

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

Decision Maker:	Executive Member – Environment and Transport
Date:	8 November 2011
Title:	Farnborough Town Access Plan Adoption
Reference:	3262
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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1. Executive Summary

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

1.2. This paper seeks to provide

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

1.3. A draft Farnborough 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 21 May and 10 June 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.

2.2. Farnborough was selected as one of a number of settlements in Hampshire to benefit from a TAP. Farnborough is an 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 and were agreed by the Member Steering Group in March 2010.

2.4 The process objectives for the TAP were to:

- (i) produce a TAP for Farnborough with a set of measures and proposals;
- (ii) bring together relevant data and information on existing travel conditions and levels of access within Farnborough;
- (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 Rushmoor Local Development Framework (LDF) about transport and highway community infrastructure investment.

2.5 The access objectives for the TAP were to:

- (i) improve accessibility to key services and facilities (especially health, education and employment, and food retail) by all sustainable modes of transport within and to Farnborough;
- (ii) enhance the quality of the town centre and district centre public realm;
- (iii) allow the needs of the mobility and visually impaired within Farnborough to be recognised and addressed;
- (iv) provide a sound base line of data to plan for any changes to access provision in the Farnborough area;
- (v) identify existing and forecast travel characteristics and the impact these have upon access within Farnborough; and
- (vi) specify alternative access options, strategies and proposals for consideration as part of the TAP output.

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 stakeholder consultation event in July 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 September 2010.

- (ii) Stage 2: Generation of potential solutions to problems/issues identified and development of draft Action Plan: This stage included a stakeholder consultation event on the draft Action Plan in January 2011, with the Action Plan agreed by Steering Group members in February 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 21 May and 10 June 2011, and was in the form of a 2 day public exhibition held in a Farnborough shopping centre, web-based consultation, and information being available for review in Farnborough library and Rushmoor Borough Council offices. 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 Farnborough to be able to access employment and services within the area. It has a high quality core bus service, especially on the Quality Bus Partnership Route 1, has good links into strategic rail networks, and also has a number of existing pedestrian and cycle facilities. However, the area suffers from peak period traffic congestion on a number of core routes, especially linking with major employment areas, and severance and way-finding issues were identified for the pedestrian and cycle network. 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 Farnborough. 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. Building on recent initiatives including improvements to Farnborough station, it was also seen as important to facilitate better integration between different ways of travel.

- 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. The Steering Group comprises the three local County Councillors (Councillors Leversha, Muschamp and Wall) and the Deputy Leader of Rushmoor Borough Council, Councillor Dibbs, and is chaired by Councillor Wall. It has met on a regular basis over the last year 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 stakeholder engagement events have been held to help develop the TAP. These have been in the form of 'drop-in' events supported by exhibition material, where stakeholders have been able to discuss issues and proposals presented by county and district officers and Steering Group members. The first event was held in July 2010 which outlined transport access issues and evidence for review. The second event was held in January 2011, which presented a draft Action Plan and supporting locations plans. Both engagement events were well received, with attendees including local district councillors, public transport and taxi operators, local retailers, access and cycle forum representatives, the police, and community groups. Feedback from both the engagement events was used to help shape development of the TAP.
- 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 21 May 2011 and 10 June 2011, and included a staffed all day public exhibition on Saturday 21 and Tuesday 24 May, a website with on-line feedback form, and placing consultation material in Rushmoor Borough Council and Farnborough 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 61 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 existing arrangements at Bradford's Roundabout, and a perceived need to review measures to improve safety and traffic congestion/ circulation at this key junction (linked to provision of bus priority measures that access to/ egress from this roundabout).
- (ii) *Walking and cycling:* There was particular support for improving crossing facilities at Clockhouse Roundabout, pedestrian links between the station and town centre, pedestrian signage and wayfinding, cycle links and facilities, including on Alexandra Road, and new crossing facilities at Ively Roundabout on the A327 close to the golf course.
- (iii) *Public transport:* There was support for improving bus links to/from Farnborough North and North Camp stations, linking the Goldline route 1 directly with Frimley Park hospital, and improving bus priority measures at junctions, waiting facilities and real time information.

3.5 Results of the public consultation were fed back to the last TAP Member Steering Group on 9 August. On the basis of review of this consultation, and discussion at the Steering Group, a number of additions/ changes were made to the TAP Action Plan. Additional proposed actions CW48 to CW50 were added to consider options for pedestrian crossing improvements close to Ively Roundabout, and new off road links close to this location. CW51 was added to reference the potential to provide a better continuous cycle route from Fleet into Farnborough. Further reference has also been given to looking at improving lighting in rail underpasses under reference CW18, and further reference given to investigating options for improving pedestrian crossing facilities close to the Plough and Horses Pub on B3014, Fleet Road under reference CW41. The final TAP Action Plan is outlined in full in the Stage 3 report.

3.6 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:* Bradford's Roundabout traffic management/ bus lane review. This high level study work will review issues raised through consultation (as noted above under 3.4 (i)), and recommend if any changes should be progressed in the context of providing for all road users at this junction.
- (ii) *Walking and Cycling:* Feasibility level study work on crossing improvements on the A325 at Highgate Lane/ Clockhouse Roundabout, Fleet Road and Minley Road, pedestrian link improvements on the Prospect Estate and between Sulzers and Pinehurst Roundabouts, and pedestrian/ cycle safety improvements on Alexandra Road.
- (iii) *Public Transport:* Feasibility level study work on bus stop/ passenger waiting improvements, especially on QBP Route 1.

- 3.7 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 improved pedestrian links between the town centre and the station and business parks, improving pedestrian links under the railway and M3 motorway, pedestrian wayfinding (linked to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund programme), and better bus links to Frimley Park hospital. It is recognised that this study work will be subject to availability of resources/funding in future years.
- 3.8 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 Spring/ Summer 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 includes £2.8 million towards emerging TAP priorities in the 2012/13 and 2013/14 and 2014/15 financial years and it is expected that a proportion of these funds will be available for Farnborough TAP schemes.
- 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. This includes £60,000 for pedestrian way-finding measures and £200,000 for measures to improve pedestrian and cycle access to Farnborough Main railway station, both to be delivered in 2014/15. In addition there is £30,000 towards improving cycle parking at Farnborough Main station (to be match funded by South West Trains), and some funds towards electric charging points in public car parks. 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 Farnborough 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 Rushmoor Borough Council is continuing, to ensure that the Farnborough TAP and its associated measures are recognised within their LDF documents and associated Supplementary Planning 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, with a more comprehensive review, including engaging with local members and stakeholders carried out in 5 years. Any future review will take account of other policy documents developed over the next few years, particularly the proposed Rushmoor 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 Farnborough 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 Farnborough Town Access Plan 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. Farnborough TAP Stage 1 Report,
September 2010

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

2. Farnborough TAP Stage 2 Report,
February 2011

3. Draft Farnborough TAP Stage 3 Report,
September 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 Farnborough 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 Farnborough 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 Farnborough 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 Farnborough 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 Farnborough 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.