

Title of meeting: Cabinet Member for Transport Decision Meeting

Date of meeting: 12 October 2023

Subject: South East Hampshire Rapid Transit City Centre South - design approval

Report by: Kerri Farnsworth, Interim Director of Regeneration

Report Author: Barnaby Fry, Principal Project Manager

Wards affected: Charles Dickens

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. To seek approval of the design of the City Centre South project, which is part of the South East Hampshire Rapid Transit (SEHRT) programme of works.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. **It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Transport approves the City Centre South scheme.**

3. Background

- 3.1. The Council has several obligations to improve the city's public transport provision and active travel network. These obligations are set out in various strategies, plans and initiatives such as the Portsmouth Transport Strategy¹, (Local Transport Plan 4), Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)² and Clean Air Zones (CAZ)³.

¹ [Portsmouth Transport Strategy 2021-2038](#)

² [74.463 LCWIP Plan Accessible.pdf \(portsmouth.gov.uk\)](#)

³ [Home - Cleaner Air Portsmouth](#)



- 3.2. In September 2020, £55 million from the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) was awarded across the South East Hampshire area, with the City of Portsmouth successfully awarded just over £26 million to improve connectivity and increase productivity via better walking, cycling, and public transport links.
- 3.3. The TCF is funding the South East Hampshire Rapid Transport (SEHRT) scheme, which seeks to improve public transport provision and journey times across the Solent region. SEHRT focusses on enhancing existing public transport services through new and improved bus priority routes making traveling by bus a more attractive option. This programme of improvements delivers a network of rapid transit routes to help get people to key employment, educational, and leisure areas. This is to be achieved through consistent bus journey times which will connect with rail and ferry services to create an integrated transport system across South East Hampshire.
- 3.4. City Centre South, one of the nine SEHRT schemes in Portsmouth, aims to improve bus reliability in the area between Commercial Road and Guildhall Square. In addition, the scheme aims to improve cyclist and pedestrian safety in the area.
- 3.5. The scheme is split into two parts:
- Station Road crossroads
 - Isambard Brunel Road widening and crossing

Station Road

- 3.6. The current arrangement of the roundabout has no formal control. Two of the arms have courtesy crossings, on another a heavily used zebra and the last an informal crossing. There is no way to control their use, and as such general traffic and buses can experience delay.
- 3.7. The design changes the current roundabout to a signalised crossing, including formal crossings on all 4 arms of the junction.

Isambard Brunel Road

- 3.8. The current bend in the road, south of Portsmouth and Southsea station, presents issues for all road users. The design seeks to remove this pinch point by allowing two-way traffic. To improve pedestrian safety, a signalised crossing point will also be included.



- 3.9. Details of the design can be found in Appendix A.

Scheme benefits

- 3.10. Both parts of this scheme offer the ability to manage pedestrian usage and prioritise bus movements, given that the signals can be linked. In addition, bus detectors can be used to further manage the movements throughout the area. The scheme offers journey time savings and reliability across a major section of the city centre. This scheme is part of the wider improvement which will benefit bus routes from Winston Churchill Ave to Commercial Road.
- 3.11. As well as benefits to buses, the scheme allows for safer crossing facilities for pedestrians. The improved pedestrian environment will also contribute to better air quality in city centre.

Landscaping

- 3.12. The scheme originally envisaged the loss of two trees. Consultation was made with both the Council's qualified Arboricultural Officer and the voluntary group of Portsmouth and Southsea Tree Wardens. It was felt that the mature tree, *Ailanthus altissima* (Tree of Heaven) located to the east of the pinch point in Isambard Brunel Road, should be retained. This will involve some modest re-design of part of the widening, which will take place this autumn.
- 3.13. This means that only one tree will be removed, *Acer platanoides* (Norway Maple) to allow for the construction of the new loading bay. Unfortunately, this tree (along with its neighbour) has recently been subject to vandalism, which means its life expectancy has already been significantly reduced.
- 3.14. New landscaping is proposed along the southwest and southeast corners of the crossroads. This will include planting of herbaceous species, ornamental grasses and shrubs.

TRO status

- 3.15. A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the relocation of the loading bay from its existing location to an area to the south was progressed (see Appendix A for more details of the location). Following a consultation period, no objections were made. As such, the TRO is expected to be sealed in the next few weeks.



4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1 This scheme is part of the "City Centre Project" package of works that Alun Griffiths Construction Ltd. has started on 11 September 2023 (the other elements are City Centre North and Lake Road). This element of the works is not scheduled to start until January 2024.
- 4.2 Approval of the design of this scheme will allow construction to progress as planned without any negative commercial implications.
- 4.3 Once the scheme is delivered, there are many benefits that would be realised, principally around improvements in bus journey reliability (see 3.10 and 3.11 above). Implementation of the scheme is supported by the local bus companies. Its delivery, along with the rest of the SEHRT programme, will unlock match funding investment from the bus companies.

5. Integrated impact assessment

- 5.1 An integrated impact assessment has been completed and is published alongside this report in Appendix B.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1 There are no specific legal implications from the recommendation in this report.
- 6.2 City Centre South scheme is part of a wider South East Hampshire Rapid Transit package of works, which is being funded by TCF. Therefore, the scheme needs to be in compliance with the relevant funding bid proposal (as may have been amended and agreed with the Government) and terms of the grant agreement with the Council.

7. Director of Finance's comments

- 7.1 The costs of works on Station Road and Isambard Brunel Road will be funded from the South East Hampshire Rapid Transit (SEHRT) budget in the capital programme approved by Full Council on 28th February 2023. These schemes are funded entirely by external grant awarded by the Department of Transport.



- 7.2 Construction is expected to complete by April 2024. A change control form was submitted to the DfT on 8th September seeking authority to roll SEHRT grant funding to the 2024/2025 financial year.

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Signed by:
Kerri Farnsworth, Interim Director of Regeneration

Appendices:

Appendix A: General arrangement drawing (49904_2002_0100)
Appendix B: Integrated Impact Assessment

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
The Portsmouth Transport Strategy 2021 - 2038	Portsmouth Transport Strategy 2021-2038
Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2020-2023	74.463 LCWIP Plan Accessible.pdf (portsmouth.gov.uk)
Cycle infrastructure design (LTN 1/20)	Cycle infrastructure design (LTN 1/20) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by:

Cabinet Member for Transport

Appendix A: General arrangement drawing (49904_2002_0100) (separate document)

Appendix B: Integrated Impact Assessment

Form name	Integrated Impact Assessment
Reference	IA522805685
Date	22/08/2023

Policy details

Request date	22/08/2023 11:20
Directorate	PCC Regeneration
Service	Infrastructure - Major Projects
Title of policy, service, function	SEHRT City Centre South
Type of policy, service, function	Changed
What is the aim of your policy, service, function, project or strategy?	<p>The aim is to introduce a bus-only route and improve the area for walking, cycling and public transport. Surrounding footpaths will also be improved to link with the Fratton to Portsmouth Guildhall walking route.</p> <p>To improve this area of the city we are proposing to:</p> <p>Modify the road layout on Isambard Brunel Road to allow a two-way traffic flow for buses and taxis Replace the mini roundabout with a crossroads traffic light junction, with controlled pedestrian crossings. Add a new controlled pedestrian crossing on Isambard Brunel Road, near to Guildhall Square</p>
Has any consultation been undertaken for this proposal?	No

Equality & diversity - will it have any positive/negative impacts on the protected characteristics?

<p>With the above in mind and following data analysis, who is the policy, service, function, project or strategy going to benefit or have a detrimental effect on and how?</p>	<p>It is providing better accessibility through installation of walking and cycling facilities in line with the accessibility requirements (New pedestrian crossings, designated cycle tracks and new pedestrian footways). Provide better access for people using mobility scooters/wheelchairs or partially sighted/blind groups.</p>
<p>Will any of those groups be affected in a different way to others because of your policy, project, service, function, or strategy?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>If you are directly or indirectly discriminating, how are you going to mitigate the negative impact?</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Who have you consulted with or are planning to consult with and what was/will be your consultation methodology?</p>	<p>HIVE / Society for Blind as well as through public consultation with residents and stakeholders.</p>

How are you going to review the policy, service, project or strategy, how often and who will be responsible?	N/A
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Crime - Will it make our city safer?

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?	Yes, through enhancing landscaping and provide more attractive public transportation walking and cycling routes towards the city centre.
How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?	N/A

Housing - will it provide good quality homes?

This section is not applicable to my policy	
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Health - will this help promote healthy, safe and independent living?

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?	<p>This project supports the following corporate priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make Portsmouth a city that works together, enabling communities to thrive and people to live healthy, safe and independent lives. • Encourage regeneration built around our city's thriving culture, making Portsmouth a great place to live, work, visit.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make our city cleaner, safer and greener. • Make Portsmouth a great place to live, learn and play, so our children and young people are safe, healthy and positive about their futures. • Make sure our council is a caring, competent and collaborative organisation that puts people at heart of everything that we do. Better cycle connectivity will hopefully encourage more people to cycle to their destinations.
How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?	Feedback from Residents, transport companies and users.

Income deprivation and poverty - will it consider income deprivation and reduce poverty?

This section is not applicable to my policy	
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Carbon emissions - will it reduce carbon emissions?

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?	Adding a lane will contribute to Improving bus journey times will encourage people to use public transport more and reduce the use of cars. Allowing buses to use a separate link will remove them from general traffic meaning less delays.
How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?	Feedback from Residents, transport companies and users.

Energy use - will it reduce energy use?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Climate change mitigation and flooding - will it proactively mitigate against a changing climate and flooding?

This section is not applicable to my policy	
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Natural environment - will it ensure public spaces are greener, more sustainable and well-maintained?

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?	Protected open spaces are being preserved where possible. Any trees being removed will be replaced by at least double the amount removed. Shrubs being planted will allow for more species to make homes in the area. Greening strategy to be agreed with Parks & Open spaces team
How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?	Feedback from residents and specialists.

Air quality - will it improve air quality?

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?	Improving the cycling routes in the south of the city centre by widening the carriageway, to give more space for cyclists, add another lane to avoid delays on bus journey times and adding a crossing to encourage people to walk, use public transport will play a role in enhancing the air quality.
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How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?	Feedback from residents, cyclists and bus companies.
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Transport - will it make transport more sustainable and safer for the whole community?

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?	Improved cycle connectivity ensures they have safe ways to get to where they are going. The proposed crossing will give priority to pedestrians to ensure they safely get from point A to B, especially that's its an area that is heavily congested with students. Adding an extra lane will improve the cycling facilities giving more confidence for road users to use public transport.
How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?	Feedback from residents, cyclists and cycle forum.

Waste management - will it increase recycling and reduce the production of waste?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Culture and heritage - will it promote, protect and enhance our culture and heritage?

This section is not applicable to my policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Employment and opportunities - will it promote the development of a skilled workforce?

<p>Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?</p>	<p>South East Hampshire Rapid Transit aims to transform the way people travel between Portsmouth and surrounding towns. By enhancing existing public transport services through new and improved bus priority routes, South East Hampshire Rapid Transit will make travelling by bus a more attractive option. We are developing a network of rapid transit routes to help get people to where they want to be (Employment and education centres) by reliable and regular bus journeys which will connect with rail and ferry services – creating an integrated transport system.</p>
<p>How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Economy - will it encourage businesses to invest in the city, support sustainable growth and regeneration?

<p>Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?</p>	<p>Better connect our communities and travel to work areas. Drive up productivity and support economic growth by improving access to employment and training</p>
<p>How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?</p>	<p>Feedback from Residents, transport companies and users.</p>

Social value

<p>This section is not applicable to my policy</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
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Involvement



Who was involved in the Integrated impact assessment?	PM/APM
Name of the person completing this form	Ahmad Hanoun
Date of completion	2023-05-30

