

# HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment
<b>Date:</b>	8 October 2020
<b>Title:</b>	Aldershot Station Transport Hub and Public Realm Improvements
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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### Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide details of the Aldershot Station Transport Hub and Public Realm Improvements scheme, and to seek approval to progress with the necessary procurement, spending, and contractual arrangements to deliver the works.

### Recommendations

2. That the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment approve the Project Appraisal for the Aldershot Station Transport Hub and Public Realm Improvements scheme, as outlined in this report.
3. That the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment recommend to Cabinet that the Aldershot Station Transport Hub and Public Realm Improvements scheme is included in the ETE capital programme (with the County Council's financial contribution to the value of £840,000 and an overall scheme value of £1.44 million).
4. That subject to Cabinet approval of the scheme's addition to the capital programme, approval be given to procure and spend and enter into necessary contractual arrangements, in consultation with the Head of Legal Services, to implement the proposed improvements that form the Aldershot Station Transport Hub and Public Realm Improvements scheme, as set out in this report, at a total estimated cost of £1.44 million, to be funded from Developer Contributions, Rushmoor Borough Council, EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership, Department for Transport Emergency Active Travel Fund Tranche 2, and Public Realm Improvement Programme funding.
5. That authority to make the arrangements to implement the scheme, including minor variations to the design or contract, be delegated to the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment.
6. That authority is given to enter into a funding agreement with Rushmoor Borough Council, in consultation with the Head of Legal Services, to secure the

transfer of the Rushmoor Borough Council funding contribution and also the LEP grant for the project, which was awarded to Rushmoor Borough Council.

7. That approval is given to enter into the necessary arrangements to secure all formal approvals, consents, and agreements, including with Network Rail, South Western Railway, and the Office for Road and Rail for proposed works within the land owned by Network Rail and leased to South Western Railway.

## **Executive Summary**

8. The purpose of this report is to provide the details of the proposed integrated transport scheme at Aldershot Station, which involves the delivery of accessibility improvements for all travel modes, and environmental enhancements to the public realm around the station approach and forecourt.
9. Hampshire County Council and Rushmoor Borough Council have a long-standing interest in delivering accessibility and public realm improvements around Aldershot Station as it is a key gateway to the town centre and an important rail and bus interchange facility.
10. The forecourt and station approach has historically experienced issues with congestion and traffic movement conflicts and no longer provides a welcoming environment for residents or visitors. Development over time within the town centre has rendered the existing arrangement for bus and rail interchange increasingly inefficient. It is anticipated that the significant proposed development in Aldershot will increase the number of all trips (pedestrians, cycling, public transport, and private motor vehicles) to and from the town on a daily basis, compounding current access and interchange issues for all modes around the station. The existing and ageing bus interchange is also the subject of a planning application to demolish it to be replaced with flats and some mixed uses. The site is currently leased by a private landlord to Stagecoach who operate the bus interchange. The development and a new modern bus interchange are facilitated by this scheme.
11. This scheme includes improvements to the local active travel network and is also setting the groundwork and masterplan for future enhancements that may be funded by others and offers benefits to multiple modes of transport. This scheme will deliver the following:
  - accessibility improvements for pedestrians walking between the train station and Aldershot town centre or nearby residential areas;
  - improved bus interchange facilities directly outside the station, which is critical given the relocation of Aldershot bus station away from the train station to a new location in the town centre, which also serves to unlock a significant redevelopment site directly adjacent to the station forecourt;
  - facilities for taxis within the station forecourt, ensuring that the taxi rank is situated close to the main access of the station;
  - better access to the train station car park for vehicles and improved walking routes for pedestrians between the car park and the main station access;
  - a new and large secure cycle hub within the station forecourt area to encourage the use of active travel modes for local journeys;
  - public realm improvements within the area of the station forecourt and its interface with the wider road network;

- highway maintenance improvements and renewals within the public highway in the area around the station forecourt; and
  - the opportunity to implement mobility hub elements. For example, electric vehicle and cycle charging spaces and lockers for picking up deliveries etc will be investigated with stakeholders to see if they can be included, or space safeguarded for them in the design, but are not currently funded.
12. The scheme will provide a better-quality environment in the area around the train station to encourage and enable residents of the town to choose more active modes of transportation for local activities, and encourage the use of the train as a sustainable transport option for journeys of longer distance. The scheme has the potential to reduce short car journeys within the town, thereby reducing vehicle traffic levels within the town centre and providing wider public health benefits.
13. A general arrangement plan of the proposed scheme is supplied in the Appendix.

### **Contextual information**

14. Aldershot railway station is an important gateway offering excellent services to the London labour market and, within the South East, relatively affordable housing. The station is well served by local bus services and well suited to access via active modes, being within a five-minute walk of the main pedestrianised shopping area of the town centre to the north. Development over time within the town centre and in major housing development (Wellesley, previously known as the Aldershot Urban Extension - 3850 homes) means the catchment area for the station is now bigger, and the demands on the station for access, particularly by non-car modes, has grown.
15. Further and significant housing and mixed-use development is planned in Aldershot Town Centre, which will result in an intensification of land use. This scheme represents a timely opportunity to support this type of sustainable development by putting in place the necessary infrastructure to lock in high levels of walking, cycling and public transport usage.
16. The Rushmoor Borough Transport Statement recognises the need for improved access and facilities at the train station, and the same objectives were previously aired in the Aldershot Town Access Plan (TAP). To address this, Hampshire County Council and Rushmoor Borough Council, in partnership, have developed the Aldershot Station Transport Hub and Public Realm Improvements scheme, which will facilitate a new public transport interchange for bus and taxi movements and will free up the existing bus station for redevelopment. At the same time, it will provide an on-highway scheme for improving the quality of routes between the station and areas of the town centre to the north-east for pedestrians, cyclists, and cars. This scheme was approved in January 2019, and is being progressed by Rushmoor Borough Council under an Agency Agreement with the County Council, and is due for construction in 2020/21.
17. The objectives of the scheme are:

- to provide an interchange facility for all modes, suitable for supporting sustainable future growth;
  - reduce conflict between non-motorised users and vehicles within the busy station forecourt area; and
  - to deliver access and environmental improvements to create a more welcoming atmosphere and encourage higher footfall. Improvements will include:
    - a cycle hub with secure parking facilities;
    - wider footways with a high-quality finish within the forecourt and on the approaches;
    - measures to tackle cycle access severance;
    - emphasised points of access and egress for all modes; and
    - increased public seating, suitable for a public realm transport interchange.
18. The strategic importance of the scheme is well-demonstrated by the breadth of organisations already working together to make progress, with Hampshire County and Rushmoor Borough councils supported by the EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership, and agreement in principle from South Western Railway and Network Rail.
19. The station forecourt scheme includes a funding contribution from the Public Realm Improvements Programme (PRIP), and as such needs to include the environmental improvements required to make the station more accessible. Additional funding is being sought via Tranche 2 of the Department for Transport's Emergency Active Travel Fund (EATF), to ensure improvements for all modes remain within scope.
20. The project initially progressed through the initial design phases on the basis of Rushmoor Borough Council taking responsibility for the delivery of the scheme. However, Hampshire County Council and the Borough Council have subsequently agreed that the County Council is more suitably placed to deliver the scheme through to completion. There are two primary reasons for this. Firstly, the County Council would be the largest funding contributor to the project; it is therefore appropriate that the County Council should implement the scheme and directly manage the associated delivery risks. Secondly, the County Council has been commissioned by the Borough Council to undertake detailed design and manage the construction contract, which also make it appropriate that the County Council should act as Client for the scheme to manage the development and delivery of the project. It is proposed, therefore, that following approval of the recommendations in this report, the County Council would take on the role of Client for the project, whilst continuing to maintain the close partnership working with the Borough Council already established to date.

## **Finance**

21.	Estimates	£'000	% of total	Funds Available	£'000
	Design Fee	225	16	S106 Developer Contributions	594
	Client Fee	40	3	EM3 LEP grant	300
	Supervision <sup>4</sup>	0	0	RBC funding contribution	300
	<b>Land and Construction</b>	1,175	81	PRIP funding*	96
			0	DFT EATF**	150
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,440</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>1440</b>

\* Public Realm Improvement Programme

\*\*Department for Transport Emergency Active Travel Fund

22.	Maintenance Implications	£'000	%	Variation to Committee's budget
	Net increase in current expenditure	2.7	0.002%	
	Capital Charge	139.0	0.087%	

## Programme

23.

	Gateway Stage			
	3 (PA)	Start on site	End on site	4
Date	Oct 2020	March 2021	August 2021	July 2022

## Scheme Details

24. The scheme aims to rationalise land use in and around Aldershot Station to create an improved public transport interchange within the station forecourt area and to deliver public realm enhancements on the approaches. The scheme has been developed using a cohesive approach to significantly upgrade transport infrastructure in this area and improve accessibility between this transport hub and the town centre areas, particularly for pedestrians and cycles.
25. Specifically, the project will deliver the following improvements:
- reallocation of road space on Arthur Street and Station Road through a reduction in carriageway area in this location, to provide a significant increase in pedestrian space;
  - repaving of existing footways and the newly created pedestrian areas with high quality block paved surfacing, in keeping with the existing footway surfacing type in the surrounding area;
  - pedestrian accessibility improvements including upgraded tactile crossing points, a new zebra crossing at the station entrance and emphasised points of access between the station and town centre;
  - a cycle hub storage facility offering secure storage for cycles within the station forecourt area;
  - carriageway resurfacing on Arthur Street, Windsor Way and Station Road;
  - revised arrangements for the taxi rank and pick-up/drop off areas;
  - new bus stop facilities within the station forecourt, to mitigate the relocation of the existing bus station to a new location within the town centre. Bus stop facilities will be specified to accommodate real time passenger information to future proof the installation. (The existing bus station is directly adjacent to the station forecourt and the proposed scheme facilitates the redevelopment of this site); and
  - additional tree planting within the highway areas to mitigate the loss of three existing trees within the station forecourt that are to be felled to facilitate the bus station redevelopment.

### **Departures from Standards**

26. No departures from standard are proposed.

### **Public Consultation and Equalities**

27. The proposed scheme crosses two electoral divisions. The local County Council Members, Cllr Bill Withers and Cllr Charles Choudhary, have been consulted on the latest proposals and have confirmed their support for the scheme. Rushmoor Borough Council has indicated there is also support from the local district councillors.
28. The proposal to improve the area around Aldershot Station has been in discussion for some time and there have been significant communications on the project between Rushmoor Borough Council and the local community in recent years.
29. The proposed scheme will result in changes to the bus operations and taxi arrangements in the forecourt area. The bus operator has been consulted on the suitability of the revised access and bus stop arrangements and has

confirmed that it is content with the proposals. The changes to the taxi rank arrangements have been discussed with the local taxi operators and have been agreed as acceptable.

30. The proposed scheme will have a positive impact on all users of the station forecourt area, particularly through delivery of significant accessibility improvements for pedestrians. The scheme proposals have gone through an equalities impact assessment, and it is considered that they will have a neutral impact on people with protected characteristics.

### **Statutory Procedures**

31. The proposed scheme includes works within land owned by Network Rail and leased to the franchise operator, South Western Railway. A series of formal consents and agreements are required to secure permission to undertake the works in these areas and to meet the requirements of the owner of the land and infrastructure (Network Rail) and the leaseholder and station manager (South Western Railway) and the Rail Regulator (Office for Rail and Road). Further detail on these arrangements is described below within the land requirements section.
32. The necessary temporary traffic signals approval and streetworks permit will be arranged prior to the commencement of the works. There will be a need for road closures to allow carriageway surfacing operations to be undertaken safely; the necessary Temporary Traffic Regulation Order will be effective prior to implementation of any road closures.
33. Various traffic regulation orders will be required to facilitate the new bus stops, taxi rank, parking controls etc. The TROs will be progressed by Rushmoor Borough Council under the Hampshire County Council Traffic Management Agency Agreement and will become effective at the appropriate time following completion of the works.
34. The revised road layout on Station Road and Windsor Way will require the removal of the existing traffic island, upon which sits an historic Second World War field gun which belongs to the Borough Council. The field gun will require relocation to another site in the town and this will require planning permission. Rushmoor Borough Council will seek permission from the Local Planning Authority for consent to reposition the field gun and will ensure all consent is secured prior to commencement of the main works. The Borough Council will manage the process of removing the field gun from the site and will complete this prior to commencement of construction.

### **Land requirements**

35. The proposed scheme is partly within the existing publicly maintainable highway and partly within land owned by Network Rail and currently leased to South Western Railway (SWR) as franchise operator and station manager. Network Rail and SWR have been engaged during the scheme development process and all parties have agreed in principle to the proposed scheme. Following approval of the recommendations within this report, a number of applications will be required to secure formal consent to progress the works.

Network Rail will advise on the consents/approvals required following full review of the proposals during the application stages, depending on the impact of the proposed scheme on the Network Rail asset and the operation of the railway.

36. The agreements and consents expected to be required are:
- Asset Protection Agreement: the Network Rail Asset Protection and Optimisation Team will advise on the type of Asset Protection Agreement required for these works based on the detailed design information supplied and how the scheme is expected to affect the Network Rail asset, the operation of the railway and station buildings, and the customer access to the station;
  - Landlords Consent: Network Rail has confirmed that the scheme should be progressed with a Landlord's Consent application, whereby the County Council as works promoter will submit the relevant scheme information and a letter of support from the leaseholder, to seek formal consent to undertake the works; and
  - a Station Change application may be required for the purpose of notifying the Office for Road and Rail (Regulator) of the proposed change and for instigating a consultation period. Network Rail and South Western Railway will advise on this following formal review of the detailed design.

## **Maintenance**

37. The County Council's Asset Management team has provided advice during the development of the scheme, has been consulted on the detailed design proposals and has agreed to the standard of materials being used. The part of the scheme that is within the publicly maintainable highway will have an impact on the maintenance budget in future years. This is expected to be approximately £2,700 per annum.
38. Part of the proposed scheme is on land within the ownership of Network Rail. The detailed design proposals for these areas will be reviewed by Network Rail, as asset owner, during the application and approval process for Landlords Consent and Asset Protection Agreement. Network Rail and South Western Railway have been involved in the development of the scheme to advise on this element of the works and the suitability of the design and materials proposed; all proposals are in keeping with their design guidance and are agreed in principle. It is therefore expected that the formal consent of Network Rail will be secured without significant changes to the design. Minor adjustments may be required, and these will be accommodated as necessary to secure the consent of the landowner. It is anticipated that the pro-active discussions had to date will continue, with close co-operation of the various project teams. The applications for Landlords Consent, Station Change and Asset Protection Agreements will be progressed following approval of the recommendations in this report.
39. The elements of the scheme on Network Rail land are not being specifically created on behalf of Hampshire County Council as Highway Authority. Therefore, these elements remain privately maintainable for the purposes of 36(2)(a) Highways Act 1980. The delivery of the proposed scheme will not alter

the terms of the current franchise; therefore, following the contractual maintenance period of the works, the future maintenance of the works on land which is owned by Network Rail will remain with the landowner, with some of these responsibilities continuing to be passed to the leaseholder as Station Manager under the terms of the franchise. Details relating to routine maintenance of the works area during maintenance period will be confirmed under the Asset Protection Agreement process, and for the avoidance of doubt, the County Council will be responsible for remedying defects in the works only: routine maintenance responsibility for the station forecourt area within the network rail land will remain with the leaseholder.

40. With regard to other notable street furniture within the scheme, all streetlighting within the areas of public highway will continue to be maintained under the Hampshire Street Lighting PFI. All streetlighting within Network Rail land will continue to be maintained under Network Rail's current maintenance processes. There is an existing CCTV column located within the highway, which is owned and operated by Rushmoor Borough Council for the purposes of public safety around the station entrance. The changes to the road layout associated with the scheme will necessitate the relocation of the column to a new position. The Borough Council will arrange for the relocation of the equipment and for the associated utilities diversion in advance of the main construction works, and will remain responsible for maintenance of the CCTV equipment thereafter.

## **Governance**

41. Project Management liaison meetings with all key stakeholders will continue and increase in frequency as the scheme transitions into the delivery phase to ensure successful delivery of the scheme. The key stakeholders are Hampshire County Council, Rushmoor Borough Council, EM3 LEP, South Western Railway, and Network Rail.
42. Hampshire County Council's Engineering Consultancy has been commissioned by Rushmoor Borough Council to undertake the design work and manage the delivery of the scheme. The role of delivery Client will transfer to Hampshire County Council upon completion of detailed design, to manage the procurement and delivery phases of the project. The tender and contract award for the works will be done through the County Council's Gen4 framework. This will ensure the award is made to a contractor pre-selected by Hampshire County Council through a comprehensive assessment, which will safeguard project delivery and remove or minimise several delivery risks.

## **Conclusions**

43. It is anticipated that the significant proposed development in Aldershot will increase the number of trips to and from the town on a daily basis, compounding current access and interchange issues for all modes around the station. This scheme represents a timely opportunity to encourage wider shift to more sustainable modes through improvements to the local active travel network and public transport nodes.

44. The scheme has been developed using a cohesive approach to significantly upgrade transport infrastructure around Aldershot Station, rationalise land use in this area, and improve accessibility between this transport hub and the town centre areas, particularly for pedestrians and cycles. Approval of the recommendations in this report is key to the delivery of a) an improved interchange facility suitable for supporting sustainable future growth, and b) the access and environmental improvements required to create a more welcoming atmosphere and encourage higher footfall.

**REQUIRED CORPORATE AND 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>	No

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>	
<u>Title</u> Project Appraisal: Access to Aldershot Station	<u>Date</u> 15 Jan 2019
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

**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.)**

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

## **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

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 by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

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

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- 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.

### **2. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

The proposed scheme will have a positive impact on all users of the station forecourt area, particularly through delivery of significant accessibility improvements for the users of all transport modes. The scheme proposal has gone through an equalities impact assessment and it is considered that it will have a neutral impact on people with protected characteristics.