

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member - Environment
Date:	21 July 2010
Title:	Eastleigh Town Access Plan – Consultation Draft
Reference:	1842
Report From:	Director of Environment

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1. Executive Summary

1.1. This report presents the Draft Eastleigh Town Access Plan (ETAP) and sets out a shared vision for how access to facilities and services within the town will be improved. This report provides an update on the progress being made on the preparation of the ETAP.

1.2. The ETAP has been developed jointly by Hampshire County Council and Eastleigh Borough Council (EBC). It is an important element in defining what kind of place Eastleigh is and connects directly with the Local Transport Plan.

1.3. This paper seeks to:

- provide background information on the emerging Town Access Plan for Eastleigh and summarise the current stage of the project;
- set out the way the ETAP will improve accessibility both to and from Eastleigh, for both leisure and commuting trips;
- summarise the work already done in terms of community involvement as well as a number of relevant strategies and Members' views; and
- provide information on available funding streams for taking the ETAP forward and future steps.

2. Contextual information

2.1. The Local Transport Plan 2006-11 sets out the role of Access Plans and how they will guide the longer term vision and strategies covering all modes of transport within larger settlements such as Eastleigh.

- 2.2. Eastleigh was selected as one of a number of settlements in Hampshire to benefit from a Town Access Plan, due to a number of factors that combine to give it traffic levels and problems beyond that which would normally be associated with a town of its size.
- 2.3. Two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) have been declared within the town centre, which places a responsibility on the Borough Council to take appropriate action to reduce the levels of pollutants.
- 2.4. The Action Plan that forms part of the ETAP sets out the way forward in terms of actual projects to progress. The schemes from the Action Plan will seek funding through the Transport Contributions Policy, which defines transport improvement schemes that will help to justify contributions from local developers.
- 2.5. Schemes from the 'Action Plan' have been identified through stakeholder engagement as well as from existing strategy documents such as the Borough's walking and cycling strategies. The measures identified have been grouped within four key areas, which form the main structure for the ETAP; Walking and Cycling, Public and Community Transport, Road Safety, Traffic Management and Parking, and Street Scene and Environment.
- 2.6. The ETAP reflects and supports other strategies, plans and policies already in place regarding the town and access, including the Borough's Town Centre Vision document.
- 2.7. The objectives of the ETAP are to:
 - (i) support Eastleigh Town Centre as a destination with a distinctive sense of place;
 - (ii) make it easier to use sustainable transport modes and improve access to key locations;
 - (iii) manage car parks, their pedestrian connections and on-street parking effectively for residents, businesses and visitors;
 - (iv) implement measures to mitigate the impacts of transport related air pollution with a focus on the two AQMAs within the ETAP study area;
 - (v) enhance Eastleigh bus station with good links to other transport nodes especially Eastleigh train station;
 - (vi) promote safer and more convenient walking and cycling routes;
 - (vii) further promote workplace, station and business travel plans as well as rolling forward existing full coverage of school travel plans;
 - (viii) reduce street clutter and promote a well designed and managed street scene;

- (ix) support opportunities for economic development to promote vitality; and
 - (x) produce a list of schemes (the ETAP Action Plan), which includes both deliverable programmed schemes and longer term requirements to meet future development needs. The latter will be incorporated into the Hampshire County Council Transport Contributions Policy to facilitate the negotiation and allocation of developer contributions to appropriate transport schemes.
- 2.8. Development within the town has brought additional pressures in terms of car parking and available road space. It is therefore important that future development (both minor and major) is used to significantly influence how the town develops in terms of accessibility, utilising the ETAP to inform where accessibility improvements are required.
- 2.9. As the EBC Core Strategy emerges, the Eastleigh Town Access Plan will contribute to the evidence base for the town centre chapter alongside other documents, including the town centre “vision” which, whilst having no formal planning status, provides context and promotes the regeneration of the town centre.
- 2.10. Further details in support of the Core Strategy proposals for the town centre are likely to be set out in a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). It is likely that the town centre proposals will be prepared in tandem with an SPD for the River Side development east of the railway, which aims to achieve major regeneration through a strategic employment area.
- 2.11. The ETAP will form part of the evidence base for the proposed SPDs, which will be focussed on identifying capacity for significant retail growth, together with the accommodation of a range of other complementary uses, all of which will be influenced by transport and access issues. The ETAP will be updated as and when the EBC Core Strategy and supporting SPD emerge.
- 2.12. The ETAP identifies the key transport corridors leading into the town, such as Leigh Road, Southampton Road, Twyford Road and Bishopstoke Road, where multi-modal accessibility improvements and environmental enhancements will be focussed. As well as focussing on key transport corridors, the ETAP also identifies more general improvements to address road safety, improved traffic management and also improved links to key transport interchanges.
- 2.13. Key schemes currently being developed for delivery as part of the ETAP include the Twyford Road Corridor Study, which will set out a range of pedestrian crossing and access improvements to improve access to the town. This will also investigate environmental enhancements, such as the provision of features to signify the “gateway” into the town.
- 2.14. Bishopstoke Road pedestrian and cycle feasibility is also currently underway to look at pedestrian crossing improvements and the provision of

the missing strategic cycle link to connect Bishopstoke to Eastleigh Town centre.

- 2.15. A Variable Message Sign (VMS) scheme is currently being designed to provide drivers with real time information on which car parks have spare capacity. This will aim to reduce the circulatory traffic caused by drivers looking for available spaces and signs will be situated on key approaches to the town centre.
- 2.16. The development of the ETAP has been informed through consultation and evidence gathering. In April 2009 a consultation event was held in the town centre over a three day period and visitors to the town had the opportunity to discuss with officers the key issues faced when accessing the town, as well as identifying possible solutions.
- 2.17. The Eastleigh Disabled Access Group have been consulted via a working group seminar and officers have also attended an Eastleigh Town Centre Partnership workshop, where local businesses voiced their opinions on access issues they and their customers face.
- 2.18. The County Member for Eastleigh (East), the Eastleigh Borough Council Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment and the Eastleigh Local Area Coordinator, as part of the steering group, are fully aware of the ETAP's objectives and proposals and have provided initial feedback on the draft document. The draft ETAP has also been circulated internally to Eastleigh Borough Council and County Council officers for comment.
- 2.19. The Eastleigh Local Area Committee (ELAC), whose members include Borough and County Members, has been sent the draft ETAP for comment and approval prior to the proposed summer consultation.
- 2.20. The public consultation process will primarily be undertaken through e-consultation, however, a consultation information leaflet will be produced for publicity purposes. Hard copies of the draft document will also be made available on request.

3. Finance

- 3.1. Funding for the consultation printing has been secured through Hampshire County Council.
- 3.2. Implementation of the schemes will be through agreed budgets and predominantly from the use of developer contributions held and forthcoming and will be subject to Executive Member for Environment approval using existing scheme delivery mechanisms.
- 3.3. The ETAP and its Action Plan will aid in securing future planning obligations (developer's contributions) as new development arises by highlighting to developers specific schemes that are required to improve accessibility within the town centre.

3.4. It is noted that the current financial climate and uncertainties regarding future development requirements, mean that there is likely to be a lengthy process for commencing some schemes.

3.5. The ETAP will have a coordinating role for the financing of schemes.

4. Future Direction

4.1. Consultation with key stakeholders and the public on the draft ETAP will take place during the summer of 2010.

4.2. Following any necessary amendments as a result of this consultation process, the ETAP will be adopted by both authorities and will be used to inform decisions on measures required to mitigate the impacts of new developments as well as developer contributions requirements. Each scheme will also be the subject of detailed design and local consultation prior to any implementation. The programming of this work and scheme delivery will be guided by local priorities and available budgets, which in the main will be from developers' contributions.

4.3. The Transportation Contributions Policy schemes list for Eastleigh Borough will be updated to reflect the new schemes identified in the adopted ETAP.

4.4. The document will be used to determine the allocation of funds sought from developers through the Development Planning process by both authorities. Developers will also use the document when assessing the amount of financial contribution likely to be sought by the authorities when mitigating development for the Eastleigh town area and what those funds will seek to provide. It will also be coordinated with other investment programmes.

4.5. The document will help to guide future development of the town in terms of improving accessibility, providing better traffic management and therefore reducing congestion and improving air quality.

4.6. The ETAP will be monitored by the County Council and Borough Council on a regular basis. The progress of the Plan in terms of meeting its objectives, scheme delivery and the overall effectiveness of measures in encouraging use of sustainable travel modes, will be reported to Council Members through the Eastleigh HAT. This monitoring, coupled with a review of outstanding issues, will enable new project and scheme priorities to be added as necessary and appropriate.

5. Recommendation

5.1. That the Draft Eastleigh Town Access Plan be approved as a basis for consultation, to be undertaken jointly with Eastleigh Borough Council.

Rpt/1842/PB

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.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
Draft Eastleigh Town Access Plan	Hampshire County Council Transport Team South, Civic Way, Fareham

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

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

The Eastleigh Town Access Plan 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 incomes and those living in areas with poor transport links such as rural villages). Preparing the recommendations involved assessing the local population and understanding the varied access needs.

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

The Eastleigh Town Access Plan has a duty to ensure that it reflects the access needs of the local community. Developing the Plan involved carrying out consultation with local residents, key stakeholder groups and Borough and County Members to identify the character of the local community and its varied access needs. The results from these initial consultations and information from a range of strategies (walking, cycling, passenger transport and Intelligent Transport Systems) helped to produce the recommendations. These aim to 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 incomes and those living in areas with poor transport links such as rural villages).

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 Town Access Plan will seek to encourage use of and improve opportunities for sustainable travel modes to access Eastleigh, thereby reducing the carbon emissions of alternative modes, principally travel by car.

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

The Town Access Plan 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 centre and looking to reduce circulatory traffic through the introduction of VMS to direct drivers to available parking spaces. Additional traffic management measures will also be considered and it is anticipated that a

combination of these measures will relieve local congestion and improve air quality.