

Liss Village Centre Redesign Brief

Initiated by Highways Committee on 27th January 2020

Reviewed and signed off by the Project Review Group on 25th January 2021

Approved by Council on 15th February 2021 (Resolution 25/21)

Aim

The aim of this document is to provide a client brief for the proposed redesign, visual and physical enhancement of Liss village centre along with other substantive improvements, specifically from the Newman Collard car park on Hill Brow Road, past the shops on Lower Mead and along Station Road to the railway station. Any design must fit for purpose not only the residents of Liss today but for the projected population increase over the next 30 years.

1. Background

- 1.1. Liss is a ‘hidden village’, of about 6,500 people in East Hampshire, located in the wooded valley of the Upper River Rother within The Western Weald. It is well connected, situated just off the A3 some 22 miles from Portsmouth and 23 miles from Guildford, and has a mainline railway station with direct links to London Waterloo.
- 1.2. The village consists of 3,567 acres of semi-rural countryside and lies within Hampshire County Council (HCC), East Hampshire District Council (EHDC) and the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA). The SDNPA is the planning authority responsible for the village. The most local tier of government is Liss Parish Council (LPC).
- 1.3. Liss has a distinct centre, based on Station Road and parts of Hill Brow Road and Mill Road, which contains all the shop, restaurants, a pub and some local services such as the Village Hall and The Triangle community centre. It is an area used by the local community.
- 1.4. In July 2014 the Liss Village Design Statement (VDS) was adopted as supplementary planning document by the SDNPA. It was prepared by Liss residents and gives guidance on the character and design of existing development within Liss, which should be considered in proposals for any new development. VDS is available to view here:
southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Liss-Village-Design-Statement.pdf
- 1.5. In December 2017 the Liss Village Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) was adopted by the SDNPA. A large amount of research was undertaken in preparing the NDP and this will be made available to the successful contractor. NDP is available to view here:
www.southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Liss-Made-NDP.pdf
- 1.6. The NDP identifies “*the recent development within the centre is unattractive and not in keeping with the character of the village. Some area of Station Road is cut off by the level crossing from the main part of the centre and is rundown and in need of sympathetic redevelopment. The street scene is poor, with a clutter of posts and signs, some poor pavements, and a lack of green planting. Parking for the centre is increasingly difficult with car parks close to capacity*”.

- 1.7. In July 2019 the South Downs Local Plan (SDLP) was adopted, it identifies Liss as a key access point and hub for visitors to the to the South Downs National Park (SDNP) providing a variety of services. SDLP is available to view here:
www.southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/SD_LocalPlan_2019_17Wb.pdf
- 1.8. In the SDLP it notes “*the modern development in the centre of [Liss] village has not been sympathetic to the character for the village*” giving a clear mandate for visual, physical and other substantive improvements. In addition, Strategic Policy SD36 of the SDLP permits proposals for Liss village centre development.
- 1.9. The SDNPA’s key purpose is:
- a) To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area;
 - b) To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public;
 - c) To seek to foster the social and economic well-being of the local communities within the National Park in pursuit of our purposes.
- 1.10. In June 2015 the SDNPA published Roads in the South Downs, a guide on enhancing the safety and quality of roads and places in the national park. This should be considered in proposals for an integrated highways design. Roads in the South Downs is available to view here:
www.southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Roads-in-the-South-Downs.pdf

2. Vision and Objectives

- 2.1. The village centre of Liss, and scope of the project, is shown in Figure 1 at the end of this brief. The land ownership is also shown and includes Network Rail (level crossing and railway station), HCC (as the Highway Authority and landowner), EHDC (landowner), The Triangle Centre (landowner), Private Owner (Lower Mead shopping area) and others. Information on utilities within the project area is available upon request from EHDC.
- 2.2. The project area is as follows (shown in the photographs 1-14 at the end of this brief):
- a) Station Road: from the rail level crossing through to The Triangle Centre
 - b) The Lower Mead pavement in front of the shops
 - c) Hill Brow Road to Newman Collard car park
- 2.3. The project area lies within the Liss Conservation Area and contains a Listed Building and several buildings of Local Historic Interest. See www.easthants.gov.uk/conservation-areas
- 2.4. The objectives of the redesign:
- a) Clear design showing the village identifies itself as a gateway to the SDNP;
 - b) Improved street scene reflecting the unique character of Liss using the principles laid out in the VDS and NDP (see 1.4 and 1.5, respectively);
 - c) Improvement in visitors first impression when arriving at the railway station, recognising it as an important arrival point within the SDNP as well as entry to the village;
 - d) Visual improvements to the Lower Mead shopping area with the potential for a new Piazza style area (please note the diagrams found in Appendix A are for illustrative purposes only);
 - e) Creation of a ‘leafy cafe society’ feel;
 - f) Pedestrian friendly and wheelchair accessible environment.

- g) Incorporate social distancing measures;
 - h) Promotion of walking and cycling throughout the village;
 - i) Improvement to pedestrian and cyclist safety, particularly but not exclusively in relation to traffic movements associated with the Lower Mead shopping area and Station Road;
 - j) Reduction in illegal parking;
 - k) Reduction in vehicle speed, number, and timing of vehicle movements – investigate potential for rerouting traffic;
 - l) Ensure businesses can operate effectively with efficient traffic flow;
 - m) Road sign rationalisation and de-cluttering;
 - n) Clearly signposted links to the countryside and points of interest;
 - o) Integrated design with the ‘School Zone’ scheme being developed by HCC;
 - p) Designed to remain fit for purpose as the population of Liss increases over the next 30 years.
- 2.5. Project will work harmoniously with a separate Liss School Traffic Calming Project being implemented along Hill Brow Road and with longer term plans to introduce traffic calming initiatives within Liss Forest that may result in increased traffic on other routes. Information available upon request.
- 2.6. Project will take into consideration the effect of an additional 70 households being built in Andler’s Wood on both volume of traffic and increased demand on village centre amenities.

3. Governance

- 3.1. LPC will act as the lead authority and will be the client for this project. The tendering process and letting of the contract will be in accordance with the Financial Controls and Procurement Standing Orders. Applicable documents are available to view:
www.lissparishcouncil.gov.uk/_UserFiles/Files/Policies/Liss%20Parish%20Council%20Standing%20Orders%20-%202019.pdf
- 3.2. The LPC Project Review Group will provide oversight for the project on behalf of the partners and function as the Responsible Body for the project.
- 3.3. The key stakeholders are listed below, in the first instance contact should be made via LPC for initial introduction:
- a) LPC (as local council and Responsible Body for project);
 - b) HCC (highway authority and landowner);
 - c) EHDC (landowner);
 - d) Local Conservation Officer;
 - e) SDNPA (local planning authority);
 - f) Local business / shop owners;
 - g) The Triangle Centre;
 - h) Network Rail;
 - i) Community Rail Partnership;
 - j) Liss Infant and Junior School;
 - k) Local business groups;
 - l) Disability Forum;
 - m) Local Clubs, Societies and Organisations;
 - n) Liss in Bloom;
 - o) Newman Collard Trust;
 - p) And others.

4. Deliverables

Phase One: Scoping and costing

- 4.1. Prepare an existing plan and topographical survey of the project area.
- 4.2. Develop an understanding of the project area, reviewing existing data generated by the NDP process, and identifying existing issues and problems.
- 4.3. Develop an outline scheme which allows a phased implementation and identifies 'quick-wins', allowing LPC to bid for specific grants and other sources of funding.
- 4.4. Identify ways to adjust highway infrastructure to reduce traffic volumes and speeds through the village centre.
- 4.5. For each phase of the project establish an indicative budget and timetable for construction.

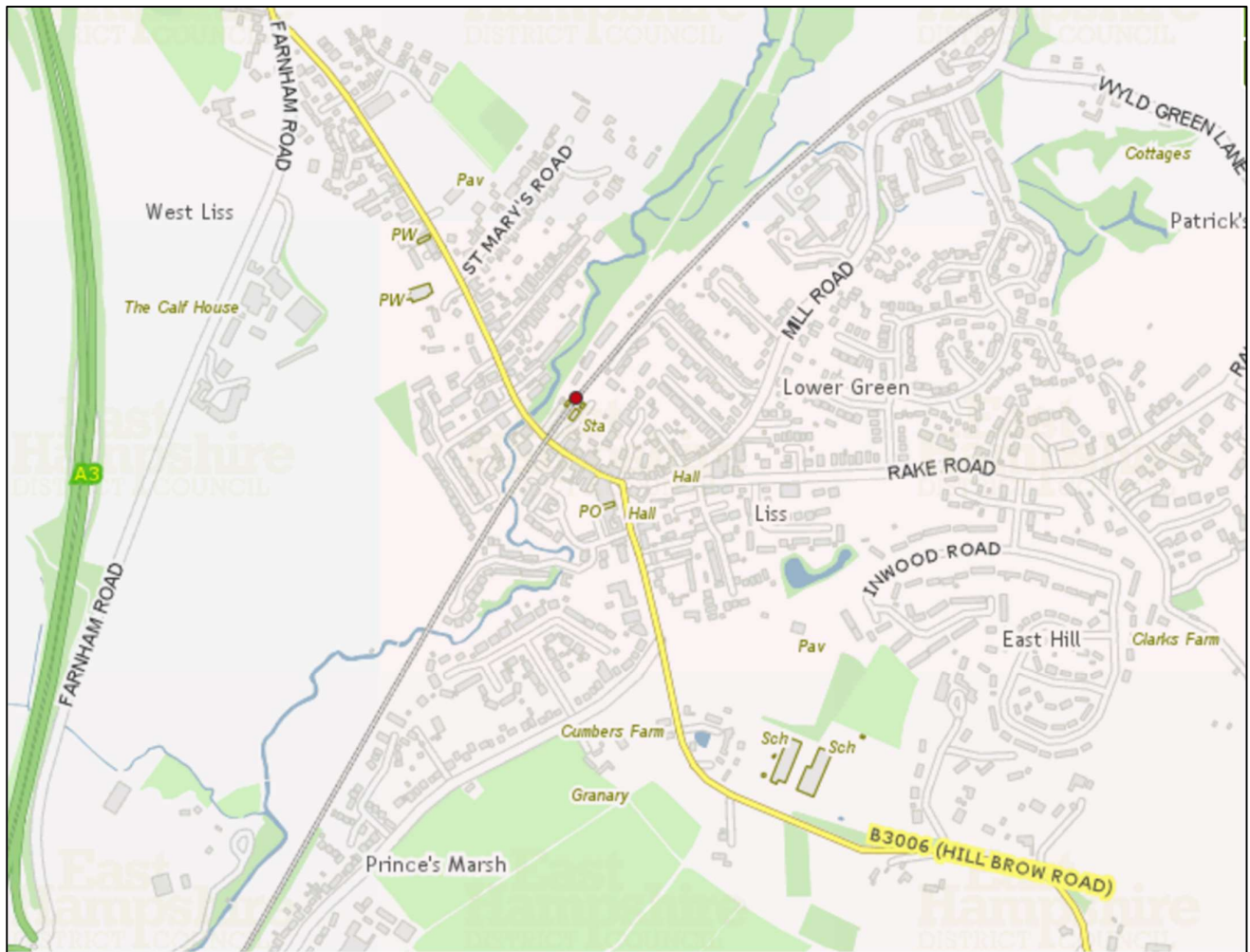
Phase Two: Detailed Reports

- 4.6. Develop the initial ideas outlined in the objectives into a more evolved proposal and include suggestions for where LPC may obtain funding support and grants. This will require the preparation of plans, sections, details at appropriate scales and to a suitable standard for submission of a planning application.
- 4.7. Produce graphic display material (e.g. drawings, visualisations etc...) to be used to illustrate the proposals to a non-specialist audience as part of a consultation process.
- 4.8. Identify an illustrative palette of materials, street furniture and planting; deemed good value for money, robust, high quality, easily maintainable and reflective of local character.
- 4.9. Allow for support to LPC to stage and participate in up to two public consultation events.
- 4.10. Undertake consultation with the LPC Project Review Group and key stakeholders at identified points in the process.
- 4.11. Undertake public consultation with residents of Liss and business owners at identified points in the process.
- 4.12. Prepare a full report at the end of the project to accompany all graphic material. written and graphic materials to be submitted in hard copy and in electronic form.
- 4.13. LPC will exclusively own the copyright of the finished report, and any data or analysis used to develop, upon receipt of payment.

5. Submission of Quotation

- 5.1. Submissions should include:
 - a) Details of consultant's proposals to fulfil the aspiration of the Neighbourhood Plan, including key inputs, phases and outputs;
 - b) Details of specific and relevant experience including how this covers the highways, spatial, aesthetic and other aspects of the brief;
 - c) Examples of the kinds of proposals which the consultant might make in fulfilling a brief of this kind;
 - d) Details/CVs of all project team members, including specialist sub-consultants if necessary, their proposed roles and reporting lines;
 - e) A lump sum fee, broken down by each of the phases and phases, to deliver the outputs identified in the brief, including hourly rates for all team members. The fee must include all disbursements, including draft and final documentation and presentation of material for consultation purposes;
 - f) A draft programme for this phase, including the progress meetings identified in deliverables.

Figure 2. Map showing wider area of Liss village



Photograph 1. Liss village centre - looking up Station Road.



Photograph 2. Station Road, Liss village - looking towards the rail level crossing.



Photograph 3. Station Road, Liss village - looking towards the centre from the rail level crossing.



Photograph 4. Station Road, Liss village - looking at the railway station ticket office.



Photograph 5. Liss village railway station from footbridge.



Photograph 6. Liss village centre - looking up Mill Road towards the Triangle Centre



Photograph 7. Mill Road – looking at the War Memorial (Grade II Listed) and Triangle Centre.



Photograph 8. Mill Road – looking towards the village centre.



Photograph 9. Mill Road – looking at the War Memorial (Grade II Listed) towards the village centre.



Photograph 10. Liss village centre - looking at Lower Mead shopping centre (1/2).



Photograph 11. Liss village centre - looking at Lower Mead shopping centre (2/2).



Photograph 12. Liss village centre - looking up Hill Brow Road.



Photograph 13. Hill Brow Road – looking away from village centre, Village Hall on left.



Photograph 14. Hill Brow Road – looking towards the village centre with Andlers Ash Road on left.



Appendix A. Plans and diagrams proposed by the Liss Village Design Group for the Liss Enhancement Scheme. These are included for illustrative purposes only.

Lower Mead Shopping Area

Aim of visually improving the area with the potential for a new Piazza style area and creation of a 'leafy cafe society' feel. Must be a pedestrian friendly and wheelchair accessible environment with improved public communal seating areas.

Liss Railway Station

Improvement in visitors first impression when arriving at the railway station, recognising it as an important arrival point within the SDNP as well as entry to the village.

Diagram 1. Suggested colonnade design for piazza.

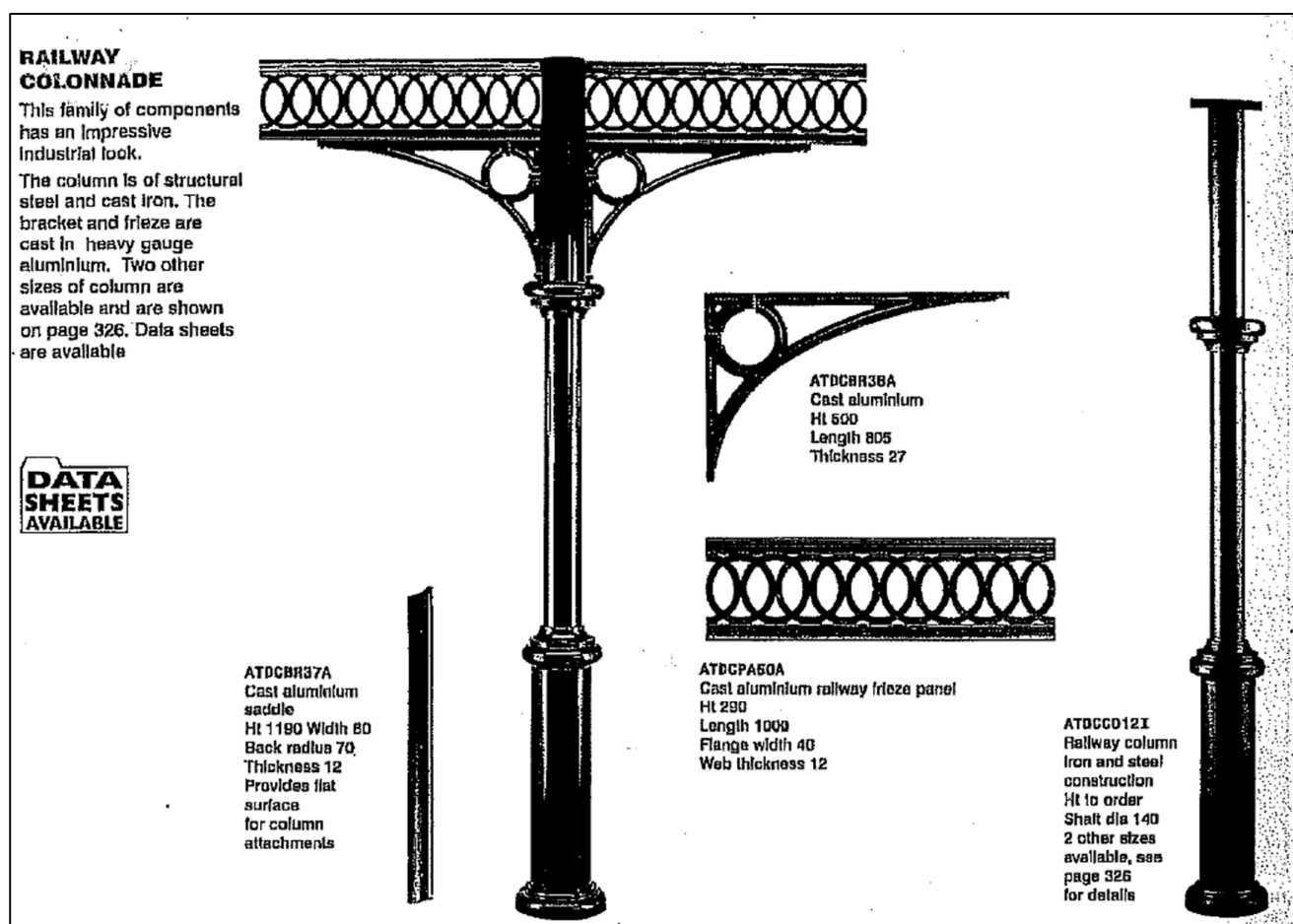
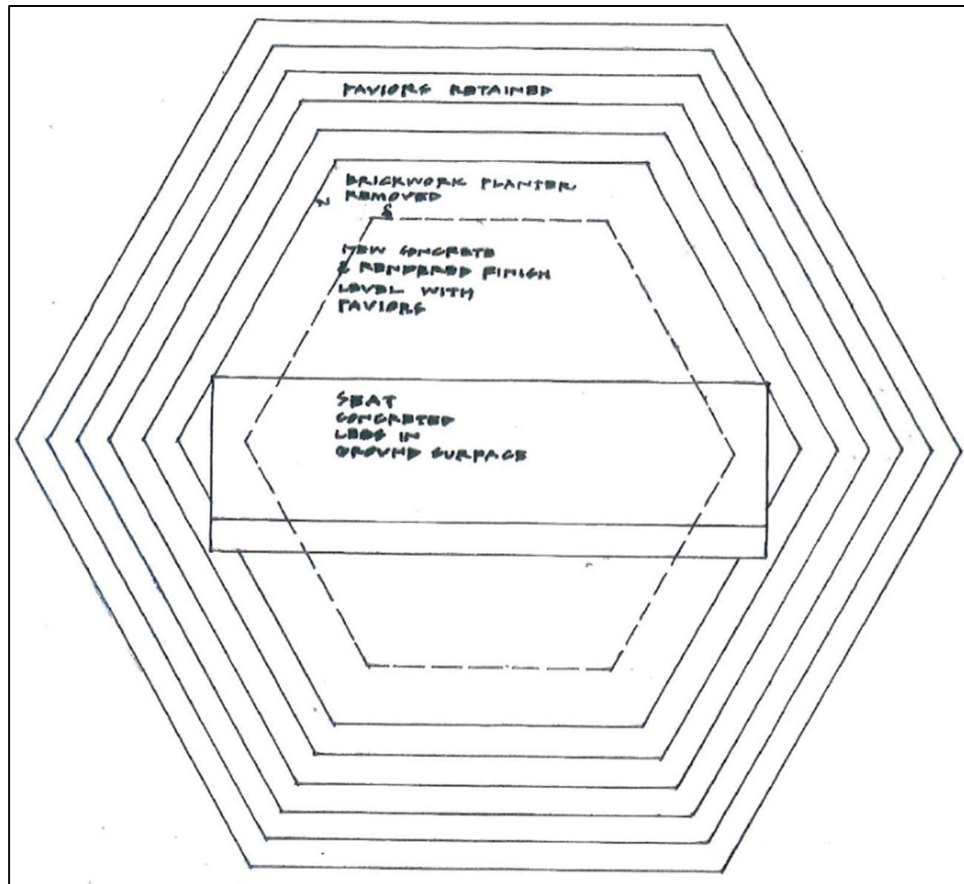


Diagram 2. Existing and suggested plan for Lower Mead Shopping area.



Diagram 3. Suggested planter seating design.



SEATS ARE SUGGESTED FOR POSITIONING IN EXISTING SITES OF PLANTERS SO THAT REMOVAL OF PLANTER ALLOWS SEATS TO BE INSTALLED IN THEIR PLACE. THIS RETAINS THE FIVE LINES OF PAVIORS THAT CIRCLE THE PLANTERS AND EMPHASISES THE SEAT POSITION.

THE GROUND SURFACE WITHIN THE PAVIORS TO BE CONCRETE AND RENDERED FINAL FINISH LEVEL WITH PAVIORS

Diagram 4. Suggested piazza style design for Lower Mead shopping area



Diagram 5. Suggested design for Railway Station showing trees and planters.

