



July 2021. Feedback was invited from the public on the modal filter whilst it was in place, which was to be used to inform a decision over whether to permanently implement the modal filter.

8. The location of the permanent modal filter is proposed for two locations on Fishers Hill, to provide a stretch of road that becomes motor vehicle free and that does not have any property accesses within it. Please see the plan at Appendix A for details. The County Council carried out another consultation on proposals to implement this permanent modal filter and a second public engagement exercise took place in early 2023.
9. Following this engagement and a number of traffic surveys that have been undertaken (details of which are provided in this report), it is recommended that the modal filter is installed on a permanent basis in order to enable active travel, promote Healthy Streets and limit the use of the route as a cut-through by non-local traffic. It is possible that a proposal will be taken forward in the future to reduce the speed limit on Fishers Hill to 20mph, once the modal filter has been established and an anticipated reduction in traffic speeds has occurred.

### **Contextual information**

10. Fishers Hill is a semi-rural lane located in the Borough of Fareham, that provides a connection between Catisfield Lane and Highlands Road at its eastern end (on the western edge of the Fareham urban area) and Mill Lane at its western end (just to the east of Titchfield Abbey). The road crosses the River Meon at the bottom of the hill at the western end and is predominantly used as a local connection between west Fareham and Titchfield Park / Segensworth, but is also used as a route for vehicles making longer journeys that are looking to avoid the A27.
11. It has a speed limit of 30mph, a 7.5 tonne weight limit (except for loading) and an average annual daily traffic flow (AADT) of around 2,000-2,500 vehicles. It is approximately 5m wide and has no footways or cycle facilities. Between Mill Lane and Catisfield Lane it provides access to approximately ten properties.
12. In 2019, Fishers Hill was identified in the County Council's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Fareham Borough as forming part of a route which could help to support active travel, providing a suitable and direct link for walking and cycling between key local destinations in Fareham and Segensworth. The LCWIP was produced in conjunction with local stakeholders and the charity Sustrans and was formally adopted as County Policy in November 2022.
13. As well as its featuring within the adopted LCWIP, Fishers Hill as a location was also selected for a modal filter, which is a feature that prevents vehicles from passing, but still allows people walking, wheeling, cycling or riding a horse to pass. In this instance the modal filter is proposed for two locations that do not have any property accesses between them (as shown on the plan at Appendix A), in order to provide a section of road that becomes completely vehicle free. A modal filter can also have a key operated gate (which is proposed in this instance), to still enable some vehicles such as the emergency services or refuse collection to pass through on an infrequent basis. This was trialled during the temporary scheme by refuse collection vehicles and took place without any issues.

14. Fishers Hill was selected for a modal filter for the following reasons:
  - to contribute to achieving the ambitions of the LCWIP, and to help towards meeting climate change objectives associated with reducing the emissions from private car journeys;
  - it lacks pavements or cycleways;
  - it has been previously audited by the County Council Home to School transport service (Children's Services) as 'too dangerous' for school children to use on foot or by bicycle as part of their journey to and from school;
  - it has a high proportion of non-local through-traffic, that is avoiding major routes; and
  - the County Council is seeking to implement the 'Healthy Streets' approach for this and other roads across Hampshire, particularly those that serve a local movement function. This involves creating a safer and more pleasant environment to encourage people to choose more active methods of travel (such as walking and cycling).
15. During the summer of 2020, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, temporary features were installed at Fishers Hill (via the Government's 'Emergency Active Travel' Fund) to form a modal filter and make it easier and safer for people walking/scooting, cycling and horse riding. The modal filter was removed in July 2021.
16. This original scheme was an emergency scheme in response to the pandemic, which meant the County Council was not required to consult widely before the scheme was installed. The temporary filters were removed in July 2021, as part of step 4 of the Government's Covid Road Map. Feedback was collected during July and August 2021, by way of a survey (online and available in other formats). An information pack was produced, which outlined the scheme proposals in order to enable an informed response.
17. The analysis of the feedback from the temporary filter showed very strong opinions for and against the measure. It also highlighted that not everyone's views had been fully considered and the County Council was unable to understand specific views from different groups of residents and users of Fishers Hill and differentiate between people that were more directly affected and those that were simply using the road as part of a longer journey by vehicle. Therefore, a further round of public consultation on the permanent installation of a modal filter on Fishers Hill was carried out from 16<sup>th</sup> January to 12<sup>th</sup> March 2023. This round of further consultation aimed to address the shortcomings of the previous survey and gather more detailed opinions about the scheme.
18. This scheme is seen as a key part of the County Council being able to implement successful local active travel measures, which contributes to achieving the objectives of the emerging Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) and rolling out a Healthy Streets approach at suitable locations across Hampshire.
19. The objectives of the scheme are to:
  - provide a safer and more comfortable environment on Fishers Hill for active and sustainable modes of travel, such as walking and cycling;

- reduce the negative impact on local residents/businesses of through vehicle traffic using Fishers Hill;
  - enable the use of active modes of travel for shorter and more local journeys, as opposed to using the car; particularly where alternate and more suitable driving routes are available; and
  - improve the Healthy Streets score for Fishers Hill (see paragraph 44 for more details).
20. As part of implementing the scheme and in order to make it fully compliant with LTN 1/20 (the Government's guidance on cycle infrastructure design), it is desirable to reduce the speed limit on Fishers Hill to 20mph. This would also help to complement and reinforce the benefits of the scheme. However, this will be dependent on a wider review of County Council policy on 20mph speed limits and therefore it is likely that the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) needed to achieve the speed limit reduction will need to take place at a later date, once the modal filter has been established and it becomes clear whether the anticipated reduction in vehicle speeds on Fishers Hill due to the modal filter has occurred.
21. In order to inform the decision over whether to implement a permanent filter, the following sections outline the recent public consultation feedback and provide details of the traffic survey data acquired both when the temporary filter was in place, and with 'normal' traffic conditions when there was no modal filter.

### **Consultation and Equalities**

22. The 2023 public re-consultation used a different methodology to the 2020/21 survey, so that the views of those living or running businesses on or just off Fishers Hill could be differentiated from those that used the road but didn't live within the immediate vicinity.
23. Feedback on the proposals was sought from:
- 'Most Local' residents living and businesses based in Catisfield Lane, Forneth Gardens, Fishers Hill, Hampton Grove, Harvester Drive, Hunters Lodge, Mount Drive, Mill Lane and Samuel Mortimer Close, who were sent a paper survey form through the post; and
  - the wider public, who were invited to submit their views via a feedback form made available online and in other formats, to provide best value for money. This survey was publicised via social media, and large information boards which were placed along the length of Fishers Hill.
24. The two feedback forms were identical, aside from some additional questions for the wider public related to their use of the road and alternative routes.
25. During the consultation period, online briefing sessions were offered to the local county councillors, and also to key known stakeholder groups who were for and against the scheme, to help provide the opportunity to answer any questions they had about the scheme and gather direct feedback.
26. In total there were 1,312 responses received to the consultation survey:
- 1,167 responses were submitted via the wider public feedback form, either online or on paper. Of those who specified, 1,147 responses were from

individuals, 12 were from businesses or organisations and one was from a democratically elected representative; and

- 145 ‘most-local’ resident completed paper surveys were received from a total of 244 that were posted out, representing a 59% return rate.

27. Opinion throughout the survey was most notably split between local residents (those who received the paper survey), who were concerned about safety and other aspects on Fishers Hill and were most likely to support the installation of a permanent filter, and non-local residents, who saw few problems on Fishers Hill and opposed the installation of a permanent filter. The table below outlines these opinions, taken from the consultation survey results.

Opinion	Local residents	Non-local residents
The road is safe for users - cyclists, walkers and horse riders	disagreed	agreed
The road is safe for children	disagreed	agreed
Volumes, speed and noise levels from traffic are acceptable	disagreed	agreed
Air quality is good	disagreed	agreed
Opinion on having a modal filter on the road	supported	opposed
Impact of a permanent filter on safety for all road users	positive impact	little/ no impact
Impact of a permanent filter on congestion elsewhere	little/ no impact	negative impact
Impact of a permanent filter on journey times	little/ no impact	negative impact

28. The overall results from the survey were as follows:

- **Local residents:** 70% support, 26% opposed; and
- **All respondents:** 23% support, 76% opposed.

29. As part of the consultation views on the impact that a permanent filter would have on travel habits were assessed via the survey. There was evidence that filtering the road could lead to a shift in travel methods, as for example:

- 22% of respondents stated that they would be more likely to cycle if a permanent filter was in place. This figure was much higher for those who already cycle (46%);
- 30% of respondents would walk more if the filter was in place, including 44% of respondents who already walked along Fishers Hill and 17% of respondents who did not; and

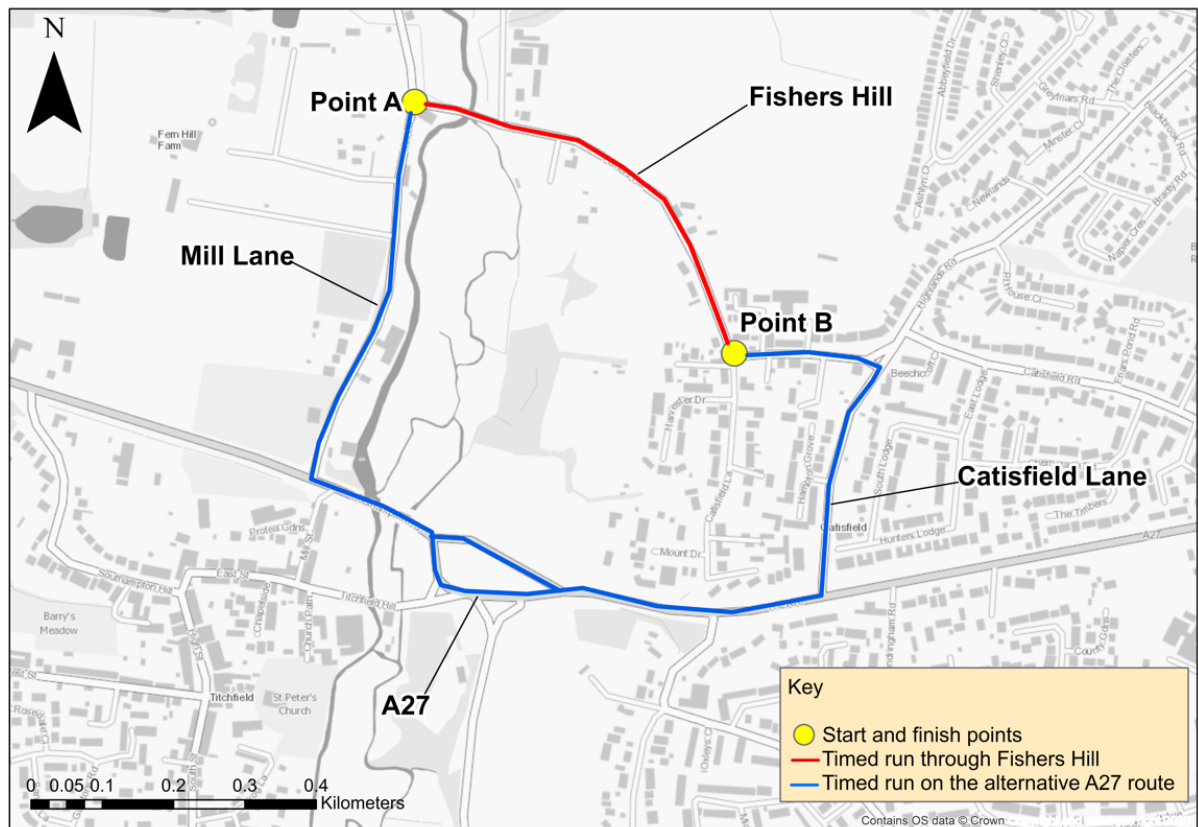
- over three quarters (76%) of respondents said that they would use the A27 as the alternative route for some of their journeys (regardless of their travel method) and just over half of all respondents (53%) would use Highlands Road for some of their journeys (respondents could pick more than one option).
30. In the survey the perceived impact on vehicle journey times was another key driver of support or opposition for a permanent filter. Overall, 73% of respondents felt that a permanent filter would have a negative impact on journey times and the amount of support reduced in line with the perceived increase in journey time that the modal filter would cause, as follows:
- if the perceived journey time increase was 2 mins or less – c.95% support; and
  - if the perceived journey time increase was 5 mins or less – c.50% support.
31. Just over half (53% or 485 respondents) thought that taking an alternative route to Fishers Hill would add 10 minutes or less to their journey time and 24% (223 respondents) thought it would add five minutes or less.
32. The actual journey time increase between going via Fishers Hill or the quickest alternative route via the A27 is less than two minutes and is described more fully in the next section. The full feedback survey report from the 2023 engagement is provided at Appendix B.
33. The local County Councillor for the Fareham Titchfield Division in which the scheme is located is Cllr Pankhurst, who has been involved during the development of the proposals and consulted during both periods of engagement. Cllr Pankhurst has confirmed that she is supportive of the scheme and would like to see it implemented. In addition, Fareham Borough Council and its Leader Cllr Woodward have confirmed that they are supportive of the scheme being implemented. The two County Councillors for the adjacent division of Fareham Town, Cllrs Bryant and Latham, are currently opposed to the scheme.
34. In the Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) a positive impact on people with the protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Pregnancy & Maternity, and Sex has been identified from this decision, as well as a positive impact on Poverty. This is primarily due to the scheme providing a safer and more pleasant environment for all users by the removal of through traffic, which will be particularly beneficial for people with the above characteristics. The impact on people with all other protected characteristics is assessed as being neutral. Full details of the EIA are provided on Hantsweb.

### **Transport Data Summary**

35. Transport data was recorded at key points "pre" (August 2020), "with" the modal filter (November 2021) and "post" (March 2023) installation of the temporary filter, where it was possible to do so, however, with the exception of the March 2023 data, the data sets cannot be considered neutral for making conclusive comparisons, due to the impact of Covid 19 on travel behaviour.
36. Journey time data was recorded during the peak traffic periods, 07:00-09:30, and 16:00-18:30 on a regular weekday (not including Monday or Friday) and

each timed run was completed several times, to account for expected natural variation in times due to traffic queues and other factors. The number of vehicles using Fishers Hill was also recorded, along with the number of people walking and cycling along the road.

37. The plan below shows the two surveyed journey time routes between Point A at the western end of Fishers Hill and Point B at the eastern end. One route goes along Fishers Hill and one via the shortest alternative route along the A27.



38. The survey results can be summarised as follows, with the full traffic data report provided as Appendix C.

39. Walking:

- walking along Fishers Hill takes approximately 7.7 minutes compared with 22.8 minutes on the alternative route; and
- pedestrians: The number of pedestrians walking on Fishers Hill "pre" scheme was very low (27) and increased significantly with the scheme (up to 120). A higher percentage of women walked "with" the scheme in place.

40. Cycling:

- cycling along Fishers Hill takes approximately 2.3 minutes compared with 6.8 minutes on the alternative route; and
- cycling levels remained similar "pre" and "with" scheme. However, cycling levels generally reduce in autumn and winter months, so the similar levels may suggest that the scheme encouraged continued cycling at this time. Levels of cycling have increased since the scheme was removed.

41. Motor vehicle:

- across three sets of timed drives (pre / with / post), the longest average journey time via Fishers Hill was 1 minute 47 seconds (March '23);
- the longest average journey time via the alternative route was 3 minutes and 30 seconds (March '23);
- in all runs the increase in journey time by car using the A27 compared with Fishers Hill is consistently under 2 minutes;
- on Fishers Hill, traffic flows have reduced “pre” to “post” scheme from an average of 2,452 to 2,082 motor vehicles in 24 hours;
- mean average speeds have reduced from 30.6 to 27.7mph, while the 85th percentile speed (the speed at or below which 85 percent of the drivers travel) has reduced from 35.9 to 32.2mph;
- compliance with the posted 30mph speed limit has increased from 51.3% to 70.6%. 29.4% of drivers are still driving above the posted limit; and
- average journey times from the 2023 surveys are shown in the table below, as 2023 had the highest recorded journey times.

<b>Difference in Average Vehicle Journey Time: March 2023</b>			
<b>Direction</b>	<b>Diversion via A27</b>	<b>Through Fishers Hill</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Westbound</b>	00:03:30	00:01:47	00:01:43
<b>Eastbound</b>	00:02:40	00:01:39	00:01:02

**Other Key Issues**

42. The journey time data in the section above shows that the actual increase in vehicle journey time via the A27 (the most likely alternative route if Fishers Hill had a permanent modal filter), is consistently less than two minutes. When this is viewed alongside the perceived journey time increase from the 2023 survey reported in paragraph 30, it's clear that most people's perception of the increase in journey time is quite different to reality. It is noteworthy that of the people who had a broadly correct perception of the actual increase in journey time there are very high levels of support for the modal filter.
43. It should be noted that to comply with cycle design guidance, cycling in mixed traffic is only suitable for most users where speeds are below 20mph and daily flows are up to 2,000 vehicles. Whilst the flows have reduced closer to 2,000, the speed on Fishers Hill is still too high for most people to feel comfortable and safe cycling.
44. Another key consideration is Healthy Streets, which is a human-centred framework for embedding public health in transport, public realm, and planning. The 10 Healthy Streets Indicators focus on the human experience needed on all streets, everywhere, for everyone. Healthy Streets indicators are something that



Hampshire County Council is embedding within all its active travel schemes and is looking to roll out this approach to viewing streets across the County. The existing layout of Fishers Hill has a Healthy Streets Score of 54 (out of 100), while the proposed layout i.e. with modal filter, has a score of 82, thus representing a significant improvement.

45. Transport policy is also a key wider consideration behind the recommendation to implement the scheme. The County Council's draft new Local Transport Plan (LTP4) proposes transformational changes which aim to:
  - shift away from planning for vehicles, towards planning for people and places;
  - meet national priorities to decarbonise the transport system;
  - reduce reliance on private car travel; and
  - support sustainable economic development and regeneration; and promote active lifestyle.
46. The Fishers Hill modal filter is one of the first of what is expected to be a number of similar modal filter type schemes being proposed over the coming years, as the County Council seeks to achieve the above LTP aims and their associated outcomes, which include: Healthy, Happy and Inclusive lives; and Reducing transport related carbon emissions to net zero by 2050. There are two LTP4 Guiding Principles sitting behind this, both of which the Fishers Hill scheme accords with: Significantly reduce dependency on the private car; and Providing a transport system that promotes high quality, prosperous places and puts people first.
47. Hampshire County Council Asset management agreement will be required during the detailed design stage, due to the nature of what is being proposed being relatively uncommon at the moment, in terms of the provision of a gate across an existing road, although examples of similar arrangements do exist in Hampshire.
48. In terms of the impact on Funtley village to the north of Fareham (which was raised during the engagement), all respondents to the 2023 survey from Funtley opposed the modal filter due to concerns over increase in traffic through their village. However, it should be noted that only around 10% of respondents said they would travel through Funtley as their alternative route (31% of these were from Funtley), which is not unexpected given that Funtley is some distance from Fishers Hill and is not on the most direct alternative route.
49. Suitable pre-scheme traffic flow data at Funtley is not available, however, data taken with, and post scheme show that flows in Funtley have reduced since the removal of the scheme. This could be a result of general reductions in traffic flow in the area as seen at Fishers Hill; a displacement of traffic to Fishers Hill, or a combination.
50. The County Council would commit to monitoring traffic through Funtley if a permanent modal filter was installed on Fishers Hill. The County Council would also commit to monitoring the operation of the A27/Mill Lane junction post implementation (most displaced traffic is expected to use this junction) and there is potential to make some improvements for traffic on Mill Lane if required.

## **Finance**

51. Up to £65,000 of funding for the implementation of this scheme has been allocated from Local Transport Block (LTB) grant funding that is held by the County Council. Significantly more LTB funding is held by the County Council, so in the unlikely event that scheme costs exceed this amount, additional funding will be allocated via approval from the County Council's internal Capital Programme Board.
52. The cost of implementing the permanent modal filter including the associated Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is currently estimated to be in the region of £52,000 based on the work that has been undertaken to date. This includes a 44% allowance for contingency plus a further 10% to allow for inflation to 2024 prices. A further 25% has been added to this estimate to allow for any other unforeseen costs, which has resulted in the £65,000 funding allocation. It is unlikely that the scheme will end up costing this much and any unspent allocation will be returned to the LTB. The estimate does not include any costs for monitoring post-implementation, which would need to be met from a separate budget.
53. A final cost estimate will be produced once a decision has been made over whether to proceed with the implementation of the scheme or not, to avoid any abortive works.

## **Legal procedures**

54. In order to implement the modal filter on a permanent basis, it will first be necessary for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to be applied for and subsequently approved.

## **Performance**

55. The modal filter will improve a key link in the local walking and cycling network and is on a route that is identified for improvements with the Fareham Borough LCWIP. It will also provide a safer environment for people walking, cycling and wheeling along Fishers Hill, due to the significant reduction in vehicular traffic along the road, as currently people walking, cycling and wheeling along the road have to share the space with motor vehicles.
56. The improvements should enable more people to walk, cycle and wheel along Fishers Hill due to the safer and more pleasant environment, which will contribute to improved health outcomes and improved social inclusion and will support a reduction in the number of trips by private vehicle by offering improved alternative options, potentially contributing to a reduction in carbon emissions and an improvement in local air quality. More details on Carbon impact are provided in the section further below.
57. The measures will therefore contribute towards the County Council's Strategic aims of people in Hampshire living safe, healthy and independent lives; people in Hampshire enjoying a rich and diverse environment; and people in Hampshire enjoying being part of strong, inclusive communities.

58. The provision of the two new modal filters, i.e. the new gates and posts will have an impact on the Council's future maintenance liability, but given the small scale and low value of the proposed measures, the impact is considered to be negligible.

### **Climate Change Impact Assessments**

59. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.

### **Climate Change Adaptation**

60. The preparation and adoption of the Fishers Hill modal filter will not, in itself, have any discernible impact on climate change. By increasing opportunities for active travel, this scheme will hopefully make a positive step towards more sustainable modes of transport. Because the scheme is a 'minor works scheme' there is no change to the project site or surrounding area's current climate change adaptations. This scheme promotes active travel in order to respond to climate change demands by reducing emissions from vehicles.
61. By utilising the Council's climate change vulnerability assessment tool this scheme scored 95 out of 100, which means that the scheme is not expected to be vulnerable to climate change in any discernible way.
62. The vulnerabilities to climate change listed for this scheme are minimal. Fishers Hill could be subject to extreme weather conditions, being open public highway and has close proximity to the River Meon. This would mean that active travel could be restricted because of torrential rains and potential surface flooding. However this is the case with Fishers Hill as it stands currently, therefore adaptations are not necessary as the project is not changing the environment.
63. The modal filter would however help to increase active and sustainable travel connectivity and opportunities and delivers appropriate infrastructure for further active travel opportunities.

### **Carbon Mitigation**

64. The project has potential to decrease carbon emissions on the project site (Fishers Hill) as implementing a modal filter will largely limit through motorised traffic and will reduce trips that are not primarily local in purpose.
65. Whilst the scheme will mean that most vehicles currently using Fishers Hill each day will need to take a slightly longer journey, the delivery of active travel and 'healthy streets' schemes such as this one will help to contribute to achieving targets on carbon reduction by encouraging and helping people to switch away from making trips by private vehicle. This will, ultimately and in combination, make a positive impact in helping the switch away from carbon-based transport modes and offset the increase in vehicle journey distance.

66. By implementing a modal filter, the scheme is helping promote sustainable methods of transport as well as discouraging car use for local journeys. As part of a series of small schemes, this will aim to reduce and mitigate carbon emissions.

## **Conclusions**

67. This main aim of this scheme is to filter motorised through traffic on Fishers Hill, to reduce the negative impact on local residents/businesses and allow safer and more comfortable use of active and sustainable modes of travel, such as walking and cycling.
68. The scheme has been subject to public consultation and traffic surveys, the data from which has been thoroughly analysed and is reported in this report. The data demonstrates that the impact of the scheme would be relatively minimal on vehicular journeys times and this is considered to be acceptable in light of the scheme benefits.
69. There are high levels of support from the most directly affected local residents and businesses in the vicinity of Fishers Hill and wider opposition to scheme was in many cases based on an incorrect perception of the increase in vehicle journey time.
70. The scheme supports many HCC polices, including the Fareham borough LCWIP and the emerging Hampshire LTP4 and represents a significant improvement in the assessed Healthy Streets score for Fishers Hill. It also promotes through traffic using the most appropriate routes, i.e. the A27.
71. The impact on traffic flows through the Mill Lane / A27 junction and the village of Funtley would be monitored should the scheme be implemented and mitigating actions taken if required.
72. In light of the above it is recommended to proceed with the implementation of the scheme.

**REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Strategic Plan**

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

Other Significant Links

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

<b>Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents</b>	
<p>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.)</p>	
<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:**

- 2.1. In the Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) a positive impact on people with the protected characteristics of Age, Disability, Pregnancy & Maternity, and Sex has been identified from this decision, as well as a positive impact on Poverty. This is primarily due to the scheme providing a safer and more pleasant environment for all users by the removal of through traffic, which will be particularly beneficial for people with the above characteristics. The impact on people with all other protected characteristics is assessed as being neutral. Full details of the EIA are provided in the accompanying report.