

PERMANENT PARK AND RIDE

Report by Director of Environmental Services

Executive member for Environmental Strategy

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek the Executive 's direction on the way forward on proposals for a permanent Park and Ride (P&R) scheme(s) for the Royal Borough of Kingston (RBK).

Action proposed by the Executive Member for Environmental Strategy

The Executive is requested to approve the way forward for further development, detailed design, consultation, planning approval and finally implementation of permanent P&R schemes from Kempton Park, Sandown Park and the land in the vicinity of the M25 junction 9.

Reasons for proposed action

To enable further progress (particularly entering into discussions/partnerships with neighbouring authorities and other relevant organisations) of P&R Schemes for RBK as part of the transport element of a cohesive strategy (K+20) for Kingston town centre

Introduction

1. A successful park and ride scheme needs to be introduced in association with other strategic proposals, traffic management and bus priority measures along the route corridor. It also needs to be considered in conjunction with other measures such as "trip end restraint" affecting the availability and attractiveness of parking facilities in the town centre.
2. The main objective is to provide an efficient and quality service which is reliable, has a good image and provides ride comfort. It should encourage a modal shift in favour of public transport thus providing a 'quality choice', bring about a reduction in congestion on strategic routes to the town centre and improvement of the general environment.
3. One of the Authority's policy objectives is to safeguard and encourage the continuing success of the town centre. To sustain this objective the Authority has been pursuing a dual "carrot and stick" transport policy; improving public transport, walking and cycling facilities to promote sustainable means of travel, whilst restraining traffic growth by controlling parking and not increasing the road network capacity. A permanent P&R scheme for the town centre is seen as one element of implementing this cohesive and consistent approach.
4. At a more strategic level progressing any proposal will need to be considered in a wider context taking account of implications for other town centres and adjacent authorities.

G2

5. Colin Buchanan and Partners (CPB) was commissioned in 2001 by the Authority to undertake a permanent P&R study. The purpose of this study was to investigate the feasibility of introducing a permanent P&R scheme for the Kingston town centre. The study initially investigated the feasibility of nine potential sites in terms of transport infrastructure, planning and engineering issues.
6. Existing information was considered in detail and new surveys were carried out to establish travel patterns, origins of trips as well as travel behaviour of users of Kingston Town Centre. The original nine sites proposed by the authority were considered in respect to demand and potential use of such a P&R scheme.
7. The consultants developed a “demand forecasting model” for trips to the town centre. They examined the possible performance of these sites under various policy scenarios for parking in the town centre (supply control and pricing structures) and P&R system configurations (frequency, fares, routings, hours of operations etc).

Appraisal Criteria

8. The appraisal of the potential sites was carried out with respect to viability and feasibility, environmental implications, outline design, development of business case and the possibility of obtaining planning permission for P&R car parks.
9. The consultants ranked the potential sites against the following criteria:-

Transport issues criteria

- Location with respect to the Town Centre, catchment areas and key routes to it;
- ease (and likely cost) of providing competitive ride time and P&R service to town centre; and.
- potential to serve other destinations.

Planning issues criteria

- Potential size of the site;
- land ownership, potential availability for P&R use, synergy with other development opportunities;
- planning policy considerations;
- environmental sensitivity of the site; and
- impact on neighbouring town centres and authorities.

Engineering issues criteria

- ease (and likely cost) of providing convenient site access;
- ease (and likely cost) of constructing adequate car park; and
- ease (and likely cost) of future expansion of the site.

Potential Sites

10. Using the above criteria CPB in their final report of September 2002 reduced the nine sites to three potential sites and concluded that the most effective sites for P&R were

G3

found to be Tolworth, followed by Kempton Park and Sandown race courses. They suggested that these three sites should be considered further as part of Kingston town centre's transport strategy, that discussions with neighbourhood authorities and TfL should take place and that the schemes be put forward for a bid in future Borough Spending Plans

11. The estimated capital cost of each of the proposed sites was identified to be in the order of about £1.5m and the running or revenue costs of a P&R scheme from each site to be in the order of £500,00 per year.

Tolworth Site

12. The consultants viewed this site to be the easiest site to progress quickly as the planning issues were within the Borough. However, it was acknowledged that this site would attract fewer car users to Kingston town centre than either Sandown or Kempton Park sites. This site also could potentially become a Park and Ride site to central London with minimum benefit to Kingston town centre. Furthermore, the site could be better suited to employment uses and high density residential development based on good public transport accessibility. It may not be economically viable to sustain a P&R scheme from this site. The potential congestion in the area in the immediate vicinity of the site could be detrimental and the scheme could potentially influence the travel choices of those who currently use conventional bus services. It is therefore suggested not to pursue this site further.

Kempton Park

13. This site offers the most reliable prospect of a consistent fast service to the town centre during the peaks and other congested times. However, the frequency of the train service would ideally need to be raised to at least four per hour in each direction. This could be achieved by terminating the trains at Kingston Station.
14. With no particular identified line capacity problems between Kempton Park and Kingston Station the journey time would be about 15 minutes.
15. There is an existing car park for about 640 cars and an area of land on the north side of the railway line with spaces for about 325 cars. The existing car parking facilities in Kempton Park could be available for 90% of the year. The demand forecast by CBP suggests that there could be 1300 trips (18% of all trips between Kempton Park and the Town Centre) which would use a P&R scheme.
16. A bus alternative would take about 25-40 minutes and may not be as reliable as the train services. The demand forecast also suggests that the bus based service would not break even after 5 years, culminating in a deficit of £700K over this period on the best operating scenario.
17. Kempton Park also has the potential to be operational at an early stage if agreement can be reached with United Racecourses, Surrey County Council, Spelthorne Borough Council and train operator (South West Trains). A rail based service could start on the current train frequency (two trains per hour) while a business case is developed for increasing the frequency to at least 4 trains per hour in each direction. A partnership with United Racecourses could achieve an increase in rail service to

G4

the race course events, which would reduce traffic congestion in the immediate vicinity of the park and allow car parking spaces for P&R users on race days. However, there is potential for an adverse impact on the A316 particularly Sunbury Cross which would require detailed considerations in conjunction with Surrey County Council and Spelthorne Borough Council.

18. Subject to the outcome of further discussions with the relevant Authorities a bid for the capital costs of preparing the site as well as part of the revenue cost could be included in the 2005/06 Borough Spending plan for submission in July 04.

Sandown Park

19. The site is estimated to capture the largest number of car trips (1,435 car per day) to Kingston Town. A P&R service with four buses per hour in each direction would be a viable proposition. The site has the benefit of a relatively direct and clear route to Kingston Town. The optimum potential of such a service could be achieved through implementation of minor bus priority measures along the route. Consequently, it should not be necessary to carry out extensive and expensive highway works to improve bus priority.
20. The proposed car park location is on the site of the racecourse. The race course car parks are large and are being extended. A key issue is that the existing car parks are filled to capacity on race days, throughout the year (26 days/year) both on weekdays and at weekends. The car parks are also used for conferences, exhibitions, fairs and sales events. However, there is the possibility of upgrading an existing site next to the course as an overflow car park site. This would require new surfacing and improved access to the site.
21. A strategy for operating the car park, servicing both United Race Course and a P&R service could designate a 200-300 space "core" P&R car park. On "non-race/event days" the P&R car park space could be extended up to 800 spaces. However, provision of a P&R site at Sandown Park requires careful negotiation with
 - a) United Race Courses;
 - b) Local residents;
 - c) Elmbridge Borough Council; and
 - d) Surrey County Council.
22. The strategy for winning the support of the local residents and the planning authority is to cause minimal possible environmental disturbance, achieve an upgraded bus service between Esher town centre and Kingston town centre and avoid extra traffic generation on the road network in the immediate vicinity of the race course. Further detailed work and analysis of traffic conditions and potential traffic generation impact would need to be carried out in partnership with Surrey County Council and Elmbridge Borough Council.
23. Following further discussion and scheme development a bid for the capital cost of the preparing the site as well as part of revenue cost could be included in 2006/07 Borough Spending Plan submission in July 05.

M25 Junction 9 Leatherhead

24. The proposed car park location is adjacent to the interchange between M25 and the A243 (M25, J9) on the northern edge of Leatherhead. The site under consideration is adjacent to the Southern roundabout (M25 west bound off and on slip), to the west of A243 and northern of A245 Leatherhead By-pass road and is ideally placed to intercept traffic leaving the M25 and heading for Kingston town centre.
25. Although the demand forecast model suggested that the traffic heading for Kingston town centre would be only a few hundred, this location could serve as a P&R site for not only the town centre but also for Chessington World of Adventures (CWoA), Leatherhead and Epsom town centres and possibly as a transport interchange for M25 Coach service (ORBIT study)
26. There is potential for a car park of 1200 –1500 spaces which would require access arrangements. The route to Kingston would be along the A243 via CWoA. The service could also serve Surbiton Station to maximise the potential passenger usage, particularly with respect to CWoA visitors.
27. The function of this site could be of regional significance and this would need to be considered over a longer term than the other sites. Careful consideration would need to be given in relation to access to the site and minimum local impact on the area. Any such scheme would need to be developed in conjunction with Mole Valley District Council, Surrey County Council, Transport for London, the Highways Agency and the Department for Transport. Such a scheme could potentially take four to five years to implement. However, there may be an opportunity to utilise part of CWoA for an all year round P&R while a proposal for the M25 J9 site is being considered in more detail. This could be considered as part of any new application for further development of CWoA.

Other sites

Kingston Hospital

28. Although this site was not considered by the P&R study, in view of the proposed development of the hospital site and associated parking provision, there may be an opportunity to consider part of Kingston Hospital site for a P&R site on Saturdays /weekends only. If the Executive is minded to pursue this option, further discussions could take place with the hospital in this regard as part of the ongoing consideration of the overall hospital site.

Discussions with Surrey County Council Officers

29. A number of meetings have taken place between the officers of this Authority and Surrey County Council to explore their first informal reaction to proposals outlined in previous paragraphs. Although their first response to the concept of P&R has been positive, they have expressed reservations about Sandown Park and the effect on roads in Esher town centre. The main highway issue at Kempton is the capacity and possible adverse traffic impact on the Sunbury Cross junction. They recognise that a P&R scheme at Kempton may provide some benefits for Surrey residents wishing to access Kingston town centre. An increase in frequency of train service on the line

G6

could also benefit users of the other stations to Shepperton. It was also recognised that the local impact of any option at J9 of M25 would need to be carefully considered.

Proposed Action

30. At the first stage, it would be prudent to make a bid in the BSP 03/04 for the appointment of a project officer to take the approved option(s) forward if the BSP process was not successful in securing the funding for such a resources, the Authority would need to allocate funding for this purpose.
31. The next stage would be to enter into formal discussions with Surrey County Council, Spelthorne Borough Council, Elmbridge Borough Council, Mole Valley District Council, Transport for London, Department for Transport and United Race Courses. The aim would be to develop partnerships with these organisations as well as CWoA, SRA, South West Trains, Network Rail, London Buses and Kingston Town Centre Management in order to take forward detail design, consultation, planning approval, contractual negotiation and finally implementation.
32. Whilst there are many benefits in having all the sites operating at the same time, the most appropriate approach would be to develop each site on an phased basis. Different phases of development and implementation could run concurrently i.e. implementation of one site can take place whilst planning approval is sought for another site.

Funding

33. The main source of funding will be through the Borough Spending Plan (BSP) bid for further development of the sites. However, further detailed work and co-ordination of activities with respect to securing appropriate funding needs to be carried out. It is proposed that Kempton Park is set as the first priority by the virtue of its deliverability and that funding be sought for its progression in 2005/06. However, at the same time the Authority continues to progress negotiations for the other sites, particularly Sandown Park and M25 junction 9.

Conclusion

34. RBK is carrying out a number of studies under the umbrella of K+20 which is considering transport strategy and infrastructure for the next 20 years. P&R is being considered as part of a wider transport strategy aimed at reducing overall car use and providing "a real choice" in mode of travel to Kingston town centre. It may be prudent to consider reducing overall car parking provision in the town centre in tandem with new provision at the potential P&R sites. A P&R scheme will only maximise its potential when it attracts sufficient patronage from those who currently drive to the town centre. Any scheme which promotes redistribution of the travel choice of existing bus services and rail passengers is unlikely to offer sufficient benefits and it is unlikely to be economically viable.
35. Site selection therefore hinges on making the scheme as attractive as possible to current car users. To promote such a choice, P&R service must be safe, reliable, comfortable and cheap. The waiting time plus journey time and cost of parking or

G7

travel has to be significantly less than travel by car and cost and time of parking in the town centre.

36. The demand forecast suggest a potential patronage of 1,300 trips (18% of all trips) between Kempton and Kingston town centre. This site also offers the opportunity to start a scheme based on existing train services with a view to developing a business case for an increased frequency of at least four trains per hour in each direction. Although there may be concerns with respect to availability of car parking spaces on race days and particularly possible adverse traffic impacts on Sunbury Cross, it is suggested that these issues are not insurmountable and could be overcome in conjunction with other partners.
37. Whilst Sandown Park is estimated to capture the largest number of car trips, there needs to be a coherent and cohesive strategy to negotiate and win the support of the local residents, Elmbridge Borough Council, Surrey County Council and United Race Courses. There are no interim options to be developed for this site. Consequently, implementation of a P&R service from this site is likely to need to be considered in a longer span of time than Kempton Park.
38. The proposed site at M25 junction 9 would be ideally suited to intercept traffic leaving the M25. This site could serve not only the town centre, but also CWOA, Leatherhead and Epsom town centres and act as a transport interchange for M25 coach services. The function of the site would be of regional significance and this would need to be considered over a longer term than the other two sites. However, an interim measure could be to take advantage of any opportunities as part of any proposed development of CWOA to utilise part of their site for an all year round P&R, whilst the proposals for the M25 J9 is being developed in more detail.
39. Opportunities to consider Kingston Hospital site for provision of a Saturday/weekend only P&R scheme could be explored as part of further development of this site.
40. Recent discussions with the officers of Surrey County Council have identified a willingness to work with RKB officers to consider/develop these proposals further. However, they have expressed some reservations particularly with respect to adverse impact of traffic on Sunbury Cross and more importantly the effects on the road network in the immediate vicinity of Esher town centre. The need to minimise local impacts of the M25 J9 site were also identified.
41. The next stage would be to enter into discussion and partnerships with the neighbouring authorities of Surrey, Elmbridge, Spelthorne, Mole Valley Councils, United Race Courses, CWOA, Transport for London, Department of Transport, SRA, South West Trains, Network Rail, London Buses and Kingston Town Centre Management in order to take forward detailed design, consultation, planning approval and finally implementation.
42. Whilst there are many benefits in having all the sites operating at the same time, the most appropriate approach would be to develop each site on a phased basis.
43. The estimated capital cost of each of the proposed sites is £1.5m and the running or revenue cost of a P&R scheme for each site is £0.5m per year.

Summary

44. The report summarises the findings of the permanent P&R study carried out by Colin Buchanan and Partners on behalf of this Authority. It proposes a way forward to progress a P&R for RBK and seeks the Executive's approval to embark on formal partnerships to further develop design, consultation, planning approval and finally implementation of a series of permanent P&R sites within the next 5 years.

Environmental Implications

45. The proposed locations of the P&R sites will have direct environmental implications on surrounding areas. However, provision of a quality choice in travel mode and reduction in car journeys into Kingston town centre and the ensuing traffic congestion should lead to an improved environment. Any implications on trees will be identified at detail design stage.

Background papers held by Jalal Sobbohi (author of the report) 8547 5902

Report by Colin Buchanan and Partners :- Permanent Park and Ride for Kingston Town Centre September 2002