

COMMITTEE REPORT

Subject:	<i>Proposed development of A36 College roundabout by National Highways</i>
Committee:	<i>Full Council</i>
Item Number:	<i>16</i>
Date:	<i>14 September 2026</i>
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Report status:	<i>Decision</i>
Confidential / Exempt:	<i>No</i>

1. Report Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks Full Council's support in principle for the A36 Southampton Road Roundabout Improvement Scheme being developed by National Highways in partnership with WSP. The scheme has been identified by National Highways as a significant transport investment intended to address longstanding congestion issues on the Southampton Road corridor and improve journey time reliability for both local and strategic traffic.
- 1.2 The proposals include the signalisation and enlargement of College Roundabout, improvements to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, and potential improvements at Bourne Way Roundabout, subject to available funding. Traffic modelling undertaken by National Highways indicates that the scheme could substantially reduce delays and improve traffic flow on one of the main gateways into Salisbury. Members are asked to consider whether the Council supports the principle of the proposed improvements, recognising that the scheme remains subject to further design development, environmental assessment and statutory consultation.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Full Council:
 - 2.1.1. Supports, in principle, the A36 Southampton Road Roundabout Improvement Scheme promoted by National Highways.

- 2.1.2. Recognises the potential benefits of the scheme in reducing congestion, improving journey times and enhancing highway and active travel infrastructure within the city.
- 2.1.3. Notes that detailed design, environmental mitigation measures and statutory consultation are still being progressed and that the Council's support in principle does not prejudice future comments on specific aspects of the scheme.
- 2.1.4. Authorises officers to continue engaging with National Highways and other stakeholders throughout the development of the project.
- 2.1.5. Any final decision would be subject to further sign off from Full Council.

3. Background

- 3.1 The A36 forms part of the Strategic Road Network and provides an important connection between Salisbury, the Solent region, Bristol, South Wales and the Midlands. Southampton Road is a key gateway into the city and provides access to a number of commercial, educational and residential destinations. As traffic volumes have increased, the route has become subject to persistent congestion and delay, particularly around the College Roundabout and Bourne Way Roundabout junctions.
- 3.2 National Highways has undertaken a programme of traffic modelling and option appraisal work to determine how these issues might be addressed. Following assessment of a range of alternatives, a preferred option has been identified which focuses on increasing the operational capacity of the Southampton Road corridor whilst also improving facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 3.3 The scheme is currently progressing through the preliminary design stage and is intended to be delivered during National Highways' current Road Investment Strategy programme 2026-2031.

4. Proposal

- 4.1 The principal element of the scheme is the reconstruction of College Roundabout. The proposal would enlarge the existing roundabout and convert it into a fully signal-controlled junction with additional circulatory and approach lanes. These measures are intended to improve the movement of traffic through the junction, reduce queuing and improve journey time reliability along the Southampton Road corridor.
- 4.2 In conjunction with the highway improvements, National Highways proposes enhancements to active travel infrastructure and the path network within Churchill Gardens. These include widening sections of the existing shared-use path network, upgrading pedestrian crossing facilities, providing a new toucan crossing and creating improved links for cyclists and pedestrians travelling through the area, including those using National Cycle Network Route 24. The scheme also includes proposals for Bourne Way Roundabout comprising a

westbound jet lane, improved pedestrian crossings, additional footway connections and measures intended to improve traffic progression through the junction. National Highways has indicated that delivery of this part of the scheme will be dependent upon available funding, with College Roundabout remaining the primary focus of the project.

- 4.3 Traffic modelling undertaken by National Highways suggests that the preferred option could increase average vehicle speeds by approximately five miles per hour and reduce average delays by more than fifty per cent. If realised, these improvements would significantly enhance access to and from the city and improve the performance of an important section of the local and strategic highway network.

5. Additional Relevant Information

- 5.1 Land Requirements: The preferred option developed by National Highways requires approximately 2,514 square metres of land adjacent to College Roundabout in order to facilitate the proposed enlargement and signalisation of the junction. The land identified within the National Highways presentation is located within Churchill Gardens and forms part of the wider public realm surrounding the junction.

At the present time, National Highways is seeking stakeholder support for the scheme during the preliminary design phase. The Council is therefore being asked to consider whether it supports the principle of the proposed highway improvements and their anticipated benefits for Salisbury. Support in principle at this stage would provide National Highways with confidence to continue developing the scheme and progressing the detailed design, consultation and approval processes.

Members should note that support in principle for the scheme does not constitute approval for the disposal, transfer, lease or dedication of any Council-owned land.

No formal request has been received from National Highways in relation to land acquisition and the final extent of any land requirement remains subject to further design development and survey work. Should the scheme progress to the point where Council-owned land is required to facilitate the works, a separate report would be brought before Members seeking approval for any proposed land transaction.

That report would include details of the land required, valuation considerations, legal implications, compensation arrangements and the public benefits associated with the proposal. The recommendations contained within this report relate solely to support for the scheme in principle and do not commit the Council to any future land agreement.

- 5.2 Environmental Considerations: The current proposals identify that approximately 25 trees may be affected by the works required to deliver the preferred option.

National Highways has advised that this includes approximately 15 trees located on Salisbury City Council land and a further 10 trees located on Wiltshire Council land.

Officers recognise that the potential loss of mature trees and the use of land within Churchill Gardens are matters of significance and are likely to be of particular interest to Members and the wider community.

National Highways has advised that ecological and arboricultural surveys will be undertaken to assess the health, value and condition of affected trees and habitats. The findings of these surveys will inform the development of mitigation measures, replacement planting proposals and wider environmental enhancements associated with the scheme.

Whilst these environmental impacts must be carefully considered, Members are also asked to consider the wider public benefits identified through the scheme development process.

Traffic modelling undertaken by National Highways indicates that the proposed improvements could substantially reduce delays, improve journey time reliability and enhance facilities for pedestrians and cyclists using the Southampton Road corridor.

- 5.3 Supporting the scheme in principle at this stage will enable SCC to continue working with National Highways to influence the detailed design and seek the best possible outcome for Salisbury. It will also ensure that the Council remains fully engaged in discussions relating to environmental mitigation, active travel improvements and the protection of public open space as the project develops.

6. Financial Position

- 6.1 The scheme is being funded by National Highways. No direct financial contribution from Salisbury City Council is currently proposed. Whilst officer time will continue to be required to review proposals and participate in stakeholder discussions, these activities are expected to be accommodated within existing budgets and staffing resources.

7. Legal and Governance Considerations

- 7.1 The proposed works remain subject to the necessary statutory approvals, environmental assessments and consultation requirements. Support in principle from the Council does not constitute approval of any future planning, highway or legal processes that may be required for implementation of the scheme.

The proposals identify the need for approximately 2,514 square metres of land associated with the expansion of College Roundabout. Any land acquisition or property agreements required as part of the scheme would be subject to separate consideration and approval through the appropriate legal processes.

8. Consultation and Engagement

- 8.1 National Highways is currently undertaking preliminary design work and intends to undertake public consultation as the project progresses. Wiltshire Council, Salisbury City Council, local residents, businesses and other stakeholders will have opportunities to comment on the proposals as part of the formal consultation process. Officers have engaged with National Highways during the development of the scheme and will continue to represent the interests of the city throughout the design and consultation stages.

9. Strategic and Policy Alignment

- 9.1 Improving the operation of Southampton Road supports wider objectives relating to economic growth, network resilience and connectivity. As one of the principal gateways into Salisbury, congestion on this corridor can affect residents, visitors, businesses and freight movements. The proposed scheme therefore has the potential to deliver benefits that extend beyond the immediate area of the works.

The inclusion of new and improved active travel facilities also supports wider objectives to encourage walking and cycling and provide safer and more accessible routes for non-motorised users.

- 9.2 Whilst the scheme will inevitably have some environmental impacts, including tree loss and land take, National Highways has committed to undertaking ecological and arboricultural assessments and developing appropriate mitigation measures as the project progresses.

10. Next Steps

- 10.1 Subject to continued progression of the scheme by National Highways, preliminary design is expected to continue until March 2027, followed by consultation and planning activities. Detailed design is currently programmed through 2027 and 2028, with construction anticipated to commence during late 2028 and continue until approximately autumn 2030.
- 10.2 Should Full Council support the principle of the scheme, officers will continue to engage with National Highways and return to Members with further updates as more detailed information becomes available.

11. Implications

Implication Area	Impact	Comments / Mitigation
Financial	Low	Scheme funded by National Highways with no direct City Council contribution currently proposed.
Legal	Medium	Future statutory approvals, consultation and land agreements may be required.
Risk	Medium	Failure to improve the A36 corridor may result in continued and worsening congestion. Construction impacts will require careful management.

Personnel	Low	NH led. Officer involvement will be low and can be accommodated within existing resources.
Environmental Impact	High	Approximately 25 trees may be affected and land within Churchill Gardens may be required. Environmental surveys and mitigation measures will be proposed by NH.
Equalities Impact Statement	High	Enhanced crossing facilities and active travel infrastructure should improve accessibility for a wider range of users.
Community / Public Impact	High	Significant potential benefits through reduced congestion, improved journey times and enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure surrounding the A36 and in Churchill Gardens.
Procurement / Contractual	Low	Procurement responsibility rests with National Highways.
Property / Asset	Medium	Land acquisition requirements and impacts on public open space will require further consideration.
Data Protection	Low	No implications identified. Standard data handling arrangements apply.