

SWALE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD 13 DECEMBER 2010

Subject:	Sittingbourne Signing Review
Director/Head of Service:	Director of Kent Highway Services
Decision Issues:	These matters are within the authority of the Kent County Council
Decision:	Non-key
SBC Ward/KCC Division:	All
Summary:	<i>Report detailing progress relating to signing in Sittingbourne and the construction of the SNRR (Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road).</i>
To Note	This report is for Members' information
Classification:	THIS REPORT IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Introduction

Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road (SNRR) is being built in stages with the latest phase (Milton Creek Crossing) due for completion in autumn 2011. This route will form the main link to the industrial estates within Sittingbourne and would take the majority of HGV movement away from the central urban area. As such existing signage will need to be altered to direct vehicles to use the most appropriate routes.

Existing Signage

Kent Highway Services has received several enquiries relating to existing signage over the past year regarding its condition and consistency of information. Particular problems have been raised with HGV direction signing and destination signing which can result in inappropriate HGV movements on certain roads.

The new SNRR is designated as the main route for HGV's accessing Sittingbourne's industrial estates from the M20 and M2 corridor via the A249. The SNRR route will be classified as the B2005 which will require existing signage to be altered.

KHS has reviewed all direction signage in Sittingbourne to ensure best use is made of the SNRR. In addition the opportunity is being taken to remove unnecessary and redundant signage, as well as consolidate existing signage (where information has changed over the years). This should reduce the environmental intrusion traffic signs have on the environment and ensure information is correct and up to standard.

Lorry Route Signage

Discussions have been held through the Borough Council's Economic Development function, liaising with groups of businesses in the industrial zones. An agreement over naming industrial areas has been suggested with the main areas designated as Eurolink and Kemsley Fields Business Park. These two areas are shown on the

proposals plans, along with the suggested HGV signage routes. Consolidation of the industrial areas into two main strategic allocations will allow minor estates to be consistently signed and remove confusion and duplication on the highway network. The Trinity Trading Estate (accessed via Mill Way) does not fall easily into either Eurolink or Kemsley Fields and signing to this destination needs to be managed separately.

The existing lorry routing for Eurolink is via Staplehurst Road West and across the north of the Town Centre. The basic proposal is to keep the HGV signing as simple as possible – with all Sittingbourne Industry directed to Grovehurst, then split the destinations into Trinity (via Grovehurst Road), Eurolink and Kemsley Fields (via Swale Way).

With the change to the SNRR via Grovehurst, the existing signage on the A249 Trunk Road also needs to be altered. The required liaison and agreement with the Highway Agency and their DBFO company is under way with a view to achieving all the alterations to coincide with the opening of the SNRR Creek Crossing.

Consultation

The proposal requires minimal consultation to be implemented, however, as the proposed zoning of the industrial areas might have implications for business operations (letterheads, delivery instructions, etc.) a small representative group of employers has been invited to discuss the issues with Members (via a group chaired by Councillor Wright). By carrying out this liaison now, sufficient notice can be given to the companies affected so they can manage their own specific operational issues in due time to take best advantage of the new SNRR.

Conclusion

This report has suggested a proposal for rationalising the signing to industrial zones across the north of Sittingbourne, to ensure the new SNRR is used by HGVs as far as possible and relieve the pressure on the Town Centre network. Members are invited to note the report and comment on the proposal: suggestions for improvement can be fed into the business liaison group for discussion, prior to implementation.

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