

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

Decision Maker:	Executive Member - Environment
Date:	14 October 2010
Title:	Hillhead Road Highway Collapse
Reference:	2113
Report From:	Director of Environment

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1. Executive Summary

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to update on progress and issues associated with the collapse and remediation of Hill Head Road, Hill Head, Fareham.

1.2. This paper seeks to

- set out the background to the project;
- look at key issues surrounding the project;
- consider the finance for the project and the impact on the budget; and
- briefly consider the next steps for the project.

2. Contextual information

2.1. Following a collapse of the highway on the night of the 17th January 2010, the road has remained closed for safety reasons. Pedestrians have been permitted to pass on the footway on the north side of the road (furthest from the collapse area) and light vehicle access has been maintained to the frontage properties affected. A diversion for through traffic has been in place and is via Solent Road, Short Road and Old Street.

2.2. The County Council's Geotechnical Engineer has produced an expert report on possible causes of the collapse. His findings have been communicated to the affected landowners and to the local residents. This collapse occurred in private property on the slope supporting the highway, causing damage to properties as well as the highway.

2.3. The County Council's Chief Executive's Department has provided legal opinion following consultation with counsel with a view to protecting the council's legal interests.

2.4. There are two options available:

- (i) A highway only solution to repair the highway only. This is likely to involve piling up to 11 metres in depth over the affected length of approximately 16 metres and reinstatement of the highway.

The private land would be left in its current state. Any works carried out by the owners subsequently would need to ensure that the highway is not further damaged nor repair works destabilised. In addition, all works to stabilise the bank to enable the properties to be returned to their original condition will need to be carried out from the highway and this is likely to require a further road closure.

- (ii) Provide a comprehensive solution to stabilise the bank for both highway and the properties benefit. This would require cooperation and a financial contribution from the affected landowners.

This is likely to require bored piling to at least 14 metres depth. This will then enable the bank to be remediated as part of a single scheme without risk to the highway. On completion of piling and the bank remediation the highway can be reinstated.

The detail design has yet to be developed, consequently pile depths and costings are approximate.

2.5 There is considerable local public dissatisfaction with both the use of the diversion route and the length of time taken to ascertain liability and progress the remediation works.

2.6 The Council has met with all the affected landowners and the representatives of three of them and are in correspondence about the best way to resolve this. Progress is slow because of a belief in the local area that the slip was caused by heavy traffic and is therefore the fault of the highways authority. There is no evidence to substantiate this.

3. Finance

3.1 The total cost of resolving the landslip for highways only solution is likely to be in the region of £500,000. Budgetary provision has been made in the highways special maintenance budget to provide for this.

4 Communications

4.1 The Council has been in regular correspondence with the affected landowners. Progress has been slow for the reasons given above but officers have been proactive in trying to persuade the affected owners and their insurers to engage in constructive dialogue.

- 4.2 As regards the wider community the Council is responding to the local residents concerns on the diversion route who are dissatisfied with the situation. Understandably they are frustrated at the slow progress and a petition was received from residents at a public meeting of the Hill Head Residents Association.
- 4.3 The local Member, Councillor Knight, has been fully engaged with the discussions.
- 4.4 Updates can be given to all residents when further information is available, which is likely to be in November when officers will be further advanced with procurement of a solution.

5 Future direction

- 5.1 HCC's obligation as a Highway Authority is to restore the highway for public use. Counsel have advised HCC that 18 months from the time of collapse to repair would be deemed as reasonable to meet the County's obligations. In this respect HCC would wish to progress with a solution to resolve the highway issue quickly. Officers have provided deadlines for the affected landowners to confirm their intentions. As they have been unresponsive HCC intend to develop a highway solution only.
- 5.2 Officers have also asked for cooperation with regard to weather proofing the slope to reduce the risk of further movement during the coming winter and anticipated poor weather.
- 5.3 Further delay in progress, if the Council waited until positive responses were received, would undoubtedly lead to an impact on the overall programme, which has been stated as 18 months to re-open the road from the date of the collapse.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 That the project advance on the basis of a highway only solution.
- 6.2 That, should an appropriate agreement with the affected residents be secured in a timely manner to enable scheme completion by August 2011 then, subject to all additional costs being met by those parties, the scheme be amended to include the property remediation works.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

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.)

DocumentLocation

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1 Once constructed the scheme will enhance accessibility over the current temporary situation. This would be applicable to whether a highways only solution or a solution in collaboration with residents was implemented.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. Not applicable.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

The construction process will utilise energy for mobilisation and construction. There should be no ongoing energy commitment except any standard maintenance.

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

Not applicable.