

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment
Date:	17 September 2019
Title:	Project Appraisal: Andover – Access to Town Mills Car Park from the A3057 and Riverside Improvements
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this paper is to seek approval and provide details for the proposed scheme to improve pedestrian and cycling accessibility in the Town Mills area of Andover. A local plan and general arrangement scheme plans are included in the appendices to the report.

Recommendations

2. That the Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment approve the Project Appraisal for Town Mills, Andover Car Park access and riverside Improvements, as outlined in this report.
3. That approval be given to procure, spend and enter into necessary legal agreements, dedication and contractual arrangements, in consultation with the head of legal services, to implement the proposed improvements to Town Mills, Andover car park access and riverside improvements, as set out in this report, at an estimated cost of £1,303,000 to be funded from Enterprise M3 LEP funding, Market Town Funding, Public Realm Improvements (PRIP Funding), Test Valley Borough Council contributions, and developer contributions.
4. 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.

Executive Summary

5. The improvements will see a new access provided into the Town Mill car park from the A3057 Western Avenue, which will allow the current access off Bridge Street to be closed to through traffic for use by cyclists and pedestrians.

6. The existing footpath through the Pocket Park will be widened to three metres for use as a shared pedestrian/cycle facility. Improved street furniture including new benches, will also be provided throughout the area to create more seating for people visiting the park.
7. The current access into the Town Mills car park via Bridge Street, will be closed off to vehicular traffic and converted to a pedestrianised area. The use of Yorkstone paving and other high-quality materials will enhance the area adjacent to the River Anton. A new 3.5 metre wide shared use footway will also be provided to improve cycle links in and around the town centre. The proposals are further detailed in the appendices of this report.

Contextual Information

8. Andover is a large market town in the north of the County sitting north of the A303 strategic link to the west. In recent times it has seen a number of major housing developments implemented, namely at East Anton, Picket 20, and most recently Picket Piece, to the east of the town and in the west re-development of the former Andover Airfield for commercial uses. These major development areas have increased the population of the town and the predicted number of trips within the town. This has highlighted the need to ensure that the town centre is accessible for pedestrians and cyclists, encouraging the growing population to undertake journeys to and from the town by active modes. This also assists in supporting the town's vitality and vibrancy and the local economy.
9. The current proposal and the previous scoping study stem from a community street audit (CSA), which was undertaken in the Town Mill area by Test Valley Borough Council in 2009. It was attended by various local community groups and interested stakeholders. The CSA highlighted a number of issues which the community group felt would improve access and the quality of the local environment. In brief, the issues identified related to seating, camber of footways, making routes accessible to all users, plus providing environmental enhancements to encourage and invigorate the local economy.
10. An original scoping brief was completed by Test Valley Borough Council in June 2015, which was commissioned to look at the options available for providing a new accessible route from Andover Railway Station to Anton Mill Road, via the town centre. Part of this corridor route focussed on providing a shared route along Town Mill Road and through the Pocket Park to the north. The scoping study also outlined the opportunities where potential investment would deliver the greatest value, including retaining and further utilising the two open spaces provided in the town centre: Pocket Park and the riverside area. Works were also suggested to improve the appearance and function of the River Anton, ranging from the introduction of marginal areas, faggoting and planting, to softening the water's edge, reducing the flow of the River Anton.
11. The potential to deliver a shared pedestrian and cycle route alongside the River Anton, along Town Mill Road was identified by the scoping study. The review of the public space was driven by the desire to make access to the main shopping and retail areas of the town centre easier and more attractive.

It was further suggested that the infrastructure would support the local economy, businesses and facilities in the town by incentivising more active forms of travel through the delivery of an improved public realm. A £513,000 bid to M3 Local Enterprise Partnership Local Growth Fund bid was secured by Test Valley Borough Council in May 2019, and this will be used for the Town Mills improvements including the new car park access from the A3057, as well as the improvements to Pocket Park and Town Mill Park/River Anton areas. Test Valley Borough Council will also use the secured funding for future enhancements to the Town Mill Park, such as aesthetic lighting and Wi-Fi provision.

12. Andover was designated a Sustainable Travel Town under the Local Sustainable Transport (LSTF) Fund 2012 – 2015; and in 2014 it was designated as one of the Enterprise M3 LEP's 'Step Up Towns', due to its potential regional economic importance.
13. Significant investment funded through LSTF alongside funds secured from developers has enabled Hampshire County Council and Test Valley Borough Council to support more active forms of travel along key corridors into the town. This has supported travel from the major development areas to key services and facilities offered by the town.
14. Test Valley Borough Council has highlighted several key locations where public realm improvements would join some of the key routes together, and this could create attractive places in the town to dwell and further incentivise active forms of travel into the town centre.
15. Andover Town Access Plan 2015 (Supplementary Planning Document) identifies that the riverside is currently underutilised. It proposes a shared use cycle/footway along the river with signage aimed at improving the link between Town Mill, the Pocket Park, and the town centre with measures to enhance the street scene.
16. Test Valley Corporate Plan: Investing in Test Valley 2015 – 2019 includes as one of its key issues the aim to ensure that the community can 'enjoy the natural and built environment' of Test Valley. Making the most of existing outdoor spaces, parks and recreational area is important. The River Anton and Pocket Park are important spaces within the town for enjoyment and use by the community.
17. Despite the popularity of both the Town Mill area and the Pocket Park to the rear of Town Mill Public House, access to the area remains poor. Therefore, increasing sustainable travel choices for residents and visitors alike, to and through these destinations, has been identified by Test Valley Borough Council as a key driver for future interventions.
18. The growth of the town and concomitant increase in private car use, combined with the impact of projected changes in demographic trends, (a predicted increase of around 50% in the number of people aged 65 or over between 2001 and 2026) together with the aspirations of the National Planning Policy Framework (to ensure the vitality of town centres whilst contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives) means that local

authorities have an obligation to improve the accessibility of local services and facilities. This is reflected in Hampshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2031, which seeks a vision of 'safe, efficient and reliable ways to get around a prospering and sustainable Hampshire.'

Finance

19.	<u>Estimates</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>% of total</u>	<u>Funds Available</u>	<u>£'000</u>
	Design Fee	150	11.6	EM3 LEP	513
	Client Fee	30	2.0	PRIP	228
	Supervision	63	4.8	Market Town Fund	307
	Construction	1,052	81.0	TVBC	133
	Land	8	0.6	Developer Contribution	122
	Total	1.303	100.0	Total	1,303

20.	<u>Maintenance Implications</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>% Variation to Committee's budget</u>
	Net increase in current expenditure	6.2	0.005%
	Capital Charge	125.0	0.078%

Programme

21.

Gateway Stage				
	3- Project Appraisal	Start on Site	End on Site	4- Review
Date (mm/yy)	09/19	01/20	06/20	06/21

Scheme Details

22. A new access will be constructed to the existing Town Mills car park from the A3057 Western Avenue. A pedestrian refuge island and uncontrolled tactile crossing will also be provided to allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross the new car park access and continue their journey along the A3057. The existing entrance to the car park is currently from Town Mills Road via Bridge Street, and this will be physically closed to vehicular traffic, and a pedestrianised area will be created along the River Anton with a 3 metre wide shared use

footpath/cycleway. The new car park access will provide consistency for visitors as all of the town centre car parks are accessible via the main ring road (A3057).

23. The use of Yorkstone paving and buff coloured Macadam surfacing will enhance the area adjacent to the River as well as the new 3m wide shared use footpath/cycleway. New street furniture such as benches will provide more seating along the river route. Verge areas and planting will also be provided along the river route to improve the aesthetics of the area.
24. A new uncontrolled tactile crossing point will be provided in Bridge Street which will allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross and join the existing shared use facility south of Bridge Street which follows the River Anton.
25. The existing car park area for the Town Mills Public House will be improved and much of the parking bays removed in order to allow better accessibility for pedestrians travelling north along the river and joining Pocket Park. The remaining car parking spaces (approximately 4-5 spaces) will be reserved for staff of the Town Mills Public House.
26. The Town Mill car park is currently owned by Test Valley Borough Council, and due to the changes of the proposed access arrangements, will require modification to the parking bay configurations. The capacity of the car park will be reduced, and the changes will require amendments to the street, lighting which has also been considered in the extent of this scheme. The changes to the car park will not affect the current maintenance liability as Test Valley Borough Council will still be responsible for the maintenance once the work is completed.
27. The existing footpath in Pocket Park which leads from the Town Mills Public House to the Chantry Centre will be widened to three metres and constructed in buff colour Macadam. An additional three metre footpath will be constructed from the existing footway on the east side of the A3057. This will continue through Pocket Park and join into the existing footpath through the park, which will improve accessibility for pedestrians to the park and town centre. The proposals are further detailed in the appendices to this report.
28. Changes to existing parking restrictions will be required to the existing Town Mill car park access (Town Mills Road) from Bridge Street, and a Prohibition of Driving order will be made as the current car park access will be physically closed via full height kerbs and bollards. These amendments to the traffic orders have been progressed by the Hampshire County Council Traffic Management team.

Departures from Standards

29. None.

Consultation and Equalities

30. Test Valley Borough Council previously undertook community street audits in 2009 and 2015, and a formal consultation was undertaken between 20th – 31st July 2017: this included two public information events. A feedback form was made available at the two exhibition events as well as online. The results of this consultation indicated overall support for the enhancements, which did not include the new access to Town Mill car park. The consultation report is further detailed in the appendix to this report.
31. The local County Councillor, Cllr Martin Boiles, has been apprised of the proposals and is in support of these. Councillor Boiles is also the current chairman of the Andover Town Centre Improvements Board.

Statutory Procedures

32. Part of the improvement proposals will see Town Mills Road physically closed off to through traffic in order to pedestrianize the area adjacent to the River Anton. As such, a prohibition of driving Traffic Regulation Order is currently being progressed by the Hampshire County Council Traffic Management Team and will be in place prior to commencement of any work on site, subject to the statutory process.

Land Requirements

33. The majority of the works will be constructed within the public highway. The extent of the proposed widening (an additional one metre) to the existing footpath in Pocket Park is not currently public highway and will require a deed of dedication to have the extra metre width dedicated as public highway. This is currently owned by Test Valley Borough Council and the deed of dedication is being progressed by the Hampshire County Council estates team. This dedication will be completed prior to work commencing on site.

Maintenance Implications

34. The improvements will have a modest impact on future years maintenance budgets, and this is expected to be approximately £6,192 per annum. The Riverside area of Town Mill is public highway and the enhanced materials being proposed there will be maintained by the County Council. An agreement has been reached with Test Valley Borough Council which will see the latter maintain the proposed areas of planting within Pocket Park and the Town Mill area, as well as any proposed material that is considered outside the normal pallet of materials currently used by Hampshire County Council.
35. The Asset Management team has been consulted on the proposals and has approved the design and material specified.

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.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

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

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Town Mills Accessibility and Environmental Improvements Consultation report http://documents.hants.gov.uk/transport-projects/TownMillparkimprovementproposal.pdf	<u>November 2017</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 protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are 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 in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

This decision has been assessed as having a neutral impact on groups with protected characteristics. The scheme is designed to improve accessibility to Andover town centre and the River Anton for pedestrians and cyclists. The proposals will also provide better continuity in the existing cycle network and aims to reduce the dominance of motor vehicles in the town centre. This will also have a positive effect on improving air quality and providing people with sustainable alternatives to access the town centre.