

# HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment
<b>Date:</b>	11 March 2021
<b>Title:</b>	Hartford Bridge Flats Junction Improvement Scheme: Project Update
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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### Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide a project update on the proposed scheme to improve journey time and congestion at the A30/A327 Hartford Bridge Flats Junction by introducing a fourth arm to the existing roundabout, and to seek the necessary approvals to progress the scheme to Project Appraisal. A local plan and general arrangement scheme plan are included in the appendices to the report.

### Recommendations

2. That the Executive Member for Economy, Transport, and Environment approves the design approach for the Hartford Bridge Flats Junction Improvement Scheme, as set out in this report.
3. That authority is given to seek planning permission to progress the construction of the new section of carriageway.

### Executive Summary

4. The addition of a fourth arm on the A30/A327 Hartford Bridge Flats Junction will address the needs of traffic seeking to travel southbound on Blackbushes Road from the A327 and the A30 eastbound. This traffic will no longer be required to divert east along the A30 and U-turn at the downstream A30 Blackbushe Roundabout, which currently adds pressure onto the adjacent junction along this important secondary link to the M3 in this area.
5. Specifically, the provision of a fourth arm will result in additional benefits as follows:
  - significant journey time savings are expected to result from the removal of the need for u-turning at the A30 Blackbushe Roundabout, as there

are approximately 240 vehicles making a U-turn in the AM peak hour and 290 in the PM peak hour alone. This causes significant delay to traffic on the A30 westbound and the Blackbushe Airport access. In addition, journey time savings are expected for vehicles that currently U-turn to travel south along Blackbushes Road. In the AM peak hour this is estimated to be 300 vehicle minutes saved, with a corresponding saving of 360 vehicle minutes in the PM peak hour;

- in terms of safety, there will be reduced accident potential associated with a 4-arm roundabout compared to the 3-arm roundabout, due largely to the removal of the requirement for traffic to U-turn at the Blackbushe roundabout; and
- vehicles currently wishing to travel to North Fleet from a westerly direction are likely to use Fleet Road in Hartley Wintney and travel via Elvetham Heath where roads are unsuitable for strategic traffic movements. At present, there are excessive traffic movements via Elvetham Lane by vehicles seeking to avoid the detour to Blackbushe roundabout when travelling from Hartley Wintney and turning right into Blackbushes Road. The fourth arm is required as a priority in order to redress these issues linked to extraneous traffic movements.

### **Contextual Information**

6. The scheme will potentially support employment at Blackbushe Airport adjacent to the junction as well as other enterprises using the Blackbushe Centre and will also support the retention of approximately 7,000 jobs in the Hartley Wintney/Yateley area that contribute around £288 million Gross Value Added to the local economy and supporting proposed innovation and development in the Hart District Local Plan.
7. Improved accessibility to planned new and existing employment sites will provide the opportunity to maximise skill sets for current and new workforces, by supporting business growth and investment.
8. The proposed fourth arm will accelerate the delivery of strategic opportunities by exploiting the junction's location between regional centres. Regionally, the measures support spatial focus and place-based growth by improving transport network efficiency, easing congestion, and removing barriers to business. Locally, enhanced A327 corridor connectivity will directly support the Growth Town ambitions for Farnborough and Step-up Town ambitions for Aldershot.
9. Economic benefits will be secured through reductions in extraneous trips on the network, reducing journey distances and time.

## Finance

10. It is estimated that the total scheme will cost approximately £2,121,000. It is planned that this will be funded with £500,000 from Local Transport Funding and the remaining £1,621,000 will be funded by existing developer contributions.
11. The proposed scheme will have an impact on the maintenance budget in future years. This is expected to be approximately £4,500 per annum.

## Programme

12.

	Gateway Stage			
	3 (PA)	Start on site	End on site	4
Date (mm/yy)	Estimated 9/21	11/21	11/22	11/23

## Scheme Details

13. Blackbushes Road will be re-aligned and the new section of carriageway will be around 300 metres long and will match the cross section of the existing road.
14. The scheme involves the construction of a fourth arm of the existing roundabout junction with the A30 and A327. There will be installation of new street lighting and removal of existing lighting made redundant by the scheme, as well as drainage and planting provision for the works.
15. The old section of Blackbushes Road will be closed and appropriate landscape reinstatement measures taken.
16. The main impact of the proposals will be the removal of some nineteen trees. To mitigate this impact, it is proposed to remove the old road surface and plant new trees in the area between the old and new roads. The area of this is around 2200 square metres, so could easily support the new trees required for mitigation. This could consist of a formal layout with some feature trees, or a more informal woodland scheme with a denser planting mix. Provided the canopy cover can be replaced then, it would be considered adequate mitigation. Therefore, to provide adequate mitigation for tree loss, a suitable planting scheme will be prepared and implemented.
17. A general arrangement layout plan, land dedication plan, and a location plan are included in the appendices of this report.

## **Departures from Standards**

18. This will be reported as part of the final Project Appraisal approval.

## **Consultation and Equalities**

19. This scheme has the full support of Councillor David Simpson, who has been campaigning for these improvements since 2015 and was involved with the development of the original Phase one improvements to construct the original roundabout on the A30 Hartford Bridge Flats.
20. The scheme has the support of Hart District Council and District Councillors.
21. Although there has not been recent consultation, the scheme was well supported by local residents and businesses as part of discussions around the second phase (the fourth arm) during phase 1 scheme consultation in 2014/15. There will of course be an opportunity for public engagement as part of the planning process.
22. There will be an informative public engagement process, which could include a public exhibition in the local area for residents and businesses pending the current Covid 19 pandemic situation at this time. If this is not achievable due to the Covid-19 pandemic, then an online public information process will be undertaken so members of the public and stakeholders can provide their views and comments as well as find out more about the scheme including timescales. Scheme information is also available on the designated Hampshire County Council scheme website.

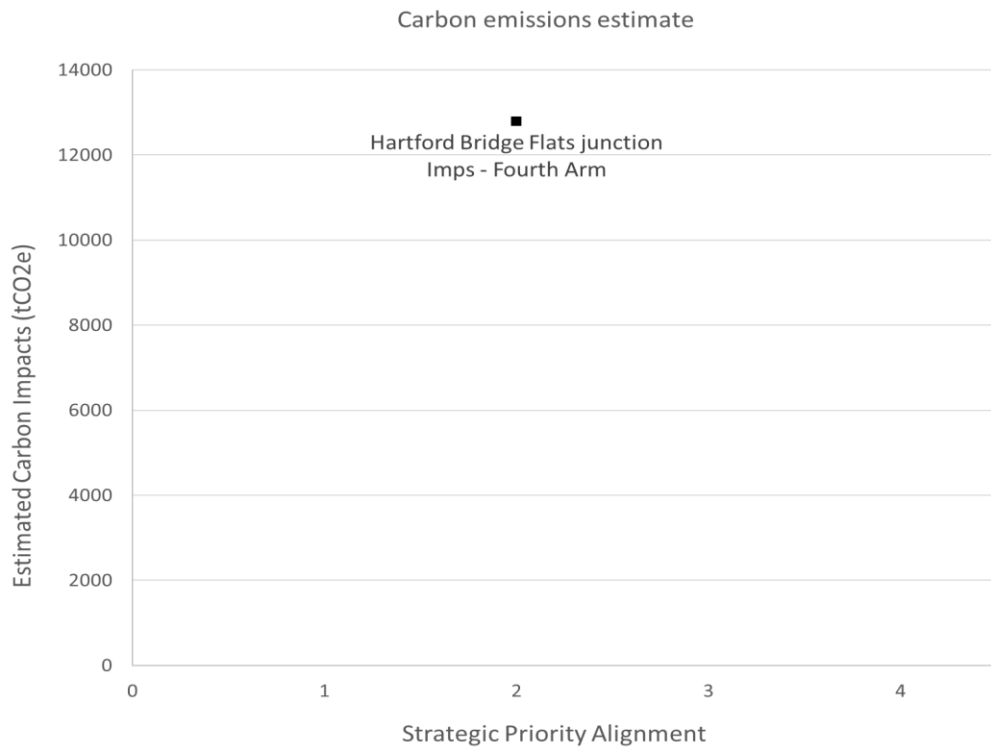
## **Climate Change Impact Assessments**

23. 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.
24. Drainage will be designed to cope for 1 in a 100 year storm. The surrounding area is flat in nature and all green area and planted with trees at present.
25. In extreme circumstances, strong winds and storm events arising from Climate Change in the future have the potential to affect the proposed infrastructure, but generally the scheme is considered to have low vulnerability to climate change.
26. Carbon emissions will arise from this project from the construction of new roads and installation of drainage elements and lighting.
27. Significant journey time savings are expected to result from the removal of the need to U-turn at the A30 Blackbushe Roundabout, as there are approximately 240 vehicles making a U-turn in the AM peak hour and 290 in

the PM peak hour alone. This traffic causes significant delay to traffic on the A30 westbound and the Blackbushe Airport access. In addition, journey time savings are expected for the traffic that currently no longer needs to U-turn, and estimates are that in the AM peak hour this would equate to be approximately 300 vehicle minutes saved, with a corresponding saving of 360 vehicle minutes in the PM peak hour.

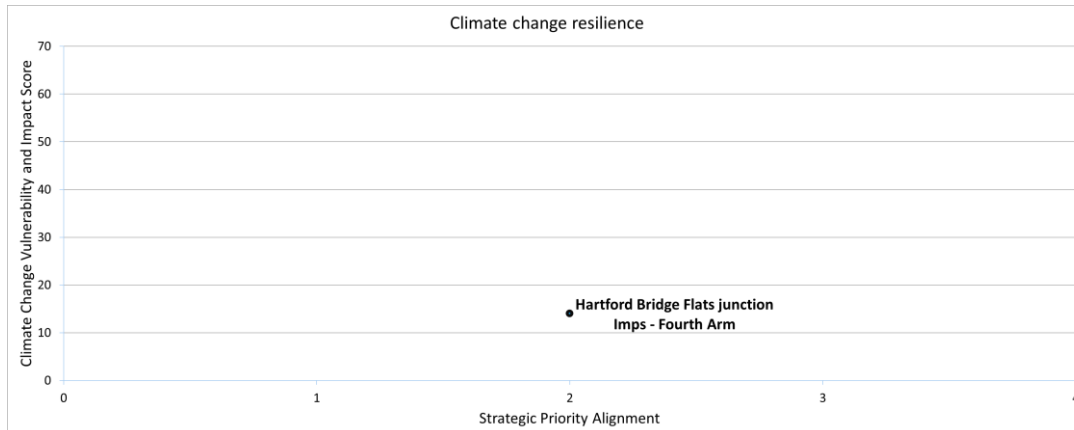
## 28. Carbon emissions

The graph below provides a simple visual representation of the estimated carbon emissions generated from the scheme against the number of strategic priorities it meets.



## 29. Climate Change Resilience

The graph below provides a simple visual representation of the scheme's estimated vulnerability to climate change against the number of strategic priorities that the scheme meets.



## Statutory Procedures

30. An amendment to the existing Traffic Regulation Order on Blackbushes Road will be required for the speed limit and clearway. In addition, the revised status of the old Blackbushes Road may require a traffic order, but full details will be reported as part of the final Project Appraisal.
31. Under Schedule 2, Section 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act, planning permission will be required by Hampshire County Council in order to progress with the construction of the new section of carriageway which will tie into the 4<sup>th</sup> arm of the existing roundabout to the south of Blackbushes Road. Authority is sought in this report to progress the necessary planning application.

## Land Requirements

32. In order to implement the scheme, Hampshire County Council will need to acquire the land that is to incorporate the fourth arm. The Elvetham Estate owns the freehold interest in the land, and CEMEX a mineral extraction lease. Terms have provisionally been agreed (subject to contract) with both parties to enable the required land to be transferred to the County Council. Solicitors have been instructed and draft documentation prepared.
33. The scheme design has been revised in order to 'future-proof' the capacity of the junction. Consequently, the area of land required to deliver the scheme has increased (4,502m<sup>2</sup>). The Elvetham Estate requires a security fence to be erected along the new highway boundary alignment which will be incorporated into the design drawings.
34. Terms agreed for acquiring the subject land were approved on 1 December 2020 by the Assistant Director - Property Services under powers delegated by the Executive Member for Policy and Resources.

35. A land plan is shown in Appendix 2.

### **Maintenance Implications**

36. The Economy, Transport and Environment Department's Asset Management team has been consulted on the proposals and has agreed to the highway materials. The proposed scheme will have an impact on the maintenance budget in future years, this is expected to be approximately £4,500 per annum.

## **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**

<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

**Other Significant Links**

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

The proposals of this report are procedural and will have a neutral impact on people with protected characteristics. The scheme will be assessed in more detail at the point of Project Appraisal, but it is expected to reduce unnecessary travel, improving overall journey times and safety at the junction with little to no adverse impact on people with protected characteristics.