

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member – Environment and Transport
Date:	17 January 2012
Title:	Basingstoke Town Access Plan Adoption
Reference:	3562
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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1. Executive Summary

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

1.2. This report seeks to provide:

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

1.3. A draft Basingstoke TAP was approved by the Director for Economy, Transport and Environment for consultation in April 2011. Public consultation on the Plan was carried out between 24 June and 15 July 2011. The TAP proposals have been refined and amended in light of consultation, with the final TAP report reflecting these changes (background document 3).

2. Contextual information

2.1. The Local Transport Plan (2011-31), gives a high level strategic vision for transport in Hampshire and provides the context for the 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, 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. Effectively, the District Statement for Basingstoke and Deane will give the strategic overview of transport priorities and proposals for the borough, with the TAP giving more detail on proposed accessibility improvements within the Basingstoke urban area.

- 2.2. Basingstoke was previously selected as one of a number of settlements in Hampshire to benefit from a TAP. Basingstoke is a large urban settlement, with a central shopping area, a number of distinct residential areas, and several successful business locations. This land-use mix, coupled with the current transport network, results in an area with particular access issues needing review.
- 2.3. In this context, a number of process and access objectives were set out at the start of the TAP development process.
- 2.4 The process objectives for the TAP were to:
 - (i) produce a TAP for Basingstoke with a set of measures and proposals;
 - (ii) bring together relevant data and information on existing travel conditions and levels of access within Basingstoke;
 - (iii) consult with key stakeholders, Councillors and the wider local community to identify issues and options for improving access within and to the town; and
 - (iv) inform the development control process and Basingstoke and Deane Local Development Framework (LDF) about transport and highway community infrastructure investment.
- 2.5 The access objectives for the TAP were confirmed by the members steering group in February 2010 and were to:
 - (i) improve accessibility to key services and facilities (especially health, education and employment, and food retail) by all modes of transport;
 - (ii) enhance the quality of the town centre and district centre public realm;
 - (iii) recognise and address the needs of the mobility and visually impaired within Basingstoke;
 - (iv) plan for and address travel demand arising from existing and planned development; and
 - (v) provide for and promote more sustainable travel choice.
- 2.6 In line with these objectives, work on the TAP was at the outset split into a number of defined and programmed stages:

- (i) Stage 1: Review of access issues and evidence: This stage included a member workshop event in December 2009 at which problems and issues were reviewed. A Stage 1 report was produced and agreed as the basis for progression to the next stage by the Councillor Steering Group in February 2010.
- (ii) Stage 2: Generation of potential solutions to problems/issues identified and development of the draft Action Plan: This stage included a stakeholder consultation event in November 2010, which identified transport access issues and potential options to address these issues. Feedback from this event, input to a draft Action Plan, which was agreed by Steering Group members as the basis to go forward to public consultation in January 2011. A draft Stage 2 report was produced as the outcome of this stage of work, and formed the basis for obtaining Director of Economy, Transport and Environment approval for public consultation.
- (iii) Stage 3: Public consultation: This was carried out between 24 June and 15 July 2011, and was in the form of a 2 day public exhibition held in the Basingstoke Festival Place shopping centre on 24 and 25 June, web-based consultation, and information being available for review in Basingstoke Library. The public were asked to provide views on the proposals via hard copy and on-line feedback forms.
- (iv) Stage 4: Implementation: This stage would follow adoption of the TAP by the Executive Member for Environment and Transport, and would be subject to availability of funding, approvals and further consultation on particular TAP schemes.

2.7 Stage 1 of the TAP identified that there are currently a range of transport choices for residents of Basingstoke to be able to access employment and services within the area. It has a high quality core bus service, especially on the high frequency stagecoach 'Jazz' branded routes, has good links into strategic rail networks, acting as a rail hub to London, the south coast, west country and Reading/ the north of England, and also has a number of existing pedestrian and cycle facilities. However, the area suffers from peak period traffic congestion principally on key junctions on the ring road and entry to the town from the M3 Junction 6. Severance and way-finding issues were identified for the pedestrian and cycle network and many missing links were also apparent. It was also recognised in this work that demand for travel to and within the area is likely to increase over the next few years as a result of planned development.

2.8 The key theme coming out of the Stage 1 work was seen as needing to develop a balanced package of transport and access improvement measures to help ensure future environmental, economic and social sustainability in fitting with the future development of Basingstoke. It was therefore recognised that, whilst the car will remain an important mode for many to access employment and services, there is a need to improve options for

travel alternatives, particularly through development of a more comprehensive, safe and secure pedestrian and cycle network that better provides for local accessibility needs.

- 2.9 Stage 2 of the TAP built on the comprehensive review work carried out in Stage 1 to develop a draft Action Plan of measures. In summary, the Action Plan identifies options for improvements that help address the access issues identified by the Stage 1 work, grouped into walking and cycling, public transport and roads and traffic related measures. The outcomes of the stage 2 work formed the basis of information presented at public consultation (Stage 3).

3. Member and Community Involvement

- 3.1 The TAP has been developed through a joint County and District Member Steering Group since early 2010. The Steering Group comprises five local County Councillors (Councillors Still, Reid, Tucker, Hussey and Frankum), and the Basingstoke and Deane Executive Member for Planning, Transport and Infrastructure, Cllr Rob Golding, and is chaired by Councillor Still. It has met on a regular basis over the last two years and has been fully engaged with the TAP process. Officers from both County and District have also been in attendance and provided relevant papers for these meetings.
- 3.2 Two engagement events have been held to help develop the TAP. The first, in December 2009 was in the form a local member workshop, chaired by Cllr Kendal, Executive Member for Environment and Transport. This reviewed transport access issues and problems, and helped develop conclusions from the first stage of the TAP. The second event was held in November 2010 in Basingstoke, and invited key stakeholder and all local councillors to comment on identified transport access issues, and potential options to address these issues. The event was in form of a 'drop-in' event supported by exhibition material, where stakeholders have been able to discuss issues and proposals presented by county and district officers. The event was well received, with attendees including local district councillors, public transport operators, local retailers, access and cycle forum representatives, and business groups. Feedback from the engagement events was used to help shape development of the draft TAP Action Plan for public consultation.
- 3.3 Approval was given by the Director for Economy, Transport and Environment for carrying out consultation on the draft TAP in April 2011. This was carried out between 24 June and 15 July 2011, and included a staffed public exhibition on Friday 24 and Saturday 25 June, a website with on-line feedback form, and placing consultation material in Basingstoke library. Feedback was sought from the public on the draft Action Plan and priorities for scheme improvement options.
- 3.4 Consultation events were well attended, with 181 hard copy or on-line feedback forms completed. In the consultation, members of the public were asked about which measures they particularly supported, and also asked for

any general comments they had on the TAP. Many of the respondents supported the principle of the TAP and the response indicated general support for the measures outlined in the TAP action plan. A number of more specific issues/ comments were also raised:

- (i) *Roads and traffic:* Concern was raised regarding traffic congestion at the Binfields and Winchester Rd roundabouts (A30/A340). There were also comments suggesting that right turns at the Lodge Road junction on the A340 should be prohibited to better manage traffic.
- (ii) *Walking and cycling:* There was particular support for creating a comprehensive cross town (east-west) cycle network coupled with appropriate signage, better connectivity and cycle parking. A pedestrian crossing on the A33 Chineham Road was also cited as a requirement to enhance accessibility to the local facilities in this location.
- (iii) *Public transport:* There was support for implementing bus priority measures where possible, and also improving the interchange between bus and rail in the town centre.

3.5 Results of the public consultation were fed back to the last TAP Member Steering Group on 28 September 2011. On the basis of review of this consultation, and discussion at the Steering Group, two minor amendments were made to the TAP Action Plan. Action CW2 was amended to reflect the specific need for pedestrian crossing improvements on the A33 around Crockford Road Junction, Chineham and RT1 was amended to include a review of the operational requirements of the A340/Lodge Rd junction to incorporate the potential for investigating the prohibition of right turns. At the Steering Group meeting members also reviewed and agreed a number of key priorities for study and feasibility work. In summary these were:

- (i) *Roads and Traffic:* Feasibility study of London Road traffic management and pedestrian safety improvements. This will help address concerns related to crossing this road safely, particularly related to accessing a local school.
- (ii) *Walking and Cycling:* Feasibility study on a number of small scale walking and cycling accessibility improvements identified through the TAP development process. This includes rail station to Basing View footway improvements and improved pedestrian access to the hospital from Priestly Road. Also, a study on improving the cycle route from Chineham to the town centre (NCN23) is planned to be carried out, as well as accessibility improvements in the vicinity of Ringway North/Rooksdown area.

3.6 A number of priorities for further study work were also agreed in principle, to be progressed for the medium-term once the highest priority studies have been completed. These are outlined in detail in the Stage 3 report, but in summary include Ringway junction improvements including options to provide

greater capacity and reduce peak time queuing, as well as further study of walking and cycling improvements where possible. Improving the west – east movement of pedestrian and cyclists in the town centre is also to be studied in the medium term. It is recognised that this study work will be subject to availability of resources/funding in future years.

- 3.7 Overall, the local members on the Steering Group support the final TAP proposals included in the TAP Action Plan and study priorities, as outlined above and in the final Stage 3 report. It is also anticipated that the TAP Member Steering Group will meet in Autumn 2012 to review progress on further study work following proposed adoption of the TAP.

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 that 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 includes £600,000 towards Basingstoke TAP priorities in the 2012/13 and 2013/14 financial years.
- 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 Towns Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) programme, approved by Central Government in July 2011. This includes £60,000 for pedestrian way-finding measures and £50,000 towards the London Road pedestrian safety scheme, to be delivered in 2014/15 and 2012/13 respectively. In addition there is £18,000 towards improving cycle parking at Basingstoke railway station (to be done jointly with South West Trains) and some funds towards electric charging points in the town. There is also £33,000 identified for developing real time on the Basingstoke Jazz routes over the next 3 years. There are also a number of revenue funded measures included in the LSTF programme, including personalised journey planning and workplace travel planning, which will complement capital funded schemes developed within the Basingstoke TAP.
- 4.3. Short-term study and feasibility work for development of schemes will be carried out by internal Hampshire staff resources particularly in Strategic Transport and Engineering Consultancy. An allocation of funds from the feasibility study budget has been agreed for this purpose. Exact apportionment of funds to particular schemes resulting from the further funding and feasibility work will be managed through the capital programme process.

5. Future direction

- 5.1. It is planned for the study work agreed as short-term priorities at the TAP Member Steering Group will commence in the 2011/12 financial year. Any

schemes resulting from this work will progress through the normal Hampshire Capital Programme and Gateway process, including obtaining relevant agreement(s) to spending of funds for implementation of schemes.

- 5.2. On-going liaison with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council is continuing, to ensure that the Basingstoke TAP and its associated measures are recognised within their LDF documents. It is recognised that this will give greater weight towards securing developer contributions in the future.
- 5.3. It is proposed that the TAP is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure priorities and objectives of the TAP continue to be met as measures are implemented. Any future review will take account of other policy documents developed over the next few years, particularly the proposed Basingstoke District Statement, future Local Transport Plan related documents, and planning policy documents. The extent of review work will also be subject to future resource availability, linked to the corporate priorities at that time.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1. That the Basingstoke Town Access Plan be adopted by Hampshire County Council as the basis for local transport policy and to support the evidence base for negotiating 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 Basingstoke Town Access Plan in the context of the emerging District Statement for Basingstoke and Deane, in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment and Transport

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

1. Basingstoke TAP Stage 1 Report,
February 2010

Hampshire County Council Transport
Team North, Sun Alliance House,
Basingstoke

2. Basingstoke TAP Stage 2 Report,
February 2011

3. Basingstoke TAP Stage 3 Report,
November 2011

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1. Statement one: The short term minimum required to meet this action: areas of the town with the poorest transport links).

The Basingstoke TAP has a duty to ensure that its recommendations provided 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 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 Basingstoke 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 form a range of strategies (roads and traffic, walking and cycling, public transport, and smarter choices) and helped to produce proposals for the schemes included in the Basingstoke TAP. These aim to provide fair and equal access to the town centre and surrounding facilities regardless of age, race, ethnicity, Religion, disability, gender sexual orientation, mobility and social and geographic inclusion (e.g. people on low income 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 Basingstoke TAP will seek to improve accessibility and therefore increase the opportunities for use of more sustainable/ lower carbon modes of transport than the motorised vehicle.

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

The Basingstoke 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 and cycle routes within the town and looking to further improve public transport facilities.