



Purpose: For Decision

Cabinet report

Date	14 OCTOBER 2021
Title	RYDE TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE – PUBLIC CONSULTATION UPDATE
Report of	CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS PFI, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report provides an update on the planned improvements to the transport interchange in Ryde, the outcomes of the public consultation, and the project delivery programme.
2. This report has been produced as a result of a decision by Cabinet on 15 July which delegated to the Director of Neighbourhoods “to feed back on the findings of the public consultation before a final decision was taken to proceed with the scheme, on condition “That the findings of the public consultation are reported to a future meeting of the cabinet to inform a final decision on the detailed design of those elements of the project to be implemented by the council...””.

The Ryde Interchange project is part of a wider joint partnership bid with Hampshire County Council (HCC) and Portsmouth City Council (PCC) for a share of the Department for Transport (DfT) Tranche 2 Transforming Cities Fund (TCF).

3. The report also provides an update on the termination of respective leases necessary to complete land assembly.
4. The revised timetable following the consultation period has significantly reduced the contingency time within the delivery programme.
5. Financial risks are also to be noted, and it is highlighted that the primary mitigation measures are variations to scope of works, and working with PCC, HCC and DfT to manage cost pressures or savings on all schemes within the region’s bid within the broader funding allocation.

RECOMMENDATION

6. **OPTION 1:** Cabinet note the contents of the consultation feedback and approves the recommended modifications as detailed under para. 19 in list (a)-(t) in this report, and the resulting Revised Outline Design as shown in Appendix 7 and 8, with the exception that the relocation of the taxi rank and the design of the Rose Garden be explored further with key stakeholders prior to a final design decision being

made, and further detailed design of planted areas and the incorporation of public art will be developed through ongoing community engagement.

All other matters required to progress and deliver all elements of the TCF funded Ryde Transport Hub projects be delegated to the Director of Neighbourhoods in accordance with this decision, the requirements of DfT and within available TCF resources.

These decisions are required to enable the design of the whole scheme to be finalised in accordance with these recommendations in so far as practical, legal and financial considerations allow.

BACKGROUND

7. As detailed in the previous Cabinet report (July 15th), the project involves a number of enhancements aimed at making the Ryde Transport Interchange area more attractive and supporting cleaner greener transport:
 - (a) Remodelling and refurbishment of the Esplanade bus interchange
 - (b) Reinstatement of the pier tramway for pedestrians and cyclists.
 - (c) Refurbishment of the station buildings
 - (d) Improvement of cycling links east and west from the interchange.
8. The council TCF funded element will be delivering the bus station, highway and cycling improvements; Wightlink will complete the pier tramway reinstatement and South Western Railways / Island Line (SWR) the station refurbishment. These elements have physical interfaces although different design / implementation programmes; all are required to be completed by April 2023. This means that contracts for implementation of some elements will need to be issued before the detailed designs are completed and construction costs established for others. The council's works are planned to commence on site early in 2022 to be completed in around 12 months depending on detailed design following the consultation.
9. The project is Department for Transport (DfT) funded via the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) as a part of wider programme in partnership with Hampshire County Council (HCC) and Portsmouth City Council (PCC).
10. The overall funding bid was successful in attracting a total of £55.6 million, approximately £10million of which is earmarked for the Ryde Transport Interchange improvements with implementation required by 30 March 2023.
11. This report has been produced as a result of a decision at the Cabinet Meeting of the 15 July which determined to await the results of the consultation process prior to a delegation to the Director of Neighbourhoods to "finalise the design and materials for those elements of the project to be implemented by the council informed by the findings of the public consultation, terminate leases as necessary to complete land assembly in a timely manner and to instruct implementation of works subject to construction costs being within the available funding and TCF programme window", on condition "That the findings of the public consultation are reported to a future meeting of the cabinet to inform a final decision on the detailed design of those elements of the project to be implemented by the council...".

12. The public consultation which took place from the 22nd June to the 3rd August resulted in a good deal of positive engagement across a broad cross section of the community and other stakeholders. A detailed summary of responses and consequent proposed modifications to the proposals are provided in this report.
13. The scheme also supports aims established through the Climate Change and Environment Strategy, and the upcoming Bus Improvement Plan and the Enhanced Bus Partnership due in April 2022. Prioritising sustainable transport will also be key to addressing needs already identified in developing the Island's new Local Transport Plan for 2023 and 2038. Public transport is a key factor in delivering wider carbon neutral aims and sustainable people movement throughout the Island."
14. Although the project is now on a very tight timetable for delivery, this additional time has allowed for the consultation results to be fully reviewed and assessed to finalise the design by the end of October. In November, quotations will be required from sub-contractors and suppliers to agree a final scheme cost with the main contractor. This will enable an order to be placed at the end of that month. We will be working with the preferred contractor to organise and mobilise so as to enable an on-site start in the first quarter of 2022. The works are expected to take 12 months dependant on the final detailed design, results of on-site surveys and statutory utility diversion requirements.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

15. As detailed in the previous Cabinet report (July 15 2021) the project supports The Corporate Plan 2019-22 and the 2019-2030 Regeneration Strategy.
16. The project also supports the newly approved Climate Change and Environment Strategy, and the developing new Local Transport Plan, by encouraging the use of more sustainable means of transport.
17. Special consideration has also been given to the historic nature of the Ryde Interchange as reflected in its status as a conservation area.
18. Further consideration has also been given to the unique environmental context as reflected in the range of protected areas abutting the site.
19. The strategic context above and local aspirations as captured by the recent consultation and engagement exercise, and in documents such as the Ryde Public Realm Strategy and the Ryde Place plan, will inform the ongoing design of the scheme and its implementation.

SCHEME DEVELOPMENT

20. The findings of the consultation have positively informed the evolution of the design, materials and landscape planting to help create a space that is more than a functional transport interchange rather a gateway to Ryde and destination in itself. A consequently revised scheme overview plan is included at Appendices 7 and 8 incorporating the following modifications informed by the consultation:
 - (a) A number of raised planting beds have been detailed to be constructed from stone contemporary with the existing stone walls fronting the Rose Garden. These will provide both facility for planting displays and seating options

although could be converted to provide pedestals for public art or incorporate that within planting displays.

- (b) Ground level planting beds have been incorporated where people would not be encouraged to dwell / sit at the bus entrance and exit interchange.
- (c) The parking bays immediately to the west of the pier access road have been removed to provide a ground level parking bed
- (d) Service tails will be left to Western Gardens to serve future concession or allow installation of an external tap / drinking fountain / showers for beach users as was sought in the consultation.
- (e) A temporary toilet block will be provided at Western Gardens prior to demolition of the existing toilets and retained until the new facilities are opened as a part of the station refurbishment.
- (f) A 'seaside' planting theme will be adopted as was preferred in the consultation
- (g) The access control barriers to the pier have been removed with only the height restriction remaining which will facilitate unimpeded access to the pier
- (h) The pedestrian access to this historic pier is retained and whilst pedestrians and cyclists will have the option to use the segregated routes on the reinstated tramway pier they will not be excluded from the historic pier.
- (i) The taxi rank and drop off parking bays immediately adjacent to the station on the pier access road will be constructed with a contrasting surface to help reduce the visual perception of carriageway width
- (j) The pedestrian / cyclist crossing of the pier access roads is provided on a flat top road hump to avoid any level changes for those crossing and introduce a traffic calming feature
- (k) The egress from the pier access road has been moved marginally to the west and the signalised crossing of the Esplanade marginally to the east to improve visibility of the signal head for emerging traffic
- (l) The 'tulip' tree is retained providing an easily identifiable meeting point and the expanded area between that and the station left vacant to provide space for busking or alfresco dining.
- (m) The busways will be surfaced in a contrasting coloured 'tarmac' consistent with the findings of the consultation
- (n) The pedestrian areas will be surfaced in limestone style paving similar in style to that used in St Thomas Square creating a smooth surface preferred by those with mobility impairments
- (o) The expansive paved area to the north of the busway between the Rose Garden to the east and pier access road to the west is not easily segregated to provide separate routes for cyclists and pedestrians. This will be designated as a shared surface in accord with DfT design guidance LTN1/20 with which the scheme is required to comply. Corduroy paving will be provided at each of the entry points to the area together with tactile paving at each of the road crossings
- (p) Cycle / scooter parking will be provided immediately to the east of the station building
- (q) Conservation type kerbs and traditional / heritage style black street furniture will be deployed throughout the scheme consistent with the findings of the consultation.
- (r) Bus shelters incorporating seating and real time bus information are provided at each bus stop together with heritage style benches and bins.
- (s) The zebra crossing to the east of the George Street junction will be incorporated into the signal control at that junction allowing:
 - (i) The provision of a large, raised planter on the north side

- (ii) The extension of the cycleway on the north side to the western end of the rose garden
 - (iii) The extension of parking on the south side of the road to provide an additional 6 spaces replacing those removed to accommodate the taxi rank to the west.
 - (t) The signal controls at the George Street junction will only operate when triggered by either a bus or pedestrian demand rather than cycling
21. This amended scheme will be subject to safety audits which may identify the need for further refinement. The initial findings (Stage 1) will be reported verbally at the meeting (if available at that time).
22. Two suggestions arising through the consultation are proposed to be explored further. These are:
- (a) The relocation of the taxi rank to the Rose Garden frontage. This has been suggested by a taxi operator and would allow the reinstatement of parking on the south side of the road or widening of the pavement to provide alfresco dining opportunities for the fronting businesses; and
 - (b) The reconfiguration of the rose garden to provide planting interspersed with seating on the northern boundary whilst routing the footway on the southern side.
23. Further detailed design of planted areas and the incorporation of public art will be developed through ongoing community engagement.

CONSULTATION

24. The scheme was developed to reflect work undertaken on previous proposals for the area, the funding award conditions, and aspirations of the Ryde Regeneration Working Group (RRWG) and informed by earlier public consultation exercises. That RRWG, which comprises members from Ryde Town Council, Ryde Society and Ryde Business Association, has acted as a steering group for the project and defined specific objectives for the area which are captured in the 'Ryde Esplanade and Interchange Plan Walkabout' notes of 24 April 2019 attached at Appendix 1. These established the following longer-term objectives which are largely to be realised by the scheme:
- (1) Increase accessibility and pedestrian priority from Union St to Western Gardens through restructure of footpaths and roadways.
 - (2) Relocation of Western Garden Café and Toilets to allow for clear sight and potential access to pier entrance.
 - (3) Safe vehicle drop off zone for Wight Link, Bus and Rail passengers.
 - (4) Bus Station reformatted with standing buses removed in favour of sheltered bus stops (as was done in Newport several years ago).
 - (5) The two lanes for standing taxis consolidated to 1 and a call down system insisted upon.
 - (6) Train Station buildings stripped back to expose ironwork, reinstatement of railing, with heritage enhancement being paramount
 - (7) New, upgraded space created at bus/rail station allowing for improved commercial opportunities.
 - (8) Consistency between Western Gardens/Interchange and seafront – incorporating interactive public realm/art/café/stalls/children friendly design

- (9) Create a level walkway between platforms, creating a direct link to Hover Travel – or alternatively a DDA bridge/lift/walkway.
 - (10) Inclusion of DDA and Public Convenience within the interchange bus/rail station.
 - (11) Create a better commuter/travel experience with digital signage at town entry roads/interchange concourse identifying parking provision/Fastcat and train times etc
25. There has also been ongoing input from the principal partners in the project Wightlink, South West Railways and Southern Vectis.
26. Whilst there is no statutory duty to consult on this scheme, a public consultation was launched on 22nd June 2021 for a six-week period which sought detailed feedback on suggested materials and planting that will help define the space in and around Ryde Bus Station, Ryde Esplanade rail station and Ryde Pier. Broader commentary was also invited on additional features and the overall scheme.
27. Covid 19 movement and engagement restrictions prevented the traditional exhibition led approach to consultation. Consequently, this exercise was primarily delivered through an online consultation document and survey supported with press releases, display of consultation materials at the pier head and bus station, on bus displays. On-line face to face and small group meetings were also held where possible to discuss issues that are difficult to explore through a survey structure. Small group engagement has and will be ongoing following the conclusion of the public consultation to improve understanding around more of the scheme details raised, and options considered.
28. Representations outside of the established consultation mechanism have been received regarding the scheme from a number of parties including Historic England, The Ryde Society, Twentieth Century Society and the Bus and Rail User Group amongst other individual representations. These have been replicated within Appendix 5 as qualitative responses with design team commentary provided thereon.
29. A further approximately 1,700 individual responses were received comprising of a single statement which were prompted by a petition which sought that 'The Isle of Wight Council should use the planning process when changing Ryde Esplanade'. Following the receipt of further petition responses which passed the numbers over the required threshold of 2,500 responses, this matter was discussed at Full Council as a petition on the 15 September 2021.
30. Members should be assured that the council has and will continue to follow the appropriate planning procedures. Furthermore, the current consultation has provided an opportunity for all people to be involved in the development of the scheme and to help ensure the best decision is made about this project as is apparent from the consultation response.
31. 329 individual responses were received to the consultation with a wide range of engagement across the age / gender ranges and proportional engagement from those with disabilities. Further details are provided in Appendix 2 the majority (approx. 62%) of respondents were aged 45-74, with 34.8% identifying as female and 55.8% identifying as male, and 15% stating that they had a disability.

32. Respondents identified a broad mix of usual modes of transport with the majority identifying either the car or walking as their usual mode of transport.
33. A detailed summary of responses is provided in appendices to this report.
 - (a) Appendix 3 details the quantitative responses to specific questions asked about material choice options
 - (b) Appendix 4 summaries the qualitative responses to the question relating to additional features which people would like to see incorporated into the scheme
 - (c) Appendix 5 reproduces all of the qualitative responses to the question inviting general observations for completeness together with design team commentary on those.
34. A specific alternative proposal was received from Bob White FIHE, MCIHT, MICE and have been reproduced in appendix 6 together with commentary on that. The option has inherent difficulties, does not give cause for any fundamental rethink of the approach and would not deliver the funding objectives.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

35. The subject of this report has been considered at the Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Neighbourhoods and Regeneration on 8 July 2021.
36. The committee resolved that “the council ensure that it is made clear to the local community that comments on all aspects of the Ryde Transport Interchange scheme are welcomed as part of the Public Consultation”.
37. The committee further resolved that “The Director of Neighbourhoods agreed to circulate to the Committee the responses received to the consultation process.”
38. The council communicated its willingness to receive comments on all aspects of the scheme and was pleased to receive a high number of detailed free text responses as outlined above which have informed the resulting revised design.
39. The Director of Neighbourhoods has forwarded to the Chairman of the committee the responses received to the consultation process.

FINANCIAL / BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

40. Whilst the TCF funding bid secured £10 million for the implementation of the scheme within the wider allocation of £56 million for the Portsmouth City region, it is understood that cost pressures or savings on all schemes within the region’s bid will be managed within the broader funding allocation in liaison with SEHRT partners and DfT.
41. The construction cost estimates for each component remain to be confirmed following completion of the detailed designs.
42. IWC’s transport interchange project will be delivered through available funding, retaining sufficient funds for accrual to the PFI network for future maintenance. If necessary, the scope of the project or funding allocation will be varied to do so in liaison with PCC as the DfT’s accountable body. In such circumstances the

consultation findings will be used to help inform any future decisions around changes to the scheme.

43. As detailed below, the revised scheme still requires the demolition of a kiosk café and toilet block which are owned by the council and are currently the subject of leases. As such there could be an ongoing loss of c. £8,000 per annum of rental income. However, this project places no further constraints on a new concession (or similar) being agreed for Western Gardens in due course by Property Services.

It may be necessary to make a compensation payment equal to twice the rateable value to the leasee of the café and provision for that will be made within the construction cost.

44. The DfT require all Tranche 2 Transforming Cities Fund projects to be completed by March 2023 otherwise funding may be clawed-back. This risk is being mitigated by careful programme management including appropriate reviews at key stages to assess viability and affordability and adjust scope if needed.
45. As a consequence, delivering this project does not present a significant financial risk or exposure for the council. Although there may be some abortive costs to the council if the project is not delivered and DfT requires some or all of the feasibility funding to be returned. This risk is being managed through ongoing liaison with DfT and PCC with regards to progress and issues, and through the appropriate use of project milestone gateways.

CARBON EMISSIONS

46. Though the core aim of the Transforming Cities Fund is increasing productivity and providing better access to good jobs. The proposals for the Ryde Transport interchange significantly promote and will enable the use of sustainable travel, whether it would be use of public transport or active travel to connect with the cross Solent links with the Portsmouth City Region.
47. Whilst the proposed improvements will not directly impact the Council's carbon emissions, they will facilitate reduced bus journey distances improving the efficiency and reliability of bus services and so reduce the associated carbon emissions. In turn any increase in the use of sustainable travel is forecast and therefore a reduction in private vehicle use. This is expected to result in associated carbon emission reductions.
48. Further consideration will also be given to Scope 3 emissions during construction, once the outline design is agreed and detailed designs, methods and material choices are being developed, with a view to reducing operational carbon during construction or the embodied carbon of materials.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

49. Portsmouth City Council (PCC) are the accountable body for the DfT grant and IWC council is subject to the terms of a funding agreement between PCC and IWC.
50. The project elements and benefits have been agreed with DfT as a part of the bidding process and any significant changes would require further negotiation via PCC.

51. To implement the scheme, it will be necessary to take possession of the toilet block and Ryde Pier Café. Whilst both of these are owned by the council, they are currently the subject of leases. The lease for the toilet block to Ryde Town Council makes specific provision for repossession in a timely manner. The lease on the Ryde Pier Café is longer standing and covered by the landlord and tenant act. This gave the tenant a right to renew the lease when it expires in March 2022 unless the site is required for redevelopment. Following a notice from the tenant to request renewal of the lease, IWC has issued a counter notice informing the tenant that the property is required for redevelopment.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

52. The council as a public body is required to meet its statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equal opportunities between people from different groups and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
53. An equality impact screening assessment has been undertaken in respect of the project which is linked in the background papers to this report. This found either positive or no impact on the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and consequently no further assessment is required.

PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

54. As mentioned previously, to implement the scheme it will be necessary to take possession of the toilet block and Ryde Pier Café which are owned by the council and subject to leases.
55. The scheme requires the demolition of these structures to allow for a new approach to the pier.
56. TFC funding has also been secured to fund an enhanced concession and public toilet facilities through the refurbishment of the Esplanade railway station so as to mitigate against any loss of key facilities. These will be under the management of SWR as is currently the case.

SECTION 17 CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

57. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended by Police and Justice Act 2006) provides that: ‘...it shall be the duty of each authority ... to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all it reasonably can to prevent, crime, disorder, antisocial behaviour adversely affecting the environment, and substance misuse in its area’.
58. Section 17 applies to all duties, activities and decision making. Ignorance or failure to respond to the requirements of section 17 leaves the Council open to legal challenge.

59. The scheme design contributes to reducing crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour by improving visibility across Western Gardens and the interchange improving natural surveillance.

OPTIONS

60. OPTION 1: Cabinet note the contents of the consultation feedback and approve the recommended modifications as detailed under para. 19 in list (a)-(t) above, and the resulting Revised Outline Design as shown in Appendix 7 and 8 with the exception that the relocation of the taxi rank and the design of the Rose Garden be explored further with key stakeholders prior to a final design decision being made, and further detailed design of planted areas and the incorporation of public art will be developed through ongoing community engagement.

All other matters required to progress and deliver all elements of the TCF funded Ryde Transport Hub projects be delegated to the Director of Neighbourhoods in accordance with this decision, the requirements of DfT and within available TCF resources.

These decisions are required to enable the design of the whole scheme to be finalised in accordance with these recommendations in so far as practical, legal and financial considerations allow

61. OPTION 2: Cabinet note the contents of the consultation feedback and recommended modifications as detailed under para. 28 in list (a)-(t) above, and the resulting Revised Outline Design as shown in Appendix 7 and 8 and the exceptions but agree alternative modifications as specified.
All other matters required to progress and deliver all elements of the TCF funded Ryde Transport Hub projects be delegated to the Director of Neighbourhoods in accordance with this decision, the requirements of DfT and within available TCF resources.

These decisions are required to enable the design of the whole scheme to be finalised in accordance with these recommendations in so far as practical, legal and financial considerations allow.

RISK MANAGEMENT

62. This project is overseen by the major highway improvements project board comprising the portfolio holder, director and senior managers in relevant services. That project board meets monthly, receives progress reports from the project manager and reviews progress against programme, spend against budget projection and the established risk log making interventions when necessary to manage and minimise risk.
63. Risks which are significant in terms of the TCF wider allocation for the Portsmouth City region, will be managed in liaison with SEHRT partners and DfT as per the partnerships Assurance Framework and related measures, including regular formal and informal updates with PCC, SEHRT partners, and DfT.

EVALUATION

64. The preferred option is recommended to reflect the views of stakeholders and to allow a timely instruction to be issued for the implementation of the council's works and hence reduce the risk of inflationary costs and the delivery programme extending beyond the TCF programme window which may compromise the funding availability.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix 1 - Ryde Esplanade and Interchange Plan 'Walkabout' notes of 24 April 2019

Appendix 2 - Demographic Breakdown of Survey respondents

Appendix 3 - Quantitative responses to specific questions asked about material choice options

Appendix 4 - Qualitative response summary to the question relating to additional features which people would like to see incorporated into the scheme with commentary

Appendix 5 - Qualitative responses to the question inviting general observations for completeness together with design team commentary.

Appendix 6 - Alternative proposal promoted by Bob White and commentary thereon

Appendix 7 - Revised plans with recommended modifications to the consultation plan (West)

Appendix 8 - Revised plans with recommended modifications to the consultation plan (East)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- (a) Equality Impact Screening Assessment
- (b) Ryde Transport Interchange Public consultation document
- (c) The Ryde Place Plan
- (d) The Ryde Public Realm Strategy
- (e) Historic England's Advice Note 'Streets for All' (2018)
- (f) DfT Design Guidance LTN1/20

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