

CABINET

13 FEBRUARY 2008

WINCHESTER TOWN ACCESS PLAN CONSULTATION

REPORT OF HEAD OF ACCESS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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RECENT REFERENCES:

None.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Cabinet will be aware that the City Council and the County Council are cooperating on the preparation of a Winchester Town Access Plan (WTAP). The Access Plan will help to shape the way in which people get to and from Winchester and how they move about whilst in the town. This is an important element in defining what kind of place Winchester is and connects directly with the Local Transport Plan, Local Development Framework, economic development strategic documents and the Vision for Winchester. It is now proposed to undertake a public consultation exercise which is described in the report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the form and content of the forthcoming consultation on the Winchester Town Access Plan as set out in this report be agreed.

CABINET13 February 2008WINCHESTER TOWN ACCESS PLAN CONSULTATIONREPORT OF HEAD OF ACCESS AND INFRASTRUCTUREDETAIL:1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out details of the form and content of a consultation on the development of the Winchester Town Access Plan (WTAP). The Access Plan is a document being prepared jointly by the City Council and the County Council which will set out proposals to reduce demand for car based travel, manage current traffic management issues and invest in new solutions to offer more and better travel choices. For the County Council in particular the Access Plan (and others they are working on elsewhere) is an integral part of the Local Transport Plan.
- 1.2 Transport and movement is a vital component of the social and economic infrastructure of a place. Decisions on these issues help to define the nature of the places we live in and the kind of future they have. Work on the Access Plan therefore links directly to the Vision for Winchester document that was approved by the Town Forum in 2006. In the Vision the City Council set out a series of transport and access related objectives which the Access Plan seeks to take forward. There is also a direct link to the choices presented by the preparation of the Local Development Framework which is currently subject to consultation. The future economic direction of the area will be shaped by the growth options under discussion and the Access Plan will both reflect and shape these as they develop.
- 1.3 Preparation of the Access Plan must also reflect other priorities, such as the need to address climate change and promote a reduction in carbon emissions – in which transport measures have a significant part to play. A reduction in air pollution and of congestion, generally, are also important objectives for both the City Council and the County Council.
- 1.4 All these have to be reconciled with the vital importance of maintaining and enhancing Winchester's economic vitality and historic setting. Good transport is essential for successful employment and retail operations which are in turn essential for social inclusion.
- 1.5 The process to date has included two joint Member's Seminars where Members received presentations on the key aspects of the plan and had an opportunity to raise issues of concern. The Winchester Town Forum has also discussed the process and consultation arrangements. A study into the Shared Space concept has been undertaken by Ben Hamilton-Baillie Associates and surveys into car park usage and traffic movements have been undertaken to inform the work. Community Street Audits were undertaken in the June and the results will help to inform the Cycling and walking elements of the Plan. The Town Forum's Vision for Winchester is being used as a basis for formulating the objectives and vision for WTAP. Various surveys have been undertaken and one which has been completed is a sample of car park users a summary of the results of which is contained in Appendix 1.

- 1.6 Work on the issues and options has now reached a stage where it is essential to consult with local residents, businesses and employers to find out what they think about what the Access Plan should contain and how they feel about some of the possible inclusions. It is therefore proposed to hold an informal consultation session to provide information and receive feedback. This is designed to dovetail with the recent consultation on the Local Development Framework.
- 1.7 The consultation will be held in the Saxon Suite of the Winchester Guildhall. It will be a joint consultation with Hampshire County Council and officers from both the City and County Council will be in attendance. Dates and times are set out below:
- Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March  
11 – 1pm Member's preview  
1 – 6pm open to public
- Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March  
10 - 1pm open to public
- 1.8 The exhibition will include displays on:
- Existing conditions/ statistics results of surveys and studies
  - Accessibility issues, cycling, walking, travel plans and other such measures such as the Car Club.
  - Traffic management issues including the one-way system and the shared space concept.
  - Car Parking issues including charging, on and off street provision and existing and future park and ride provision.
  - Public transport including bus and rail issues.
  - The High Street Refurbishment Scheme and proposed associated vehicular restrictions. (See separate report elsewhere on this agenda).
- 1.9 The consultation will be advertised in Perspectives and on the web sites of the City and County Councils. A promotional leaflet will be produced and feedback obtained at the exhibition and through a questionnaire.

All City and County Councillors will be invited and letters of invitation will be sent to stakeholders and interest groups.

Businesses and Retailers will be invited through the Town Centre Manager.

## 2. Consultation Issues

- 2.1 Key projects and issues which it is proposed to cover in the consultation are as follows:

### 2.2 **Accessibility Issues**

This covers walking and cycling improvements and measures such as working with schools, residents and businesses to reduce the need to travel by car.

The refurbishment of **the High Street** through the provision of new paving and street furniture will significantly improve the retail environment, conditions for pedestrians and provides the opportunity to review and replace all pedestrian signing in the

central area to reflect views received through the Community Street Audits. Some key issues to consider:

- Is the proposed extent of the scheme correct?
- Is the proposed refurbishment supported?
- What type of street furniture should we use?
- What other elements (e.g. seating/signing) should be included?

The development of **travel plans** for schools, colleges, the University and businesses and actively helping them to implement their plans will help to reduce car trips associated with the school run and commuting. Some issues to consider are:

- Is there support for Travel Plans as a means of encouraging sustainable travel?
- What specific measures and incentives are needed and where?

The enhancement of **conditions for cyclists** through a range of measures including dedicated routes, on-road improvements, contra-flow cycle lanes and cycle parking is considered a key component of the plan if more cycling is to be encouraged. Some key issues to consider are:

- Is there support for cycling improvements?
- What specific measures are needed and where?

The provision of a **car club** would allow residents and businesses to hire cars and pay for them on the basis of time and mileage. This will hopefully encourage lower car ownership levels reflecting the limited amount of space available for cars in the Town. Some key issues to consider are:

- Is there support for a Car Club?
- Where should the cars be located?
- What businesses/ institutions could make use of the vehicles?
- How can it best be promoted and who to?

We will continue to run the **Bikeabout** bike loan scheme to residents and visitors through the tourist information office and WACA's Shopmobility office. Some issues to consider are:

- Does the scheme, in its current form, serve a valuable function?
- Are there better ways of running the scheme?

The **shared space concept** which seeks to break down the barriers between people and vehicles is being carefully considered in terms of its suitability and application within Winchester town. This approach seeks to change the road environment so that vehicles and people are given a more equal priority. This both reduces vehicle speeds and enhances the environment thereby opening up under utilised areas for other purposes with economic benefits. Three areas have been identified where shared space could be considered further. These proposals will have to be considered in relation to traffic management issues generally as discussed below.

- **'Jewry Place'** the intersection of Jewry Street with High Street, St George's Street and Southgate Street. This could be remodelled to form a coherent public space at the head of the City accommodating traffic and pedestrian movements.
- **St Georges Street** could be redefined as a series of distinct spaces.
- **'King Alfred Square'** this area around King Alfred Statue, City Bridge and the Junction of Chesil Street and Magdalen Hill. This area could form a new entry and gateway from the east formed by a new reformed Chesil Street junction and improvements for pedestrians at City Bridge.

Some key issues to consider are:

- Do you think this approach is right for Winchester?
- Do you agree with the potential locations which have been suggested?
- Are there other areas which you feel might benefit from similar schemes?

### 2.3 Car Parking

Under the heading of car parking a range of issues and potential actions have been identified as set out below. Car parking management and incentives are a key mechanism in controlling and encouraging changes in travel behaviour.

The **charging strategy** can play an important role in determining how and which car parks are used and for what purpose. As such there are some key issues which WTAP must consider such as:

- Do we use the right mechanisms for payment? Are the charges appropriate?
- Should we consider further discounts for 'clean vehicles'?
- Should we consider charging on Sundays?

The provision of **public off-street car parking** and its location are major factors in terms of influencing travel behaviour and in people's choices in terms of where they choose to shop or visit. Issues which WTAP need to consider therefore include:

- Would some car parks serve a better purpose in delivering other elements of the WTAP vision?
- Where could we reduce parking provision if we are successful in encouraging use of alternatives forms of transport and use of the park and ride service ?
- Which car parks should we seek to retain?

It is hoped to extend the **park and ride service** by providing a new site to the South of Winchester. We are currently assessing how the two services can be run and how they will best serve the needs of the users. Issues in relation to park and ride include:

- Will there be a need for further sites in the future i.e. north of the City?
- Which routes should the new services from the south of the City use?
- Should there be an associated reduction in town centre car parking spaces?
- Should bus priority measures be provided to enhance existing and future park and ride services?
- Pricing – to what extent, if any, should we subsidise the park and ride to encourage its use?

Our **residents on street parking schemes** have helped to reduce the amount of commuter parking and protected this parking for the use of residents. Some issues which we are considering include:

- Is the pricing and availability of spaces about right?
- Is there some misuse of visitor permits and how could this be better controlled?
- Do we need to create / expand controlled zones?
- How do we accommodate and support the evening economy?
- Should the times of restrictions be reviewed to reflect different pressures in different parts of the Town?

The current **coach parking** area is to the North of the City in Worthy Lane. At the Broadway coaches are only permitted to drop off visitors. Many visitors and coaches come to Winchester on a daily basis and it is hoped that WTAP will be able to improve facilities for coaches. Some issues to consider include:

- Is the coach parking in the right place?
- Should we pursue additional/replacement parking to the south of the city?

## 2.4 Traffic Management.

The management of traffic is a key issue and one that impacts on all of the plans objectives in one way or another. Looking at the volume of traffic that passes through Winchester town it is difficult to see how effective changes can be made without causing major issues. However, in many similar examples of where bold initiatives have been undertaken in other cities, it has shown that people do change their habits without having major effects on the economics of an area. There was great concern ahead of the fairly recent road closure of Southgate Street due to utility works however; in reality the impact was not that great. The longer term effects of traffic management schemes on the local economy do, however, need careful consideration and as such it may be appropriate to undertake schemes on a trial basis in order to assess the environmental benefits alongside the economic issues. WTAP will therefore look carefully at the following:

- Are traffic management arrangements particularly at key junctions and congestions points adequate and are there better potential solutions?
- Does the one-way circulatory system provide the best solution for the Town and are there better ways to provide more direct access to the city centre areas and to provide better facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. e.g. at St Georges St and North Walls?
- Are the current freight delivery restrictions including those on St Georges Street the best solution and what alternatives exist?
- Should we further restrict delivery hours throughout the Town in order to reduce delays during the day?
- Are the current pedestrian and vehicular access arrangements and restrictions in and around pedestrianised areas of the High Street correct?
- Is there potential to implement the shared space concept approach in some of the reviews of traffic management arrangements?

## 2.5 Passenger Transport

Winchester town is relatively well served by **buses** from most areas and has recently had installed a real time information system. Key issues to be considered are:

- Is there adequate bus stop provision throughout the core of the town centre in relation to the relocation of the bus station?
- Will the new bus station have effective priority measures for both west and east-bound services,
- Should the new Bus station be equipped with Real Time Information and other relevant information such as train running times?

- In conjunction with traffic management measures should the possibility of a bus only link between the junctions of St George's Street/Jewry Street and High Street/Southgate Street be investigated?
- Should the phasing of all traffic signals in the city, including pedestrian crossings be adjusted to ensure appropriate prioritisation (particularly for pedestrians and buses)?
- Should additional bus priority be provided in the Town?
- As part of the wider review of the circulation of traffic in Winchester should measures to reduce journey lengths for buses be considered?
- Should opportunities for a joint bus ticket that can be used on all bus company services that serve Winchester **town** be considered?

## 2.6 Rail.

Winchester benefits from excellent rail services but this can bring its own pressures particularly in terms of access to the station. Some of the issues that WTAP will need to consider include:

- Should additional car parking be provided at the station?
- Should we restrict any additional parking to serve 'off-peak' rail travel?
- Should we enhance bike and motorcycle parking?
- Are pedestrian and cyclist routes to the Station adequate?
- Is disabled access/provision adequate?
- Is bus integration and taxi provision adequate?
- Do opportunities exist to improve the co-ordination of bus and rail timetables?

## 3. Conclusions/ Next Stages

The purpose of the consultation is to obtain the views of members of the public, business and employers before the preparation of a draft plan for consideration by Cabinet, the Town Forum and by the County Council. No conclusions have been reached at this stage either on the extent of the issues to address or the way to address them. The questions suggested as part of the consultation process are designed open debate and to stimulate comments and suggestions. Following the consultation the plan will be drafted and after consideration by Members will be subject to further consultation before final approval towards the end of the 2008.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

### 4. CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

- 4.1 The proposals accord with the corporate priority for safeguarding our high quality environment.

### 5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising directly from this report. Staff time and funding for the consultation itself is available within approved budgets for the Access and Infrastructure team and from Hampshire County Council. The potential budget implications of proposals which might be included in the WTAP and its

component projects and policies will form part of the consultation process and will be subject to detailed consideration by Members in later reports.

5.2 Staff resources are available to organise and staff the consultation as set out in this report.

6. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

6.1 None.

7. APPENDICES:

WTAP Car Parking Survey Summary Results.



Appendix 1: 2007 WTAP parking surveys summary

**Car Parks: Town Centre\***

<b>Summary Statistics</b>		<b>What purpose is their stay related to?</b>	
Total capacity	1083 spaces	Shopping	46%
Maximum Occupancy	73% full	Work	10%
Average Occupancy	61% full	Social	10%
Vehicle Occupancy	1.5 people per car	Business	8%
Average Length of stay	2.65 Hours	Health	7%
		Leisure	7%
		Other	7%
		Education	4%
<b>How frequently do users park here?</b>		<b>What comments were made by users?</b>	
monthly or less	23%	Parking is expensive	20%
2-3 times a week	22%	Traffic management issues	12%
2-3 times a month	21%	Congestion related issues raised	10%
weekly	10%	Need additional parking	10%
daily	1%	site specific car park comments	10%
More than once per day	1%	Need for better public transport	8%
		Parking provision / situation is good	7%
		Other issues / comments	7%
		Problems with pay machines	5%
		Need more Park & Ride	5%
		Parking provision / situation is bad	4%
		Parking is cheap/reasonable	0%
<b>Why do users choose these car parks?</b>			
Ease of Vehicle access	30%		
Ease of Pedestrian access	29%		
availability of space	23%		
other	14%		
cost	4%		

\*Including: The Brooks, Upper Brook St, Middle Brook St, Colebrook St, St Peter's, Cossack Lane & Fringsgate

**Car Parks: Chesil Car Parks**

<b>Summary Statistics</b>		<b>What purpose is their stay related to?</b>	
Total capacity	709 spaces	Work	67%
Maximum Occupancy	84% full	Shopping	8%
Average Occupancy	60% full	Business	8%
Vehicle Occupancy	1.18 people per car	Education	7%
Average Length of stay	7.08 Hours	Social	3%
		Health	2%
		Leisure	2%
		Other	2%
<b>How frequently do users park here?</b>		<b>What comments were made by users?</b>	
daily	54%	Parking is expensive	20%
monthly or less	24%	Traffic management issues	12%
2-3 times a week	11%	Need additional parking	10%
2-3 times a month	6%	site specific car park comments	10%
weekly	5%	Congestion related issues raised	10%
More than once per day	1%	Need for better public transport	8%
		Parking provision / situation is good	7%
		Other issues / comments	7%
		Problems with pay machines	5%
		Need more Park & Ride	5%
		Parking provision / situation is bad	4%
		Parking is cheap/reasonable	0%
<b>Why do users choose these car parks?</b>			
Ease of Vehicle access	24%		
other	21%		
cost	19%		
availability of space	18%		
Ease of Pedestrian access	17%		

Appendix 1: 2007 WTAP parking surveys summary

**Car Parks: Tower St. & Gladstone St. Car Parks**

<b>Summary Statistics</b>		<b>What purpose is their stay related to?</b>	
Total capacity	630 spaces	Work	68%
Maximum Occupancy	100% full	Business	13%
Average Occupancy	89% full	Shopping	6%
Vehicle Occupancy	1.28 people per car	Other	4%
Average Length of stay	8.3 Hours	Leisure	3%
		Social	3%
		Education	2%
		Health	1%
<b>How frequently do users park here?</b>		<b>What comments were made by users?</b>	
daily	55%	Parking is expensive	20%
2-3 times a week	15%	Need additional parking	14%
2-3 times a month	10%	site specific car park comments	12%
monthly or less	10%	Traffic management issues	10%
weekly	7%	Need more Park & Ride	9%
More than once per day	3%	Need for better public transport	8%
		Parking provision / situation is bad	7%
		Problems with pay machines	7%
		Other issues / comments	7%
		Congestion related issues raised	6%
		Parking provision / situation is good	1%
		Parking is cheap/reasonable	0%
<b>Why do users choose these car parks?</b>			
other	30%		
availability of space	23%		
Ease of Vehicle access	21%		
Ease of Pedestrian access	21%		
cost	7%		

Appendix 1: 2007 WTAP parking surveys summary

**Car Parks: Andover Rd & Worthy Lane Car Parks**

<b>Summary Statistics</b>		<b>What purpose is their stay related to?</b>	
Total capacity	450 spaces	Work	69%
Maximum Occupancy	66% full	Business	19%
Average Occupancy	50% full	Education	3%
Vehicle Occupancy	1.16 people per car	Other	6%
Average Length of stay	8.1 Hours	Shopping	1%
		Health	1%
		Social	1%
		Leisure	0%
<b>How frequently do users park here?</b>		<b>What comments were made by users?</b>	
daily	61%	Parking is expensive	27%
2-3 times a week	14%	Need more Park & Ride	18%
monthly or less	10%	Other issues / comments	15%
weekly	9%	Traffic management issues	10%
More than once per day	3%	Problems with pay machines	8%
2-3 times a month	3%	Need for better public transport	7%
		Congestion related issues raised	5%
		Need additional parking	4%
		Parking provision / situation is bad	4%
		Parking provision / situation is good	3%
		site specific car park comments	0%
		Parking is cheap/reasonable	0%
<b>Why do users choose these car parks?</b>			
Ease of Vehicle access	25%		
cost	22%		
availability of space	21%		
Ease of Pedestrian access	17%		
other	15%		

Appendix 1: 2007 WTAP parking surveys summary

**Car Parks: Park & Ride Car Parks**

<b>Summary Statistics</b>		<b>What purpose is their stay related to?</b>	
Total capacity	785 spaces	Work	71%
Maximum Occupancy	67% full	Shopping	6%
Average Occupancy	80% full	Business	5%
Vehicle Occupancy	1.18 people per car	Education	5%
Average Length of stay	7.9 Hours	Leisure	5%
		Social	3%
		Other	3%
		Health	1%
<b>How frequently do users park here?</b>		<b>What comments were made by users?</b>	
daily	57%	Parking is expensive	27%
monthly or less	19%	Parking provision / situation is good	26%
2-3 times a week	15%	Other issues / comments	24%
weekly	7%	Traffic management issues	4%
2-3 times a month	2%	Need more Park & Ride	4%
More than once per day	1%	Problems with pay machines	4%
		site specific car park comments	3%
		Parking provision / situation is bad	2%
		Need for better public transport	2%
		Congestion related issues raised	1%
		Need additional parking	0%
		Parking is cheap/reasonable	0%
<b>Why do users choose these car parks?</b>			
cost	31%		
Ease of Vehicle access	21%		
availability of space	26%		
Ease of Pedestrian access	6%		
other	6%		