

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Decision Report

|                        |                                                       |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Decision Maker:</b> | Executive Member for Environment and Transport        |
| <b>Date:</b>           | 3 November 2016                                       |
| <b>Title:</b>          | Botley Bypass Public Consultation and Preferred Route |
| <b>Reference:</b>      | 7832                                                  |
| <b>Report From:</b>    | Director of Economy, Transport and Environment        |

**Contact name:** Heather Walmsley

**Tel:** 01962 846089      **Email:** heather.walmsley@hants.gov.uk

#### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. On 31 March 2016 the Executive Member for Environment and Transport gave approval for consultation to be undertaken on the preferred route for the Botley Bypass (the "Botley Bypass route"). Accordingly a public consultation was undertaken in June and July 2016 which confirmed a majority support for the overall Botley Bypass Scheme ("the Scheme"). The purpose of this report is to summarise the consultation process and the responses received. It summarises key issues for residents and highlights areas where modifications have been made to the design in light of responses received.
- 1.2. This report seeks delegated approval to progress the preferred Botley Bypass route identified on the plan at Appendix 1, and to finalise the details of the overall Scheme, in order for enable a Planning Application to be submitted. Securing Planning Permission will enable early implementation of the Scheme subject to securing appropriate funding.

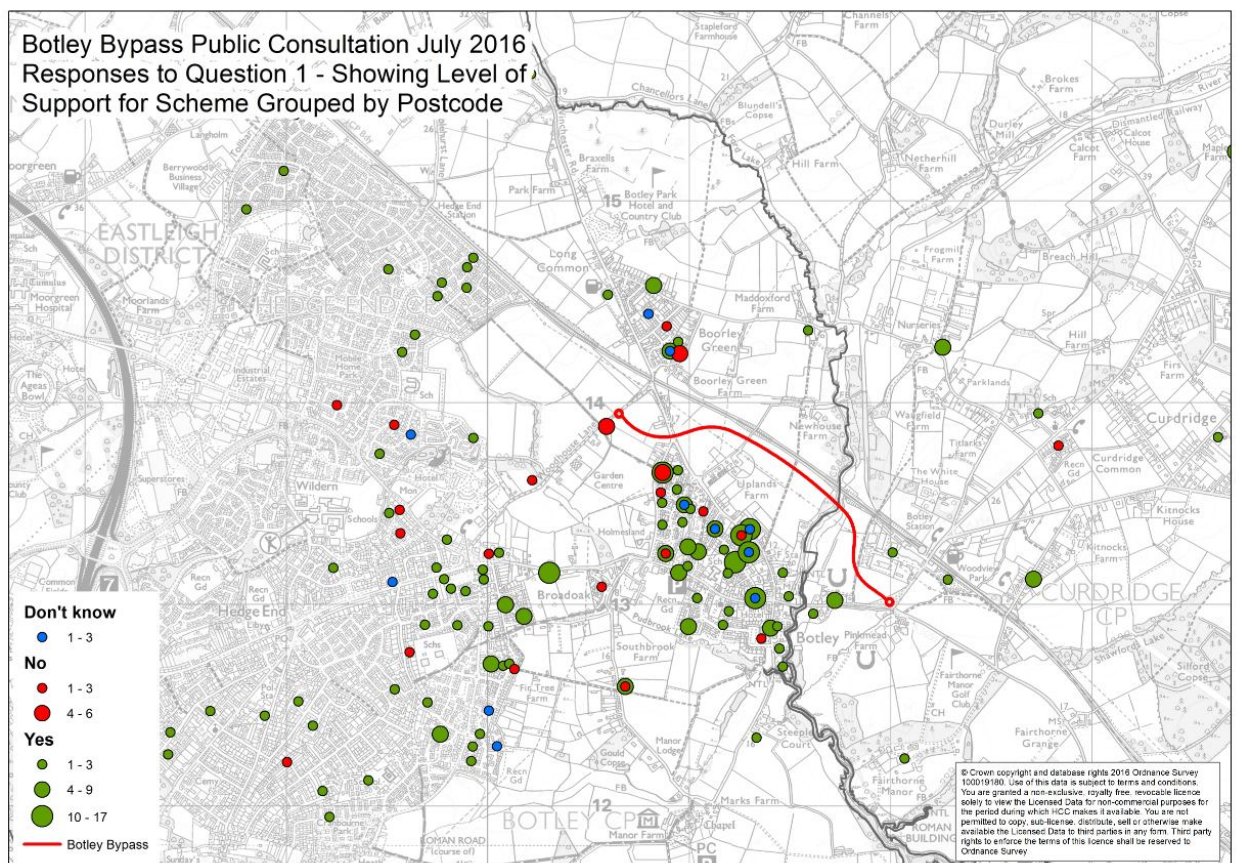
#### 2. Introduction

- 2.1. The public consultation for Botley Bypass was undertaken to seek public views on the preferred route and the design of the overall Scheme in order to identify areas where modifications might be required. The consultation comprised three manned exhibitions held at the Diamond Jubilee Hall in Botley Village on 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> of June. Copies of the exhibition material were available to view at local libraries and the Botley Parish Council Offices for a six week period from 21<sup>st</sup> June until 29<sup>th</sup> July. The scheme and exhibition material was also available to view on the Hampshire website. A questionnaire was provided to help gauge levels of support and to identify any issues that local residents might have.

- 2.2. The public consultation was advertised via press releases issued to local newspapers, posters displayed on local notice boards, invitations to stakeholders and via a mail drop to local residents within broadly a 2km distribution area covering approximately 3,400 addresses.

### 3. Summary of Results

- 3.1. Approximately 730 local residents attended the public exhibition with many others viewing the exhibition material via the website. A total of 501 completed questionnaires were received including 361 paper responses handed in at the exhibitions or returned via the post and 140 electronic responses returned via the website.
- 3.2. Overall 410 (82%) of respondents supported the principal that Botley should have a bypass and 14% did not support the principal of a bypass. 4% were in the “don’t know” category. The responses were received from residents living in the locations identified on the plan below representing a broad area of interest in the scheme.



- 3.3 Of the 410 (82%) of respondents that supported the principal of the bypass 312 (62%) of respondents supported the preferred bypass route. Those seeking a different route were largely looking to revert to a route further

north in the area of the crossing of Winchester Street with one comment seeking a route south of Botley High Street.

- 3.4 Over 80% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the scheme would deliver the following objectives for Botley:

Reduce through traffic;

Reduce traffic congestion;

Reduce noise and vibration;

Improve air quality;

Reduce HGVs;

Improve pedestrian and cycle access;

Improve the village environment; and

Improve road safety.

- 3.5 A question was included to gauge the levels of pedestrian activity in the area in order to inform the design process. The responses showed that the majority, 91%, of respondents use the footpaths to the north of Botley for general recreation and dog walking, with 3% using the footpaths as part of their journey to work and 6% for other reasons.
- 3.6 Respondents were asked to provide their age. 65% of respondents were over 50, a further 31% were aged between 35 and 50. Only 4% of respondents were under 35.

#### **4. Summary of Comments and Officer Responses**

- 4.1 A full Botley Bypass Consultation Analysis Report including comments received is included at Appendix 2.
- 4.2 The questionnaire included three boxes for comments. Throughout the analysis process it was clear that there were several recurring themes which respondents were repeating in each box. For the purposes of this report all of the comments have been summarised as a whole and broadly grouped. A table is included at Appendix 3 which provides a summary of the most frequent comments and responses. The table includes the number of comments made against each comment and officer responses to each issue in turn.
- 4.3 In addition to comments made on the questionnaire a number of letters were received from key stakeholders, including: Eastleigh Borough Council, Winchester City Council, Botley Parish Council and Whiteley Town Council who expressed support for the bypass. Hampshire Chamber of Commerce

also wrote in support of the bypass. A summary of the letters is included in the appended Consultation Analysis Report.

- 4.4 A number of other detailed letters/responses were received from stakeholders that focused mainly on pedestrian, cycle and equestrian issues. The comments are included in the appended Consultation Analysis Report for information and will be addressed as design work progresses. However, it is worth highlighting some of the key points made below along with a summarised officer response.

#### **Botley to Bishops Waltham Bridleway**

- 4.5 There is a long standing local aspiration to deliver a Botley to Bishops Waltham bridleway, and this was mentioned in detailed comments received from the relatively low number of 12 respondents. The respondents are seeking funding for and the delivery of, a section of the bridleway which would connect Winchester Street to Maddoxford Lane / Wangfield Lane.
- 4.6 The respondents request that the proposed bridleway route should utilise the Hampshire County Council privately owned farm access track which connects Uplands Farm to Newhouse Farm, crossing the proposed bypass route via a new bridge which should be capable of accommodating pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians and cart drivers, north of Uplands Farm. The proposed bridleway route would then continue north east across the railway line via the existing track over the rail bridge. This route has no status or permissive rights at present and is not on the Definitive Map, which sets out the legal record of Public Rights of Way for Hampshire.
- 4.7 The County Council Countryside Service supports the ambition of the proposed Botley to Bishops Waltham bridleway in principle, however the route currently has no status. There is no reasonable means by which the County Council could be expected or required to secure delivery of this section of the bridleway as part of the bypass project.
- 4.8 Notwithstanding the above the County Council have undertaken high level design work to assess the feasibility of providing a bridge across the proposed bypass to accommodate a section of the bridleway. The bridge would require two 60m long approach ramps for cycles and equestrians which would be difficult to fit into available space and would not be suitable for cart drivers. The cost of such a new structure would be in the region of up to £1.6million.
- 4.9 There is an aspiration to continue the bridleway north of the bypass across the railway bridge to the north of Uplands Farm. There is currently no public access over the railway bridge as the existing structure does not meet Network Rail safety standards. An agreement would need to be reached with Network Rail regarding the scope for and cost of appropriate improvements, in order to progress this section of the bridleway route, and again this is clearly outside the scope of the bypass proposal.

- 4.10 The bypass currently provides good value for money and has a high benefit to cost ratio, which is critical given the competitive nature of bids for Local Growth Funding. To add £1.6m to the overall scheme cost would be disproportionate, would undermine the cost benefit ratio and may threaten the overall competitiveness and viability of the scheme. In light of this the inclusion of a bridge across the proposed bypass is not appropriate as a requirement of the bypass scheme.
- 4.11 Discussions have been held with representatives promoting the bridleway which considered alternative, more deliverable and realistic solutions, to provide an initial part of the route, including connectivity across the bypass, which did not prejudice the future delivery of the bridleway and also did not compromise the business case and funding bids for the bypass.
- 4.12 Consideration could be given to the provision of an at grade crossing at the northern end of Holmesland Lane. Subject to agreement an informal track with permissive rights could be provided across Hampshire County Council owned land running to the south of the bypass route from Winchester Street to a point opposite where the diverted access track to Newhouse Farm connects into the northern side of the bypass. At grade crossing points suitable for equestrian use across the bypass could be provided at this location. Provision for these measures could be made as a complementary package of works in parallel with the bypass project provided that this could be accommodated without detriment to the funding and progression of the bypass scheme itself. The process for delivering this section of the bridleway route is also linked to other matters outside the scope of the bypass project, including the need to upgrade access across the Network Rail owned bridge, and hence will need to be progressed independently to the bypass project.
- 4.13 Opportunities could also be explored by respondents in respect of other potential private and public sector funding sources to assist the delivery of various parts of the bridleway outside the funding package for the bypass itself.

### **Pedestrian and Cycling Issues**

- 4.14 A number of comments were received regarding the two existing Public Rights of Way which will cross the bypass running east and west of the River Hamble. The routes are important not only as general paths but also as they form part of the Upper Hamble Valley Circuit. The comments are seeking to ensure these routes are retained. Pedestrian and cycle use in the area is being surveyed to establish levels of demand and the most appropriate type of crossing provision will be included in the design. It is likely that crossing provision will be made in the form of dropped kerbs and an appropriately sized central refuge.
- 4.15 A number of comments were received in relation to the crossing of the bypass by pedestrians and cyclists from Winchester Street to the Boorley Green direction. It is recognised that there will be demand to cross in this location particularly at school times. Pedestrian and cycle surveys are being undertaken to assess the level of demand. A crossing will be provided and

the findings from the surveys will be used to help design an appropriate facility.

## **5. Modifications to Scheme**

- 5.1. Further to responses received through the public consultation as outlined above and initial discussions with directly impacted, adjoining land owners a number of modifications have been made to the Scheme. The following notable changes have been made from west to east:

**Woodhouse Lane** – further slight revisions have been made to the alignment of Woodhouse Lane as part of the progression of design work to help improve visibility and sight lines from access points and to reduce the impact upon the Ancient Woodland in the vicinity of Woodhouse Gully and associated culvert. Consideration is being given to requirements for equestrian use which will be discussed with interested parties as part of ongoing design refinements. A pedestrian refuge and a horse coral to assist horses crossing will be provided to assist crossing movements where the existing bridleway crosses Woodhouse Lane.

**Woodhouse Lane/Botley Bypass roundabout** – the roundabout has been moved slightly to the north and east to help reduce the impact upon adjacent properties. The landscape bunds which are to be included as mitigation have been revised to take into account visibility splays. However, they may be further refined following discussions with adjacent landowners.

**Botley Bypass/Winchester Street junction** – enhanced crossing provision has been included at this junction to provide for estimated pedestrian demand between the Botley and Boorley Green area. Surveys are being undertaken to help fully quantify demand and to enable an appropriate facility to be designed. Consideration is being given to requirements for equestrian use which will be discussed with interested parties as part of ongoing design refinements. If required a horse crossing could be provided on the bypass east of the junction with Winchester Street.

**Botley Bypass east of Winchester Street** - enhanced provision has been made for pedestrians at the points the Public Right of Way crosses the bypass east and west of the River Hamble. The location of the River Hamble crossing has been ratified through ground investigation and topographical survey work. Design work will continue to progress in respect of the detail of the structure.

**A334 Station Hill/A3051 Botley Road** – enhanced crossing provision has been made for pedestrians, cycles and also equestrians at the roundabout. Further discussions will be undertaken with interested parties regarding this as design work progresses.

## **6. Where Next**

- 6.1 An Environmental Assessment (EA) is being undertaken for the preferred Botley Bypass route which considers in detail a number of key topic areas including: ecology, landscape, noise and air quality, water and drainage, geology and soils, archaeology etc. This work will be ongoing until Spring 2017. The EA will be used to identify impacts associated with the provision of the bypass and will inform what works are necessary for mitigation purposes and what work can be undertaken to provide enhancement value to the surrounding area.
- 6.2 A Transport Assessment is also being prepared which will consider the existing and forecast traffic situation with and without the bypass, taking into account both background traffic growth and growth associated with all planned and committed new development in the area.
- 6.3 Liaison will continue with land owners and adjacent property owners to ensure that mitigation measures identified through the Environmental Assessment work can be designed taking into account the views of those in proximity. Discussions will be largely focused around noise mitigation bunds and acoustic fencing, landscape planting and drainage proposals along with changes to access points and visibility splays which will need to be agreed. Once the mitigation measures have been agreed then the Scheme design can be finalised and detailed plans will be developed.
- 6.4 Subject to the completion of the above, approval for delegated authority is sought as part of this report to submit a Planning Application for the Botley Bypass Scheme in mid 2017.

## **7. Finance**

- 7.1 It is anticipated that the total Scheme cost will be in the order of £22-24 million. An Expression of Interest was submitted to the Solent LEP in November 2015 for approximately 50-55% of the total cost with the intention that the remaining proportion will be secured through local public and private sector contributions. It would be inappropriate to predetermine the proportions of respective contributions at this stage in advance of the negotiating and planning process, hence figures are not specified in this report.
- 7.2 In February 2016 the Solent LEP invited the Scheme promoters to come forward with an outline business case for Local Growth Funding. A caveat was attached which specified that this was not an indication of or commitment to fund the project and that all business cases should be developed on that basis. The Outline business case was submitted in April 2016. The LEP received over 40 project proposals, and these were assessed against eligibility criteria, the prioritisation framework, and criteria set down by government. In July the Solent LEP advised that the bypass had been prioritised and was included within their Local Growth Deal submission to government. It is expected that the Government will announce the new Local Growth Deals in November 2016.

## **8. Recommendations**

- 8.1. That the responses received following the June 2016 public consultation undertaken for the Botley Bypass Scheme, summarised in this report, and the overall positive response to the Scheme, be noted and that where appropriate comments received are taken on board.
- 8.2. That the preferred Botley Bypass route as outlined in this report and identified on the Plan at Appendix 1 be approved.
- 8.3. That Eastleigh Borough Council and Winchester City Council be notified of the preferred Botley Bypass route and are requested to make appropriate provision in their Local Plans.
- 8.4. That authority be delegated to the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment, to progress all work necessary to finalise the details of the overall Scheme to enable the timely submission of a Planning Application.
- 8.5. That authority be delegated to the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment to pursue all appropriate funding opportunities for the Scheme and in particular to continue to work with the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership to pursue Local Growth Funding for which an Outline Business Case has already been submitted.



**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.)

Document

Location

None

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

1.1. 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 under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

**Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:**

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### **1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

The delivery of the Botley Bypass is not guaranteed at this time in advance of securing Planning Permission and funding. Should the scheme proceed then it will provide positive benefits for the residents of Botley, reducing traffic and improving Air Quality and congestion related impacts in an identified Air Quality Management Area and central area. Benefits will apply to all residents in the central area. The bypass will improve accessibility for all regardless of equality matters. Whilst principally a highway scheme, measures will be included for Non Motorist Users ie. pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians, which will be agreed with interested parties in advance of finalising the scheme design.

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

2.1. It is considered that the decision will have no impact on crime and disorder.

**3. Climate Change:**

- 3.1. How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?
- 3.2. How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

The proposed Botley Bypass if approved and funded will help reduce congestion and delay, and improve journey times for through traffic. The scheme will help improve air quality in an identified Air Quality Management Area in central Botley.