

## Drumbridges Bus Stop Multi-Modal Integration Improvements

### Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

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Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

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#### **1) Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Committee be asked to:

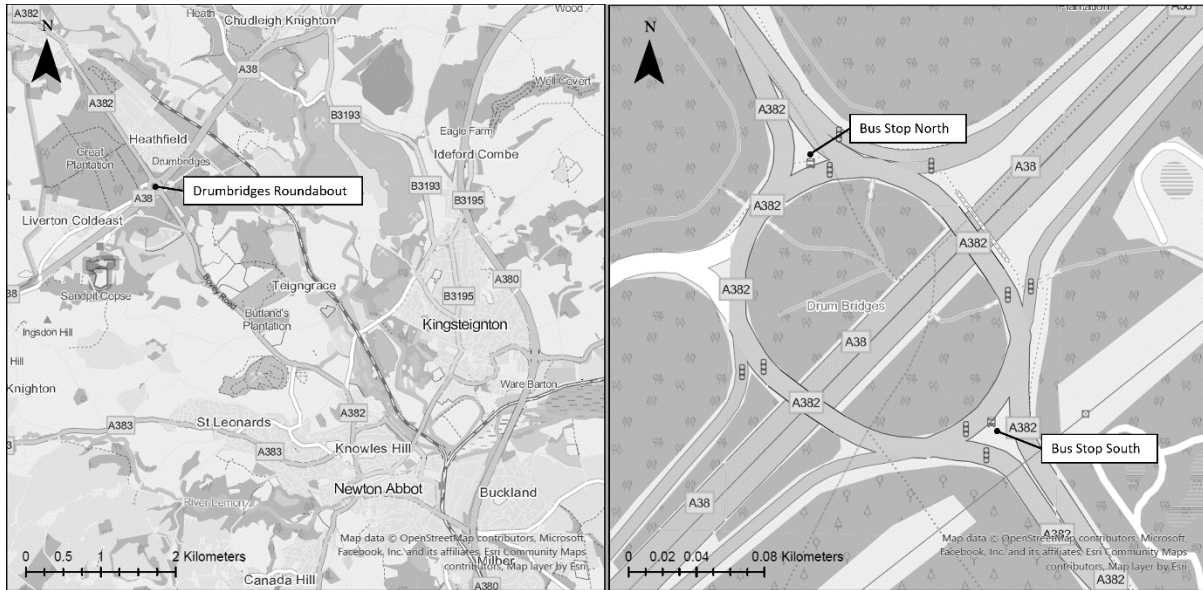
- (a) approve the design and construction of the multi-modal bus stop integration improvements at the A38 Drumbridges roundabout, Heathfield, shown on the plans provided in Appendix 1, at an estimated cost of £83,000; and
- (b) give delegated powers to the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport in consultation with the Chair of HATOC and the local member, to make minor amendments to the scheme as required.

#### **2) Introduction**

This report sets out a recommendation to approve the design and construction of a scheme to enhance multi-modal integration and improve bus stops at the A38 Drumbridges roundabout, Heathfield at an estimated cost of £83,000.

The Drumbridges roundabout sits on the A38 Strategic Road Network, connecting Exeter and Plymouth. It serves Newton Abbot to the south via the A382 and Bovey Tracey to the north Newton Road. The junction is also in close proximity to Teignbridge's largest industrial estate at Heathfield, covering some 95 acres. Bus stops are sited on the northern and southern arms of the roundabout. These serve the strategic South West Falcon bus service, connecting Plymouth to Bristol 20 times a day, and the 39 service between Bovey Tracey and Newton Abbot. The scheme area and local geography is shown in Figure 1 below.

The present situation makes multi-modal integration between sustainable travel modes and the strategic bus services difficult. To access the South West Falcon service, bus users will generally need to interchange between buses or be dropped off by private car or taxi. Whilst the junction is served by shared use paths and toucan crossings to/from Heathfield Industrial Estate, there are no cycle storage facilities, making integration between bus and cycle difficult. There is also an opportunity to enhance bus users' arrival and waiting periods by upgrading the existing bus stops and providing real time journey information, which is not currently provided.



**Figure 1 – Scheme Area and Geography**

The proposals align well with the ongoing and planned improvements to the strategic A382 corridor improvements. Once delivered, a new shared use path and junction improvements will create an active travel corridor between Drumbridges roundabout, Forches Cross, Houghton Barton Link and Newton Abbot Town Centre. This provision will dramatically improve walking, wheeling and cycling connectivity between the bus stops and growth areas – enhancing the bus stop provision and multi-modal facilities in readiness for these improvements is essential.

The scheme is proposed to be delivered through the £8.8m Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) capital programme. The Devon BSIP includes plans to deliver multi-modal integration hubs, targets bus stop improvements and a rollout of real time information services. If approved, these proposals would be the first of their kind to be delivered under the Devon BSIP.

### 3) Proposals

It is proposed to enhance multi-modal integration and improve bus stops at the Drumbridges A38 roundabout, Heathfield. The proposals are shown in Appendix 1 and a summary is also detailed below:

#### Multi-modal Integration Improvements

- **Installation of secure cycle storage** – Six heavy-duty pre-bookable vertical bicycle lockers (three at each bus stop). These will provide regular bus users a safe and secure option to leave their cycle whilst travelling by bus.
- **Installation of Sheffield stands** – Eight free to use Sheffield cycle stands (four adjacent to each bus stop). These will be available for occasional bus users with additional cycle parking options.

- **Painted cycle symbols** – Intermittently located on proposed conventional cycleway surfacing at each bus stop to inform pedestrians as to the likely presence of cyclists.
- **Public bike maintenance stands** – Two free to use bike maintenance facilities located adjacent to cycle parking (one at each bus stop).
- **Onward travel information boards** – Posters detailing onward travel option for cyclists and pedestrians will be provided.

### **Bus Stop Improvements**

- **New bus shelters** – Installation of two upgraded 2-bay bus shelters with integrated flag bracket, timetable case and seating (one at each bus stop) – enhancing passengers waiting experience. These shelters will be cleaned and maintained under the Devon County Council contract with Fernbank Advertising.
- **Real-time journey time information** – Installation of two 38” single sided shelter displays, providing up-to-date information about approaching bus services and delivering enhanced certainty to bus users.

It is expected that these proposals will be delivered before the end of financial year 23/24.

## **4) Options/Alternatives**

**Do Nothing** – To not progress with multi-modal integration and bus stop improvements at the Drumbridges roundabout would continue to restrict access to sustainable transport choices in the local area. The status quo would miss out on opportunities to align with the strategic A382 corridor improvements which will create a continuous travel corridor between Heathfield Industrial Estate and Newton Abbot, including the Houghton Barton development allocation. Under these complementary improvements, demand for bus facilities along the corridor is anticipated to increase. Vehicle traffic flows are also expected to increase at the roundabout, and ensuring cycle and bus users have access to suitable facilities at the junction is essential.

**Private Car Provision** – It is recognised that bus users being dropped off by private car are likely to use the bus stops on both the northern and southern sides of the roundabout for ease of access. Whilst the provision of dedicated parking might be desirable, this is considered unfeasible due to a lack of available and unutilised land. To reallocate existing road space to parking would reduce the capacity of the junction for vehicle movements, potentially increasing congestion during peak periods.

**Shared Electric Bike Dock** – The provision of a shared E-bike dock at the site would offer increased convenience for bus passengers arriving to the area for the first time without a bike. However, there is currently no wider shared E-Bike network in place around Newton Abbot; offering E-Bikes would not provide a feasible connecting transport option for users.

## 5) Consultation

The proposals form part of the suite of schemes identified in the Devon Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), which itself underwent a thorough consultation with key local stakeholders from all tiers of local government, bus operators, user groups and public bodies in 2021.

The proposals have been discussed with the Local Member and are the first of a series of multi-modal bus stop integration interventions across the county, which have been supported and endorsed in principle due to their inclusion in the BSIP.

## 6) Strategic Plan

The proposals are well aligned with the Strategic Plan's priorities and actions; facilitating and encouraging increased use of sustainable travel modes. The proposals will support local residents and visitors to access local and regional employment, education and leisure opportunities.

The table below summarises how the proposals would impact the achievement of relevant Strategic Plan actions according to a seven-point scale, whereby -3 represents a large negative impact and +3 represents a large positive impact.

Strategic Plan Priority	Strategic Plan Action	Alignment
Respond to the climate emergency	Support a green recover from COVID-19.	+1 (Slight positive)
Respond to the climate emergency	Prioritise sustainable travel and transport.	+1 (Slight positive)
Respond to the climate emergency	Encourage sustainable lifestyles.	+1 (Slight positive)
Support sustainable economic recovery	Secure investment in transport infrastructure.	+1 (Slight positive)
Support sustainable economic recovery	Maintain and, where necessary, improve our highway network and improve sustainable transport options.	+1 (Slight positive)
Improving health and wellbeing	Give people greater opportunities for walking and cycling to increase their physical activity.	+1 (Slight positive)
Helping communities to be sage, connected and resilient	Enable a range of transport options, including public transport.	+1 (Slight positive)

## **7) Financial Considerations**

Proposals are estimated to cost approximately £83,000 and will be delivered using the Minor Works Framework. The scheme costs are broadly split equally between multi-modal integration improvements (£43,000) and enhancements to each bus stop (£40,000). Estimates are inclusive of works, design and supervision fees.

Devon Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) capital funding will be used to fund the scheme's cost, delivery is expected to be realised in the 23/24 financial year and as such future project spend expected to incurred entirely in the same year.

## **8) Legal Considerations**

There are no specific legal considerations.

## **9) Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change, Sustainability and Socio-economic)**

The proposals will encourage uptake of sustainable transport options, through both the enhancement of the bus stop infrastructure and information displays, as well as the provision of cycle parking and storage. These facilities will make it easier and more attractive for local residents and visitors to use the strategic public transport services that pass through the corridor, consequently encouraging reduced car use and contributing to reduced emissions.

Through the construction process, a small amount of disturbance to the immediate environment is expected. The provision of cycle stands and lockers will require use of the existing grass land on the roundabout. It is also expected that the noise and light pollution emitted during the construction process will not exceed that which already exists at the junction.

## **10) Equality Considerations**

Where relevant, in coming to a decision the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision makers to give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

in relation to the protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership (for employment), pregnancy and maternity, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).

A decision maker may also consider other relevant factors such as caring responsibilities, rural isolation, or socio-economic disadvantage.

In progressing this proposal, an Impact Assessment has been prepared which has been circulated separately to Committee Members and also is available on the Council's website at <https://www.devon.gov.uk/impact/published>

The impact assessment undertaken for this proposal highlights that the interventions will provide improved access to sustainable transport options for all users, and that no person, on account of their protected characteristics, are negatively impacted by the proposals. The proposals will particularly benefit groups who make a greater proportion of their trips by bus, such as those under the age of 30 and those over the age of 70, those from lower income households, and Black people. The provision of improved wayfinding, signage and information displays will particularly benefit people who may require additional support in navigating public transport.

## **11) Risk Management Considerations**

A combined stage 1 and 2 road safety audit (RSA) has been commissioned for the proposals. If necessary, a verbal update on the audit recommendations may be provided at the meeting of this Committee.

Bus shelter lighting and real time information screens are expected to be powered by supplies that also serve Devon County Council owned street lighting. This approach is typical across the County, however, its viability for this specific site is currently being explored. If no suitable power supply is available then solar panel supplies could be explored.

Further changes to the design will be subject to a revised Road Safety Audit and could be agreed through delegated powers.

## **12) Summary**

The proposals recommended for approval for construction represent an opportunity to improve sustainable multi-modal integration and bus stop provision at a strategic site served by regionally significant bus services. Proposals utilise capital funding from the Devon Bus Service Improvement Plan, aligning with the Devon Carbon Plan and Strategic Plan.

Proposals have been designed to link with the forthcoming strategic active travel infrastructure to be delivered as part of the A382 corridor improvements. Working together the proposals will enhance sustainable travel choices serving the Heathfield Industrial Estate, Newton Abbot and the Houghton Barton strategic allocation.

**Meg Booth**

Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

**Electoral Division: Bovey Rural**

## **Local Government Act 1972: List of background papers**

Background Paper

Nil

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