

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

Decision Maker:	Executive Member – Policy and Resources
Date:	9 September 2010
Title:	Project Appraisal: North Popley Accessibility Improvements
Reference:	1766
Report From:	Director of Environment

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this project appraisal is to carry out accessibility improvements at North Popley, Basingstoke. It is an externally funded scheme and the majority of the contributions were taken specifically to implement the outcomes of the proposed scheme.
- 1.2. The proposed scheme will improve the accessibility for non-motorised users in the North Popley area. It will to upgrade ageing infrastructure, improve the safety and security of users, as well as encourage more local journeys to be taken on foot or by bicycle.
- 1.3. Although this submission is seeking approval for the entire programme of improvements, the first component of these works was delivered in summer 2010. This was because of the necessity of having informal pedestrian crossings to assist relocated school children cross a busy road ready for the new school term. That decision referred to this overall Project Appraisal and was approved by the Director of Environment in June 2010. It explicitly stated that approval was only being sought then for a limited and stand-alone component of the overall package.

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MEMBER – POLICY AND
RESOURCES

PROJECT
APPRAISAL
(Externally Funded)

9 SEPTEMBER 2010

PROJECT: NORTH POPLEY ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

COMMENCEMENT DATE: JANUARY 2011
COMPLETION DATE: JANUARY 2012

PLANNED YEAR OF START IN ACCORDANCE WITH CAPITAL
PROGRAMME: 2010/11

1. **Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this Project Appraisal is to carry out accessibility improvements at North Popley, Basingstoke, to be funded from external sources.

2. **Contextual Information**

- 2.1 The North Popley estate has a high level of deprivation, as measured by a variety of indicators, including unemployment, incapacity benefit recipients and percentage of children receiving free school meals. The estate has also been advanced as a priority area for street lighting renewal under Hampshire County Council's Private Finance Initiative (PFI) to aid with reducing crime rates.

- 2.2 The North Popley area requires frequent attendance by maintenance engineers from Hampshire Highways due to the age of the existing infrastructure. The proposed upgrade and replacement with more durable materials will significantly reduce the level of attendance required and future expenditure imposed on the County Council.

3. **Introduction**

- 3.1 The area around North Popley is characterised by older infrastructure and properties. The surrounding roads of Popley Way and Carpenters Down are residential distributor roads with speed limits of 40 miles per hour (mph). These limits are being reduced in a parallel piece of work.

- 3.2 The design and construction era of the North Popley estate meant that pedestrians and motor traffic were never meant to come into conflict. This was through use of subways that are currently not favoured by users and frequently flood, providing an additional significant maintenance responsibility. Many such users, including people with prams and the elderly, currently choose to cross the highway at road-level instead and walk along the verges, despite these movements not being supported by infrastructure.

- 3.3 This safety risk was highlighted at the end of 2007, when a pupil of Everest Community College was involved in a serious road traffic accident at a crossing point to the North Popley estate. A similar accident occurred there in 2009. The proposed scheme will reduce the dangers on all the main pedestrian routes.

4. **Details**

- 4.1 The North Popley Accessibility Improvements scheme features three components, focusing on improving pedestrian and cycle accessibility on Popley Way, Carpenters Down and within the North Popley estate itself.
- 4.2 On Popley Way, the proposals will link the residential estate on the eastern extreme of Popley with the new area of open space to the west, through a widened shared-use path for cyclists and pedestrians on the north side of the road. Dropped kerbs and tactile paving will allow the safe crossing of any side roads. This route has been noted as a missing link within the Basingstoke town cycle network. These improvements will complement a number of informal pedestrian crossings that were implemented over the summer of 2010, and make it easier and safer for pedestrians and cyclists to travel along and across this road.
- 4.3 On Carpenters Down, the proposals are for a single shared-use path with informal crossing facilities and pedestrian refuge islands, on the route to key local destinations, including Everest Community College, Popley Fields Community Centre and the local convenience store. There are also crossings at regular distances along the road, which will act as traffic-calming and improve pedestrian accessibility, including where the shared-use path is required to cross to the other side of the road because of highway land availability.
- 4.4 Within the estate, the existing path network will be widened and straightened with additional connections to improve local access to Marnel Infant and Junior School, and local shops and services.
- 4.5 The two distributor roads, Popley Way and Carpenters Down, both have 40 mph speed limits. In July 2010 the Police agreed to these both becoming 30 mph zones. The change is being advanced in parallel with this scheme, allowing implementation of a permanent reduction immediately following the present temporary reduction in speed limit over the works period.
- 4.6 Approval of this scheme now will allow the proposed works to be coordinated with the above street lighting improvements under the PFI. This will ensure a positive outcome, rather than potentially having to move recently installed street lights.
- 4.7 A component of this scheme, a number of informal crossings on Popley Way and Carpenters Down, was implemented over the summer of 2010. This was because the Chineham Park Primary School, located a few hundred metres to the south, is closing and the pupils are relocating to Marnel Junior School, north of the

road. This required many of the pupils resident on the south side to cross this residential distributor road with no supporting infrastructure. Due to the necessity of this improvement to safety being in place prior to the new school term in September, a separate submission for approval by the Director of Environment was obtained for this work. This approval for a limited series of pedestrian crossings was granted on 10 June 2010, but explicitly said that approval for a larger tranche of works was not being sought until submission of this report.

5. Targets and Outcomes

- 5.1 The intended outcomes of the proposed scheme are increased levels of non-motorised movement in the Popley area of Basingstoke. This is through an increased sense of safety and security when accessing key local destinations, including local schools, retirement homes, shops and the community park.
- 5.2 The success of the scheme will be measured by a satisfaction survey to be undertaken with users of the improvements, to be carried out within the first year of installation.
- 5.3 This will be complemented by comparing the percentage of children who walk to school, as measured by the hands-up survey in the school travel plan.

6. Standards

- 6.1 The scheme has been designed in accordance with National and Hampshire County Council design standards and has been subject to a road safety audit following completion of the detailed design. A further safety audit will be undertaken on completion of the works.

7. Statutory Procedures and Consultation

- 7.1 The scheme derived initially from officer site observations, Public Enquiries Manager records and a series of meetings held with Councillor Mrs Frankum. These meetings allowed the scheme to be designed and presented to the public for comment.
- 7.2 A public exhibition was held on 5 March 2010 which revealed that over 90% of respondents supported the scheme and suggested some valuable minor changes to the detail of the proposals.

7.3 Work is progressing to lower the speed limits on Popley Way and Carpenters Down and this was recently approved by the Police. The work will complement the above proposed scheme and will involve public consultation on the proposed change of speed limit.

7.4 There has been continuing consultation with Councillor Mrs Frankum to ensure that the proposals address the existing and emerging local priorities. This will continue until the proposed scheme is delivered.

8. **Policy Considerations**

8.1 The North Popley Accessibility Improvements will increase safety and improve access to key local destinations by encouraging safer walking. This corresponds with the Hampshire County Council Corporate Objective of making Hampshire safer and more secure for all, whilst also contributing to the two supporting objectives of enhancing well-being and improving the quality of place.

8.2 The proposed scheme meets with the objectives of the current Basingstoke Environmental Strategy for Transport and the emerging Basingstoke Town Access Plan.

9. **Land Requirements**

9.1 The majority of the land is designated as public highway. The small additional area is owned by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, which is supporting the scheme and has indicated that the land will be made available at nil cost.

9.2 Authority is therefore sought for the Director for Property Business and Regulatory Services (Strategic Manager - Assets and Development) to settle terms and conditions for the dedication of this additional land for highway purposes.

10. **Alternative Arrangements**

10.1 Do nothing. This option would mean that pedestrians, including the elderly and schoolchildren, are left to cross the road unsupported and forced to reach destinations by unsafe and extended routes. It would also mean a connection for non-motorised users to reach the local community park is incomplete.

10.2 There are no other options. The proposed scheme delivers the pedestrian and cycle improvements in the optimum location for improving local accessibility, safety and security.

11. Local Member's View

11.1 The local Member, Councillor Mrs Frankum supports the proposed scheme and played a significant part in the scheme development process. This has helped the scheme meet local expectations and was reflected in the support of over 90% of people who attended the exhibition.

12. Sustainability

12.1 The scheme will assist walking and cycling to local destinations, thereby encouraging access by non-motorised means. This will lead to reduced traffic and greenhouse gas emissions in the local area.

12.2 The proposed scheme will make use of recycled materials wherever possible. This will divert aggregate and other construction materials from going as waste to landfill sites.

13. Financial Arrangements

13.1	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>Funds Available</u>	<u>£'000</u>
	Design Fee	110	Developer Funding	1,200
	Supervision	80		
	Project Works	1,010		
	Land	0		
	Total	<u>1,200</u>	Total	<u>1,200</u>

13.2	<u>Revenue Implications</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>% Variation to Committee's budget</u>
	Net increase in current expenditure	14	0.012
	Capital Charge	62	0.046
	Total Expenditure	<u>76</u>	<u>0.058</u>

14. Maintenance Implications

14.1 The infrastructure in the North Popley estate is old and requires frequent attendance by the highways maintenance team. They have expressed their support for its upgrading and replacement with modern, durable materials.

- 14.2 It is hoped that the proposed improvements will significantly reduce the County Council's expenditure in the North Popley area.
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15. **Recommendation**

- 15.1. That the Project Appraisal for the North Popley Accessibility Improvements scheme, to be externally funded at a cost of £1.2 million, be approved.
- 15.2. That the Director of Property Business and Regulatory Services (Strategic Manager - Assets and Development) be authorised to settle detailed terms and conditions in respect of the dedication of the non-highway land.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes/no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes/no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes/no
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

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1. The proposed improvements will greatly improve access for all within the estate. It will allow all users, particularly the mobility-impaired, to access local shops, facilities and public transport with improved safety and security.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. The proposed improvements will coordinate with the delivery of improved street lighting. They will allow easier and more direct movement by non-motorised means, which will be combined with improved lighting, within an area of Basingstoke with noted social and economic deprivation. This is intended to have the effect of reducing the instances of crime and disorder within the area.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

The proposed improvements will reduce the energy consumption and carbon footprint of the County Council within the estate. This is through the upgrading and replacement of many street lighting units and the encouragement given to people to travel by non-motorised means.

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

The proposed improvements, by encouraging non-motorised travel, will help more people travel as a pedestrian or cyclist. This will reduce emissions that cause climate change, as part of a strategy of a wider reduction. By improving the infrastructure, the local population will become better able to be resilient to impacts of climate change.