and the proposed scheme. The view is that it is probably cost neutral or that any increased cost is marginal when considered in the context of the overall cost. While costs will ultimately fall to a developer it would clearly have been inappropriate to replace an existing scheme with one that had a high cost premium just to achieve the release of a capital receipt.

### **Consultation**

9. Formal public consultation has not been carried out or considered appropriate because the alignment amendments are fairly subtle and the overall scheme remains generally within the highway boundary. No private property is affected and extensive consultation would unnecessarily raise expectations or concerns for a scheme that is not programmed and may never happen.
10. Snodland Town Council has been consulted at a meeting of their Planning & Environment Committee on 13 August. The principle of the disposal of the Red Lion was accepted on the basis that a dualling scheme could still be achieved.

## A228 Snodland Bypass Dualling Red Lion Public House

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11. A report is being taken to the Tonbridge & Malling Joint Transportation Board meeting on 10 September and their views will be reported at the Board meeting.
12. The local County Member has been consulted on the report and any views will be reported at the Board meeting.

### **Recommendation**

13. Subject to the view of this Board it is proposed to recommend to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste that:
  - i. The scheme for the dualling of A228 Snodland Bypass shown on Drawing No. 102408/3A is abandoned.
  - ii. The revised scheme for A228 Snodland Bypass shown on Drawing No. B0659000/3 is approved for development control and land charge purposes.
  - iii. The Red Lion public house is declared surplus to highway requirements.

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### **Background Documents:**

None

### **On Display:**

Drawing No. 102408/3A (existing 1992 proposal)  
Drawing No. B0659000/3 (revised proposal)