

**REPORT OF THE TRANSPORTATION, DESIGN AND PLANNING DIRECTOR TO THE MEETING
OF THE EXECUTIVE TO BE HELD ON 23 JULY 2002**

SUBJECT

A650/A657 CORRIDOR MULTI-MODAL IMPROVEMENTS STUDY

SUMMARY STATEMENT

This report seeks guidance from the Executive following consultation with residents of the Aire Valley area of the district affected by current and future transport problems along the A650, which is currently programmed to be de-trunked in 2005/06, and the A657.

The consultation process contained three elements: initial consultation with local organisations; interactive public consultation events held at 6 venues; and a public questionnaire distributed to some 60,000 properties.

The consultation has identified a strong level of public opinion for two of the strategy options presented within the questionnaire. It is considered that these two options should be developed further with extensive public participation.

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PORTFOLIO:

Environment

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY AREA:

Environment

A650/A657 CORRIDOR MULTI-MODAL IMPROVEMENTS STUDY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Matter for Consideration

- 1.1 This report seeks guidance from the Executive after consultation with Aire Valley area residents on current and future transport problems along the A650 and A657.

2. Background Information

- 2.1 Following the proposed A650 de-trunking proposals, consultant Faber Maunsell was commissioned by this Council to undertake a study within the Aire Valley area.

- 2.2 The main objectives were to:

- Determine the views of the local population as to how traffic and the road system through the area should be treated;
- Relate these views to the objectives and strategy set out in the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 2001 - 2006; and
- Identify the general form of measures/improvements to address key issues raised by the community.

- 2.3 A questionnaire delivered to 59,691 premises in the study area sought views on four broad strategic options. Those consisted of: -

- OPTION A: Do minimum – low cost strategy incorporating pedestrian, cycling, public transport and traffic management improvements.
- OPTION B: Public transport and major traffic management – balanced strategy with major investment in public transport and traffic management improvements.
- OPTION C1: New bypass – long term strategy to secure funding for a major bypass of the existing communities.
- OPTION C2: Upgrading existing road – long term strategy to secure funding for major improvement to the existing carriageway through the communities.

A total of 3169 responses were received producing an overall return rate of 5.3%.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 There is little public support for the do minimum or upgrading existing carriageway options.

- 3.2 From the public opinion expressed during this process, it is considered that investment in public transport and major traffic management improvements should be central to the development of a new transportation strategy for the corridor. In addition, significant public demand has expressed a need for the development of new highway infrastructure, although a significant number opposed such a measure.

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks guidance from the Executive following consultation with residents of the Aire Valley area of the district affected by current and future transport problems along the A650 and the A657.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following the proposed A650 de-trunking proposals, consultant Faber Maunsell was commissioned by the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council (CBMDC) in January 2002 to undertake a series of consultation exercises within the Aire Valley area of the district affected by current and future transport problems along the A650 and the A657.

Study Objectives

- 2.2 The main objectives of the study were:
- To determine the views of the local population, including key local organisations, as to how traffic and the road system through the area should be treated;
 - To relate these views to the objectives and strategy, as set out in the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 2001 - 2006, to maximise the use of walking, cycling and public transport modes; and
 - To identify the general form of measures/improvements which will address the key issues raised by the community during the public participation process.

Study Area

- 2.3 The study centred on the communities of Shipley and Saltaire, and included the A650 and the other major roads within the area, such as the A6038 and the A657. The study area includes the communities of Steeton, Silsden, Keighley, Bingley, Baildon and the hillside villages of Harden, Wilsden and Cullingworth. The study area is shown in the plan accompanying this report.
- 2.4 The A650 is also an important link for the town of Baildon, as well as other adjacent routes of north west Bradford, bringing the overall population within the study area to over 121,000.
- 2.5 The study area is served by a network of rail routes, offering direct access to Leeds, Bradford and Skipton, with a number of local stations in the area. There is also an extensive network of bus services that are essentially local in nature.

- 2.6 The A650 is presently a trunk road, although it is not included as one of the Highways Agency's "core" routes. Hence, it has been earmarked to be de-trunked, with responsibility for its maintenance reverting to CBMDC in 2005/06. However, the road is a major route for traffic to the south from Keighley and other communities in the north of the District. It also still carries north – south strategic traffic, linking Bradford with Skipton and beyond to parts of north Lancashire, the Yorkshire Dales and the Lake District. The importance of the A650 as a strategic route and integral part of the local highway network will continue.
- 2.7 The A657 is not a trunk road, but provides an important link through Shipley and Saltaire, and towards Leeds and Harrogate to the east. The two roads currently meet at Saltaire Roundabout at the western end of Saltaire village.
- 2.8 During the 1980s, the strategic role of the A650 was recognised by the then Department of Transport. A number of road improvement schemes for the A650 were included within the Department's forward programme. Some of the schemes to the north of the study area were implemented. The other schemes included the Bingley Relief Road, Saltaire Relief Road, Shipley Eastern Bypass and Canal Road Phase 2.
- 2.9 Only the Bingley Relief Road remained in the programme following the Roads Review. It is currently under construction and on completion in 2003, will provide relief from traffic congestion for the town centre of Bingley. There is now an awareness that the capacity control that Bingley placed on traffic movement on the A650 corridor will no longer be in place following the completion of Bingley Relief Road.

Initial Consultations

- 2.10 At the outset of the study, a list of 34 organisations for initial consultation was agreed with CBMDC, this list included Civic/Town Societies, bus operators, rail operators, freight transport organisations, waterways representatives, cycle groups, walking groups and disabled persons. This list covered organisations in the full study area as well as parties external to the area with an interest in transport issues in this corridor. The full list of organisations can be found in the Faber Maunsell report.
- 2.11 Of the 34 organisations consulted, 23 offered comments. The main concerns raised in the discussions with key organisations focused on four key areas, namely:
- Concerns over the negative impact of the Bingley Relief Road;
 - Traffic increases as a result of the Saltaire World Heritage Site status;
 - Delays and unreliability of public transport; and
 - Cycling provision.

These initial consultations allowed for the key facts and issues to be refined and expanded in preparation for the public consultation events. Further details of each are contained within the study's Consultation Report .

Interactive Public Consultation Events

- 2.12 A series of public consultation events were staged across the area during the end of February 2002. A total of 281 people attended the events staged in the communities of Baildon, Bingley, Heaton, Keighley, Shipley and Saltaire (2 events).
- 2.13 The events were structured into the following three areas:
- Exhibition Display: a number of displays, aimed at informing the attendees of the background to the study;
 - Key Issues Mapping Exercise: a large plan of the study area onto which attendees could place key issue cards where they felt something is important;
 - A ballot of possible measures that could be utilised to alleviate the traffic issues experienced within the study area.
- 2.14 The results of the initial ballot indicated a clear majority in favour of public transport initiatives. There were also significant levels of support for both traffic management measures and road building initiatives. The full results are as follows: -
- | | |
|------------------------|-----------|
| • Public transport | 231 votes |
| • Traffic management | 140 votes |
| • Road building | 123 votes |
| • Pedestrian and cycle | 98 votes |
| • Environmental | 89 votes |
| • Parking | 81 votes |
- 2.15 Although the numbers attending these events were small, the information obtained from them was adequate to determine the content and preparation of the questionnaire then issued to the wider public in the study area.

Public Questionnaire

- 2.16 A questionnaire was then developed to provide the opportunity to register resident's opinion on the form that the developing transport strategy within the study area will take. It was distributed to 59,691 households and businesses within the study area. A copy of the questionnaire is supplied within the supporting Consultation Report.
- 2.17 The questionnaire asked for views on four broad strategic options based on the previous forms of consultation. Those strategies consisted of: -
- OPTION A: Do minimum – low cost strategy incorporating pedestrian, cycling, public transport and traffic management improvements.
 - OPTION B: Public transport and major traffic management – balanced strategy with major investment in public transport and traffic management improvements.
 - OPTION C1: New bypass – long term strategy to secure funding for a major bypass of the existing communities.
 - OPTION C2: Upgrading existing road – long term strategy to secure funding for major improvement to the existing carriageway through the communities.
- 2.18 A total of 3169 responses were received producing an overall return rate of 5.3%.

- 2.19 The response to Question 2 within the questionnaire is likely to be the most significant as it invited the population to identify their preferred option. The results are as follows: -

Strategy	N ^o of returns
OPTION A: Do minimum	255
OPTION B: Public transport and major traffic management	1362
OPTION C1: New bypass	1222
OPTION C2: Upgrade existing road	283

- 2.20 Given the results from the initial consultations a close result was always expected and the initial question within the questionnaire asked the population to rank the options. By expressing the average ranking and percentages, a view on the public's perception of the effectiveness of each option can be gained. The results are as follows: -

Strategy	Average Ranking (Where Strongly Support =1 & Do Not Support = 5)	Average Ranking as % (Reversed Ranking so that 100% = Strongly Support & 0% = Do Not Support)
OPTION A: Do minimum	3.46	33.2%
OPTION B: Public transport and major traffic management	2.53	55.3%
OPTION C1: New bypass	2.78	49.4%
OPTION C2: Upgrade existing road	3.19	37.9%

- 2.21 The results suggest that there is little public support for the do minimum and upgrading existing carriageway options. It is recommended that these possible solutions be discounted from the development of the new transport policy for the corridor.
- 2.22 From a review of public opinion expressed during this process, it is considered that investment in public transport and major traffic management improvements should be central to the development of a new transportation strategy for the corridor. In addition, it is recognised that significant public demand has expressed a need for the development of new highway infrastructure, although a significant element of the response opposed such a measure. It would therefore be advisable to review and consider any possible network improvements that would bring additional benefit to the overall transport strategy.

3.0 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 This study seeks to advise the input to the Annual Progress Review of the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan, as a mechanism to develop funding for a series of localised improvements as part of the overall transport strategy.

4.0 OPTIONS

- 4.1 None.

5.0 FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

5.1 There are no immediate financial and resource implications to the Council.

6.0 LEGAL APPRAISAL

6.1 There are no immediate legal implications to the Council arising from the recommendations below.

7.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Equal Rights

7.1 No implications for equal rights are raised within this process.

Sustainability Implications

7.2 The preferred option is based on the development of sustainable transport modes (public transport, cycling and walking) throughout the study area, with associated traffic management improvements. It is consistent with Central Government policy, as it would plan major investment in sustainable modes of travel. Any highway construction projects identified as part of the strategy, would seek to provide new highway to enhance the existing network and allow further development of public transport improvements along any preferred routes.

Community Safety Implications

7.3 The preferred transport strategy will aim to control existing traffic movements within the community and develop a shift to sustainable transport modes. It will also seek to generate investment to enhance safety for vulnerable road users. A reduction in the number and severity of traffic related personal injury accidents (PIA's) is likely given the correct level of investment. Any highway construction projects that can be identified are likely to remove through traffic from critical points on the network, thus reducing conflicts between vehicles and vulnerable road users.

Human Rights Act

7.4 There are no immediate human rights issues arising as a result of the recommendations below.

Trade Union

7.5 No implications to the Trade Unions are raised within this process.

8.0 NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

8.1 None.

9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Executive is invited to accept the results of this independent study as a true representation of public opinion within the A650/A657 Corridor.
- 9.2 That the majority of public support for investment in public transport and major traffic management improvements (Option B) is recognised and the development of a transport strategy for the corridor be directed to schemes of this nature.
- 9.3 That the level of support for investment in new carriageway construction within the corridor is also recognised.
- 9.4 Officers are instructed to re-evaluate the historic nature of previous construction proposals in this corridor linking the new Bingley Relief Road to the road system south of Shipley and Saltaire. In this re-evaluation, consideration will be given to the identification of possible and affordable highway improvements which could be utilised to provide enhancement for private car use without a detriment to public transport and other road users. These improvements are also required to be evaluated against current conditions in the corridor and Bradford's strategic transport aims and objectives.
- 9.5 That a further report on the results of this re-evaluation be submitted to the Executive in Spring 2003.

10.0 APPENDICES

- 10.1 None.

11.0 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 11.1 The final report prepared by Faber Maunsell 'A650/A657 Corridor Multi-Modal Improvements Study – Consultation Report' details the consultation process and subsequent results.

**A650/A657 CORRIDOR
MULTI-MODAL STUDY**

STUDY AREA

Keighley

Bingle

Baildo

Saltai

Shiple

Heaton