

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Member – Environment and Transport
<b>Date:</b>	3 April 2012
<b>Title:</b>	Aldershot Town Access Plan Adoption
<b>Reference:</b>	3785
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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### 1. Executive Summary

1.1. The purpose of this report is to present the Aldershot Town Access Plan (TAP) for adoption by Hampshire County Council.

1.2. This paper seeks to provide:

- background information on Aldershot Town Access Plan and its development;
- information on how the Aldershot Town Access Plan will be used; and
- information on how the Aldershot Town Access Plan will be monitored and updated.

1.3. A draft Aldershot TAP was approved by the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment for consultation in March 2011. Consultation on the Plan was carried out between 1 and 24 December 2011. This included a web based consultation and distribution of the Draft TAP document to Stakeholders for final comments. The TAP report and proposals have been amended following the outcome of the consultation, with the final TAP report reflecting these changes.

### 2. Contextual information

2.1. The Local Transport Plan (2011-31) (LTP3), gives a high level strategic vision for transport in Hampshire and provides the context for delivery of more detailed transport policies. Town Access Plans, which were originally presented as a policy tool in the second LTP remain an important mechanism in the LTP3 for helping to secure and prioritise transport improvements at the local level. It is also the intention that District Statements will be developed.

These will cover whole districts/Boroughs, encompassing the TAP and non TAP areas. District Statements will address the lack of detailed local transport policy outside of the TAP areas but will closely refer to the TAP strategies as an important evidence base for transport initiatives. The District Statement for Rushmoor will give the strategic overview of transport priorities and proposals for the borough, with the Aldershot TAP giving more detail on proposed accessibility improvements within the Aldershot Town Centre area.

2.2. Aldershot Town was selected as one of a number of settlements in Hampshire to benefit from a Town Access Plan. It is well known as the home of the British Army. Parts of Aldershot are within the top 20% of deprived wards in the county, with local polls indicating that Aldershot has a poor image.

2.3. Major development is proposed to the north of the town centre, there are plans to develop over 4,500 residential units in the future. In addition the proposed retail development for the Westgate site in Aldershot which will provide retail, and leisure facilities has recently commenced.

2.4. These improvements along with the proposed transport and accessibility improvements identified in the TAP will help to revitalise the town and improve conditions for all users.

2.5. The broad aims of the TAP are:

- to encourage the residents of Aldershot and other local areas to choose Aldershot town centre as their preferred destination for shopping;
- to encourage access by sustainable modes i.e. walking, public transport and cycling;
- to support the economy of Aldershot town centre by providing transport infrastructure to facilitate development and attract more visitors;
- to promote social inclusion; and
- to integrate transport proposals with land use development.

2.6. The objectives of the TAP are;

- to encourage Aldershot town centre to be vibrant and vital with a wide range of shops and services;
- to provide improved facilities and priority for pedestrians;
- to provide for the visually and mobility impaired;
- to improve flow of traffic in the town centre reducing delays and wasted miles;

- to provide an adequate supply of car parks with easy access;
- to provide improved priority and facilities for buses;
- to provide improved facilities and access to the rail station;
- to reduce the number of accidents, including for pedestrians and cyclists;
- to improve the quality, maintenance and management of the public realm;  
and
- to improve information for travellers to help with their choices.

### **3. Consultation**

- 3.1. The TAP has been developed jointly by Hampshire County Council and Rushmoor Borough Council through the Steering Group chaired by Councillor Kimber (who is also the former Mayor of Aldershot) and supported by Councillor Neal. The TAP has also been developed in conjunction with the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the Town Centre.
- 3.2. Consultation has principally taken place through the Task and Finish Group. Stakeholder meetings and other events have also been held which included a consultation exercise and workshop in relation to the emerging Aldershot town centre SPD. Urban Practitioners, appointed by Rushmoor Borough Council, held an 'Action Aldershot' Test and Review Workshop on 15 February 2007 at Princes Hall, Aldershot. Officers from Hampshire County Council and Rushmoor Borough Council attended the workshop and engaged with the Stakeholders. 64 local stakeholders, business representatives and residents attended. The purpose of the event was to provide local stakeholders with the opportunity to feedback on the projects and schemes being developed through the SPD and to suggest additional issues and solutions. Ideas and potential solutions have come from the public and stakeholder events, officers and consultations and following data analysis and a review of past studies and their proposals.
- 3.3. Following consultation with Key Stakeholders, a workshop and public exhibition, a project task and finish group, which included Rushmoor Borough and County Members identified a set of aims and objectives for the TAP. These are set out in item 1.3 of the Town Access Plan.
- 3.4. During the period of the emerging TAP the public were consulted regarding their views on accessibility, public transport and their views regarding the Town Centre.
- 3.5. The results of these consultations, along with feedback from earlier workshops, walkabouts, questionnaires and surveys. has contributed towards the outcome of the emerging Aldershot TAP.

- 3.6. Approval was given by the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment to carry out consultation on the draft Aldershot TAP in March 2011.
- 3.7. The document was made available for the public and stakeholders consultation on the Hampshire County Council website during December 2011. Copies of the document were also provided at Rushmoor Borough Council and displayed in the reception area and circulated to various Stakeholders.
- 3.8. During the period of the emerging TAP Project Appraisals have been approved to take forward two schemes which have been identified in the draft TAP. These have been consulted on. The first accessibility improvement, which has now been completed, is in Birchett Road, Aldershot, the second is pedestrian and accessibility improvements along Victoria Road, Aldershot, which is due to be implemented shortly.
- 3.9. Comments received during the consultation for those schemes, coupled with comments received during the draft Aldershot TAP consultation has resulted in minor amendments to the documents, however, a more significant amendment made is to review Taxi provision and parking in Aldershot Centre in the future. A total of 15 comments were received and some minor changes and updates to the draft report have been carried out.

#### **4. Finance**

- 4.1. It is recognised that implementation of any schemes outlined in the TAP will be subject to available funds coming forward, and in the short-term the most likely source of monies will be Section 106 contributions associated with development in the area. The capital programme approved by the Executive Member for Environment on 26 January and Cabinet on 11 February 2011 identified funding towards emerging TAP priorities.
- 4.2. As well as funds agreed as part of the capital programme, a number of measures related to the TAP are included in the Hampshire Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) programme, approved by Central Government in July 2011. Six towns have been identified for funding from this grant, Aldershot is one of them. In addition, as part of the Department for Transport Mid-Tier Programme South West Trains proposals for an Access for All improvement at Aldershot Station to make the platforms more accessible through the provision of lifts at Aldershot Station is to be taken forward.
- 4.3. In summary funding currently identified for improvements in Aldershot Town Centre up to 2014/15 includes £150,000 for improved pedestrian and cycle access to Aldershot Station, £42,000 for a station travel plan kiosk, £402,000 for pedestrian and accessibility improvement in Victoria Road and £1,750,000 for access improvements at Aldershot Station. An earlier scheme identified in the emerging TAP, pedestrian accessibility improvement in Birchett Road, Station Road, Grove Road junction has already been completed.

- 4.4. Schemes identified in the action plan of the Aldershot TAP that require further study and feasibility work will be allocated funds from the feasibility study budget and will be managed through the capital programme process.

## **5. Future direction**

- 5.1. The Aldershot TAP will be reviewed at regular intervals in order to ensure the schemes outlined in the Action Plan list are consistent with the objectives of the TAP and meet local and national transportation and accessibility needs.
- 5.2. The development of the Westgate Centre, which is currently underway, is to include a cinema, restaurants and shopping facilities, and coupled with the future development of the Aldershot Urban Extension will necessitate regular monitoring and reviewing of the Town Access Plan and proposed schemes. Other surveys such as accident and pedestrian surveys may be undertaken on scheme completion to confirm the success of a scheme.
- 5.3. Regular consultation and liaison with County Council Members, Rushmoor Borough Council, local groups, officers and other stakeholders is recommended in order that the Aldershot TAP is updated as necessary and the County Council is aware of any changes regarding future developments or changes to policy which may require the TAP to be amended.

## **6. Recommendations**

- 6.1. That the Aldershot Town Access Plan be adopted by Hampshire County Council as the basis for local transport policy to support the evidence base for negotiation developers' contributions and other sources of funding towards accessibility improvements.
- 6.2. That the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment be given delegated authority to periodically update the projects in the Aldershot Town Access Plan in the context of the emerging District Statement for Rushmoor, in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment and Transport.

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

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

1. Aldershot Town Access Plan
2. Background Document – Changes to Draft report
3. Consultee Responses

Hampshire County Council Transport Team, Sun Alliance House, Basingstoke

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

#### **1.1. Statement one: The short term minimum required to meet this action:**

The Aldershot TAP has a duty to ensure that its recommendations provide fair and equal access to the town centre regardless of age, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, mobility and social and geographic inclusion (eg people on low income and those living in the areas of the town with the poorest transport links). Developing the TAP has involved assessing the local population and understanding the varied access needs.

#### **1.2. Statement two: Longer term minimum required to meet this action:**

The Aldershot TAP has a duty to ensure that it reflects the access needs of the local community. Developing the plan involved carrying out community engagement with local members and stakeholders to identify their varied access needs. The results from these audits, and information from a range of surveys, strategies (roads, and traffic, walking and cycling, public transport and smarter choices) has helped to produce proposals for the schemes included in the Aldershot TAP. These aim to provide a fair and equal access to the town centre and facilities regardless of age, race, ethnicity. Religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, mobility, and social and geographic inclusion (e.g. people on low incomes and those living in areas of the town with the poorest transport links).

### **2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

2.1. Schemes that provide enhanced or new lighting could have a beneficial impact on reducing crime and anti-social behaviour owing to fewer areas with secluded outlooks. Increasing levels of pedestrian and cycling activity, and public transport patronage, can lead to improved levels of surveillance within the public realm, and at interchanges, and enhance personal safety and security.

### **3. Climate Change:**

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

The Aldershot TAP will seek to improve accessibility and therefore increase opportunities for use of more sustainable/lower carbon modes of transport than the motorised vehicle. Of those who need to travel by motorised vehicle the improvements aim to reduce unnecessary mileage in the town.

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

The Aldershot TAP supports the need to adapt to climate change by looking to promote and support a move towards more sustainable modes of transport, in particular by improving walking routes with the town and looking to further improve public transport facilities.