

Pre-feasibility Study Executive Summary

Liss Parish Council
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CONTROL SHEET

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Executive Summary

Project Overview: Commissioned by Liss Parish Council and conducted by Hampshire Planning and Transport, the Liss Phase 1 Pre-feasibility Study report summarises the initial phase of work to enhance Liss village centre. The project focuses on improving the public realm to make it more walking and cycling-friendly, aligning with the local Neighbourhood Plan's vision of creating an attractive, accessible, and vibrant village centre.

Key Objectives:

1. Engage with local residents, businesses, and stakeholders to identify issues and opportunities.
2. Develop initial concept designs for public realm improvements.
3. Provide a masterplan based on community feedback and technical analysis.

Methodology: The study employed a 'Healthy Streets' approach, by measuring and improving outcomes against ten indicators such as clean air, ease of crossing, and places to stop and rest. Initial engagement activities to gather local views included stakeholder site walks, online surveys, business surveys, and a pop-up event in the village centre. Follow up public engagement was also completed to obtain feedback from the initial concept designs.

Findings:

1. **Traffic and Safety:** The impact of traffic on the village, particularly around the level crossing and roundabout, was identified as a major issue. High traffic speeds and limited crossing points have a negative impact on perceived pedestrian safety and comfort.
2. **Visual Appearance:** The village centre's visual appeal is diminished by empty shops and outdated building facades.
3. **Parking:** Parking contributes to congestion and safety concerns, with illegal and inconsiderate parking common. The availability of parking is appreciated by the community and not flagged as a problem.
4. **Community Feedback:** Residents and stakeholders expressed a desire for more greenery, better pedestrian facilities, and improved public spaces.
5. **Other findings:** Prolonged level crossing "down time" lead to air and noise pollution as well as illegal driving manoeuvres. Anti-social behaviour was also noted.

Concept Designs: The study proposes concept designs for four sections within the masterplan area, all covered by a new 20mph zone:

- **Liss Central Plaza:** Two options are presented, one proposed to transform the existing roundabout into a pedestrian-friendly 'square-about' and the other a redesigned mini roundabout, both with raised carriageways and improved footways. The roundabout proved the more popular option. Public feedback prioritised the improvement of this area.
- **Memorial Gardens:** Enhancing the area around the War Memorial with new seating, hedging, and improved pedestrian access, with a raised road surface, crossings and continuous footways. This area saw the most marked improvement against Healthy Streets scoring criteria.

- **Station Forecourt:** Improving the station forecourt with step free access to create a better sense of arrival and safer pedestrian routes. Provision of continuous footways, narrowing of station road for better width for pedestrians.
- **Andlers Ash Road/Hill Brow Road junction:** a new uncontrolled crossing point, raised road surface, improved pavements

Healthy Streets Audit: The proposed designs significantly improved Healthy Streets scores, indicating better walking and cycling environments. Key improvements included increased shade and shelter, more places to stop and rest, and safer crossing points.

Cost Estimates: The high-level cost estimate for construction of the proposed scheme is approximately £2.7m, excluding required feasibility, design and procurement elements (see report for further detail.) This figure will need revision depending on outcomes of future feasibility and design work.

Next Steps: The next phase involves a feasibility study and preliminary design, incorporating community feedback and further technical analysis. Upon successful completion of phase two, detailed design and procurement will need completion as will sourcing of funding before construction can begin.

Conclusion: The Liss Phase 1 Pre-feasibility Study lays a strong foundation for transforming Liss village centre into a more attractive, accessible, and vibrant community space. Continued phases of project development to further explore feasibility and design work will be crucial in realising this vision.