



Strategic Capital Scheme Business Case

Junction upgrade at Torbay Road / Rathmore Road,
Torquay – Design and Scheme Development

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Author:	Ian Jones
Director/Executive Head:	Frances Hughes
Project Manager:	Ian Jones
Business Unit/Service:	Community and Customer Services.

1. Strategic Case – Is there a compelling reason to do this?

1.1 Scheme objective

The primary drivers of the project are:

Project Primary Driver (Please indicate all that apply)	Maintaining/Improving service delivery	Cost Avoidance	Cash Savings	Risk Avoidance	Delivering a Piece of Legislation
		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

1.2 Key Objectives

The key objectives of the project are to:

Objectives	
Objective 1	To develop proposals to implement a highway junction improvement scheme to reduce traffic congestion on Torquay sea front and improve pedestrian and cycle safety issues to detailed design stage and to undertake applications to bid for appropriate funding to fully implement.
Objective 2	To develop improved pedestrian connectivity between Torquay Railway Station and Torquay sea front including improved linkages to onward public transport facilities.
Objective 3	To produce a scheme and develop proposals to a 'shovel ready' position to enable further progression within future funding bid processes for scheme implementation.
Objective 4	To support to Mayoral direction to consider the removal of traffic signals.
Objective 5	To support the objective of improved use of sustainable transport by considering the issues of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.
Objective 6	To develop an improved public space proposal at one of the main entry points to Torbay's sea front amenity areas.

1.3 Statutory Framework

There is no legislative driver for the project, but it will need to comply with English and European law.

The Council has a number of statutory responsibilities relating to highways management:

- Transport Act 2000 (and Transport Act 2008 Amendment).
- Highways Act 1980.
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
- New Roads and Street Works Act 1991.
- Traffic Management Act 2004.

However, within the Highways Act there is no definition on the level of maintenance required and national code of practice provide the standards we adhere to.

1.4 Policy Framework

Corporate Plan

The development and implementation of this proposal supports the following targeted actions within the Corporate Plan:

- Promoting healthy lifestyles across Torbay.
- Ensuring Torbay remains an attractive and safe place to live and visit.

Local Transport Plan 2011-2026

A key tenet of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) is to deliver and support new development and economic growth. The Local Transport Implementation Plan (2016 – 2021), which has been agreed by Council, advises that “Sustainable transport investment provides opportunities to improve the quality of public spaces and road junction improvement (supporting town centre Masterplans), improve road safety across the network for all users.”

It states that the benefits of investment in sustainable transport are well evidenced and positively impact on both economy and health for example:

- a healthier and more physically active population
- reduced air and environmental pollution
- reduced road traffic congestion and accidents
- reduced noise and vibration
- increased community well-being
- better functioning social support networks

Local Plan

The project supports the delivery of the following aspirations in Torbay Council’s Local Plan:

- Achieve a better connected, accessible Torbay and essential infrastructure.
- Protect and enhance a superb environment.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

Healthy Torbay SPD – The proposal encourages walking, cycling and other active travel; the project will make it safer to undertake journeys.

1.5 Equality, Diversity and Deprivation

The proposal supports Equality Issues by ensuring an improved environment for vulnerable road users and non-motorised vehicle users.

1.6 Condition of the asset

The traffic signals were installed in 1987 and whilst they are currently in reasonable working order, the apparatus is reaching the end of its residual life and becoming more difficult to maintain.

The condition of the public highway at this location is in a fair condition, however the carriageway is suffering from the effects of a deteriorating reinforced concrete road base, which is now in excess of 70 years old.

An investment into the junction would remove a significant maintenance liability from the authority, which is likely to become apparent within 5 years.

1.7 Scope of Project

The project relates to the development of a revised and improved junction arrangement to the Torbay Road/Rathmore Road junction, Torquay by using funding from the Integrated Transport Capital allocation to fund the outline design, detailed design and any funding applications, with a view to future implementation.

The project is proposing the removal of the existing traffic signal arrangement to the junction, which with the implementation of a new roundabout arrangement, provides an opportunity to improve the connectivity between the public transport hubs at Torquay Railway Station and Torquay sea front, improve the access for cyclists by providing an alternative to using the main carriageway, whilst having limited impact on traffic congestion.

Traffic modelling has demonstrated that this junction can operate effectively as a simple roundabout junction within predicted traffic levels at peak times. The revised junction also provides a regeneration opportunity at this high profile sea front location.

The project within this business case does not have any specific funding provision, however in order to access future funding opportunities, a scheme will need to be developed to ensure that the authority is in a position to bid with a 'shovel ready' scheme. The proposal therefore at this time is to request £50,000 capital funding provision from the Integrated Transport Block to fund the outline and detailed design processes.

Should the development work prove successful in obtaining future funding for implementation, there may be a requirement for the authority to provide some match funding of which development costs can be used to support.

1.8 Benefits, Risks, Dependencies and Constraints

Benefits

The project will seek to deliver the following benefits:

Financial Benefits

- The production of a fully designed and costed scheme will provide the basis for future capital bid opportunities to fund this scheme.
- The implementation of the scheme would remove the maintenance liability of ageing traffic signal apparatus and carriageway and footway surfacing within the junction.

Non-Financial Benefits

- The scheme, when implemented, will provide improved connectivity between Torquay Railway Station and Torquay sea front giving visitors and commuters an improved experience of accessing sustainable transport options and the sea front amenity areas.

- The scheme, when implemented, will provide an improved cycle facilities within the sea front area.
- The scheme, when implemented, will provide improved traffic flow at 'off peak' times, whilst having no detrimental effect to 'peak traffic' flows.
- The scheme, when implemented, will improve pedestrian links to the South West Coast Path.
- The scheme can be further developed as part of any future regeneration of the remaining Torquay sea front to town centre links.

Risks

The project has identified the following key risks which will require management during the project:

- The designed scheme may not meet the criteria for any future capital funding opportunities, or applications for appropriate opportunities may not be successful.
- If no future funding stream can be secured, there may be a requirement to back fund the design costs from the authority's revenue funding stream.
- If funding cannot be secured for the scheme implementation within 5 years, it is likely that the authority will incur maintenance costs to replace defective signal apparatus or highway surfacing in order to meet its statutory obligations to maintain the highway.
- The predicted costs of undertaking the implementation of the scheme may deem the improvement unviable compared to a simple signal replacement scheme.
- The design process may identify issues with public utility apparatus or other underground structure or hazard that may affect the viability of the scheme.
- Any successful funding application may require the authority to provide some level of 'match funding', for which with other budget pressures may not be available.
- The scheme on implementation may not provide some or all of the benefits predicted for this improvement.

The project will produce and maintain a Risk Register to identify, manage and monitor the risks associated with the project. A risk register is a requirement of any funding application.

Dependencies

The key dependencies of the project are as follows:

- That there are sufficient resources within Torbay Council and the TDA to undertake the production of the scheme design.
- That there will be no loss of political support for the scheme during any funding bid process.
- That appropriate funding opportunities will be forthcoming from central government or other capital funding source.

Constraints

The project has the following key constraints:

- The project within this Business Case is restricted to outline and detailed design and any opportunity to bid for capital funding. There is currently no budget in place for the construction costs.
- That the needs of all highway users form part of the proposals and not prioritised as an improvement for motorised traffic.
- That underground services such as public utilities, unexpected ground conditions or other structure can be avoided, protected or diverted as part of the scheme.
- That any preliminary site works or investigative excavation works are carried out outside of peak holiday times.

2. Financial Case – Can we afford to pay for the solution?

2.1 Financial Investment

The project is requesting £50,000 from the Integrated Transport Capital block to fund the outline design, detailed design and funding applications for the construction costs related to this scheme.

The project will also fund a detailed estimate of the construction costs, which are likely to be in excess of £500,000 for this scheme, however the design process may give an opportunity to consider some alternative options.

The costs requested under this business case will serve as the investment required to provide a ‘shovel ready’ scheme that can be included in any appropriate fund bid processes. Without undertaking the scheme development process, funding bids will be unlikely to be considered. It is also likely that this investment can be identified as part of any match funding requirement within any funding application.

2.2 Financial Savings

There are no savings as a result of the design process for this scheme.

However the scheme, when implemented, is likely to save the authority approximately £200,000 in replacement costs for ageing traffic signal apparatus and defective highway surfacing in the area. The scheme will also save ongoing maintenance and energy costs associated with maintaining a signalised junction.

2.3 Ongoing financial implications

The junction will be subject to normal maintenance costs over its residual life including cyclic maintenance costs. Any high profile planting within the proposed roundabout may incur some additional maintenance costs.

3 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Capital Scoring Matrix for Scheme.

Appendix 2 – Location Plan.