

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Environment and Transport
Date:	30 June 2016
Title:	Improved Access to Southampton Airport Economic Gateway/ Chickenhall Lane Link Road
Reference:	7547
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to review and update the historically safeguarded Chickenhall Lane Link Road. As part of the review changing design standards and circumstances along the route will be taken into account. The evolving context of the regionally significant strategic development at the Southampton Airport Economic Gateway (formally known as Riverside), and associated development of an access strategy, will also be taken into account. The engineering difficulties and complexities of delivering the link road, associated with site constraints are highlighted. In light of key issues the report recommends that a flexible and phased approach be maintained towards delivery to ensure best advantage can be taken of all appropriate funding opportunities.

2. Background

- 2.1 The proposed Chickenhall Lane Link Road (CLLR) would connect the M27 Junction 5 with the B3037 Bishopstoke Road, east of Eastleigh town centre. The CLLR has been safeguarded through the Local Plan process for many years as a relief road for Eastleigh town centre. The CLLR would also provide access to facilitate regionally significant, large scale, economic development on land locked brownfield sites and would improve access to existing employment areas.
- 2.2 A substantial amount of work was undertaken, to progress the link road between 2005-2009, largely fuelled by economic drivers at the time. The scheme was costed in the order of £120m. However it was always anticipated that substantial private sector contributions would be necessary to bring forward the link road, either as a single scheme or in phases as the development came forward.

- 2.3 In 2007 the Executive Member for Environment recommended that ‘a flexible and phased approach to delivery be approved in order to take advantage of available funding and delivery opportunities.’ For a number of reasons, but due largely to changing economic circumstances, the promotion of the development sites and the progression of the link road then stalled.
- 2.4 Over the last few years, linked to economic recovery, land owners have re-focused their efforts to find ways to accelerate development on this important strategic site, which has recently been re-branded as Southampton Airport Economic Gateway. Political impetus has increased following the last general election and raised the profile of the link road once more as a key piece of infrastructure necessary to not only provide traffic relief for Eastleigh town centre, but also to facilitate the development of these strategic sites adjacent to the airport. The Solent Local Enterprise Partnership is also keen to facilitate anticipated growth on this site.
- 2.5 In light of these changing circumstances it is now timely to review and update the proposed CLLR and the associated approach to delivery. It is essential that the historic alignment for the CLLR is updated and set within the context of proposals to bring forward the strategic development sites now known as Southampton Airport Economic Gateway. A summary of the key development proposals is set out below.

3. Southampton Airport Economic Gateway

- 3.1 A key determinant in the evolution of the CLLR has been the changing ownerships and aspirations for the land allocated for development both north and south of the Botley railway line currently known as the Southampton Airport Economic Gateway (SAEG) and formerly known as Eastleigh Riverside. It is important to have an understanding of the proposals for development contained within Eastleigh Borough Council’s adopted (2001-2011) and emerging Local Development Plans (2011-2036) as they will critically inform the access strategy requirements, particularly in the context of an updated CLLR.
- 3.2 In its entirety the Southampton Airport Economic Gateway (SAEG) site is in excess of 100 ha in size and presents the largest opportunity for commercial development in the Solent LEP area. It is estimated to be capable of accommodating over 1.8m sq ft of commercial floor-space and consists of green and brownfield land in multiple ownerships. Employment space developed in this location would benefit from being situated in close proximity to a transport hub which has the advantage of being globally connected with links between air, rail and strategic highway. This level of accessibility is highly sought after by businesses and investors.
- 3.3 In relation to the two parcels of land **south of the Botley railway line**, which are in the ownership of Southampton Airport and Network Rail, work is underway to progress these sites as a critical first step in stimulating the development of the wider SAEG site. Both parcels owned by Southampton

Airport and Network Rail are greenfield sites which currently have no means of highway access. The parcels are further constrained by: the adjacent airport runway; the main railway line to the west; the main railway line and rail loop line to the north and west; parkway Railway Station; the River Itchen and associated ecological constraints to the south and east; and also the M27 to the south. Hence access solutions are limited, complex and costly.

- 3.4 In relation to the sites **north of the Botley railway line** these are largely focused around the proposed redevelopment of the Barton Park and Tower Lane Industrial sites, which are currently accessed via Chickenhall Lane, an existing cul-de-sac. These sites have different access issues to the southern part of the SAEG site. The northern end of Chickenhall Lane joins the B3037 Bishopstoke Road at an over-capacity mini-roundabout. Constraints at this junction relate to the adjacent bridge over the Barton River and existing properties in proximity. Barton Park is a brownfield site approximately 20 hectares in size, which has the potential to accommodate approximately 62,000 sq.m of employment floor space should it be brought forward for re-development. However, the timing of redevelopment is currently uncertain. No Masterplan for the site has been created, and the proposed mix of uses on the site is yet to be determined by the landowner.
- 3.5 In view of differing access related issues and also the different land ownerships, proposals for development and likely timing of such, it has been recognised that the development of the sites could be brought forward incrementally rather than as a whole, prioritising deliverable sites which could be unlocked by phased infrastructure interventions in the shorter term. Land within the ownership of Southampton Airport and Network Rail has been identified as a key enabler to bring forward initial development, acting as a catalyst for the delivery of the wider site.

4. Redevelopment of the Former Ford Site

- 4.1 A significant proportion of the former Ford site has recently been purchased by developer Mountpark for the development of 45,198 sq.m of warehousing and industrial uses, and work is already underway to progress this development. This in itself presents a major opportunity for the Solent to meet much needed demand for logistics space in the South Coast market, for which there is a critical lack of supply.
- 4.2 The former Ford site is important in the context of the access strategy for SAEG, and within the context of the updated CLLR, given its location in proximity to the airport and access via the M27 Junction 5, Wide Lane Bridge and Spitfire roundabout. Consequently consideration needs to be given to the access arrangements for this important site in conjunction with the overarching access strategy for SAEG.

5 Potential Development at South Bishopstoke

- 5.1 As part of the emerging Eastleigh Borough Local Plan, a number of potential development sites are being considered as part of an Issues and Options process. Although it is not known at this time exactly which sites will be allocated, it is important to note the potential for development located South of Bishopstoke. Should development be allocated in this area there is likely to be a requirement for highway mitigation, and options have recently been explored for a South Bishopstoke Bypass. One of the options links into the southern end of Chickenhall Lane, following the lane to tie into Bishopstoke Road at the northern end. Clearly the outcome of the ongoing Local Plan site allocation process will be a fundamental determinant in respect of agreeing the preferred way forward for any improvements to Chickenhall Lane and its junction with Bishopstoke Road.

6 Chickenhall Lane Link Road (CLLR) - Safeguarded scheme

- 6.1 The changing interests, fortunes and land ownerships of the key sites surrounding the CLLR have meant that the purpose and alignment of the link have evolved over time and are still evolving.
- 6.2 The current scheme design dates from 2008/9. The link road connects the M27 junction 5 with the B3037 Bishopstoke Road, east of Eastleigh town centre. The scheme is approximately four kilometres in length. North of the M27 junction 5 the scheme heads northwards via the A335 Wide Lane, continuing past Southampton Airport Parkway Station. A new bridge is proposed to cross the A335 and the main Southampton to Waterloo railway line running west of and parallel to Southampton Airport runway. The link then turns and heads east via a new tunnel before turning north to cross the Fareham railway line via a second new bridge, to join the existing Chickenhall Lane by Prysman, terminating at the junction with the B3037 Bishopstoke Road.
- 6.3 The key aims and objectives from 2008/9 remain pertinent and are as follows:
- (i) To facilitate regionally significant, large scale economic development on land-locked greenfield sites and regeneration on brownfield sites, and also improve access to existing employment areas.
 - (ii) To facilitate the development of a multi-modal transport hub/interchange in the heart of South Hampshire which will form part of an international gateway based around the airport, railway stations and motorway infrastructure, and which will provide key links between air, rail, bus, road and cycle travel.
 - (iii) To provide environmental and air quality improvements through the reduction of traffic, particularly heavy goods vehicles, in central Eastleigh in a designated Air Quality Management Area.

- 6.4 The scheme alignment is constrained by numerous factors, including the railway lines and yards, the airport runway and runway end safety area, a significant gas main, environmentally designated sites and other existing land uses, all of which ultimately mean that there is very little scope for varying the overall alignment. The key scheme features are as follows:
- (i) new and improved existing carriageway, including a section of dualling between the M27 junction 5 and a new junction with the A335 north of Southampton (Airport) Parkway Station;
 - (ii) two new bridges, one across the A335 and the main Southampton to Waterloo railway line and one across the main Fareham railway line; and
 - (iii) an upgraded junction at the B3037 Bishopstoke Road junction with the northern end of Chickenhall Lane.

7 Chickenhall Lane Link Road (CLLR) - Review Process

- 7.1 Upgrades are now required to the historically safeguarded CLLR to reflect changing standards, changing network constraints and requirements since the scheme was designed, and also changing circumstances in relation to the SAEG proposals. Key matters for consideration are set out below in relation to each section of the link road in turn.
- 7.2 In relation to the southern section of the scheme (south of the Southampton Airport long stay car park) two main options are currently being considered as follows:
- i) a route based upon the historically safeguarded CLLR with revisions to take into account: the new Southampton parkway car park entrance; recent upgrades to the M27 Junction 5; and Network Rail height increases for all structures over railway lines. This route will provide some benefit for the redeveloped Ford site, in that it will reduce the amount of traffic on the Wide Lane bridge and Spitfire roundabout, making it easier for traffic from the site to access the M27 junction 5. However, it will primarily provide benefit in the form of direct access to the new SAEG sites to the north east of the airport runway;
 - ii) a new route which will help improve access to the redeveloped former Ford site, provide a new 'front door' to the airport, as well as providing access to the SAEG sites based upon an upgraded Wide Lane bridge and Spitfire roundabout, and an upgraded Mitchell Way. Engineering complexities and site constraints may mean that this option is difficult to progress and discussions are ongoing with Network rail regarding the viability of this as an option.
- 7.3 In relation to the section of the CLLR from the Southampton Airport long stay car-park east towards the land locked SAEG sites, this could be realigned to avoid the need for a tunnel. However airport safety requirements and the need for Southampton Airport to be able to manage the traffic flow to the

north of the airport runway will be key determinants in the feasibility of any at grade option. The nature and timing of the development of the sites to the south of the Botley line will be intrinsically linked to the alignment and delivery of this section of the CLLR.

7.4 In relation to the section of the CLLR north of the Botley railway line there are a number of material considerations which once again will be determined by the nature and timing of development and redevelopment proposals. The potential development of land to the south of Bishopstoke could mean that there is a need to facilitate access to this site as well as the redevelopment of the Barton Park and Tower Lane Industrial sites. In either case an upgraded junction will be required at the northern end of Chickenhall Lane to improve existing capacity constraints as well as cater for additional demand from new development. Two options are currently being considered as follows:

- i) a new 4 arm traffic signal junction which will replace the existing mini-roundabout based upon the original CLLR scheme design. This layout will involve widening / upgrading the existing bridge over the Barton River; and
- ii) an alternative 3 arm traffic signal layout which moves the junction eastwards and involves a widened / upgraded bridge across the Barton River and a further new bridge over the Barton River to the south of the junction. This type of layout would be required should the South Bishopstoke development sites be allocated.

8 Associated Infrastructure

8.1 In order to ensure the access strategy for SAEG works, it is important that traffic along the B3037 Bishopstoke Road corridor heading into Eastleigh town centre is managed effectively. A key constraint along this corridor is the town centre junction, namely the A335 Station Hill/B3037 junction. Previous attempts to improve this junction have been frustrated by building constraints along the A335 and the proximity of the bridge over the main railway line to Waterloo. Eastleigh Borough Council's emerging Local Plan is likely to propose redevelopment in this area, which will provide the opportunity to reconfigure this critical junction. Options are currently being developed which include a double roundabout layout designed to improve capacity and reduce conflicts. The provision of additional capacity at this location will reduce the need for a direct link road to be provided between Bishopstoke Road and the M27 Junction 5 in the form of the historically safeguarded CLLR, hence it is important to consider this improvement in the context of the future direction of the CLLR as a link road as well as in the context of the access strategy for the SAEG sites.

9 Future direction

- 9.1 In view of the issues highlighted above related to the interrelationships between the respective development proposals and each section of the CLLR, a flexible approach to delivery is essential. It is apparent that each section of the link road has its own complexities and is fundamentally linked to development proposals which by their nature have their own requirements for access whilst being considered as part of the wider access strategy.
- 9.2 In relation to funding and delivery of the SAEG access strategy/upgraded CLLR, different approaches may need to be taken to different sections, which will enable bids to be made in a flexible and phased manner to any appropriate funding source. Either phased or single bids for an updated CLLR could be considered as part of a flexible approach.

10 Funding Opportunities

- 10.1 A number of opportunities are currently being progressed to source funding for the access strategy.
- 10.2 An Expression of Interest has recently been submitted to the Solent LEP for Local Growth Funding to progress a first phase of the SAEG access strategy in order to facilitate access to the sites to the south of the Botley railway line. A preferred option has not been defined in the bid as further work is required.
- 10.3 In the April 2016 Budget a new Large Local Majors Fund was announced so that areas in the South East could bid for large local transport schemes such as the specifically named CLLR. Subsequently the Government invited bids for schemes from the £475m fund and specifically identified that schemes from the Solent LEP area should be no less than £69m in value. It is understood that the Solent LEP will be submitting a bid to the government for funds to both develop and progress delivery of the SAEG access strategy.
- 10.4 Development funding is likely to be a fundamental part of bringing forward the overarching SAEG access strategy/updated CLLR. Contributions will be sought from all key SAEG sites. The optimum delivery mechanisms in respect of the proportions of private versus public sector funding have yet to be agreed and will be subject to negotiations at the appropriate stage in the planning process. It is worth noting that bid guidelines would typically expect private sector match funding in the order of at least 25%.

11 Finance

- 11.1 Development work on these proposals is being funded from existing revenue resources supplemented by £50,000 awarded by the Solent LEP to develop this work to a sufficient level to enable bids to be compiled.

12 Recommendations

- 12.1 That the historic policy commitment for the proposed Chickenhall Lane Link Road be re-confirmed and that delegated authority be given to update the safeguarded alignment to reflect revised design standards and opportunities at the southern end of the scheme in keeping with the objectives of the access strategy for the regionally significant strategic development and regeneration site at Southampton Airport Economic Gateway.
- 12.2 That authority be delegated to the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment to progress necessary development and design work for the access strategy in liaison with key stakeholders and developers where appropriate.
- 12.3 That a flexible and phased approach towards delivery be maintained reflecting the current development requirements and set within the context of the access strategy for the Southampton Airport Economic Gateway, in order that best advantage can be taken of all appropriate funding and emerging development opportunities.
- 12.4 That authority be delegated to the Director of Economy, Transport and Environment to prepare business cases and bids to pursue and secure funding opportunities for the whole or partial access strategy according to appropriate funding opportunities, in order to facilitate scheme delivery at the earliest opportunity.

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):	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u> EME Chickenhall Lane Link Road – Project Review	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u> 20.3.2007
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u> n/a		<u>Date</u>

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>
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 project will have no impact at this time as it is currently in the development stage. The project will open up a strategic site creating opportunities for all and will improve accessibility for all residents to new and existing areas of employment. As part of the progression of the project consultation will be undertaken. Relevant approvals and funding will be required prior to implementation.

2 Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1 The decision will not have any direct impact upon 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 project development is taking into account the need to reduce congestion and delay in the centre of Eastleigh in an identified Air Quality Management Area. The scheme will need to help reduce traffic levels in the central area and improve air quality.