

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Town Centres, Economic Growth and Prosperity</b>
2.	<b>Date:</b>	<b>20th February, 2012</b>
3.	<b>Title:</b>	<b>A630 Doncaster Road – Oldgate Lane junction signalisation and Whinney Hill Bus Lane</b>
4.	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Environment and Development Services</b>

### 5. Summary

To seek Cabinet Member approval to undertake the detailed design and implementation of highway improvements on A630 Doncaster Road, Dalton. Proposals include the signalisation of the Doncaster Road/Oldgate Lane junction and introduction of bus priority measures on Whinney Hill.

### 6. Recommendations

**Cabinet Member is asked to resolve that:**

- i) The scheme is approved for detail design and the appropriate consultations start in the 2011/12 financial year.**
- ii) Implementation of the scheme, as shown on drawing number 126/17/TT191-A1, (subject to the outcomes of the consultations) commences in the 2012/2013 financial year.**
- iii) The scheme be joint funded from the Better Bus Area Bid (if successful) and the South Yorkshire Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Capital Programme for 2012/13 (RMBC and SYPTE co-funded).**
- iv) If the Better Bus Area Bid is unsuccessful, that the Oldgate Lane signalisation scheme be funded from the South Yorkshire Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Capital Programme for 2012/13 (RMBC and SYPTE co-funded) and additional funding is sought for the bus lane.**

## 7. Proposals and Details

The A630 Key Route Rotherham to Thrybergh forms a significant part of the main cross county bus service the X78 from Sheffield to Doncaster via Rotherham and the Don Valley. This is one of the most popular bus services in South Yorkshire and accordingly investment on the route has been extensive to date with major infrastructure improvements on Balby Road in Doncaster and the signalisation of Mushroom Roundabout, College Road roundabout and St Ann's Roundabout in Rotherham. Further route improvements between Rotherham and Meadowhall with improvements to M1 Junction 34(N) and in Sheffield around the Wicker have further improved bus journey times and reliability. This route; A630 is also the main key arterial into Rotherham.

The Dalton area of Rotherham suffers from social deprivation and public transport forms a key part of people's mobility. The junction of Oldgate Lane and the A630 Doncaster Road suffers significant delays which adversely affects journey times and journey time reliability. The junction also forms an access into one of the major employers in the area; TATA steels at its Aldwarke plant. Queuing traffic in the morning peak on the inbound approach to Rotherham frequently stretches to the top of Whinney Hill and this is caused mainly by the merging of traffic from Oldgate Lane (a minor arm) onto the A630 Doncaster Road. Oldgate Lane also forms part of a scheduled service bus route which similar to the key route suffers poor journey time reliability.

**Scheme proposals**, as shown on Drawing No.126/17/TT191-A1 (Appendix A):

- Signalise the junction of Doncaster Road, Oldgate Lane and TATA steels access.

This would introduce a control of traffic flows, ensure queues on the A630 are kept to a minimum, address accident issues and improve journey time reliability. Signalising the junction in this manner would include the prohibiting of the left turn from Oldgate Lane to Doncaster Road and the right turn from Oldgate Lane to Doncaster Road in order to facilitate efficient traffic signal timings and allow the provision of pedestrian crossing facilities. Traffic surveys at the junction show that these manoeuvres are virtually redundant with only single figures making these turns in a 12 hour period.

- Implement a full time bus lane on Doncaster Road, Whinney Hill (If the Better Bus Fund Bid is successful)

To maximise the benefits to buses it is proposed to provide a full time bus lane on Whinney Hill to bring buses to the front of the queue when traffic on Doncaster Road is held back to allow Oldgate Lane to discharge. Included the bus lane design there are traffic signals to allow the bus to reach the front of any queue that may have formed. These signals also form a traffic light controlled pedestrian crossing which should make access to and from the bus stops more commodious for potential bus passengers.

## **Summary of benefits of the scheme:**

- Provides improved accessibility between Doncaster, East Rotherham to the employment centres of Rotherham and Lower Don Valley by either interchange with the proposed Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) North at Rotherham Interchange or direct on the X78 bus service. The scheme is in the immediate vicinity of the access to the TATA steelworks a major employer in Rotherham and with improved bus stop infrastructure and pedestrian crossing facilities will provide good links to the rest of Rotherham.
- Transport modelling of the proposed junction arrangements has indicated, in terms of Values of Time and Operating Costs, that the scheme has an annual scheme benefit of just over £400,000 per annum. This would give a scheme payback of less than 3 years.
- A reduction in carbon emissions through improved journey reliability, junction control and bus priority measures.
- Potential for affordable housing adjacent to the proposed bus lane. There is an intention to ensure there are clear pedestrian routes through from existing residential areas.

The scheme would be delivered in partnership between South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and First Group. The primary bus operator, First Group, fully supports the proposal particularly the potential journey time reliability it provides.

## **8. Finance**

The cost for the whole scheme has been estimated at £1.235m (including both fees and works cost), which is split as £625,000 for the Oldgate Lane signalisation and £610,000 for the bus lane. A bid for a £600,000 grant had been made to the Department for Transport for their Better Bus Fund. The £50m Better Bus Area Fund provides grants of up to £5m to local authorities working in partnership with local bus operators. The aim of the fund is to increase bus patronage in busy urban areas, create growth and to cut carbon emissions. The result of the bid will be known in late March 2012.

The scheme would be funded from the South Yorkshire Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport (SY LTP IT) programme (co-funded through RMBC and South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive's programme allocations) and Maintenance grants together with the Better Bus Fund (if successful). If the Better Bus Fund bid is unsuccessful it is proposed that the Oldgate Lane signalisation scheme is still progressed and implemented using SY LTP IT Programmes for 2012/13 and 2013/14 because of the benefits it brings. Additional funding from future year SY LTP IT programmes or other sources to implement the bus lane would need to be identified. This could naturally extend the time taken to deliver the complete scheme.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

- If the scheme is not implemented queues and delays to buses, and traffic in general, will continue to be unpredictable
- Traffic Regulation Orders would be required to prohibit the turns. Failure to secure these could prevent an efficient junction operation as traffic signal timings and junction layouts would have to accommodate the potential for these turns.
- If the Better Bus Fund Bid is not successful, delivery of the elements of the scheme would be split with the bus lane proposals not being implemented until other funding is identified.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The proposals as outlined would provide accessibility improvements, improve congestion, more reliable journey times, improve air quality and potentially encourage growth. These are all elements in line with the objectives set out in the South Yorkshire Local Transport Plan

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

June 2009 – A630 Rotherham-Thrybergh Smart Route Consultation update

June 2010 – A630 Rotherham-Thrybergh Smart Route Proposed Improvements

**Contact Name:** Richard Baker, *Senior Technician ext 22939*

[richard-eds.baker@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:richard-eds.baker@rotherham.gov.uk)