

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 9 JANUARY 2007

RURAL ROUTE IMPROVEMENTS A70 OCHILTREE BYPASS B778 FENWICK TO STEWARTON

Report by Acting Executive Director of Development & Property Services

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to :-

- (i) Advise the Committee that tenders have been invited from consultants to :-
 - (a) carry out a study, and prepare a report, into the transport issues associated with the passage of traffic on the A70 route through Ochiltree and consider alternative alignment options for an A70 Ochiltree Bypass;
 - (b) carry out a study of the B778 and produce a design package road improvement measures to improve the level of service for all road users on the route between Stewarton and Fenwick.
- (ii) Seek the approval of the Committee for the provision of road safety improvements on the B778 between Stewarton and Fenwick

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 A70 Ochiltree

Ochiltree is a designated Conservation Area containing 60 listed buildings. Heavy traffic volumes on the A70 result in community severance and noise and vibration from the passage of heavy goods vehicles. This is exacerbated by the high proportion of coal movements to and from the Killoch coal distribution terminal to the west of the village.

There have been long-standing calls for the construction of a bypass for Ochiltree. The current East Ayrshire Local Transport Strategy identifies the need to consider a bypass as a means of relieving accidents, congestion and poor environment and improving the reliability of journey times. The Consultative Draft Local Plan proposes that the Council will pursue all possible means to ensure that a by-pass for Ochiltree is provided as a matter of priority and that the assistance of the Scottish Executive, private landowners, other interested bodies and organisations and significant users of the A70 route through Ochiltree will be actively sought in this regard.

2.2 In November, 2006 Strathclyde Partnership for Transport provided a budget of £50,000 in 2006-07 for a feasibility study of Ochiltree By-pass. This sets a very tight timescale for the surveys and investigative work required. SPT have been asked to carry over the budget into 2007-08 to provide a realistic timescale to carry out the study.

2.3 B778 Stewarton to Fenwick Route

The B778 between Stewarton and Fenwick (approximately 4.5km) has seen an increase in traffic volumes since the opening of the new M77 Fenwick to Malletsheugh. New housing developments within Stewarton have also added traffic to the B778 and there is further potential residential development in the area which will lead to increased pressure on the route. The route features several sections of substandard road alignment, visibility and road widths.

2.4 An allocation of £40,000 has been provided in the Roads Division capital programme for 2006–07 for the design and implementation of Rural Route Improvement Schemes

3. PROPOSALS

3.1 A70 Ochiltree

The successful consultant will be required to

- Consult stakeholders and collect relevant information to establishing an understanding of existing traffic conditions;
- Develop and appraise a range of transportation options to achieve the objectives established during the course of the study.
- Undertake a preliminary design and associated surveys and assessments for an Ochiltree bypass.

The study outputs will be used by the Council as a basis for future funding bids. The appraisal of the bypass options will include traffic, economic and environmental assessments.

3.2 B778 Stewarton to Fenwick Route

The successful consultant will be required to

- (i) identify road schemes to improve the level of service for all road users on the B778 between Stewarton and Fenwick to reduce accidents, enhance the reliability of journey times, and to improve accessibility and connectivity as a means of stimulating economic activity.
- (ii) Design a package of lower cost accident remedial measures which can be implemented before the end of the current financial year.

It is estimated that the cost of this study will be approximately £15,000. It is proposed that the remainder of the budget (approximately £25,000) will be used to carry out road safety improvements, on the B778, such as enhanced road markings, signing and anti-skid surfacing. These works will be programmed for completion before the end of the 2006-07 financial year

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Ochiltree Bypass study will be funded from the allocation provided by SPT of £50,000
- 4.2 The study to produce a Rural Route Action plan for the B778 and the road safety measures will be funded from the Council's existing Capital budget.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None

7 COMMUNITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The rural route studies and road safety improvements will contribute to improving community safety and improving the environment and enhanced accessibility to improve opportunities.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- (i) Welcomes the additional budget allocation from SPT to carry out the Ochiltree Bypass Feasibility Study;
 - (ii) Agrees that the Acting Director of Development and Property Services shall seek the rescheduling of the budget into 2007-08, by SPT, to allow a realistic timescale for the detailed study; and
 - (iii) Agrees the proposal for a study of the B778 Stewarton to Fenwick Road and the implementation of lower cost accident remedial measures as set out in paragraph 3.2 above.

James T Kane
Acting Executive Director of Development and Property Services
18 December 2006
NB - FV

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

For further information on the contents of this report please contact Keith Orton on 01563 555714

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