

# HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Member for Environment and Transport
<b>Date:</b>	13 November 2018
<b>Title:</b>	Project Appraisal Update: Eclipse Busway: Completion of Phase 1-Retention of Rowner Road Bridge
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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### 1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Executive Member for Environment and Transport approves the Project Appraisal Update for the Eclipse Busway Completion of Phase 1 – Retention of Rowner Road Bridge, as outlined in the supporting report, and gives approval for the further development of this option.
- 1.2 That authority is given to develop the design, pursue funding, secure consents, and make all necessary arrangements, to include the submission of further planning applications as required, to develop this option for final Project Appraisal approval.

### 2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 A July 2018 Executive Member for Environment and Transport decision approved a 0.9km southern extension to the Eclipse Busway between Hutfield Link/Tichborne Way to Rowner Road.
- 2.2 The Scheme forms the final phase of the planned busway. Once complete, First Hampshire and Dorset will invest £3 million in a new fleet of seventeen low-emission buses as well as introducing a new Eclipse Extra service to the nearby Daedalus Enterprise Zone.
- 2.3 This report provides an update on the scheme design which has identified a potential alternative arrangement to the Rowner Road junction which retains the bridge and the existing grade-separated shared-use route for pedestrians and cycles. The shared-use route is well used and retaining the bridge would maintain this amenity for users.

- 2.4 The design for the majority of the approved busway extension would remain unchanged with only the ramped connection at the southern section of the route realigned to connect to Rowner Road immediately east of the bridge.
- 2.5 The retention of the bridge would remove the need for the extended road closure necessary for demolition.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 Planning permission was granted in July 2009 for the dedicated busway to operate between Redlands Lane in Fareham and Military Road in Gosport. Phase 1A of the Eclipse Busway, which opened in 2012, consists of a high quality two-way dedicated unguided busway between Redlands Lane in Fareham and Tichborne Way in Gosport. The A32 is highly congested at peak times resulting in service delays and poor journey time reliability. The busway uses the disused railway branch line corridor to provide a reliable alternative route for buses to avoid the A32.
- 3.2 The busway is one of a number of infrastructure improvements helping to generate investment to create much needed jobs for a growing population in Gosport, an area of economic underperformance, where employment has declined by a significant 11% between 2006 and 2016. This compares poorly to Hampshire as a whole where employment has increased by 3.6% on average over the same period.
- 3.3 First Hampshire and Dorset, working in partnership with Hampshire County Council, operates high specification, buses on a fully commercial basis that provide fast and high-frequency services on the busway.
- 3.4 The existing Eclipse Busway Phase 1A has delivered significant modal shift. Approximately 20% of passengers have transferred from the car, and traffic has reduced by up to 2% on the parallel A32. There has been a 64% growth in patronage on the two Eclipse routes compared with the services they replaced, delivering a 12% increase in public transport use generally on the peninsula. More people are using Eclipse for their daily commute, and more passengers are transferring to rail at Fareham railway station. A particular area of growth has been in the student market for journeys to Fareham College. Approximately 2.4 million journeys each year are now made on Eclipse, the busiest bus corridor wholly within Hampshire.
- 3.5 The busway has been very attractive to local cyclists as it provides a largely traffic-free, direct route.

## 4. Finance

4.1	<u>Estimates</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>% of total</u>	<u>Funds Available</u>	<u>£'000</u>
	Design, land acquisition and planning application fees	532	100	HCC	532
	Total	532	100	Total	532

4.2 Revenue Implications                      £'000                      % Variation to Committee's budget

Capital Charge                      None

## 5. Programme

- 5.1 The scheme to complete Phase 1 of the Eclipse Busway forms part of the County Council's Transport Capital Programme for 2018/19.
- 5.2 Site clearance operations and ducting for a utility diversion for the current scheme are currently being carried out under an Advance Works contract that is due to be completed on 23 November 2018. The works would remain valid for a revised proposal.
- 5.3 Should approval be given to this revised proposal, a planning application, land acquisition and detail design work will progress in parallel, along with the pursuit of additional funding. A subsequent update report to the Executive Member for Environment and Transport will follow the successful conclusion of these elements.

## 6 Scheme Details

### Overview

- 6.1 An alternative junction option will be developed for the southern section of the busway extension. This option will allow the retention of the existing, segregated shared-use footway/cycleway that passes under Rowner Road Bridge. The new busway will cross the shared-use footway/cycleway at-grade and then continue along a new ramped embankment to meet Rowner Road immediately to the east of the bridge.

- 6.2 This proposal would remove the need for a three month road closure of Rowner Road, for the demolition of the bridge, and for the construction of the new junction, which were all required for the previously approved scheme. Road closure and single lane working will still be required on Rowner Road while elements of the construction work, utility diversions, traffic signal ducting and removal of the north east wing wall, take place although the traffic implications will be significantly reduced.
- 6.3 The retention of the bridge will require the height of the busway ramp to be increased relative to the approved scheme, to allow the connection to Rowner Road. In addition, a realignment of the southern section of the route to the east would move the busway closer to the rear of Huhtamaki and Woodcote Lodge.
- 6.4 The proposal would require the dedication of additional land currently owned by Gosport Borough Council and will have a generally neutral impact on Ecology and similar to the approved scheme.
- 6.5 The Eclipse services seek to reduce car trips and this revised option would help to support sustainable modes and is in keeping with the need for improvement of the two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in Fareham.

## **7 Departures from Standards**

- 7.1 The details of the proposals are yet to be fully developed and should the proposal prove viable, any departures from standard will be reported at a later stage.

## **8. Community Engagement**

- 8.1 Initial public consultation for the whole busway from Redlands Lane in Fareham to Military Road in Gosport took place in 2008 and 2009. Feedback was mainly positive, with 88% of respondents thinking there was a need to improve public transport on the Peninsular and 70% stating the busway would help improve access and address some of the areas raised as concerns.
- 8.2 Statutory consultation was carried out and the results considered when the planning application for Rowner Road junction was determined in 2013.
- 8.3 To make residents of Gosport and stakeholders aware of the current scheme, a Public Exhibition was held in Bridgemarky in May 2018. Key concerns raised were:
  - Closure of Rowner Road during construction;
  - The scheme cost; and
  - Pedestrian and cyclist safety (given the removal of the bridge and loss of the grade separated pedestrian/cycle route).

- 8.4 Should approval be granted to progress the revised design, an exhibition of the alternative scheme that retains Rowner Road Bridge will be held late in 2018 so that residents of Gosport and other stakeholders are made aware of the revised proposals.
- 8.5 The local member, Councillor Philpott, supports the completion of the Eclipse Busway and in particular a revised junction arrangement that allows the retention of Rowner Road Bridge.

## **9. Statutory Procedures**

- 9.1 There are two planning permissions in place for the existing scheme:-
- For the whole route from Redlands Lane in Fareham south, via the disused railway corridor to Military Road in Gosport; and
  - For a new at-grade junction with Rowner Road.
- 9.2 A new planning application would be required for an alternative junction arrangement that retains Rowner Road Bridge.

## **10. Land Requirements**

- 10.1 Hampshire County Council purchased the whole extent of the redundant railway corridor between Fareham and Gosport for the busway scheme and the land is currently held for highway purposes. While the current route can be constructed without the provision of additional land, the new proposal which retains Rowner Road Bridge will require additional land.
- 10.2 The additional land required is owned by Gosport Borough Council, and early indications are that it would be willing to dedicate the land for highway purposes. The County Council has requested the dedication of this land and awaits the outcome of Gosport Borough Council's deliberations on this matter.

## **LTP3 Priorities and Policy Objectives**

### **3 Priorities**

- To support economic growth by ensuring the safety, soundness and efficiency of the transport network in Hampshire
- Provide a safe, well maintained and more resilient road network in Hampshire
- Manage traffic to maximise the efficiency of existing network capacity, improving journey time reliability and reducing emissions, to support the efficient and sustainable movement of people and goods

### **14 Policy Objectives**

- Improve road safety (through delivery of casualty reduction and speed management)
- Efficient management of parking provision (on and off street, including servicing)
- Support use of new transport technologies (i.e. Smartcards; RTI; electric vehicle charging points)
- Work with operators to grow bus travel and remove barriers to access
- Support community transport provision to maintain 'safety net' of basic access to services
- Improve access to rail stations, and improve parking and station facilities
- Provide a home to school transport service that meets changing curriculum needs
- Improve co-ordination and integration between travel modes through interchange improvements
- Apply 'Manual for Streets' design principles to support a better balance between traffic and community life
- Improve air quality

- Reduce the need to travel, through technology and Smarter Choices measures
- Promote walking and cycling to provide a healthy alternative to the car for short local journeys to work, local services or school
- Develop Bus Rapid Transit and high quality public transport in South Hampshire, to reduce car dependence and improve journey time reliability
- Outline and implement a long term transport strategy to enable sustainable development in major growth areas

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:****Links to the Strategic Plan**

<b>Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:</b>	no
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:</b>	yes

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>	
Project Appraisal: South East Hampshire Bus Rapid Transit – Phase 1 Fareham –Gosport	29 January 2009
New Junction with Eclipse Busway and Removal of Existing Road Bridge at Rowner Road, Gosport (Application No: 13/00323/HCC3) (Site Ref: GPH002)	23 October 2013
Project Appraisal: Eclipse Busway: Completion of Phase 1	17 July 2018
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>	
None	

**Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

DocumentLocation

None



## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

**Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:**

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2 Equalities Impact Assessment:

Should they be realised, the new proposals will provide better access for cyclists and pedestrians, retaining the bridge and the existing grade separated shared use for pedestrians and cycles. A further equalities impact assessment would be carried out as part of final proposals for this option, but the recommendations of this report are procedural and will have a neutral impact on people with protected characteristics.

### **2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

2.1 Neutral impact.

### **3. Climate Change:**

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

Neutral impact.