

# HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Officer Decision Record

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment
<b>Title:</b>	Ringwood Town Centre Improvements (Phase 2) and A31 Slip Road Closure

**Contact name:** Nimish Vithani

**Tel:** 0370 779 4525

**Email:** Nimish.vithani@hants.gov.uk

### 1. The decision:

- 1.1. That the Director approves the addition of the Ringwood Town Centre Improvements (Phase 2) and A31 Slip Road Closure scheme to the 2020/21 Capital Programme at a value of £200,000. This is the second phase of this programme of works to be funded by Highways England's 'Cycle, Safety and Integration Designated Fund' grant. The first phase will be completed for £179,800, leaving £200,000 to fully fund phase two of this programme of works.
- 1.2. That the Director notes the reduction in value of phase one of this programme of works to £179,800 in the 2019/20 Capital Programme.
- 1.3. That the Director approves the details of the Ringwood Town Centre Improvements and A31 Slip Road Closure (Phase 2), as set out in this paper.
- 1.4. That the Director gives approval to procure, spend and enter into necessary contractual arrangements, in consultation with the Head of Legal Services, to implement this scheme, at a total estimated cost of £200k, to be funded from Highways England's 'Cycle, Safety and Integration Designated Fund' grant.

### 2. Reason(s) for the decision:

- 2.1. To physically close the western end of West Street in Ringwood and to restrict access to the A31 near the Fish Inn public house which forms part of Highways England's proposals to increase traffic capacity on the west-bound carriageway of the A31.
- 2.2. To improve accessibility for pedestrians and to improve cycle connectivity between Ringwood town centre and outlying areas for both commuting, utility and leisure journeys.

**3. Other options considered and rejected:**

- 3.1. To do nothing was rejected because the Non-Motorised User (NMU) improvements in the town centre are fully funded by Highways England. They are needed in order to change the layout of West Street, to reflect its changed function due to the closure to through traffic as proposed by Highways England as part of the A31 widening project.
- 3.2. Construction of a new footway from the Furlong Shopping Centre to Ringwood Church via the church yard was also rejected due to land ownership and personal safety issues, and the need for Listed Building Consent to construct on consecrated land. In addition, an alternative pathway exists from the Furlong car park to the church.

**4. Conflicts of interest:**

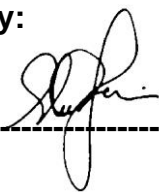
- 4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by an Executive Member who is consulted by the officer which relates to the decision: None

**5. Dispensation granted by the Head of Paid Service:**

- 5.1. None

**6. Supporting Information:**

- 6.1. None

<b>Approved by:</b>  -----	<b>Date:</b>  -----24/09/2020-----
<b>Stuart Jarvis</b>	
<b>Director of Economy, Transport and Environment</b>	

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## Decision Report

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### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The scheme seeks to physically close the western end of West Street (Including a Prohibition of Vehicles Traffic Order) to restrict access to the A31 slip road. The closure of West Street forms part of Highways England's proposal to increase capacity on the west-bound carriageway of the A31 and to improve facilities for cyclists, pedestrians and other non-motorised users both adjacent to the A31 and within Ringwood Town Centre.
- 1.2 The proposals will improve accessibility for pedestrians by the widening of the northern footway in West Street from Market Place through to the proposed road closure near the Fish Inn public house.
- 1.3 The scheme will also see the reversal of the existing one-way system in Meeting House Lane between High Street and Western Service Road in order to re-direct local traffic and avoid the road closure in West Street.
- 1.4 The proposals will remove through traffic using the High Street to access the A31 and will improve permeability and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclist in line with the Ringwood Town Access Plan.

### 2. Background

- 2.1 The A31 is an important strategic route which regularly experiences significant delays between the Ringwood and Verwood junctions as it passes through the New Forest. This situation is exacerbated at peak times and during the summer months as it is a key holiday route to the south coast and the West Country.
- 2.2 Highway England (HE) acknowledges that improvements to the route on the approaches to Ringwood are necessary both to improve safety (particularly at the junction of West Street and A31) and to reduce congestion and improve journey reliability on the westbound carriageway. In addition, HE is

also seeking to improve facilities for cyclists, pedestrians and other non-motorised users adjacent to the A31 and within Ringwood Town Centre. The A31 is a barrier to movement and severs the town centre from some of the residential areas to the north.

- 2.3 Following public consultation in 2017, HE decided to take forward a package of measures that includes, amongst other things, the widening of the westbound carriageway of the A31 and the closure of the West Street access onto the A31.
- 2.4 HCC's Phase 1 scheme consisted of several schemes to aid cyclists and pedestrians and at present these are nearly complete with the last few elements currently being undertaken. The schemes that were included as part of Phase 1 are:
- Strides Lane footpath widening;
  - Market Place gateway entry;
  - Gravel Lane pedestrian improvement and improved drainage;
  - The Furlong crossing point improvement;
  - The reinstatement of the island at Meeting House Lane;
  - Improvements to crossing at Meeting House Lane;
  - Cycle route signed from Lidl to town includes improved drop kerb access and corduroy paving;
  - 16 additional cycle hoops installed in town;
  - Hurn Lane improvements to crossing point
  - Gateway feature on Mansfield Road.
- 2.5 Some elements of work included in part of the Phase 1 scheme are still under construction as the contractor was delayed due to the COVID 19 Pandemic.
- 2.6 HCC has been working collaboratively with New Forest District Council and Ringwood Town Council to develop a programme of small scale measures that originate from the Ringwood Town Access Plan. The measures will help to ensure both that the closure of West Street has no adverse impact on movement and permeability within the town and to improve pedestrian and cycle accessibility and safety.
- 2.7 The funding for the programme has been secured through a successful bid to HE's Cycle, Safety and Integration Designated Fund, which commits HCC to delivering the agreed schemes by the end of March 2021

2.8 Due to the size of the scheme and for better control and management, the scheme was split into two smaller schemes. This minimised the impact to HE's work programme and allowed for better management and co-ordination of the schemes being carried out by HCC and HE. Total HE grant given to HCC was £379,800 of which the first phase will be completed for £179,800, leaving £200,000 to fully fund phase two programme of works.

### 3 Finance

3.1	<u>Estimates</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>% of total</u>	<u>Funds Available</u>	<u>£'000</u>
	Design Fee	20	10	HE CSID fund	200
	Client Fee	15	8		
	Supervision	20	10		
	Construction	145	72		
	Land	0	0		
	Total	<u>200</u>	<u>100</u>	Total	<u>200</u>

3.2	<u>Maintenance Implications</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>% Variation to Committee's budget</u>
	Net increase in maintenance expenditure	1.5	0.001%
	Capital Charges (Depreciation and notional interest charges)	19.0	0.012%

### Programme

	Gateway Stage			
	3 - Project Appraisal	Start on site	End on site	4 - Review

Date (mm/yy)	9/20	9/20	3/21	3/22
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#### **4 Scheme Details**

- 4.1 The western end of West Street will be physically closed by a kerbed build out/landscaping (Including Prohibition of Driving Traffic Order) to restrict through traffic onto the A31 at this location. It also removes traffic using High Street as a through route to get to the A31, making the High Street shopping experience safer while also reducing congestion for the local Wednesday market. These changes will be reinforced by the erection of traffic signing.
- 4.2 The widening of the north side footway in West Street (by narrowing the existing carriageway width to 4.8m) will provide between a 1.8m and 2m average width footway, giving an uninterrupted pedestrian link between Market Place and the west bound pedestrian/cycle route facility on the A31.
- 4.3 The existing one-way system in Meeting House Lane between High Street and Western Service Road will be reversed in order to allow local traffic on the High Street to exit onto Meeting House Lane.
- 4.4 The existing footway on the northern side of "The Stony Bridge" in West Street will be widened to improve accessibility for pedestrians.
- 4.5 Landscaping works will be undertaken at the Western end of West Street to further enforce the prohibition of driving traffic order.
- 4.6 The A31 slip road closure (West Street) will be the first activity to be undertaken as the vast reduction of traffic in West Street will make the temporary traffic management safer during the construction phase which would result in less congestion and air pollution etc.

#### **5 Departures from Standards**

- 5.2 None

#### **6 Community Engagement**

- 6.2 The local HCC member (Cllr Thierry) and Ringwood Town Council have been consulted and are supportive of the scheme. Highways England have also undertaken local consultation with affected residents and stakeholders as part of their A31 improvement proposals.
- 6.3 Affected residents will be made aware of the construction works via a letter drop once the tender returns have been received.

## **7 Statutory Procedures**

- 7.2 A prohibition of traffic TRO between West Street and the A31 is required.
- 7.3 Reversal of the one-way system in the Meeting House Lane traffic order between High Street and Western Service Road, to allow vehicles to exit the western end of High Street onto Meeting House Lane.
- 7.4 The advertising notices for both TRO's (prohibition of driving and one-way) is ongoing and is being dealt with by HCC Traffic Management Team.

## **8 Land Requirement**

- 8.2 None.

## **9 Maintenance Implications**

- 9.2 The Asset Management Team has been consulted on the proposals and the design has been amended to reflect the comments received.
- 9.3 The improvements will have a minor impact on future years' maintenance revenue budget, and this is expected to be approximately £1,500 pa.

## **10 Recommendation(s)**

- 10.1 That the Director approves the addition of the Ringwood Town Centre Improvements (Phase 2) and A31 Slip Road Closure scheme to the 2020/21 Capital Programme at a value of £200,000. This is the second phase of this programme of works to be funded by Highways England's 'Cycle, Safety and Integration Designated Fund' grant. The first phase will be completed for £179,800, leaving £200,000 to fully fund phase two of this programme of works.
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## 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

**Other**

Please list any other targets (i.e. National Indicators, non LTP) to which this  
scheme will contribute.

**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>	no

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
<a href="https://democracy.hants.gov.uk/documents/s46474/DecisionRecord.pdf">https://democracy.hants.gov.uk/documents/s46474/DecisionRecord.pdf</a>	10.02.2020
<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>

## Impact Assessments

### 1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

1.1. The proposals in this report have been developed with due regard to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Council's equality objectives. The website contains a summary [assessment of the impacts](#) on developing Hampshire's highway network and transport systems.

1.2. Statutory considerations:

Impact	
Age	None
Disability	None
Sexual Orientation	None
Race	None
Religion and belief	None
Gender Reassignment	None
Sex	None
Marriage and civil partnership	None
Pregnancy and maternity	None
Other policy considerations	
Poverty	None
Rurality	None
Other factors	None
Geographical impact	Ringwood

### 2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

None expected

### 3. Climate Change:

The proposals will help to reduce carbon footprint by encouraging road users to use alternative modes of transport such as walking or cycling. This will help to reduce carbon emissions and reduce the dependency of car journeys for short trips.

