

# Southampton Public Transport Development Summary Annex B

## 1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 A study by MVA in 1999 for Southampton City Council identified potential public transport improvements. Since then, changes have taken place in the demand for travel, how public transport services are owned and operated, Government guidance and land use. In addition, the prospects for accommodating growth in Southern Hampshire have been debated. MVA has reviewed the current position for Southampton City Council in the light of Local Transport Plan (LTP) requirements; the potential role of a park and ride facility in the Stoneham area has been considered in more detail for Hampshire County Council.
- 1.1.2 **This summary** outlines the findings of the previous study and the measures that have been implemented to date before considering the policy context. Particular opportunities for improvement are then discussed including information availability, ticketing, city centre circulation, local rail and park and ride. Finally, the implementation issues are considered. Recommendations are included throughout.

## 1.2 Key Issues

- 1.2.1 Southampton is a key focus for activity in the South Hampshire sub-region. Traffic has increased considerably in recent years but peak traffic flows have remained relatively constant with some shift to public transport use. However, there remain pressures on the transport networks in terms of environmental impacts of traffic and anticipated future pressures. Key issues include:
- The **ownership and management** of transport infrastructure and services;
  - **Accessibility** with the aim of locating facilities where public transport is available; and
  - **Parking policy** which encourages car use and undermines the ability of public transport to provide an attractive alternative.

## 1.3 Current Public Transport Provision

- Several **bus operators** provide services in the city including First Hampshire and Dorset, Solent Blue Line (recently incorporated into the Go-Ahead group), Wilts and Dorset (also Go-Ahead) and Uni-Link (operated by Minerva Accord under contract to the University of Southampton);
- **Local rail services** are provided by South West Trains (Stagecoach) in addition to main line services to Weymouth and London Waterloo. Other operators include Virgin Trains and Southern Rail; and
- **Ferry services** operate from Town Quay to Cowes, Isle of Wight (Red Funnel Ferries) and to Hythe (White Horse Ferries).

# Previous Recommendations and Review of Progress

# 02

## 1.1 Key Actions From The 1999 Study

### 1.1.1 Recommendations from the study included the following:

- an integrated network with integrated ticketing (considering the possibility of a Fares-Free Zone in the central area);
- modern buses and high frequency services
- central area shuttle services and small interchanges with comprehensive information systems;
- highway priority measures; and
- performance-led contractual arrangements.

### 1.1.2 The extent to which the initiatives have been implemented is shown below:

Vision Action		Achieved?				
		None	Low	Medium	High	Complete
General	Low emission buses	→				
	Accessible low-floor buses	→				
	Use of alternative fuels for buses	→				
	Guided systems	→				
West Quay	Introduction at no cost to users	→				
	Improved walking route from Central Station	→				
ROMANSE	Widespread STOPWATCH real time information	→				
	Applying STOPWATCH at locations other than stops	→				
	Application of ROMANSE system	→				
Bus Services	High frequency daytime services	→				
	High frequency evening services	→				
	Introduction of night buses	→				
	Better city centre arrangements	→				
Priority Measures	Extensive bus priority measures	→				
	Restricting general traffic in Portland Terrace	→				
	Whole route priority measures	→				
Information	City centre public transport information strategy	→				
	Information in West Quay shopping centres	→				
Integration	Fully integrated network and seamless journeys	→				
Ticketing	Inter-ticketing	→				
	Fares-Free zone in City Centre	→				
Interchanges	Seamless interchanges in and around the City	→				
	Improvements at Central Station	→				
	Extend smartcard applications	→				
Park and Ride	Establishing an initial facility	→				
Contractual Relationship	Quality partnership	→				
	Solent Transport partnership	→				
Demand Management	Area-wide measures	→				
Location Stations	Suburban station improvements	→				

2.1.3 In view of the mixed success in implementing the recommendations of the 1999 study, further recommendations have been made in this study:

- Promote a more integrated network through partnership working;
- Introduce low floor buses supported by the implementation of more high kerbing at stops;
- Progress with alternative fuels for buses to be monitored, particularly if linked with any future Low Emission Zone proposal;
- Promotion of guided systems need not be undertaken at this stage;
- Consider fares structures in more detail;
- Improve the walking route from Central Station to West Quay;
- Improve pedestrian signing including links to bus stops;
- Change city centre bus routes;
- Improve public transport information in the city centre;
- Consider detailed interchange requirements around the central area;
- Implement STOPWATCH display units in locations remote from stops;
- Identify the benefits of STOPWATCH to users through surveys;
- Determine monitoring requirements for bus punctuality/LTP monitoring and ensure that the City Council and operators have access to the relevant data;
- Determine the City Council's position regarding revenue support for evening services for the medium to longer term;
- Introduce further bus priority measures for locations where problems are experienced regularly;
- Consider voluntary or contractual arrangements necessary to deliver effective improvements.

2.1.4 Many of the problems identified in 1999 are evident today and have been considered in more detail in the study. Significantly, partnership working needs to be strengthened and commitment given to create the improvements set out in the vision.

## 3.1 Regional and Sub-Regional Requirements

- 3.1.1 The regional spatial strategy – **the South East Plan** – has emphasised how new land uses and travel patterns cannot be addressed through car travel alone. Extensive residential and commercial development is planned for the City which will add to pressures on the transport network both within the city and from development sites beyond. Southampton plays a key role given its port activities and its role as a ‘regional hub’. The **Regional Transport Strategy (RTS)** supports public transport improvements with an emphasis on the potential for local bus services.
- 3.1.2 The **Solent Transport** partnership includes local authorities alongside Government agencies, private sector transport operators, rail authorities and operators and port and airport operators. Solent Transport is working closely with the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH), a grouping of local authority leaders and chief executives, which is considering how best to meet the requirements of the emerging South East Plan. Solent Transport offers the potential to unify services throughout the area for marketing purposes while retaining independent political and financial controls.
- 3.1.3 The **Local Transport Plan (LTP)** process has emphasised how public transport can meet changing demands and how performance can be monitored. The LTP’s Bus Strategy sets out proposals to enhance local rail, bus and taxi services and fully accords with the RTS and the sub-regional strategy. Bus punctuality has been identified as a key issue and a Punctuality Improvement Programme is under way.
- The City Council and operators should continue to play a strong role in the Solent Transport partnership to help promote improvements to local services;
  - Improvements identified in the Bus Strategy should be explicitly linked to a detailed programme of improvements in an updated Quality Partnership agreement to include funding source, programme and monitoring;
  - Targets should be monitored continuously using ROMANSE data and information should be shared between the City Council and operators; and
  - The City Council should liaise with bus operators about all forthcoming streetworks to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to minimise adverse impacts.

## 3.2 Review of Quality Partnership

3.2.1 The diagram below illustrates the current status of the elements of the Quality Partnership agreed between the City Council, bus operators and Hampshire Constabulary.

Requirement	Agency	Achieved?		
		No	Partially	Yes
<b>General</b>				
1 Agree 2% patronage growth per year Share patronage data	All City Council / Operators			
2 Implement planning policies that encourage intensive development only in accessible locations etc	City Council			
3 Monitor and review Quality Partnership progress Hold annual meeting to review QP effectiveness	City Council / Operators City Council / Operators	 		
<b>Vehicles</b>				
4 Achieving vehicle fleet profile of less than eight years All vehicles including minibuses to be fully accessible	Operators Operators			
<b>Traffic Management and Priorities</b>				
5 Use of ROMANSE data for monitoring bus performance Responding to bus operator requests regarding particular locations within three months	City Council City Council			
6 Commitment to reliability monitoring system and to share data with City Council	Operators			
7 Commitment to review traffic management , infrastructure and parking controls to support bus improvements within three months of a notification of change in services	City Council			
8 Commitment to investigate traffic management measures to support bus improvements	City Council			
9 Commitment to reviewing car parking policy	City Council			
10 Develop detailed bus corridor agreements and Quality Partnership	City Council / Operators			
11 Improve liaison with bus operators regarding highway works	City Council			
12 Enforcement of bus priority measures Investigate use of CCTV for bus lane enforcement	Police City Council	 		
<b>Bus Stop and Shelters</b>				
13 Commitment to infrastructure investment programme for shelters etc.	City Council			
14 Implement Bus Information Strategy	City Council			
15 New system for shelter maintenance and cleansing	City Council			
16 Introduce programme of bus stop clearways and enforcement	City Council			
17 Introduce real time information system at stops	City Council / Operators			
<b>Marketing and Ticketing</b>				
18 Develop commercial and marketing strategies	Operators			
19 Commitment to investigate smartcards and other ticketing improvements	Operators / City Council			
20 Develop public relations programme	All			
21 Ticketing discounts for green travel plans	Operators			
22 Produce and update public transport map	City Council			
<b>Staff</b>				
23 Introduce customer care training programme	Operators			

## 4.1 Current Provision

4.1.1 Observations suggest that current information about services and fares is poor despite the investment in real time displays. However, STOPWATCH is reassuring to users and is currently being upgraded. The Bus Departure Information System provides scrolling timetable information but needs to be supported by appropriate static information eg maps. Various web sites include useful detail with varying degrees of success but the one place at which it could be coordinated, [www.romanse.org.uk](http://www.romanse.org.uk), fails to provide any public transport information.

4.1.2 Providing comprehensive information is essential prior to people making decisions about how they travel. **Linking technologies** is the key to this with database information being passed to various media and on-street information being available at a variety of locations, not just bus stops and stations.

4.1.3 The **identity of the network** (i.e. the clear definition of services) is poor with confused ownership and operation rather than a unified and cohesive image. Coordinated marketing and possibly branding would help and could include local rail services and ferries as well as buses.

4.1.4 Information provision could be improved including the following measures:

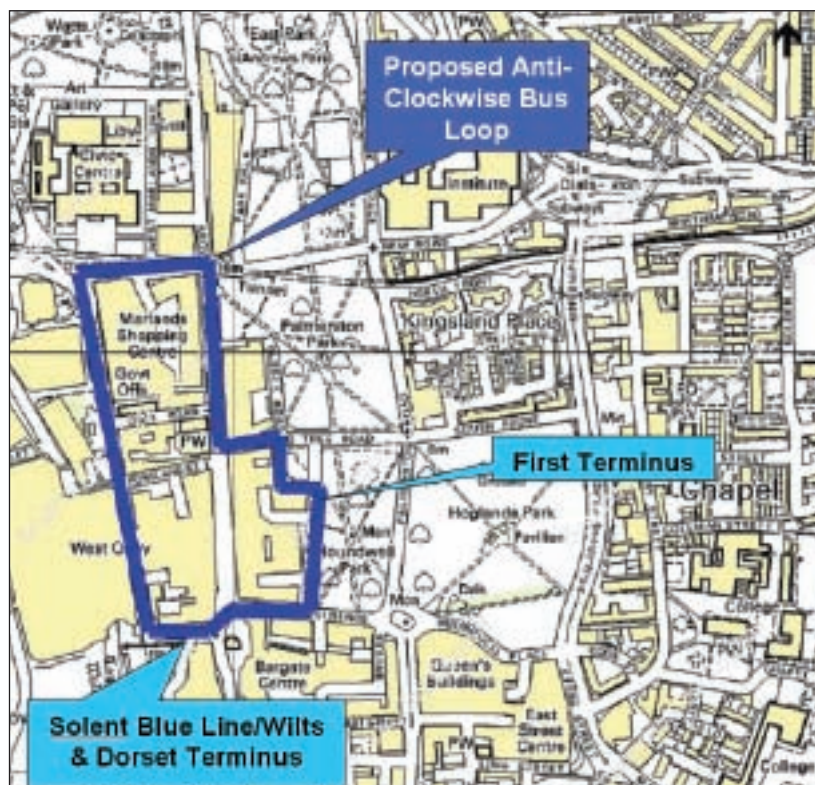
- A programme of comprehensive improvements in the provision of static information at stops should be determined (responsibility to provide and update, funding source, implementation programme);
- Operators should not compete to provide information and the City Council should coordinate;
- The Bus Departure Information System should be simplified by having better maps to indicate stop locations and a simpler terminology to identify stop locations;
- Information on destinations and fares should be provided;
- Interchange arrangements at Central Station and elsewhere should be significantly improved by providing better information about services;
- Include more and better public transport information on web sites eg ROMANSE;
- Consider how the City Council can improve the legibility of the network in a cohesive manner; and
- Consider how strong marketing can be undertaken given the different requirements of the different operators.

## 5.1 Realising Opportunities

- 5.1.1 The image of bus use is tainted by a lack of information on fares, an impenetrable range of products and a need to queue for purchase in cash. Pre-payment would address the problem of extended dwell times at stops and speed up journeys, supported by the wider use of smartcards. This would be complemented by introducing more vehicles with two or more doors. The adoption of a simpler fare structure eg more flat fares would assist marketing and operating efficiency. Add-on bus fares to rail tickets ('Bus Plus') is in place but little information is available, a missed opportunity.
- 5.1.2 A Fares-Free Zone could extend from Central Station to East Street and Ocean Village and encourage short journeys around the city centre, particularly between retail areas. Such an arrangement would need to consider appropriate remuneration to operators.
- 5.1.3 To improve ticketing structures and payment methods, the following initiatives are proposed:
- Consider an expanded role for smartcards, recognising that their application will not be universal;
  - Identify operating benefits of smartcard use ie shorter dwell times and reduced cash handling;
  - Consider fare zones in terms of marketing and revenue impacts;
  - Develop Bus Plus concept and/or an expanded Solent Travelcard;
  - Operators and the City Council to consider in more detail the possibility of a Fares-Free Zone for the central area; and
  - Consider the options for cash-free ticketing in terms of vehicle design.

## 6.1 City Centre Bus Loop

6.1.1 A Bus Loop is proposed which would route all services along a common anti-clockwise circuit (see below). This would provide a much simpler and more legible arrangement with clear pedestrian routes and without a need to cross major roads. With this arrangement, all services would stop at several city centre destinations including West Quay.



This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Southampton City Council 100967 2005

6.1.2 Termini at Castle Way and Vincents Walk could be served by the respective operators. Cross-centre services could use different parts of the Bus Loop in different directions or operate independently of the circulatory arrangement eg the West Quay Shuttle.

6.1.3 To take this issue forward, the report suggests that:

- The City Council should develop an implementation programme to introduce a City Centre Loop taking into account operating requirements (especially for through services) including marketing and infrastructure.

## 7.1 Local Stations

- 7.1.1 Central Station has the potential to be a fully integrated, major transport focus. A revised arrangement outside the main entrance (north side) would be possible and achieve good interchange between rail, bus, taxis, cycling and walking.
- 7.1.2 Local stations are not well used for a variety of reasons relating to timetables and geography. Swaythling is unattractive compared with the frequent services available at Southampton Airport Parkway and St Denys has suffered from severance due to road construction. The Fareham line stations (Bitterne, Woolston, Sholing) have a circuitous route to the city (contrasting with direct bus services) but could be better integrated with walking and cycling routes. Millbrook and Redbridge are in isolated settings and have limited services and catchments.

## 7.2 Extension of Romsey-Totton Service to Waterside

- 7.2.1 It has been suggested that the current hourly Romsey-Eastleigh-Southampton-Totton service could be extended to Marchwood on the freight-only Fawley branch to serve the Waterside area. The route from the junction at Totton would need to be upgraded and the pathing arrangements (the sequence of varying types of train operating on the tracks available) at Totton would need to be examined in detail. However, adequate time could be available if the Millbrook and Redbridge stops are omitted; they could then be served by extending the Portsmouth to Southampton service to Totton.
- 7.2.2 Any extended service would be a matter for the rail agencies to consider with the City Council and Hampshire County Council. However, it should be noted that the Department for Transport is considering cutting back the service to provide a Romsey to Eastleigh shuttle only which would undermine any attempts to improve the service. The study proposes that:

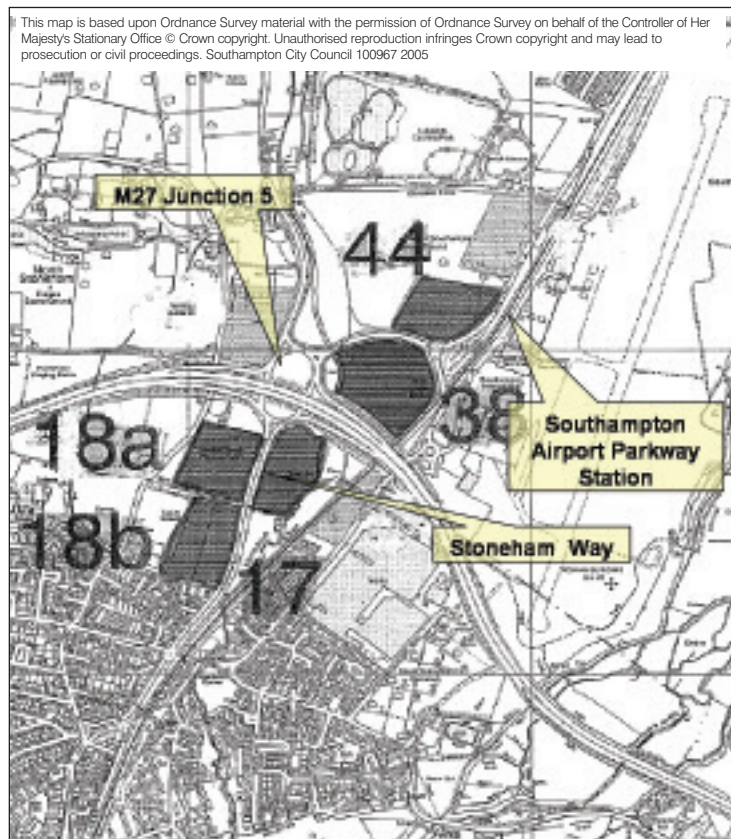
- The City Council should improve walking links (signing, lighting etc) to St Denys, Bitterne, Woolston and Sholing stations in partnership with South West Trains; and
- Investigate in detail the implications of extending the Romsey-Eastleigh-Southampton-Totton service to Marchwood in terms of pathing constraints, operating costs, timetabling, infrastructure requirements and the possibility of extending the Portsmouth to Southampton services from Southampton Central to Totton to provide a replacement stopping service at Millbrook and Redbridge. This will need to involve Hampshire County Council in partnership with the City Council.

## 8.1 Context

- 8.1.1 Sites for three potential park and ride locations are being safeguarded at Nursling (west of the city), Stoneham (north) and Windhover (east), each on a core corridor into the city and close to the trunk road network. A number of potential sites in the Stoneham area have been investigated. Any facility would need to be high quality to be attractive and should not require subsidy in the longer term. Bus priority measures are essential to provide a good journey time compared with the equivalent car journey and a frequent service would need to be available.
- 8.1.2 Parking policy for the central area is a key to the success of park and ride. The City Council has ownership of only part of the parking stock and hence it must address the supply and cost of those spaces under its control before promoting park and ride; private non-residential parking will also need to be addressed. Long stay parking in the City Centre will need to be reduced in quantity, raised in price and/or converted to short stay for park and ride to be successful.

## 8.2 Review of Sites at Stoneham

- 8.2.1 Park and ride is dependent on a suitable site being available. In the Stoneham area, only one of the sites considered (Site 18b) is owned by the City Council; the others are located in Eastleigh Borough Council's area for which Hampshire County Council is the highway authority (see plan below).
- 8.2.2 The assessment criteria used in a previous analysis were re-evaluated. Users of Site 17, 18a and 18b (south of M27 Junction 5) have easy access to the site with little time penalty incurred as these sites are closest to the city. Sites 38 and Site 44 (north of Junction 5) require Southampton-bound motorists to travel a short distance out of their way to access the site; these would however be more convenient for access to Eastleigh town centre should a park and ride service be made available. On the basis of the criteria selected, sites to the south of the motorway scored most highly.



8.2.3 In terms of operating costs, Sites 18a and 18b had the largest funding gap due to their limited size in contrast to Site 38 which could generate more revenue due to its largest size. Priority measures on the route into the central area would be required, particularly in the Bevois Valley area.

8.2.4 Detailed analysis for selected sites is necessary to bring forward the scheme including landscaping, site access, design of priority measures, service specification, etc alongside a proposed strategy for central area parking.

8.2.5 To develop a park and ride facility, the following steps are proposed:

- Establish the City Council's commitment to developing a park and ride facility at Stoneham;
- Promote a suitable site – Site 18b is in the City Council's ownership and is well located in terms of operation;
- Should Site 18b not be promoted, then the City Council should liaise with Eastleigh Borough Council and Hampshire County Council to promote Site 18a or alternative sites;
- Review city centre parking supply and pricing with a view to reducing long stay spaces so that spaces will be re-provided at the park and ride site and to ensure that the overall stock of public parking is not increased;
- Commission a demand forecasting study to ascertain the likely use of a facility;
- Consider in detail how bus priority measures will be implemented to support an efficient and attractive park and ride service;
- Commence design including mitigation/landscaping;
- Secure funding; and
- Apply for planning permission to the appropriate planning authority(ies).

## 9.1 Overview

9.1.1 Institutional and organisational structures have had a significant role in slowing down the programme of implementing measures. Establishing effective partnership working has been recognised as a crucial part of the process. Two recent changes in legislation allow Statutory Quality Partnerships with a stronger role for local authorities and the promotion of Punctuality Improvement Partnerships with the support of the Traffic Commissioner. However, these are not a substitute for commitment from all parties to a structured programme of improvements with measurable targets. With three main operators in the city, an agreement is needed to which all stakeholders can subscribe. For the City Council, unpopular decisions may be necessary such as the reallocation of road space at the expense of motorists.

9.1.2 To move forward, the City Council must set out its strategy for developing public transport in terms of short to medium term objectives, determine how these objectives are to be met and use a Quality Partnership to manage implementation. Should this be achieved and operators are unable or unwilling to participate fully, then there are grounds for pursuing a Statutory Quality Partnership. The Council may resort to Quality Contract powers which would require incumbent operators to provide detailed information and would be strongly opposed.

## 9.2 Proposed Partnership Strategy

9.2.1 Some proposals are entirely a matter for operators such as service patterns, frequencies and vehicle quality while other aspects are entirely in the control of the City Council, notably the introduction of bus priority measures. Other elements of the strategy can be promoted jointly such as real time information provision. Any partnership arrangement could be overseen independently to ensure impartiality and to provide advice and guidance and adjudication if required.

9.2.2 A Punctuality Improvement Partnership is being established to provide a framework in which the council and operators can work together with appropriate targets being set and involving data sharing.

9.2.3 Given that the relationships between the City Council, public transport operators and others are crucial if improvements are to be achieved, the study proposes the following:

- Ensure that there is a clear statement of what it is that the City Council is seeking to achieve in terms of public transport improvements;
- Identify the role of each player in implementing the strategy;
- Develop a management framework for the partners to oversee implementation of the strategy, driven by a regular cycle of monitoring and review;
- Consult with the key players to secure their sign-up to both the strategy of improvement, and the management process;

- Review the potential for Solent Transport to coordinate operators' interests and promote public transport improvements;
- Modify proposals as far as possible to obtain consensus agreement; and
- Assuming that there is agreement on a sufficient critical mass of improvements, begin the implementation process, with the partnership management framework overseeing the ongoing programme of work, and also monitoring results.



