



22nd June 2021

Press release

Help shape Ryde's new transport interchange

Islanders are being asked to help shape some of the key elements of a multi-million-pound project to improve Ryde Transport Interchange in a consultation that launches today.

As part of the project, facilities and connectivity for cyclists, pedestrians, bus and rail users as well as Wightlink FastCat passengers are all to be improved, with the transport hub reorganised to provide a more pedestrian prioritised area with additional areas of public use.

The scheme is supported by a Government grant from the Transforming Cities Fund following a successful bid by the IW Council, Portsmouth City Council and Hampshire County Council (together as South East Hampshire Rapid Transport or SEHRT) for £55.6m million, £10 million of which is earmarked for the Ryde Transport Interchange improvements. Complementary improvements are also being made by Southern Vectis, Wightlink and South Western Railway who are all partners in the project. The Ryde scheme is part of a wider, co-



ordinated initiative to enhance sustainable transport infrastructure and connectivity in and around Portsmouth (Portsmouth City Region).

The project will transform the old tramway along Ryde Pier into a new pedestrian and cycle boardwalk. There will also be improvements to Ryde Esplanade railway station including the refurbishment of the terminal building to create new fully accessible toilets and remodelled, expanded concessions as well as access to the boardwalk.

The bus terminal will also be re-modelled to provide a safer environment for bus users/pedestrians with more public amenity space. A new road layout will also allow buses to emerge from the bus terminal and head straight up George Street, as opposed to the current arrangement where they have to use the roundabout at the end of the Esplanade.

The project will also create a dedicated cycle route and walkway through the area linking Ladies Walk to the west and Puckpool to the east providing more areas of public use with new street furniture.

As well as providing better connectivity and promoting active travel, the project also aims to make the interchange a more pleasant public space for both those arriving at the gateway to Ryde and those wanting to enjoy the area as a destination in itself. Consequently, additional trees and shrubs will be planted, there will also be additional public seating as well as more space that can be safely accessed by the public. There will also be enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities and the area will be opened up to improve views of the historic pier.

The council is now holding a consultation to share the details of the plans and seeking feedback from the community on the key elements which define the look and feel of the area including landscaping and planting, bus carriageway surfacing, kerbing, pedestrian paving and

seating. The council is also interested in receiving feedback on other key features which could be incorporated into the public space while respecting the local heritage, wider natural environment and conservation area status.

Councillor Phil Jordan, Cabinet Member for Transport and Infrastructure said: “It is fantastic news that SEHRT has secured this significant investment on a scheme that will improve the interchange and the wider Esplanade area both as a transport hub and as a public amenity area to enjoy.

““While some elements of the project are tied to conditions of the grant money, there is nevertheless scope for the public to help refine the plans for the public realm.

“There are important decisions on the character of the interchange to be made. For example, does the community want it to have a more traditional feel in keeping with other areas of the Island or is there an opportunity for something more contemporary? Do people want seafront themed planting to complement the existing palm trees, or something more traditional involving native species?

“This public consultation will play a big role in shaping the ongoing dialogue we are having with local stakeholder groups and help us finalise a scheme that is a credit to Ryde and marks a step towards our ambitions of regenerating the wider area by creating a fully integrated, user-friendly gateway transport hub.”

The council will also continue to seek the input of key groups like Ryde Town Council, Ryde Regeneration Group and Ryde Business Association to ensure they also have an opportunity to input their views as local representatives.

The findings of the consultation will inform a decision on the way forward.

It is hoped work on the project can start in early 2022 and be completed in Spring 2023.

The survey runs until 3 August and can be accessed online via the following link www.iow.gov.uk/rydeinterchange

A consultation document explaining more about the scheme can also be found on the same link. Paper copies of both the survey and consultation document are available from PFI@iow.gov.uk

ENDS.

Notes to editors:

1. Photos showing the existing transport interchange.
2. The designs for the scheme are attached showing the overview plan and accessibility improvements.
3. The Transforming Cities Fund aims to improve productivity by investing in public and sustainable transport infrastructure in English cities. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-the-transforming-cities-fund>
4. More information about the plans, including scheme designs, the consultation document, survey and frequently asked questions can be found at www.iow.gov.uk/rydeinterchange
5. The Highways scheme within the project is council-led and will be delivered by Island Roads. It does not form part of the existing Highways PFI Contract.