Pre-Planning Engagement

This leaflet provides an update on the work completed so far to develop the planning application for the rest of the South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR).

The display boards at the exhibition provide a summary of the proposal, some key images and drawings, and anticipated timescales for construction.

Please use the following link to access our online information pages, the feedback form and some frequently asked questions: Search ‘SWDR’ at www.wokingham.gov.uk

Your feedback will be summarised in the Statement of Community Engagement document submitted as part of the planning application.

There will also be an opportunity to make formal representations on the proposals during the statutory consultation period after the planning application has been submitted.

Artist’s impression of the proposed new bridge crossing the Emm Brook river
South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR)
Pre-Planning Stage

» The bigger picture

Wokingham Borough Council is committed to the development of 2,500 new homes in The South Wokingham Strategic Development Location (SDL). The aim of the planned SWDR is to:

• Provide access to development with in the South Wokingham SDL;
• Allow dispersal of traffic within the street network, thus relieving some pressure on the town centre;
• Act as a corridor for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport; and
• Become a key public street within Wokingham.

The route of the SWDR between Waterloo Road and Finchampstead Road was chosen following public consultation in 2014. 81% of respondents agreed with Option B (central route) shown below. This was further refined in 2018 based on site surveys taking account of environmental constraints, traffic and planning requirements.

Phase 1 of the SWDR (William Heelas Way from London Road) has already been built (by David Wilson Homes) as part of the Montague Park. The Eastern Gateway is the second phase, which extends William Heelas Way southwards, over the railway line to connect to Waterloo Road. It obtained planning permission in February 2018 with construction due to start in Autumn 2019.

On completion of Eastern Gateway and presuming the planning application for the rest of the SWDR is approved, the SWDR will link the new Waterloo Road roundabout to Finchampstead Road via a series of junctions.

The final phase, Western Gateway, will constitute highway improvements along Finchampstead Road between the existing Tesco roundabout and Molly Millars Lane.

The Western Gateway scheme detail is currently being finalised and it is expected that the scheme detail will be included in the planning application.

South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR) Option B
Progress to date

We have submitted and successfully obtained planning permission for the Eastern Gateway, with detailed design completed and pre-construction activities currently underway.

For the remainder of the SWDR, our consultants, WSP, have been completing investigations and surveys covering a wide range of matters. These include trees, ecology, landscape, archaeology, ground investigation, noise, air quality, ground water, flood modelling and transportation.

We have continued to liaise with key stakeholders and interested groups, including the South Wokingham SDL Forum, developers and land owners.

We have used information collected from the investigations, surveys and stakeholder engagement to advance the proposed route alignment, bridge design and junction layouts.

Artists impression of new junction with Tesco access
The proposed scheme

The South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR) will run west from the new Waterloo Road level crossing east of the level crossing. There will be a number of accesses and a compact roundabout midway between Easthampstead Road and the Emm Brook river. A new bridge is proposed to cross the Emm Brook river. It will be a number of accesses and a compact roundabout midway between Easthampstead Road and the Emm Brook river.

From the proposed new roundabout, a new signalised ‘T’ junction where it connects to Easthampstead Road, south of the level crossing, will be a number of accesses and a compact roundabout midway between Easthampstead Road and the Emm Brook river.

A new bridge is proposed to cross the Emm Brook river and a new roundabout providing an access to Tesco.

The SWDR will run west from the new Waterloo Road level crossing east of the level crossing. The proposal also assists in addressing pedestrian crossing opportunities for pedestrians. It also offers the ability for a smaller junction footprint, safer streets and Heathlands Road/Easthampstead Road, introduction of a link road between the SWDR and the Emm Brook river. There will be a number of accesses and a compact roundabout midway between Easthampstead Road and the Emm Brook river.

South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR)
Pre-Planning Stage

Easthampstead Road

The control and layout for the SWDR: Easthampstead Road junction was developed on the basis of road network operation, the constraint created by the level crossing and creating a sense of place.

In terms of finding that suitable, various junction arrangements were tested. While a signal controlled roundabout junction offered junction capacity benefits, the footprint was considered too large and out of place for the environment in which the junction would be set.

Roundabouts were also tested but the operation of the level crossing created three to “lock” and create worse congestion. This led to the introduction of a link road between the SWDR and east of the level crossing. This option offers the ability for a smaller roundabout footprint, safer streets and Heathlands Road/Easthampstead Road, introduction of a link road between the SWDR and the Emm Brook river.

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Planning Application

Due to the size, complexity and impact of this section of road, the planning application will include a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment, Transport Assessment and a number of supporting planning documents.

The planning application will draw upon all of our baseline surveys, and will be developed to meet national and European guidelines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noise</th>
<th>From pre-planning onwards, noise assessments have been undertaken for the project. What are the key findings?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Air Quality</td>
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<td>Ecology</td>
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<td>Transport Assessment</td>
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<td>Landscape</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flood Risk</td>
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Easthampstead Road

The control and layout for the SWDR/Easthampstead Road junction was developed on the basis of road network operation, the constraint created by the level crossing and creating a sense of place.

In terms of finding that balance, various junction arrangements were tested. While a signal controlled crossroads junction offered junction capacity benefits, the footprint was considered too large and out of place for the environment in which the junction would be set.

Roundabouts were also tested but the operation of the level crossing caused these to “lock” and create worse congestion. This led to the introduction of a link road between the SWDR and Heathlands Road/Easthampstead Road, east of the level crossing. This option offers the ability for a smaller junction footprint, safer crossing opportunities for pedestrians. It also enables the ability to better manage the traffic through the junction when the barrier is down at the level crossing.

The proposal also assists in addressing an existing junction operation problem at Heathlands Road/Easthampstead Road junction through the signalisation of the junction.
South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR)
Pre-Planning Stage

Planning Application
Due to the size, complexity and impact of this section of road, the planning application will include a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment, Transport Assessment and a number of supporting planning documents.

The planning application will draw upon all of our baseline surveys, and will be developed to meet national and European guidance.

Noise
- Tasks undertaken:
  - Baseline noise surveys
  - 3D noise modeling of the existing and future scenarios
  - Mitigation measures developed based on likely noise levels
  - Noise model used to predict the level of noise and vibration

- Output (docs to be submitted as part of PA):
  Noise and Vibration Chapter of the Environmental Statement.

Ecology
- Tasks undertaken:
  - Baseline ecological surveys undertaken including:
    - Habitat surveys and ground level tree inspection
    - Badger, dormouse and bat activity surveys
    - Great Crested Newt habitat suitability and eDNA survey, breeding bird surveys

- Output (docs to be submitted as part of PA and EIA):
  Ecological Impact Assessment.

Air Quality
- Tasks undertaken:
  - Baseline desktop survey
  - Modelling assessment of Air Quality impacts

- Output (docs to be submitted as part of PA):
  Air Quality chapter within EIA.

Contamination
- Tasks undertaken:
  - Desk-based assessment
  - Ground investigation undertaken to look at the potential for contamination with the soils and water

- Output (docs to be submitted as part of PA):
  Phase 1/Phase 2 Ground Contamination Report and Ground Conditions Chapter (EIA).

Landscape
- Tasks undertaken:
  - Baseline assessment and impact assessment identifying where landscape mitigation is required.

- Output (docs to be submitted as part of PA and EIA):
  Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and Landscape Mitigation Design.

Heritage
- Tasks undertaken:
  - Desk-based assessment
  - Targeted trial trenching

- Output (docs to be submitted as part of PA):
  Heritage Chapter in Environmental Statement.

Transport Assessment
- Tasks undertaken:
  - WCHR Reports prepared to identify current and future demands
  - Walking Cycling and Horse Riding (WCHR)
  - Transport Assessment to explore the levels of traffic predicted in the future with and without the distributor road.

- Output (docs to be submitted as part of PA):
  Transport Assessment Report.

Flood Risk
- Tasks undertaken:
  - Our consultants has modelled the effects of storm events across the catchment area and have prepared a drainage strategy to accommodate and store this run off.

- Output:
  Flood Risk Assessment.

Glossary:
- EA: Environmental Agency
- EcIA: Ecological Impact Assessment
- EIA: Environmental Impact Assessment
- ES: Environmental Statement
- LVIA: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- NMU: Non Motorised User
- PA: Planning Application
- TAR: Transport Assessment Report
**South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR)**

**Pre-Planning Stage**

### Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Gateway planning application determined</td>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
<td>2014/2015: Option B and early delivery of the Eastern Gateway agreed by our Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detailed design and planning conditions completed</td>
<td>Summer 2019</td>
<td>2015/2016: Eastern Gateway baseline surveys/investigations, stakeholder engagements, design development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Application submitted</td>
<td>Autumn 2017</td>
<td>Autum 2017:</td>
</tr>
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<td>Eastern Gateway planning application determined</td>
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<td>Autumn 2019</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Gateway construction due to be completed</td>
<td>Winter 2020</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWDR baseline surveys/investigations, stakeholder engagements, design development</td>
<td>2017/2018</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibitions showing SWDR planning application proposal</td>
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<td>Detailed design completion</td>
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**What happens next?**

Please provide any comments using the feedback form, either at the exhibitions or online. You can visit the website to read the detailed technical reports and frequently asked questions. [Search ‘SWDR’ at www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk)

The deadline for feedback is **18 July 2019**.

Your feedback will be analysed and submitted as an addendum to the Statement of Community Engagement which will be submitted as part of the planning application.

There will be a statutory consultation period. The feedback received during this period will be officially logged and taken into consideration by the local planning authority when determining the application.

**Thank you for visiting our exhibition.**
The Western Gateway (WG), is located at the western end of the South Wokingham Distributor Road (SWDR) and includes the A321 Finchampstead Road / SWDR / Oakley Drive Roundabout, and the A321 Finchampstead Road / Molly Millars Lane Roundabout, shown in green on the plan below.

Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan policies; CP10 and CP21 indicate improvement of the A321 Finchampstead Road including an aspiration to improve the rail bridges on Finchampstead Road. The improvements seek to add capacity and improve connectivity for all road users.

By far the most challenging aspect of any improvement to this location is the replacement of the southern rail bridge carrying the Guildford Line / Gatwick Express and its height restrictive brick arch bridge. As such the bridge replacement and highway improvements have been worked up separately, whilst also maintaining the ability to be delivered alongside one another should both be progressed, to prevent any abortive works.

The highway improvement scheme has been progressed to a fully working design and is identified to provide capacity improvements within the Western Gateway and A321 corridor.

The Council must continue to develop the planning application for the rest of the South Wokingham Distributor Road alongside the housing delivery aspirations of developers but also ensuring that there is maximum network resilience built in for when works are being delivered at the Western Gateway.

At the time of preparing this public exhibition, the Western Gateway scheme has not completed internal Council procedures and can therefore not be presented in detail. However, full details will be included within the planning application for the rest of the South Wokingham Distributor Road which is due to be submitted this summer.