

BARGE CANAL, ROMSEY ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Background, Aims and Objectives

Romsey lies towards the southern end of the River Test and has a population of about 18,000, of whom approximately 24% are aged 60 or over. Expansion since the 1930s has predominantly taken place to the north and east of the historic town centre due to the River Test to the west and the Broadlands estate to the south. However, local access to these newer areas is constrained by the railway lines which connect Southampton and Eastleigh with Salisbury.

Canal Walk provides a convenient link for pedestrians and cyclists between the Fishlake Meadows and Cupernham housing areas to the north-east and the railway station and the northern part of the town centre. Barge Canal, Rights of Way Footpath No 2, connects Canal Walk with the Plaza roundabout (junction of the A3057 and A3090) and the town centre to the west and the sports and leisure facilities at Romsey Rapids to the south.

Barge Canal footpath is approximately 500 metres long and runs on the west side of the watercourse on a narrow bund. It is in generally poor condition for regular use, being both narrow and prone to overgrown margins. Only the section south of the railway overbridge is surfaced with the northern part being gravel. Although not part of the RoW footpath, there are spurs to the railway station and the Mountbatten Avenue housing estate. A short flight of steps at the southern end means that it cannot be used by wheelchair users. Pedestrian facilities at the Plaza roundabout are also poor. Apart from a single lamp column near to the Plaza roundabout, there is no lighting.

Movement surveys were carried out at the junction with the railway station spur in August and September 2007. During the first survey 123 people used the northern section of footpath, of whom about 15% were cyclists, and 80 used the spur. During the second survey 202 people used the northern section, again with about 15% being cyclists, and 90 used the spur.

A review of school facilities has resulted in the merging of Romsey Infants School and Romsey Junior School into Romsey Primary School. The junior school site, which is off Cupernham Lane, is currently being enlarged to accommodate the additional pupils, with work expected to be completed by Easter 2008. After this, the infants school site, which is on the east side of Barge Canal and is accessed off the A3090 Winchester Road, will be redeveloped for housing. An outline planning for 38 houses will be made to Test Valley Borough Council by Culture, Communities and Business Services. This consolidation could increase use of Barge Canal footpath by parents and pupils, and its improvement is specifically identified in the School's Travel Plan approved in April 2007.

FULL BUSINESS CASE

1. Scheme Description

The G0 Outline business was completed in March 2008 followed by a detailed feasibility study. This study was completed in March 2009 and included consultation with various stakeholders, local groups and Test Valley Borough Council. A public exhibition was held at the Borough Council Offices in Romsey. The local County Member, Councillor Cooper, is supportive of this scheme. The study addressed the various options available, with particular attention paid to the risk involved in each one and included:

- A location Plan
- Highway Boundary Plans, Land Ownership Plan
- Proposed Designs
- Feasibility Stage 1 Safety Audit
- Ecology Reports and Plans
- Arboriculture Report and Plans
- Conservation Areas, Rights of Way and Historic Buildings Plan
- Pedestrian and Cycle Count Data and Summary Data
- Street Lighting Design Proposals, Preliminary Cost Estimate and Certificate of Approval for Illuminated Street Furniture Installation
- Report Survey of Barge Canal (Plaza) Culvert
- Resident Comment following Public Exhibition
- C3 Notice Plans

This scheme will support the recently approved Romsey Railway Station improvement scheme.

The recommendation is to make provision of a new footway on Barge Canal footpath including the introduction of street lighting and a pedestrian and wheelchair friendly ramp to replace the Plaza steps.

The inclusion of a cycleway along Barge Canal has been rejected on the grounds of practicality and safety.

2. Finance

<u>Estimates</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>% of total</u>	<u>Funds Available</u>	<u>£'000</u>
Design Fee	39,248	15%		
Client Fee	10,000	3.8%		
Supervision	22,808	9%		
Construction	261,900	62.2%		
Land	Nil	Nil		
Contingency	26,190	10%		
Total	360,146	100%	Total External Funding	355,000

3. Programme

	Gateway Stage				
	1	3	Start on site	End on site	4
Date (mm/yy)					

No Programme available at this stage: Dependent on work load, but June 2011 start of works is feasible. The Feasibility report recommends a phased approach and concludes all elements of the scheme may not be deliverable in 2010/11 year.

4. Local Member(s)

Councillor Cooper is supportive of this scheme.

5. Community Engagement

83% of comments received are in favour of these proposals. 17% were concerned with vegetation clearance and street lighting associated with future policing issues.

Detailed design will be displayed at the Borough Council offices with letters to local residents.

6. Risks

Risk	Reason	Potential Impact	Mitigation
Land issue	Party wall agreement required.	Unable to construct the proposed ramp at plaza steps.	Negotiate with property owner.
Land issue	Network rail licence agreement	Unable to complete this section	Negotiation with Network Rail and legal practice.
Ecology	Bats	Scheme delay	If identified, possible licence required.
Costs	Feasibility costs compiled in 2009	All phased elements may be delayed	Phased implementation.

7. Preferred Procurement Route

- Engineering Consultancy**
- District**
- Professional Services Framework**
- Other**
- No preference**

PROJECT APPRAISAL

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this project appraisal is to increase public safety and access for the residents of Romsey by the provision of new and improved footways and street lighting.

Scheme Outline

- 1.2 A public exhibition held at Test Valley Borough Council offices in Romsey in November 2008 identified various options for improvement to the Barge Canal footpath in Romsey to improve accessibility to schools and the railway station.
- 1.3 The County Council, Test Valley Borough Council and the Romsey 2020 Group were among those collectively involved in selecting the best options from the variety of measures identified in the feasibility study undertaken prior to the public exhibition.
- 1.4 The options supported and identified for implementation are outlined in section 4.

Alternative Options

- 1.5 The option to provide a shared use footway and cycleway has been considered and rejected on the grounds of its close proximity to the canal and the restricted amount of room to increase it to the minimum width required to meet with the standard.

Measures of Success

- 1.6 The proposed accessibility improvements will encourage more people to walk to and from residential areas, to and from the town centre and local facilities.
- 1.7 Pedestrians will benefit from improved access to local schools and other facilities such as shops, the Railway Station and the Plaza Theatre.
- 1.8 The success of the proposals can be measured by comparing pedestrian footfall. Data was collected at the scoping stage of the original study in the areas for improvement proposed in this scheme, and can be compared with new data to be collected in the period following the implementation of the proposed improvements.

2. Finance

2.1	<u>Estimates</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>% of total</u>	<u>Funds Available</u>	<u>£'000</u>
	Design Fee	61	17	Developer Contributions	320
	Client Fee	8	2	LTP	40
	Supervision	12	3		
	Construction	279	78		
	Land	0	0		
	Total	<u>360</u>	<u>100</u>	Total	<u>360</u>

2.2	<u>Revenue</u> <u>Implications</u>	<u>£'000</u>	<u>% Variation to</u> <u>Committee's budget</u>
	Net increase in current expenditure	3	0.002
	Capital Charge	18	0.013
	Total Expenditure	<u>21</u>	<u>0.015</u>

3. Programme

	Gateway Stage			
	3 - Project Appraisal	Start on site	End on site	4 - Review
Date (mm/yy)	27 July 2011	September 2011	November 2011	November 2012

4. Scheme Details

- 4.1 A location plan is attached (Appendix A) and a detailed plan will be displayed at the meeting.
- 4.2 The elements that make up the proposals are:
- A tarmac footway with street lighting to replace the shingle canal path from the new pedestrian ramp to its junction with canal walk.
 - A new pedestrian ramp facility to replace the existing steps adjacent to the Plaza Theatre at the entrance to Barge Canal path.
 - Improved dropped crossing and central refuge at the roundabout, crossing the A3057.

5. Departures from Standards

- 5.1 There is no departure from the Department for Transport and Hampshire County Council highway design standards in these proposals.

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1 The proposals have been jointly developed with Test Valley Borough Council in consultation with Members and key stakeholders, and a summary of options for delivery in phase 1 were identified.
- 6.2 A public exhibition of the proposals, including a range of options, was held in November 2008 with officers from both Hampshire County Council and Test Valley Borough Council in attendance. There were five objections from members of the public whose property backs on to the footpath and their issues have been addressed as best as possible. The overarching feeling was that of support from the public for the scheme.
- 6.3 Test Valley Borough Council has been fully consulted on the plans and the details and are in support of the scheme proposals.
- 6.4 Councillor Cooper fully supports these access improvements.

7. Statutory Procedures

- 7.1 Temporary road closures will be required to enable the works to be undertaken safely. Hours of work will be restricted to between 09.30 and 16.30.

8. Land Requirements

- 8.1 No land acquisition required. All works to be confined within existing highway limits.

9. Maintenance Implications

- 9.1 The revenue implications of these proposals has been taken into account in setting the annual budget.

CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION

Links to the Corporate Strategy

<i>Hampshire safer and more secure for all:</i>	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):		
<i>Maximising well-being:</i>	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):		
<i>Enhancing our quality of place:</i>	yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no <input type="checkbox"/>
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

Scheme files

Engineering Consultancy, Capital House, Winchester

Impact Assessments

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

The improved and new footways, crossing facilities and central refuge will help pedestrians and the more vulnerable user to access the railway station, schools and other village amenities and provide safer opportunities to cross the road.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

The scheme will have no direct impact on the Crime and Disorder Act, but by providing improved crossings will contribute towards a safer and more secure community.

3. Climate Change:

The residential areas within Romsey have expanded in recent years with several new homes being built. It is therefore important to address the accessibility within the village itself ensuring its amenities can be reached, and provide travel choice to encourage walking as an alternative to motor transport. This improvement will make a positive contribution to a reduced carbon footprint rather than adding to road congestion.

Appendix A – Priorities and Targets

7 LTP2 Objectives

Increase accessibility to services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Promote Safety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reduce impact and effect of congestion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Widen travel choice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Contribute towards improvements in air quality	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support wider quality of life objectives	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Encourage value for money and efficient asset management	<input type="checkbox"/>

17 LTP2 Targets

LTP1 - Accessibility. Percentage of people who consider accessibility is good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
LTP2 - Change in area-wide road traffic mileage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
LTP3 - Cycling trips (annualised index)	<input type="checkbox"/>
LTP4 - Mode share of journeys to school	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
LTP5 - Bus punctuality indicator	<input type="checkbox"/>
LTP8 - Air Quality. Related to traffic in Winchester, Eastleigh, Totton and Lyndhurst	<input type="checkbox"/>
BVPI 199x – Casualties. Total killed and seriously injured	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
BVPI 199y – Casualties. Total child killed and seriously injured	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
BVPI z – Casualties. Total slight casualties	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
BVPI 223 – Road Condition. Contribute towards improvements in air quality	<input type="checkbox"/>
BVPI 224 a – Road Condition. Classified non-principal roads	<input type="checkbox"/>
BVPI 224b – Road Condition. Unclassified roads	<input type="checkbox"/>
BVPI 187 - Footway Condition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
BVPI 102 – Public Transport. Number of bus passenger journeys	<input type="checkbox"/>
BVPI 104 – Public Transport. Satisfaction with local bus services	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other

Please list any other targets (ie National Indicators, non LTP) to which this scheme will contribute.

NI 175 Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling.

Environment Department Gateway Process
Scheme Name: Barge Canal, Romsey – Accessibility Improvements
Reference: 985828



NI 198 Children travelling to school – modes of transport used.
LI local accessibility.



APPENDIX A

