

Appendix 6: Benefits achieved by the scheme against original objectives

The following note summarises benefits offered by the proposal against the original scheme vision and objectives:

Vision:

A fitting welcome to the city

The first impression of the city upon leaving the Station is dominated by complex traffic infrastructure and associated clutter (such as guard-railing and traffic signals). It is this infrastructure that has the greatest negative impact on the environment around the Station. By simplifying the carriageway design, the impact of traffic infrastructure is greatly reduced, enabling positive elements of the environment to take precedence.

An efficient interchange

Formalising the gyratory road system enables simplification of junctions, which improves traffic flow and enables easier crossing for cyclists and pedestrians. The gyratory system also enables carriageway space to be reduced – significantly enhancing provision for pedestrians (the main users of the space) without any detrimental impact on vehicular traffic. The rebalancing of space also enables a cycle contra-flow to be provided in Queens Road. Cycle parking is due to be enhanced by Southern Railway's efforts to deliver a dedicated cycle parking facility at the north of the Station. Bus and taxi services are retained outside the Station's southern entrance in a simpler arrangement which complements rather than dominates the environment.

A high quality public place

As with the welcome to the city, the main way in which the public places around the station can be improved is by removing the elements that currently have the greatest negative impact on the environment (those relating to the overly complex traffic infrastructure). The simplified traffic arrangement enables widened footways which provide opportunities for businesses lining Queens Road to create outdoor activity areas. Improving the environment is also likely to encourage investment from business owners (as has happened in New Road). Where possible tree planting is also introduced to bring additional aesthetic benefit.

Objectives:

An accessible environment

The project improves the accessibility of the environment for all through measures such as simplifying road crossings (the current arrangement has been described as one of the worst in the city for visually impaired people) and creating accessible taxi drop off facilities. An accessibility audit will be undertaken during the process of developing detailed design.

High quality cycle facilities

Southern Railway has been working for some time on developing proposals and seeking funding that would enable a dedicated cycle hub to be built at the

north of the station. Southern Railway has now secured funding of £850K and a planning application is being prepared. Southern plan to submit the application imminently and should it be agreed, work to deliver the facility will commence immediately.

By reclaiming road space the proposal enables a cycle contraflow to be provided on Queens Road.

The simplified arrangement also reduces the need for clutter such as the guard-railing outside Budgens, which has historically attracted cycle fly parking, creating additional barriers to pedestrian movement.

High quality pedestrian facilities

By reclaiming road space, additional pedestrian space is provided on Queens Road and Surrey Street. As well as improving vehicular flow, simplified junctions enabled by the new road layout enable significant improvements to pedestrian crossings outside the Station and at Gloucester Road / Queens St.

The simplified arrangement also provides a more pleasant environment than the existing, heavily engineered and cluttered streetscape.

Effective and efficient deliveries and business access

Dedicated loading spaces are provided for businesses including pubs on Surrey Street / Terminus Road. Located within the footway, these spaces enable businesses to be serviced without obstructing through traffic, and provide additional pedestrian space when not in use for servicing.

An environment that reflects the qualities of Brighton & Hove

The design of the current streetscape is heavily engineered and congested, untidy and cluttered and confusing. The poor quality of the environment makes it difficult for businesses in the area to thrive, which is reflected in the upkeep of some of the potentially attractive buildings in the area.

By proposal simplifies the streetscape, creating a better balance of space and reducing the need for traffic related clutter, the proposal significantly improves the quality of the environment, and so the welcome to the city.

Enhanced connections to surrounding areas such as North Laine

The proposal primarily improves physical connections between the station and the south of the city by improving walking and cycling facilities along Queens Road and Surrey Street. These improvements are significant.

Opportunities to make real improvement to the connection with the west of the city (via Guildford Road) are limited by spatial constraints on Terminus Road.

Enhanced physical northern and eastern connections will be delivered through later phases (the Northern Gateway and Trafalgar Street entrances respectively).

Simplifying the arrangement of Queens Road and Surrey Street also improves the inherent legibility of the route south from the station.

Requirements and opportunities for enhanced signage can be considered at the next stage of detailed design.

An environment that feels safe from physical harm and pollution

The gyratory road system enables existing traffic flow to be maintained within a simpler arrangement. The simpler arrangement enables wider footways and improved crossings which reduce the perceived impact of traffic and make moving through the area much safer for pedestrians. Widening footways moves vehicles further from frontages which reduces impact of vehicle emissions and noise pollution on people in buildings lining the streets, whilst simplified junctions will improve traffic flow.

An environment that is well managed and maintained

The detailed design stage will consider maintainability of materials suggested for the scheme. Management of the environment, including taxis, licensing and crime, will be considered during and inform the detailed design process.

An environment that encourages business success

As stated above, the existing environment of Queens Road does little to encourage business success, whilst the proposal reduces the negative impacts of traffic in the area, creating an environment people (particularly potential business customers) are less likely to rush through. It is expected that the enhanced setting provided for businesses will be a boost to the local economy. New Road is a reasonable comparison as to the benefits that can be achieved through enhanced public realm.

Better use of Mangalore Way

Network Rail has a long term ambition to improve Mangalore Way. However, it is unlikely that any investment will be made in the area at least until completion of Block J.

An improved Northern entrance

Planned improvements to the area directly outside the northern station entrance have been on hold pending resolution of the future of the Cycle Parking Hub, due to the Hub's potential for significant impact on this environment. However, S106 funding in excess of £300K has been secured to enable improvements to be made, and design will progress following the outcome of the Cycle Hub planning decision. Proposals for improvements will be presented to a future Committee meeting as soon as possible.

