

# HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Member for Hampshire 2050 and Corporate Services
<b>Date:</b>	24 October 2024
<b>Title:</b>	Whitehill & Bordon Transport Strategy Update
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Hampshire 2050

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### Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on transport priorities in Whitehill and Bordon and the surrounding areas, to review existing strategies against the Local Transport Plan 4 and to gain agreement for a shortlist of potential schemes to be investigated through feasibility studies and design work.

### Recommendation

2. That the Executive Member for Hampshire 2050 and Corporate Services approves the revised list of priority schemes for Whitehill & Bordon, as outlined in this report.
3. That the Executive Member for Hampshire 2050 and Corporate Services approves the allocation of £2 million of developer contributions to refund local resources contributed by Hampshire County Council to the delivery of the relief road scheme.

### Executive Summary

4. There is a need for Hampshire County Council to review and amend the scheme priorities in Whitehill & Bordon to reflect changes to transport policy and changes in movement and behaviour that has occurred post pandemic and as a result of the new development and infrastructure in the area.
5. The relocation of the Bordon Army Barracks presents a unique opportunity to regenerate Whitehill & Bordon in a sustainable way that meets the housing needs identified in the local plan. This included introducing new facilities, movement infrastructure, a new town centre, improved public transport and a mix of housing, employment and local shops. In 2010 an Eco-Town Masterplan was developed to provide the framework for delivering 4000 new homes and the regeneration of the town centre, including the new A325 Relief Road with associated traffic management measures and a transport hub in the town.

6. Along with the Masterplan, in 2010 Hampshire County Council in partnership with East Hampshire District Council and the developer published a Transport Strategy for Whitehill & Bordon in recognition of the anticipated growth. Following the Eco Town principles of the time meant the strategy was ambitious in seeking to reduce the need to travel by car by providing alternative choices. It was also very practical in that it recognised that in such a rural location the car would play a vital role in connecting future populations and providing for their transport needs and so included significant investment in road capacity and in traffic management measures to deal with possible traffic growth in rural villages and towns near to the development. The measures identified were intended to be flexible and adapt to changing travel patterns and need. This report does not fundamentally change the strategy, but it seeks approval of a refreshed prioritisation of measures. This reflects the changing need for different types of interventions, what has been delivered so far and the available funding.
7. This comes at a time following the adoption of a new Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) for the whole County in February 2024. The new LTP4 places a greater focus on delivering a carbon neutral, resilient and inclusive transport system designed around people. It is consistent with the Eco-Town principles originally envisaged for the development.
8. With significant changes in population, travel patterns and a changing policy focus, the new prioritisation reflects current priorities. The new strategy will:
  - apply the principles and policies of the Hampshire Local Transport Plan (LTP4)
  - inform the priorities for the spend of the remaining Section 106 (S106) funding from the development.

## **Contextual information**

### **Previous Delivery of Transport Measures to Mitigate Development Impacts**

9. Since the strategy was developed in 2010 the County Council has led many schemes through to delivery and secured significant sums of external funding to deliver transport improvements on top of those required to be funded by the developer.
10. The delivered schemes are summarised below:
  - Arrival Square – infrastructure improvements to improve access to the new town centre, connect new and existing residents to the local area and encourage through traffic to use the A325 Relief Road
  - A325 Relief Road – New highway providing an alternative route around the town centre for through traffic, including walking and cycling provision. Delivered in partnership with local developers, Homes England and EM3 Local Partnership
  - Hogmoor Road to Oakwood Court footway improvement
  - cycle crossing improvements on A325 Relief Road
  - Budds Lane traffic management and active travel improvements scheme
  - High Street, Chalet Hill and Woolmer Way Junction improvements
  - Petersfield Road, Sutton Field Road/A325, Firgrove Road/Liphook Road Junction improvements.

11. Hampshire County Council has also played a key role in securing funding for and delivery of the Green Grid Green Loop (GGGL) in partnership with East Hampshire District Council. This is a pedestrian and cycle network around Whitehill & Bordon made up of two sections. The Green Loop is a 7-mile loop encircling and connecting the new and existing town, and the Green Grid is a secondary network of footpaths and cycle routes connecting the town to the Green Loop.
12. There are a number of schemes that currently have funding committed to delivering them, but not yet at the delivery stage:
  - Budds Lane Parallel crossing
  - Hogmoor Road cycle facility and associated traffic management improvements
  - GGGL – Lindford Link
  - Traffic management improvements along the Blacknest Corridor
  - There is also a payment to be made to Surrey County Council for junction mitigation works required due to the development in Hampshire.

### **Revised Priorities**

13. To help inform the future transport priorities in Whitehill & Bordon a series of engagement sessions were undertaken with Hampshire County Council officers, East Hampshire District Council and Whitehill Bordon Redevelopment Company (the developer). Discussions were held to gain a further understanding of the current stage of development in the area, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and any suggested schemes highlighted. Feedback was also sought from Councillors from Hampshire County Council, Councillors from Whitehill Town Council, the Ministry of Defence – Defence Infrastructure Organisation, Homes England and Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership.
14. The key topics that emerged from the sessions were (in no particular order):
  - active travel crossing provision
  - traffic levels on streets
  - public transport enhancements
  - infrastructure improvements and maintenance
  - parking provision and standards
  - car club/car sharing
  - behaviour change/travel planning
  - improving traffic management
  - the role of the A325 Relief Road
  - the town centre
  - modal filters
  - the community travel plan.
15. The feedback gathered from the engagement sessions was reviewed and considered against the new LTP4 policies and four key themes were identified. These are:
  - creating a place for people
  - improving public transport provision
  - enhancing active travel connections
  - future transport choices.

16. The list of schemes recommended to progress forwards to feasibility using developer contributions is:
- redesign of the Station Road/Camp Road junction to provide better pedestrian accessibility
  - introduction of a modal filter on Station Road
  - measures to reduce traffic on Budds Lane by way of a modal filter or one way road
  - improving existing walking, cycling and vehicle parking facilities in the high street to further reduce traffic and lower vehicle speeds
  - introducing seating areas and planters on the high street and town centre areas
  - enhancement of the 18 public bus service to Farnham to half hourly frequency, exploring options to time buses to meet rail services.
  - upgrades made to bus stop facilities in town
  - improving walking and cycling crossing facilities on the A325 relief road
  - upgrading pedestrian and cycle facilities at Oakhanger Road and Budds Lane junction
  - completing the Green Grid Green Loop
  - introduction of car club vehicles in the future
  - future introduction of micromobility scheme
  - refresh of the community travel plan and associated action plan
  - recommendation that lower parking standards are considered for development within close proximity of the town centre.
17. Some of the schemes recommended for further study have been subject to initial feasibility studies and further work would be required to develop detailed proposals. Other proposals are yet to have initial feasibility carried out and will need to be developed from the first stages. All of these schemes would support residents of Whitehill & Bordon in accessing local facilities and services using active modes by adding to the network of safe and convenient walking and cycling routes. They will further support residents using public transport services to access rail links rather than relying on a private vehicle. They will also help create stronger placemaking themes across the older parts of the town to integrate them into the new development by creating greener spaces and putting people first. There is a strong policy basis within the LTP4 for prioritising these schemes as they accord with the two guiding principles below, as well as a number of the core policies.
- giving people a choice of high quality travel options
  - proving a transport system that promotes high quality, prosperous places and puts people first.
18. The implementation of the recommended schemes needs to be carefully phased in line with the remainder of the development, to reflect the demand in services by residents, and to align with the future triggers for payment of developer funding yet to be received by Hampshire County Council.
19. East Hampshire District Councils Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation has proposed further development allocation in Whitehill & Bordon. The revised Transport Strategy (attached as an Appendix) is only based on development

that was committed at the time of writing and the recommendations reflect this. If there are future allocations made in Whitehill & Bordon the Transport Strategy may need to be revised again to reflect this and any other changes that arise from East Hampshire's emerging local plan.

## **Finance**

20. A total of £14.3 million plus an additional overage payment of £2 million of developer contributions is expected to be received by Hampshire County Council for Transport as part of the Whitehill & Bordon regeneration project.
21. To date a total of £8.8 million of developer contributions has been received by Hampshire County Council for Transport measures. This amount includes previously agreed contributions but also an overage payment, which has increased the expected value held to date. These funds have already been spent on identified transport schemes or are committed to transport schemes that are currently being progressed. There is £2 million of funding allocated to repay Hampshire's local resource money that was lent to help fund the delivery of the relief road scheme.
22. In January 2015 Hampshire County Council gave full approval for the construction of the Whitehill and Bordon relief road, which was opened to the public in January 2019. The overall cost of the scheme was £27 million, funded by developer contributions, Homes England, EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership and Hampshire County Council. The funding from Hampshire County Council included £2 million allocated in 2015 from local resource money to aid delivery against various time constraints. Now that the scheme is complete and relevant developer contributions have been secured, it is proposed to refund the County Council's contribution.
23. The total contribution yet to be received by Hampshire County Council is expected to be £7.5 million. Allocations are due in 2025, 2028 and 2032, subject to development progress.
24. The developer funding has allowed Hampshire to seek additional funding via competitive bidding processes which require match funding to be available in order to bid. To date Hampshire County Council has secured and invested £26 million in transport infrastructure on top of the developer contributions. It will continue to seek such additional funding sources to maximise resources going forward.

## **Consultation and Equalities**

25. The proposals detailed within this report have been shaped by engagement with County Council and East Hampshire District Council officers and members, the developer and Town Council representatives. These discussions were held in the format of workshops and were framed within the changing need and policy context.
26. A neutral impact on people with protected characteristics has been identified from this decision. The undertaking of feasibility studies will not result in any change and therefore tangible impact. It is the delivery of schemes at a later

stage that will deliver change and therefore will be subject to their own equalities impact assessments. Therefore, whilst any transport schemes that are identified as a result of the feasibility studies are expected to have positive impacts on a range of protected characteristics such as age, disability, pregnancy & maternity, poverty and rurality by providing improved access and connectivity by non-motorised transport, they will be subject to their own Equalities Impact Assessment as schemes progress to delivery.

### **Climate Change Impact Assessments**

27. 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.
28. The development of feasibility studies, as is proposed in this report will not, in itself have any discernible impact on climate. Any impacts will come at a later stage should any schemes be taken forward for delivery. However, in due course, the delivery of measures to improve walking and cycling facilities in Whitehill & Bordon and the surrounding area has potential to reduce carbon emissions due to a reduction in car trips that could be achieved.

### **Climate Change Adaptation**

29. The climate change adaptation tool was not applicable to this report because the decision relates to a number of possible individual projects, which are subject to assessment individually at the point at which they come forward. The document itself is more strategic in nature and therefore doesn't have a direct impact on climate change.

### **Carbon Mitigation**

30. The climate change mitigation tool was not applicable to this report because the decision relates to a number of possible individual projects, which are subject to assessment individually at the point at which they come forward. The document itself is more strategic in nature and therefore there are no clear mitigation measures which could be taken forward at this time.

**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>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:</b>	yes

**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.)**

Document

Location

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:**

A neutral impact on people with protected characteristics has been identified from this decision. The undertaking of feasibility studies will not result in any change and therefore tangible impact. It is the delivery of schemes at a later stage that will deliver change and therefore will be subject to their own equalities impact assessments. Therefore, whilst any transport schemes that are identified as a result of the feasibility studies are expected to have positive impacts on a range of protected characteristics such as age, disability, pregnancy & maternity, poverty and rurality by providing improved access and connectivity by non-motorised transport, they will be subject to their own Equalities Impact Assessment as schemes progress to delivery.