

Issue 7: Transport, Access and Movement (WEL23 –WEL28)

- 7.1 ***The development at Welborne is reliant on the creation of an ‘all-moves’ junction 10 on the M27. A final scheme has not been agreed but the Strategic Framework Diagram is based on Option 3 of the Transport Strategy. Does this have the support of the Highways Agency? Have all realistic options been considered and been subject to sustainability testing and when will the preferred option be selected?***

The preferred option has been chosen based on the design development carried out to date. This option best meets the scheme requirements in terms of delivery of a suitable junction catering for traffic to the development and North Fareham. This scheme has been extensively modelled and will be assessed in a Transport Assessment supporting an outline planning application. The final scheme is not agreed but is based on a Strategic Framework diagram based on Option 3. A Joint Note (HA, HCC, FBC) was prepared in April 2014 which confirms ‘in principal’ support for a layout for Junction 10 based around The SF diagram.

Have all realistic options been considered?

As stated in the Transport Strategy Report, a number of options for an “all moves” junction have been tested during the transport modelling process. It has been possible to consider a range of all practical configuration alternatives for delivering efficient traffic movements at an improved Junction 10, together with a Do Nothing (‘No Mitigation’) scenario for comparative purposes. The solution chosen can be delivered within the defined available budget and land available to the project.

Have all realistic options been subject to sustainability testing?

The Sustainability Appraisal for the NCNF Plan (April 2013) contains a high level assessment of options for Strategic Environmental Assessment, including Concept Master Plan Options for upgrading Junction 10. This work is taken further in the SA Report on the Publication Draft Welborne Plan. Table 4.1 takes each main policy area in turn and provides an explanation of reasonable alternatives. Results of a detailed assessment of reasonable options is set out in Appendix G of that document. Further work regarding sustainability will be developed as a part of the outline planning application.

When will the preferred option be selected?

The scheme forms a key component of the strategic transport infrastructure programme enabling access to Welborne. A decision on the final design will be made following Examination of the Welborne Plan. More detailed design work is underway on a scheme for Junction 10 based upon Option 3 in the SF. Once this layout is agreed with the HA then the Joint Promoters (JP) will progress the design. A significant proportion of the funding for Junction 10 will be secured through developer contributions. £14.9m has already been allocated to the upgrade of Junction 10, from the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership as part of the Solent Growth Deal.

- 7.2 ***What will be the consequences, in terms of traffic and movement, of not completing the M27 J10 improvements until 2022?***

Not providing improvement at Junction 10 until 2022 would have detrimental impacts:

- Welborne would not be an attractive site to investors because of difficulties in accessing the site from the west and exiting the site towards the west via existing heavily congested parts of the local highway network including the A27 from the M27 Junction 9 at Segensworth roundabout and through central Fareham. Strategic traffic modelling identifies approximately 37% of trips will wish to access Welborne from the west.

- Capacity on the local road network is inadequate to cater for the additional traffic which would be seeking to access/egress Welborne to and from the west. Regular congestion already exists along the A27 where sections of dual carriageway filter into single lane sections and inadequate capacity at junctions results in peak hour tailbacks.
- Solent LEP has allocated £14.9m specifically for improvements at M27 Junction 10. This funding needs to be spent in the timescales dictated by the Single Growth Fund award - prior to 2020/21.
- The HA and HCC would be very unlikely to support the development of the site without an all moves Junction 10.

The delivery timescale will be phased over a number of years with initial works commencing as early as 2016/17 with completion around 2018/19.

7.3 *Is there any evidence to demonstrate that traffic to and from the proposed community at Welborne would have significant adverse effects in terms of highway safety and movement of traffic that cannot be mitigated?*

Strategic Transport Modelling has been undertaken which identifies the distribution of new trips from Welborne onto transport networks taking into account predicted background traffic growth and planned network improvements. The model outputs do not identify traffic increases to a level which cannot be addressed by the proposed mitigation measures, although on certain parts of the local transport network traffic levels will inevitably be higher than at present.

Additional traffic movements have been identified on the strategic and local road networks which can be managed by planned mitigation at key locations. There is no direct correlation between increased traffic levels and adverse highway safety. Traffic increases can be managed appropriately. The impacts on traffic will be presented by developers in the Transport Assessment.

7.4 *Policy WEL23 refers to both a Transport Framework and a Transport Assessment. The former is not included in the Glossary but is referred to in paragraph 7.14. Is it clear exactly what is required in each document? Is there the risk of information being duplicated?*

The Transport Assessment will deal comprehensively with all transportation issues, thus avoiding duplication.

7.5 *Is criterion (ii) of policy WEL23 sufficiently clear – what is ‘Travel planning’ (not in Glossary)?*

Travel Planning refers to programmes and initiatives to influence travel behaviour to reduce a use of the private car. FBC may wish to provide further information on their understanding

- 7.6 ***Is there sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the junction improvements listed in paragraph 7.27 (and in policy WEL25) can be satisfactorily funded and implemented within the appropriate timescale and without threat to the viability of the other elements of the development at Welborne. What is the Council's fallback position should progress on the junction improvements be delayed?***

The majority of schemes listed in 7.27 have been identified by the Solent LEP as part of a package of improvement measures which are necessary to improve access to Fareham and Gosport and to facilitate development at Welborne and the Solent Enterprise Zone. In their own right the junction improvements will form a small proportion of the overall highway works package which will principally go towards the delivery of the improvement to M27 Junction 10. Funding for the schemes listed in 7.27 is nonetheless an essential requirement and will be derived from a combination of Solent LEP and developer contributions/works. Allocations are being firmed up by the Solent LEP and funding splits across the wider area package of improvements are currently being considered. The schemes have been identified as being required prior to the construction of the M27 Junction 10 as enabling works. It is anticipated that the majority of works in 7.27 will be constructed in 2016/17, with elements of traffic management works which will be required later as development and traffic generation from Welborne increase to come on stream at the appropriate time later within the five year Solent LEP funding window. Scheme number 7 has already secured £6.6m Local Transport Body and Hampshire County Council Funding and will be constructed by the County Council in 2016/17.

- 7.7 ***There is a reference in paragraph 7.24 to the provision of four road junctions between Welborne and the A32 – is this requirement justified***

The description of access to the local highway network in paragraph 7.24 is based on the Council's understanding of the likely access arrangements, and has not been challenged by the JP. It is recognised however that this description is unduly prescriptive and should be amended. The proposed amendment to paragraph 7.24 is as follows – second sentence to read - *This access will link back to the A32 at a number of locations (including Knowle Road / A32 junction).*

- 7.8 ***Is there any evidence that traffic to and from Welborne would have an adverse effect on highway safety in Wickham, Knowle or Funtley that could not be satisfactorily mitigated? Should policy WEL25 make it clear that Welborne should look to the south for its key transport links?***

There is no evidence that traffic to and from Welborne would have an adverse effect on highway safety in Wickham Knowle and Funtley. The strategic model identifies a limited demand for traffic from Welborne heading north towards Wickham in the order of some 2-3 % of overall trips from the site. As traffic increases on the A32 north of the M27 in the vicinity of the site it becomes less attractive to the traffic which is currently using this route to head northwards towards Winchester. These existing trips re-route elsewhere on the network as development traffic increases on the A32 and there is an off-set between decreasing existing traffic movements with new movements from the site. Whilst on the A32 in the vicinity of the site there are substantial increases in traffic flow, heading north beyond the site towards Wickham there is only an overall slight increase in traffic flows.

There is no direct correlation between increasing traffic flows and adverse highway safety. Traffic increases can be managed and planned mitigation for all roads and junctions will be designed in accordance with current highway standards. Scheme details will be required to be presented by developers in the Transport Assessment Report which will accompany the Planning Application.

7.9 *Is the last bullet point of WEL25 criterion (iv.) which refers to ‘other roads’ sufficiently clear?*

JP suggest delete ‘other roads’. There is no anticipation that any other roads in Fareham apart from those listed in bullet 2 will be considered for mitigation.

Is the reference to traffic light provision at the junction of the A32/A334 in Wickham justified (paragraph 7.27.1)?

The provision for/need for traffic lights at this location has been considered and may not be necessary. Other traffic management measures through the town may be more appropriate / adequate to cater for the relatively small increase in traffic. The developers will identify an appropriate mitigation package as part of the Transport Assessment. JP suggest rewording 7.27.1 as follows:

A32/A334 Fareham Road, Wickham - This junction lies to the north of the development on the A32. It is a three-arm roundabout junction with two lanes on all approaches. Whilst some works may be required at this junction to discourage additional traffic movements travelling north through Wickham it may be more appropriate to manage this additional demand through traffic management measures in the town centre and appropriate measures will need to be identified and locally agreed.

7.10 *Can it be demonstrated that the Bus Rapid Transit link from Welborne to the town centre can be satisfactorily routed and subsequently implemented? What evidence is there that the BRT link will reduce the number of car journeys to and from Welborne? When is it anticipated the service will be introduced?*

Satisfactory routeing and implementation of the BRT from Welborne to Fareham Town Centre?

Preliminary design undertaken by HCC has confirmed the practicality of the BRT route between Welborne and Fareham Town Centre, subject to engineering work necessary to facilitate the BRT service at junctions and road sections. Bus lanes and other mitigation measures designed to enable the BRT have been identified at a number of junctions, including the A32/High Street and A32/Hill Street Junctions. The proposed route is shown in the figure on Page 45 of the Welborne Transport Strategy Final Report. Feasibility designs have been prepared to show that dedicated bus lanes can be constructed from the A32 North Hill junction northwards underneath the M27 to the first site access roundabout on the A32 north of the motorway.

South of North Hill junction the BRT works will be combined with the off-site highway works package - funded by a combination of Solent LEP funding and developer contributions, during 2016/17. The funding split is being investigated. The bus lanes leading from the North Hill junction to and from the new site access roundabout north of the M27 will be funded and delivered as part of the M27 Junction 10 works which already have partial contribution of £14.9m of funding from the Solent LEP towards delivery. It is anticipated that these works will form part of the early site access works likely to commence in 2016/17.

What evidence is there that the BRT link will reduce the number of car journeys to and from Welborne?

The BRT Eclipse services between Fareham town centre and Gosport, opened in April 2012, has been successful with patronage exceeding all expectations. 1.3 million passengers were transported in the first year of opening and a 64% increase in passengers on the Eclipse E1 and E2 services has been recorded compared with the 82 and 86 services which previously ran between Fareham and Gosport along nearby routes.

The BRT services offer a viable alternative to the private car for residents of Welborne and will provide reliable and frequent direct connections to Fareham bus station and Fareham railway station for onward longer distance journeys. It is also intended to provide connections to Portsmouth as the size of development increases.

When is it anticipated that the service will be introduced?

The introduction of high specification bus services will be needed from the outset of development and until housing numbers increase sufficiently to deliver commercially viable levels of patronage it is inevitable that these initial services will need to be subsidised. Discussions with the principal bus operator, First Bus, indicate that connectivity with Fareham bus station (for transfer to Eclipse services), Fareham railway station, Queen Alexandra Hospital and Portsmouth (via the A27) at a 10 to 12 minute frequency can be achieved from the outset. The timescale in which high specification services will be replaced by BRT services will be dependent upon the delivery of the sub regional BRT network, particularly BRT services linking Fareham to Portsmouth. Direct services from Welborne to Portsmouth will be delivered when housing numbers and employment opportunities can generate reliable patronage levels. Early BRT services will establish travel patterns from the day residents move into Welborne.

7.11 *How will BRT and the other bus service improvements referred to in paragraph 7.38 be funded and implemented?*

New transport infrastructure will be funded through a combination of Solent LEP funding and developer contributions. A phased implementation plan is currently being drawn up which, subject to agreement with the Solent LEP, includes the identified off site works required to deliver reliable local bus and BRT connections to Fareham bus and railway stations. The funding required for the detailed design of infrastructure on the external road network has already been identified in submissions to Solent LEP.

Funding for Delivery of BRT infrastructure (external network) via LEP

In 2012 HCC commissioned consultants to develop an economic, funding and delivery strategy for the BRT wider network, including completion of the link from the Town Centre to Welborne.

Funding of Design and Delivery of BRT infrastructure (internal Welborne network) via developers

The intention is to provide bus only lanes on the main north south distributor road and the main distributor roads serving the western side of the development. These would be the roads used by BRT when it serves the whole development. The north south link bus lanes would be used by the dedicated local services connecting the Local centre and District Centre to Fareham in the early stages of the development.

Operations

Bus services that are commercially viable will be provided through the normal process of planning, consultation and approval. Non-commercially viable services may be subsidised by the Transport Authority and/or via developer contribution.

Implementation of BRT and other Bus Services

Key stakeholders (including FBC and HCC) have a proven and successful track record in collaborative working to deliver the Fareham to Gosport BRT service and subsequent scheme enhancements (Phase 1A).

7.12 ***What work has been undertaken to assess the feasibility of providing a station on the Fareham to Eastleigh railway line? Is the Council's approach sufficiently aspirational?***

What work has been undertaken to assess the feasibility of providing a station?

An initial pre-feasibility assessment has been undertaken. The work included preliminary appraisals of potential demand and the practical issues associated with constructing a station in this location. The views of Network Rail as lead promoter for the scheme were also obtained. These appraisals have informed the preparation of the Welborne Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2014. Demand for rail services using the new station is expected to come mainly from the western side of the Development Area, with additional demand from nearby villages such as Knowle. Portsmouth would be a major destination for employment-related trips. The proposal would also impact on patronage of the BRT system and it was acknowledged that this would need to be quantified at a later stage to give assurance on the sustainability of both schemes. Network Rail has confirmed in principle that there are no major technical reasons why a new station could not be developed at the proposed location. There would be significant challenges including delays incurred to existing services, requiring the support of South West Rail Trains, and in securing finance for the scheme from the Welborne development.

Approach sufficiently aspirational?

In the light of the comments made by Network Rail, FBC considers that it has adopted a prudent approach which recognises the key risks and time period involved in developing and delivering a new station at Knowle. Network Rail has stated that the short term decision to develop strong links to Fareham Station via the BRT and bus network enhancements is the most effective value-for-money option. Any future investigation of a potential halt/station on the Fareham to Eastleigh line would require discussions with South West Trains, business case development and a detailed timetable.

7.13 ***Why does policy WEL28 not refer to the provision of the pedestrian and cycle links listed in paragraph 8.38?***

FBC to prepare response.