

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Environment
Date:	9 March 2010
Title:	Whitehill Bordon emerging Transport Strategy and Eco Towns growth funding transport allocation
Reference:	1382
Report From:	Director of Environment

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1. Executive Summary

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to seek approval for the release of the emerging Transport Strategy as a draft and developing document to support the development of the Eco Town proposals, and to guide future policy and strategy decisions for the town. The report also seeks approval for the allocation of Eco Town growth funding for transport projects in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

1.2. This paper seeks to:

- Provide background information on the Whitehill Bordon Eco Town project, and summarise the current stage of the project;
- Set out the emerging Transport Strategy for the Eco Town, and seek approval for its release as an emerging strategy and as a basis for consultation;
- Summarise the conclusions of a number of draft technical reports undertaken to guide the emerging transport strategy and seek that their conclusions are noted;
- Provide information on forthcoming funding from the Eco Town's growth fund and seek approval to the allocation of funding to transport projects; and
- Set out the future stages of the project.

2. Contextual information

Background to the Whitehill Bordon Eco Town project

- 2.1. A Defence Training Review is ongoing which proposes to relocate significant military training facilities across the country from all strands of Defence together under a combined services training facility in South Wales. Should the Defence Training Review proceed (decision expected later in 2010) the significant military presence in Bordon would be re-located.
- 2.2. In anticipation of the release of substantial military land being considered as part of the Defence Training Review, a 'Green Town Vision' was produced for the town in 2005 (updated in 2008), which sought to create a 'thriving sustainable community', bringing forward re-development of the vacated land.
- 2.3. The South East Plan sets out that a Strategic Development Area will be allocated in Whitehill Bordon which will provide 5,500 dwellings. The South East Plan does recognise that should it not be possible to provide 5,500 dwellings in Whitehill Bordon then there is no expectation that these dwellings must be provided elsewhere in the East Hampshire district.
- 2.4. Building on the 'Green Town Vision', and in response to the Government's announcement of the Eco Towns programme, East Hampshire District Council applied for Eco Town status for Whitehill Bordon. The town was shortlisted in April 2008, and confirmed as one of the first four Eco Towns in July 2009.
- 2.5. Following announcement of Whitehill Bordon as an Eco Town, the District Council commissioned the production of a Masterplan for the future town. The Masterplan was subject to public consultation in late 2009, and is due for approval by mid-2010.

The Emerging Transport Strategy

- 2.6. Under the major development envisaged by both the South East Plan and the Eco Town programme, the population of the town is likely to grow significantly from an existing population of around 14,000, to some 30,000 by 2036. This significant growth needs to be brought forward in a sustainable manner, and one that will not create unacceptable environmental or social impacts.
- 2.7. The town is accessed via the A325, which connects the A3 with the A31 via Farnham. The A325 at Bordon carries approximately 16,000 vehicles per day, with approximately 40% of this classified as through-traffic. Flows are forecast to reduce by 8% following the opening of the A3 Hindhead Tunnel in 2011.

- 2.8. The town currently offers limited facilities in terms of employment (outside the garrison) retail and community provision, and suffers from a poor public perception. There is also limited public transport provision, reflected in the high rate of out-commuting and dispersal of trips, low levels of public transport usage and heavy reliance on the private car.
- 2.9. Whitehill and Bordon currently has no direct railway service and public transport provision is limited. There are currently two bus routes serving destinations north to Alton, Farnham and Aldershot and south towards Liphook and Haslemere. These routes operate on an hourly frequency, which is not conducive to encouraging greater use.
- 2.10. A series of work has been undertaken to inform the transport strategy for the re-development of the town. This work includes:
- Alan Baxter Transport Strategy (Draft)
 - Mott Macdonald Community Transport Study
 - Mott Gifford Rail Pre-Feasibility Study (Draft)
 - Mott Gifford Sub-regional Bus Study (Draft)
 - Mott Gifford Park and Ride Study (Draft)
 - WSP Transport Assessment (including Travel Plan).
- 2.11. The Eco Towns Planning Policy Statement, released in July 2009, sets a number of targets and requirements for Eco Towns. In relation to transport these include:
- (i) enabling at least 50% of trips originating in the town to be made by non-car modes, with the potential to increase this to 60% over time;
 - (ii) close future monitoring of the carbon impact of transport as part of a low-carbon approach to travel;
 - (iii) inclusion of measures to ensure that travel demand from private vehicles does not cause congestion on local roads;
 - (iv) inclusion of measures to support children walking and cycling safely and easily to school; and
 - (v) all homes provided within a maximum walking distance of 800 metres to the nearest school.
- 2.12. In order to meet the requirements of the Eco Town, and to guide future development in a sustainable and acceptable manner, a Transport Strategy is being developed. The emerging Transport Strategy aims to:

“Achieve sustainable growth in the long term by delivering an integrated low carbon transport system that will be at the forefront of innovative thinking, providing high-quality, affordable and deliverable alternatives to the private car, managing transport demand and maximising the use of existing assets to become an example for modern day sustainable living”.

- 2.13. In order to achieve this, the emerging Transport Strategy seeks to:
- (i) support exemplar sustainable economic regeneration and town growth;
 - (ii) improve the environment by reducing congestion and pollution;
 - (iii) enable sustainable movement by developing high-quality public transport, walking and cycling alternatives to the private car;
 - (iv) balance the needs for people to travel against the importance of protecting the environment;
 - (v) reduce journey length and the need to travel outside of the town; and
 - (vi) manage car demand within, through and outside of the town maximising the use of existing assets.
- 2.14. The overarching themes for the emerging Transport Strategy are:
- (i) **Reducing the Need to Travel outside the town** – By providing the appropriate jobs and facilities within the town itself, travel to surrounding towns and service centres can be significantly replaced by more local journeys and trip lengths reduced. Minimising both the number of trips and their length will provide positive benefits to the operation of the local roads and to the environment.
 - (ii) **Managing Car Demand within and outside to the town** – While acknowledging that the car will play an important role in the operation of the future town, pro-active management of car trips within and external to the town can minimise the negative impacts of car travel, and appropriately mitigate and overcome adverse implications of car use.
 - (iii) **Enabling Sustainable Transport for all trips** – Transport within the town will be re-prioritised away from the car and high-quality public transport systems and walking and cycling routes will be provided to enable easy and safe access to facilities and jobs. New approaches to sustainable transport will be employed to promote a shift away from the private car.
- 2.15. In order to achieve the Strategy, and create a sustainable and exemplary development, a range of measures will be implemented:

Measure	Description
Masterplan	Co-location of facilities, services and population.
A325 Re-design	Designing down of the existing A325 to deter traffic movement, to create a quality of space and to make easily accessible by all modes of travel.
Innovative Street Design	High-Quality Manual for Streets-led street design throughout the town to provide for all users of the street - to include home zones, car-free and car-reduced areas and shared space.
Connected Network of Streets	Construction of an interconnecting network of streets to disperse and distribute traffic.
Commercial Street	Construction of a Commercial Street parallel to the A325, to remove through-traffic from the town centre and provide access to the new development areas.
Eco Car Club	Introduction of an Eco Car Club, using environmentally friendly vehicles, available at discount prices to residents of the Eco Town.
Highway Improvements	Targeted highway improvements to add capacity where needed and to manage the transport network to maximise benefit.
ITS Systems	Utilisation of ITS technology to manage town travel, provide interactive information and parking advice.
Transport Hub	Iconic transport Hub in the centre of the town - provides for transport modal interchange and as a centre for town transport needs.
Movement Corridor	Provision of a non-car movement corridor between the Transport Hub and the potential rail station - potential for innovative people-moving system.
Eco Car Share	Creation of an Eco Car Share scheme to encourage car sharing for essential car trips, particularly commuter trips outside of the town.
Potential for Direct Rail Connection	Investigate the potential for direct rail connection to Whitehill Bordon, both for light and heavy rail, including the development of the business case to support rail provision and routing.
High-Quality Bus System	Establishment of a high-quality three-tier bus system, providing regular and attractive services at the Town, Local and Sub-regional level, utilising environmentally friendly vehicles.
Bus Infrastructure	Provision of improved bus infrastructure throughout the town to include improved bus waiting facilities, storage depot, high-quality modern and interactive waiting facilities.
Bus Priority Measures	Public transport priority improvements at junctions and along key corridors, including the wider A325 and the disused rail corridor. Consideration of bus-only highways, bus gates and bus lanes.

Measure	Description
Real-Time Passenger Information	Provision of a fully interactive high-quality Real-Time Information System, available at the stop, the Hub and at Home.
Smart-Ticketing	Installation of smart-ticketing system to allow seamless transfer between mode, linked with the Eco Car Club, the Eco Cycle Hire scheme, the three-tier bus system and the rail network.
Walking and Cycling Improvements	Improvement of existing and creation of new walking and cycling links between the local communities, including potential cycle links to Alton, Bentley and Liphook to connect to rail.
Green Grid	Establishment of a Green Grid of pedestrian and cycle links within and around the town, where safe and attractive walking and cycling facilities are provided.
Eco Cycle Hire Scheme	Provision of a Cycle Hire scheme, providing the latest electric cycles, alongside conventional pedal cycles, conveniently located around the town.
Cycle Parking	Provision of secure high-quality cycle parking facilities in the town, and at the home.
Smarter Choice Measures	Intensive application of Smarter Choice Measures - including personalised Journey Planning, Information dissemination, travel events, vouchers and incentives.
Town Transport Team	Establishment of the Town Travel Team to co-ordinate, promote and implement the Transport Strategy at the local level.
Changing and Showering Facilities	Provision of showering and changing facilities in the workplace.
Travel Plan	Establishment of a Town Travel Plan to co-ordinate the sustainable mode and Smarter Choices agenda, to encompass individual travel plans for major employers and travel generators, including education.
Broadband Provision	Installation of Broadband within homes.
Remote Working Facilities	Provision of working space within the town.

- 2.16. In order to achieve the Eco Town targets, strong parking policies will be required, which will include restrictive car parking within the town where alternative opportunities for travel will exist. The development of a parking policy is central to the emerging Transport Strategy, and is expected to be carried out during 2010.
- 2.17. There will be a need for the existing and future residents of the Eco Town to understand and embrace low carbon living. Promotional and marketing campaigns will be carried out to promote alternatives to the car.

- 2.18. As an emerging Transport Strategy, significant additional work will be required before a final strategy can be determined. Work is currently ongoing to provide additional detail and evidence to guide and support the emerging Strategy, and further work needed has also been identified:
- (i) **Rail Feasibility Study** – To develop the engineering pre-feasibility study, and provide the full assessment and business case appraisal of future direct rail connection for the town.
 - (ii) **Development of a Town Transport Model** – A Transport Model to quantify and test the impact of the Eco Town, and to inform the future Transport Strategy and Infrastructure requirements of the town.
 - (iii) **Development of the Transport Assessment** – A detailed Transport Assessment to provide a sound evidence base for future planning decisions.
 - (iv) **Walking and Cycling Strategy** – A strategy to provide high-quality walking and cycling routes in and to/from the town.
 - (v) **Smarter Choices Study** – A strategy for the Smarter Choices and demand management approach to the Eco Town.
 - (vi) **Parking Strategy** – A strategy for car parking provision and control within the town, at both the origin and destination.
 - (vii) **Freight Strategy** – A strategy to manage and control deliveries in a sustainable way.
- 2.19. In order to support the early stages of development, and to bring forward demonstrator projects to showcase innovative and exemplary design and technology, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has made a growth fund available. As an important element of the future strategy for the town's development, a proportion of this funding will be made available to bring forward early transportation projects. This is set out in further detail in Section 3.
- 2.20. Critical to the success of the Eco Town in achieving its Vision and Objectives will be continued and close working between a range of different organisations and bodies.

Background Transport Reports

- 2.21. In order to support the Eco Towns proposals, and in development of the emerging Transport Strategy, Hampshire County Council commissioned a series of studies in 2009 to consider the potential for sub-regional connections to the town. These studies considered:
- Rail pre-feasibility

- Sub-regional bus strategy
- Potential for park and ride.

Rail pre-feasibility

2.22. The Study provided an engineering feasibility assessment of six potential route options for light and heavy rail. The report:

- Considered available and required track-bed for each
- Prepared feasible route alignments
- Made high-level assessment of impacts on the existing rail network
- Considered environmental and engineering constraints to delivery
- Provided an initial assessment of route journey time
- Provided high-level cost estimates for each route option

2.23. The pre-feasibility study concluded that all six routing options are 'feasible' from a purely engineering perspective, given appropriate funding, but that the diversion of the main Portsmouth–London line into the town should be disregarded due to operational issues.

2.24. The report identified the need for substantial further work to consider the business case for direct rail connection, the environmental constraints to delivery and the next level of engineering feasibility work.

Sub-regional bus strategy

2.25. This report considered the future potential bus strategy for the town and its local area, including projections for patronage, funding, routing and vehicle type (including alternative fuel vehicles). The report proposes the development of a three-phased bus service:

- (i) **Phase 1** – Improving Existing Bus Routes in terms of their frequency and coverage, improving connections to Alton, Liphook, Aldershot and Haslemere. It is also proposed to extend the Havant to Liss Service to serve the town. Each route would operate a 20 minute frequency.
- (ii) **Phase 2** – Providing new limited stop linkages to Guildford, Aldershot and Farnborough to provide employment connections using a combination of 20 and 30 minute services.
- (iii) **Phase 3** – Providing new limited-stop linkages to Basingstoke and Petersfield providing half hourly connections.

- 2.26. The study concluded that the roll-out of the full bus strategy would cost between £8.6 and £9.2 million per annum. Should the Eco Town mode share targets be met, future bus services would have a good prospect of becoming self-financing.
- 2.27. The report stated that in order to provide a self-financing service, and achieve the Eco Town targets, strong controls on car parking would be required and service subsidy would be required during the development stages.

Park and Ride Study

- 2.28. The report considered the potential for inclusion of Park and Ride in the town from a policy perspective, considered the level of demand that would be required to make Park and Ride viable and the scale and location of facilities that may be needed. The report also provided a broad cost estimate for achieving Park and Ride in the Eco Town and the level of bus service that would be needed to effectively serve Park and Ride.
- 2.29. The report concludes that Park and Ride could play a role in the overall Parking Strategy for the town, and would provide for residual car trips. Should Park and Ride be considered, two sites should be provided, one north and one south of the town, accessed from the A325. Bus based transit would provide connections from the Park and Ride sites to the town centre and key destinations, using a 5 minute peak frequency and 15 minute frequency off-peak, along with strong walking and cycling linkages.

3. Finance

- 3.1. To support the early stages of the Eco Towns programme and to bring forward demonstrator projects which showcase sustainability and innovation, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), in association with the Home and Communities Agency (HCA) and the Department for Communities, Families and Schools (DCSF), have made a fund of £62.5 million available for the first four Eco Towns. This funding is available for 2009/10 and 2010/11.
- 3.2. The first year’s funding has recently been announced, and allocations of the funding between the first four Eco Towns released.

	2009-10 (CLG / HCA)	2010-11 (CLG / HCA)	DCSF	Total
Whitehill Bordon	£9.35m	£2-6m	£1.34m	£12.675 - £16.675

- 3.3. Whilst the first year funding allocation is set at £9.35 million, the 2010/11 funding allocation will range between £2 million and £6 million, dependent upon demonstration of delivery of first year projects.

- 3.4. Of the total funding available to the town, £3 million has been set aside for transport projects across the two years. Whether this full funding will become available will depend in part on the ability to deliver the first wave of early wins. In addition to the £3 million allocated for transport projects, there is commitment to a Rail Feasibility Study (£250,000) and a Studies Budget allocation of around £2 million. East Hampshire District Council took a report to its Members on 24 February 2010 setting out how the first wave of funding would be spent.
- 3.5. In transport terms, it is important to deliver meaningful early win projects that are visible on the ground, demonstrate innovation and delivery and also contribute towards the future aspirations for the town. The table below sets out the proposed allocation of the £3 million transport fund.

Early Win Project	Allocation (£)
Whitehill Bordon Travel Web Site	15,000
Eco-Cycle Hire Scheme	50,000
Car Sharing measures	10,000
Personalised Journey Planning Project (Stage 1)	75,000
Whitehill Bordon Eco-Car Club	250,000
Evidence Base Development	250,000
Marketing and Promotion Campaign	100,000
Electric Charging Points	20,000
Town Transport Manager (Smarter Choices)	200,000
Improved Cycle Parking	50,000
Personalised Journey Planning Project (Stage 2)	75,000
Walking and Cycling Improvements	1,100,000
Improved Bus Services	500,000
Bus Stop Improvements	250,000
Transport Hub (Phase 1)	55,000
Total	3,000,000

- 3.6. In addition to the main Transport Schemes allocations, a studies budget of £2 million is likely to be available to bring forward necessary studies to enable the Eco Town to be constructed. The table below sets out those transport studies which are sought as part of this funding, and which are put forward for consideration to the Whitehill Bordon Executive Group and East Hampshire District Council.

Study Title	Description	Stage	Timescale	Study Cost (£)
Studies Funded				
Rail Feasibility Study	Develop business case for direct rail connection to the town	DCLG Funded - Study being commissioned	6 - 9 months	250,000
Smarter Choices Study	Develop and determine the content of the Smarter Choices toolkit	DfT Funded - Study underway	3 months	50,000
Evidence Base	Development of the Evidence Base for the Eco-town proposals, including a Transport Model	Funding secured in Eco-Towns Fund - To commence April 2010	9 - 12 months	250,000
				550,000
Further studies				
Walking and cycling Strategy	Develop opportunities for walking and cycling (Green Grid) and provide strategy of route prioritisation, feasibility design and funding potential	Not yet commenced - No funding Secured	3 - 5 months	100,000
Parking Strategy	Strategy to define the car parking provision and control within the town	Not yet commenced - No funding Secured	4 months	50,000
Traffic Management Strategy	A strategy to deliver traffic management improvement works on roads leading to and from the town	Not yet commenced - No funding Secured	4 months	75,000
Freight Strategy	A strategy to provide for Freight Transport to and from the town	Not yet commenced - No funding Secured	3 months	30,000
				255,000

- 3.7 As scheme promoter, the funding set out for the Eco Town at Whitehill Bordon will be given to East Hampshire District Council. Within its report to Members on 24 February 2010, the District Council included a recommendation that the funding allocations for transport and education projects be given directly to the County Council. Discussions on the mechanisms required to administer this are continuing.

4. Future direction

- 4.1. East Hampshire District Council has recently consulted on its Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy, and set out its Preferred Policies for the Eco Town. The LDF Core Strategy Submission, which allocates Whitehill Bordon as an Eco Town, is due for submission in mid 2010.
- 4.2. An SPD is due to be produced following adoption of the Core Strategy that will provide supplementary planning guidance for the Eco Town.
- 4.3. The emerging Transport Strategy for the Eco Town will be formalised in due course following completion of current and future planned work, and following consultation.
- 4.4. East Hampshire District Council considered a report on 24 February 2010 which authorised the expenditure of the Eco Towns grant-funding and approved that the grant-funding for transport and education projects be passed directly to the County Council. The Whitehill Bordon Executive Group will meet on 12 March 2010 to advise and agree the allocation of the grant funding between particular projects outlined in the funding bid to DCLG.
- 4.5. Following receipt of funding set out in Section 3, Hampshire County Council will be tasked with delivering the Early Win projects described.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1. That the emerging Transport Strategy for Whitehill Bordon Eco Town referred to in paragraph 2.12 be approved as a basis for consultation.
- 5.2. That the recommendations of the background reports on rail pre-feasibility, sub-regional bus strategy and the potential for Park and Ride referred to in paragraph 2.21 be noted, the draft reports be finalised and their contents be considered further in the development of the emerging Transport Strategy for Whitehill Bordon.
- 5.3. That the allocation of Eco Town growth funding for transport projects set out in paragraph 3.5 be approved, and that the projects be taken forward for delivery subject to receipt of funding from East Hampshire District Council.
- 5.4. That the schedule of further study work set out in paragraph 3.6 be recommended to East Hampshire District Council and the Whitehill Bordon Executive Group for consideration for funding from the studies budget.

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):	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u> None	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u> Eco Town PPS (DCLG)		<u>Date</u> July 2009

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>
Emerging Transport Strategy	Electronic
Rail Pre-Feasibility Study	Electronic
Sub-regional Bus Study	Electronic
Park and Ride Study	Electronic

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

1.1. N/A

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1. N/A

3. Climate Change:

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

The emerging Transport Strategy sets out a sustainable strategy to reduce the impact of development, reduce carbon emissions and to promote sustainable travel. The implementation of the strategy will reduce carbon emissions and energy consumption, and deliver sustainable growth.

The Early Win projects are designed to provide initiatives and infrastructure which will encourage the use of sustainable travel modes and will reduce carbon emissions and energy consumption.

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

The emerging Transport Strategy will develop to become the long term strategy for the development of significant growth in East Hampshire. The strategy focuses on tackling climate change through the promotion of sustainable travel, the reduction in travel (particularly by car) and the management of car travel.