

MORLAIX DRIVE ACCESS IMPROVEMENT SCHEME CONTRACT AWARD

Part I Briefing Note



PROJECT DETAILS

The Morlaix Drive Access Improvement Scheme will widen the existing narrow road that links Brest Road to Derriford Hospital, allowing for a constant flow of two-way traffic, including buses, and an upgrade of the existing narrow footway to a shared pedestrian and cycle path. The junction of Morlaix Drive with Brest Road will operate under new traffic signals (with new pedestrian crossings) and the northbound Brest Road entry on to Derriford Roundabout will be for buses, cyclists and emergency vehicles only, preventing Brest Road from becoming a 'rat-run' for traffic approaching from the in-construction Forder Valley Link Road and wishing to head towards Derriford Roundabout. A new shared use path will also be provided along Brest Road on the east side between Morlaix Drive and William Prance Road.

The scheme was originally planned to commence construction in 2020, however due to the pandemic and the proximity of the scheme to Derriford Hospital, construction has been put on hold until early 2022.

CURRENT PROBLEMS

Morlaix Drive is currently a narrow, 300m stretch of road linking Brest Road with Derriford Hospital and provides access to the ambulance station, Brest Way, and the hospital's large multi-storey car park. At present Morlaix Drive is, in part, too narrow for two-way use and is therefore only used as an informal access to the hospital site for staff, visitors and patients. Existing facilities for cyclist and pedestrians on Morlaix Drive and Brest Road are poor.

Large scale growth is proposed in the Derriford and Northern Corridor Growth Area, which will generate increased demand for travel and place greater pressure on the transport network. Morlaix Drive is identified in the Plymouth & South West Devon Joint Local Plan as critical part of the transport network to support increased travel by bus and thus the sustainable growth of the city.

Morlaix Drive needs to be widened and upgraded to local highway standards to support two-way traffic, including buses, with the junctions improved at Brest Road and the Derriford Hospital end. Once upgraded, buses from the south and east of the city serving the Derriford Hospital Interchange will be able to avoid the congested A386 Derriford Roundabout resulting in reduced journey times and improved reliability.

BENEFITS OF THE SCHEME

The Morlaix Drive Access Improvement Scheme will widen Morlaix Drive along its entire length, providing better access, including for buses, to Derriford Hospital and improve reliability for bus services in the north of the city.

The Morlaix Drive scheme is one of a number of infrastructure improvements needed to allow sustainable growth in the north of the city to happen. It will become a key strategic route for buses, allowing direct access to the hospital via the new Forder Valley Link Road for future bus services from the east of the city. The improved walking and cycling facilities will help to encourage trips to be made by more sustainable modes and improve links between communities as well as forming part of the 'Seaton Arc'.

The scheme compliments other nearby and recently delivered strategic transport projects including Derriford Transport Scheme, Derriford Hospital Interchange and Marjon Link Road. These infrastructure projects are needed to support the significant number of new homes and jobs planned for the east of the city over the next 20 years.

PROJECT COST

The Executive Decision to add £4.734m to the Council's Capital Programme for the Morlaix Drive Access Improvement Scheme and delegate the award of any subsequent contract to the Director for Place was signed in January 2018.

Subsequent to this a further £94,000 contribution from PCC Highways for resurfacing works on Brest Road that are included in the project was added to the scheme budget. Due to the scheme being put on hold as a result of COVID-19, inflation costs had placed additional pressure on the scheme budget. As a result a further £100,000 of revenue to capital contribution has been approved by S151 Officer in the current financial year in order to ensure the scheme is still affordable, bringing the **total budget** value to **£4.928m**.

The **estimated project cost** is **£4.92m**. This includes an allocation for contingency based on a quantified assessment of risk.

FUNDING

The scheme is funded as follows, with the majority of funding being provided through the Department for Transport's National Productivity and Investment Fund (NPIF).

| Funding source | Amount |
|---|-------------------|
| Corporate borrowing un-ringfenced | £1,420,000 |
| DfT NPIF S131 Grant | £3,314,000 |
| PCC Highways resurfacing contribution | £94,000 |
| Revenue to capital from Strategic Transport | £100,000 |
| Total | £4,928,000 |

The DfT NPIF grant funding is subject to the condition that it may only be spent on this project.

DELIVERY TIMESCALES

Construction of the Morlaix Drive Access Improvement Scheme is planned to start in early 2022 and finish in December 2022.

MEMBER AND STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

Members were consulted through the City Council Investment Board (CCIB) and the Business Case approved in December 2017. The subsequent Executive Decision was signed in January 2018, placing £4.734m of funding onto the Council's Capital Programme. The Executive Decision included the decision to delegate the award of any subsequent contract to the Director of Place.

The Cabinet Member for Transport was consulted with on 19 November 2021 and approval was secured to progress and deliver the scheme as planned.

Public and ward member consultation was carried out in summer 2019, with the results fed into the development of the final design for the scheme.

LAND

Morlaix Drive is privately owned by University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust. The scheme will deliver improvements to both Morlaix Drive and Brest Road to adoptable highway standards and upon completion of the scheme, Morlaix Drive will be dedicated as highway and adopted (as per an existing planning obligation upon the NHS Trust).

Two additional areas of third party land required to deliver the scheme previously owned by NHS Property Services and Lime Property Fund have been acquired by Plymouth City Council. Access licenses have been acquired as part of the land transfers enabling access and associated works by the Council's contractors during construction of the project.

All other land required for delivery of the project is on the ownership of Plymouth City Council.

ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION

Approximately 30 mature trees were removed along the southern side of Morlaix Drive in February 2020 in preparation for the start of works. The scheme includes on site planting / mitigation for the loss of these trees including:

- 21 large 'specimen' trees
- 36 smaller specimen trees
- 100 understorey whips and ornamental plantings
- bat and insect boxes
- bat sensitive-lighting
- 5 year establishment / maintenance of new plantings

PROCUREMENT APPROACH

The Council's Term Maintenance Contract (TMC) with South West Highways specifically provides for its use to deliver transport schemes and projects in addition to the core highway maintenance activities.

The scale and nature of the works required for the Morlaix Drive Access Improvement Scheme make it an ideal candidate scheme for delivery through the TMC.

The use of the TMC has a number of benefits that would support early delivery of the Morlaix Drive scheme works:

- Capitalise on the collaborative working arrangements that the contractor has established with the Council's Highways department and other key stakeholders and partners
- Access to the competitive price list that was secured through the vigorous and robust tendering assessment that the Council carried out to award the TMC
- Local knowledge
- Co-ordination with other planned works on the local and strategic road networks
- Early contractor involvement to progress the design and identify value savings and reduce risks in both the design and construction stages
- Supports continuity of working between the Council and the contractor to help deliver improvements in performance over the term of the TMC
- Gives confidence to and supports the local economy, helping to safeguard existing jobs and create new ones

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The alternative options to employing the TMC would be to either carry out a formal tendering exercise or use an appropriate framework. Both these options would add delay to any appointment, impacting on the delivery timescale of the works and do not have all of the benefits use of the TMC offers.