

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 14 DECEMBER 2004

JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT- MUNRO AVENUE

Report By Executive Director of Development & Property Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek the approval of the Committee to purchase land to improve the signalised junction at Munro Avenue / Irvine Road, Kilmarnock either by voluntary negotiation or if required by the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers .

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In August 2002 East Ayrshire Council received an allocation of £427,728 for public transport improvements through Crosshouse and on the western approach to Kilmarnock which formed part of the B7081, Western Corridor Improvements. This allocation formed part of a successful bid for Public Transport Improvements which was submitted to the Scottish Executive's public transport fund by North Ayrshire Council. The programme of improvements has to be completed by the end of the 2005/06 financial year.
- 2.2 Peak period traffic congestion is regularly experienced at this junction which results in delays for buses and other road users. The transportation consultants who prepared the bid for the public transport fund identified the need to upgrade the junction to improve the regularity of bus services in the western corridor and to ease the flow of other traffic. Two improvements, Scheme A and Scheme B have been identified; Appendix 1. Both require the road to be widened into adjacent land.

3. COMPARISON OF OPTIONS

3.1 Scheme A – Right Turning Lane on Irvine Rd (East)

This improvement provides a turning lane, formed with road markings in the centre of the junction, for traffic waiting to turn right from Irvine Road (East) to Munro Avenue. The right turn lane provides capacity for 2 cars to sit in the centre of the junction, allowing straight ahead traffic to progress through the junction.

Advantages

- This scheme requires relatively little land take, approximately 10m² in total from land already under Council ownership although a licence to occupy has been granted in respect of the area of ground required to the owner of 84 Irvine Road. This improvement will enable right turners and ahead traffic to flow simultaneously, providing that the queue waiting to turn right does not exceed 2 vehicles.
- Requires only minor junction amendments.
- Junction will operate more efficiently than the current layout.

Disadvantages

- If more than 2 cars are turning right then the ahead traffic will be blocked and the advantage of the right turn lane will be lost.
- The junction does not reduce delays as effectively as Scheme B.

3.2 Scheme B– Two Lanes on Irvine Road (West)

This improvement involves the introduction of an additional lane over 75m of the Irvine Road, on the western approach to the junction. The introduction of the additional lane for left turning vehicles to Munro Avenue would enable Irvine Road (East) to operate unopposed. The two lanes on Irvine Road (West) would have to be 3.3m wide.

Advantages

- Significant reduction in delays.
- Reduces overall queuing.
- Allows unopposed right turn lane from Irvine Road to Munro Avenue.

Disadvantages

- More land take required than Scheme A i.e. approximately 110m² in total from 4 separate properties.
- Major services diversion may be required.
- To allow clear passage of the left turn filter, 3.3m wide lanes with a minimum length of 75m would be required.

3.3 Summary

Scheme B provides the best reduction in delay and overall junction performance, but would require the acquisition of land, diversion of services and would be more costly.

Scheme A provides an improvement over the existing situation but if two cars were waiting to turn right then any benefits are lost. The land required to build Scheme A is already in ownership of the council. It is proposed that Scheme A should go ahead straightaway. Nonetheless, the benefits of Scheme A are limited, it is proposed therefore, that the land required to form Scheme B should also be acquired to allow Scheme B to be implemented at a later stage, thereby providing significant enhancements in the regularity of bus services and reductions in delay for all traffic.

The two stage approach to the improvement of the junction, which is proposed, will allow early benefits to be realised from the introduction of Scheme A. There will be no abortive work arising from the later implementation of Scheme B.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** The Licence to Occupy granted to the owner of 84 Irvine Road can be terminated by the giving of a one month period of notice.

4.2 The Council in the event of failure to acquire the land required for scheme B by negotiation has power to acquire the ground by the promotion of a compulsory purchase order in terms of sections 103 to 112 of the Roads(Scotland) Act 1984.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no cost implications arising directly from the service of a notice terminating the existing licence to occupy the area of ground at 84 Irvine Road Kilmarnock required to enable scheme A to proceed. The Council will require to meet the acquisition costs in respect of the areas of ground required to implement scheme B.. The cost of the scheme to be implemented in the next financial year will be met from the Public Transport Fund settlement received from the Scottish Executive.

6. RECOMMENDATION

6.1 It is recommended that the Committee agrees to:-

- i) implement Scheme A with immediate effect; and
- ii) Authorise the Solicitor to the Council to serve the required notice to terminate the licence to occupy at 84 Irvine Road Kilmarnock required to enable Scheme A to be implemented; and
- iii) Authorise the acquisition of the land required to build scheme B; and remit to the Executive Director of Development and Property services to negotiate the terms and conditions of acquisition on a voluntary basis failing which authorise the Solicitor to the Council to promote a Compulsory Purchase Order to acquire the land if required; and
- iii) Implement Scheme B subject to the acquisition of the requisite land, diversion of underground services and the available funding.

James Lavery
Executive Director of Development and Property Services
7 December 2004
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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

For further information please contact Keith Orton on 01563 555337
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