

Report to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
Report submitted by: Head of Service Policy, Information and Commissioning
(Live Well)
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Part I

Electoral Division affected:
Preston South East

Approval for Highway Works in New Hall Lane, Preston
(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

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Executive Summary

Approval is sought to build the proposed highway improvement works in New Hall Lane local centre as shown in the plan attached at Appendix 'A'.

Improvements to the New Hall Lane local centre are identified as an early activity under the Infrastructure Delivery Plan for the Preston, South Ribble and Central Lancashire City Deal. Once the proposals are approved, the county council will be in a position to construct the improvement works along New Hall Lane in early 2016.

The improvements to New Hall Lane local centre have been identified as part of the Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan. New Hall Lane forms part of the wider Warton to Samlesbury Enterprise Zone Public Transport Priority Corridor which will see improvements to public transport, cycling and walking over the ten year City Deal period.

A total of three public consultation events were held in March 2015 with an additional event held after the 'Purdah' period in May 2015. Opportunities to comment on the proposals were made available through the Preston City Council website and social media.

The consultation received 58 responses to the online survey. A Consultation Report, presented at Appendix 'B', compiles and summarises the comments received and responds to these. None of the issues identified through the consultation impede the progression of the improvement works at this stage.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the provisions of Standing Order No. 25 have been complied with.

Recommendation

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport is requested to:

- (i) Approve the proposals for the New Hall Lane local centre, as set out in the plan attached at Appendix 'A', being works within existing highway extent at an estimated cost of £1,400,000 to be funded from the City Deal Infrastructure Delivery Fund.
- (ii) Agree that traffic modelling assessments and detailed design works be proceeded with and further consultation carried out as detailed in the report and final design be confirmed by Project Manager, City Deal.

Background and Advice

The Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan (CLTM) was published in March 2013 and provides the basis for determining future transport investment priorities across Preston, South Ribble and Chorley. As part of the CLTM, eight key bus corridors and local centres were identified for improvements to public transport and measures to promote walking and cycling. New Hall Lane is one of the local centres identified and is part of a wider east-west corridor running between the Enterprise Zones at Samlesbury and Warton.

New Hall Lane consists of a mix of commercial and residential uses and is a primary transport gateway into Preston City Centre. However, currently the route is characterised by dense traffic volumes, high accident rates, poor air quality and little local identity. The economic and social functions of the local centre are secondary to the transport function. Pedestrians are marginalised and there are no provisions for cyclists along the route. The improvement of this area is an objective within the Inner East Preston Neighbourhood Plan which was adopted in April 2015.

The aim of the local centre improvements is to prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users over motorists where possible and improve connectivity and ease of movement. The intention is to give over more dedicated road space to buses, cyclists and pedestrians and develop a sustainable transport network that will support economic development in the local area. The proposals aim to transform New Hall Lane into a place that supports economic and social regeneration, will give a sense of place to meet the needs of its community and fulfil local transport requirements.

In particular, the local centre proposals presented at Appendix 'A' will:

- Widen and improve existing footpaths and pavements to create a more attractive public realm
- Provide new tree planting and lighting along the scheme corridor

- Improve pedestrian crossings throughout the local centre
- Provide key junction improvements within the scheme boundary including enhanced pedestrian crossings
- Improve existing bus stops/shelters
- Cycling Improvements (including potential to improve wider network connections, improved junction signs and crossings and new cycle stands and signage)
- Improved parking/loading areas
- Reduce/remove street clutter such as signs, barriers etc. where possible.

The area under consideration for the local centre Improvements is from the junction of New Hall Lane and Mosley Street and extends just beyond the junction at Acregate Lane. This is a slight expansion of the local centre boundary identified in the adopted Preston Local Plan 2012 -2026 and Inner East Preston Neighbourhood Plan. This expansion (from Rutland Street to Mosley Street) was at the request of Preston City Council to provide improvements to a wider retail area.

These works will be complemented by proposed improvements at the junctions of New Hall Lane with Blackpool Road and London Road to improve traffic flow. Trees, planting and lighting will enhance the area and the scheme will complement other community-led projects in the area such as the planter art work scheme and the potential for community based investment through the Big Local Fund. The tree planting will be by the City Council under s96 Highways Act 1980 (power to plant in highways) and the City Council will maintain said planting.

Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal

The Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal was signed in September 2013 and provides a financial structure to deliver the proposed highway improvement scheme.

In May 2015 a programme for delivery, presented in the City Deal Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) for 2015/18 was endorsed by the Cabinets of the 3 Local Authorities and approved by the City Deal Executive. The IDP timetable programmes the development and approval of the New Hall Lane local centre improvement works during the 2015/16 financial year.

Consultations

A 2 week period of public consultation took place during March 2015. A series of events were held in the local area and affected communities, landowners and parish councils were engaged. An additional consultation event was held after the 'Purdah' period in May 2015. The consultation was published in the local press, on the Preston City Council website and through social media. Copies of the Improvement Plans were also made available at Preston Town Hall, the West View Leisure Centre and the Friends of Fishwick and St Matthew's (FOFS) website during the consultation period.

58 online responses were received during the consultation. The full consultation report is included at Appendix B. The main issues to emerge through the consultation and a summary response for each include:

- **Cycling improvements**

The comments received as part of this consultation have given significant insight into the concerns of local residents in relation to the widening of the footways and narrowing of the carriageway. Safety is of paramount importance. Cycling improvements and facilities will be considered in detail at the design stages and will include input from relevant cycle officers and forums. New Hall Lane currently has a safer parallel cycle route utilising Fishwick Parade; included will be measures to improve this route and connectivity to New Hall Lane

- **Design/Carriageway Width**

Detailed design works will be undertaken subject to approval of the improvement works and following consideration of the comments received during the consultation. When the detailed design has been prepared, another consultation will be conducted. This is due to be carried out in November 2015.

- **Existing Buildings/Shop Frontages**

One of the main issues raised through the consultation was regarding the condition of the existing shops, frontages and buildings facing New Hall Lane. City Deal funding for this scheme only covers the public realm (i.e. streets and public spaces), therefore these elements are outside the scope and funding of this project. However the scheme will support social and economic regeneration and make the area attractive to potential investors.

- **Local Network Issues and Perceived Increased Congestion**

One of the main issues that was referred to during the consultation was perceived increased congestion both within the local centre and to and from the Motorway network. There was concern that widening the footway and therefore making the carriageway narrower, will make traffic slower and create more congestion and rat runs.

Using the recently developed Central Lancashire Traffic Model an assessment of potential impacts on all routes around the City Deal proposals is being undertaken. The assessment will identify whether measures will be required to deal with any unwanted effects on the highway network.

- **Parking/Servicing Areas including Enforcement**

A number of concerns were received in relation to existing issues of people parking on footways and querying how the future parking arrangements would be enforced. Others were concerned that existing parking areas would be removed.

Exact numbers and location of parking/loading areas will need to be determined after input from local businesses. This will be built into the detailed design process. The

Improvement Plans in Appendix 'A' show that existing parking areas will be retained, improved and increased.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

If the proposal is not approved, this will mean that the delivery deadlines identified within the Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal Infrastructure Delivery Plan will not be achieved.

Financial

The total costs of the scheme is estimated at £1,400,000. Funding for the whole scheme has been secured through the Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal Infrastructure Delivery Fund.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2015/18, Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal	September 2015	Sharon Montgomerie/Legal and Democratic Services/ 01772 530544
Report to Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulation on the New Hall Lane Public Realm Improvement Plan	February 2015	Matthew Edwards/Preston City Council/01772 906731

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A.