



STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Riverside Park, Western Avenue, Andover

May 2025

Statement of Community Involvement

This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is submitted in support of the planning application for the creation of a new riverside park and associated changes to the highway network at Western Avenue and West Street, Andover. The Statement outlines how the Council has engaged with the community throughout the development of the proposals for the scheme in accordance with its [Statement of Community Involvement](#).

1. Scheme conception - Andover Town Centre Masterplan

The scheme was first conceptualised in the Andover Town Centre Masterplan, adopted in 2020. The Masterplan was informed by extensive community engagement and nearly 3,000 responses from the community were received. 987 of the responses received from the community wished for more green space and access to the River Anton which is hidden within the Western Avenue gyratory. Two of the key priorities within the Masterplan are to open up accessibility to the River Anton and bring more green space into the town centre. The riverside park scheme will achieve this, building on the success of the Town Mills Park and providing an extension of this space which is so valued by Andoverians and visitors to the town centre.

The Masterplan engagement also identified the perceived distance between the town centre and key facilities, such as the Leisure Centre, Andover College and Simplyhealth and that this is exacerbated by the quality of existing pedestrian and cycle routes. This reduces the likelihood of people walking into the town centre from these locations.

Comments from the community also highlighted the barrier of the ring road on accessing the town centre, creating poor arrival experiences for pedestrians and cyclists. The delivery of the riverside park scheme will improve these connections and the arrival experience into the town centre from the west.

Examples of the feedback from the Masterplan engagement:

“Improve the river to give the town centre a more natural feel, improved access and more places to sit and relax”

“Make the river the core of any redevelopment so that it informs subsequent town centre redevelopment”

“It would be amazing to introduce some more interesting green space to Andover. It would be nice to walk through the town and then into a green space for everyone to enjoy with a book or picnic”

“I believe the River Anton corridor is potentially the most important aspect of the redevelopment of the town”

“Access for all, safe play for children and disabled access, better cycling routes and wheelchair highways”

“Improving the experience of getting into town would help, there are large roads that surround the centre and making walking a less desirable choice”

A selection of images from the Andover Town Centre Masterplan engagement c. 2019 – 2020 has been provided (see Appendix C).

2. Design Development

The Masterplan scheme was a concept only and further design feasibility was required to develop a scheme which was deliverable.

This feasibility work identified and sought to address the following issues that were identified with the Masterplan concept scheme:

- The Masterplan concept scheme indicated a bus-only exit lane through the northern section of the park. The inclusion of this bus lane created a break in pedestrian and cycle connectivity and would create conflict between pedestrians, cyclists and buses.
- Currently, West Street accommodates one-way traffic. The Masterplan did not address how other traffic along West Street would exit onto Western Avenue, including Lidl, Andover Leisure Centre, Portland Grove, Chantry Lodge, deliveries to the Chantry Centre and traffic from the east of the town centre. This meant that the proposed bus-only exit lane would have to be used for all vehicular traffic unless changes were made to West Street to make it suitable for two-way vehicular traffic.
- The quality and amenity of the park to be created and access to the river would be compromised by the space required for the bus lane as well as noise and emissions from vehicles using the northern exit only route.

To address these issues, the Council has worked with Hampshire County Council’s Highways Engineering Services to design a road scheme where all vehicular traffic is re-directed through West Street by making changes to its road layout to accommodate two-way vehicular traffic. Doing so allows for the exit only route through the northern section of the park to be removed, thereby creating a larger and improved area of public realm and green space. This allows better pedestrian and cycling connectivity through the proposed park and removes any potential conflict between pedestrians and vehicular movements within the new park itself.

It is considered that this design approach aligns more closely with the aspirations of the Masterplan and results in a significantly improved scheme. The Council has worked

closely with the following stakeholders to inform the design of the road scheme, particularly in respect to the changes proposed along West Street.

2.1. Stagecoach

The Council has engaged with Stagecoach throughout the design process to ensure that the changes to West Street and the bus station forecourt meets their requirements. This has involved in person and online meetings to share the progression of the road design through the early stages of design development to respond to their needs and concerns raised.

A full vehicle tracking exercise of the proposed changes to the road network was organised by Hampshire County Council and Test Valley Borough Council 19th and 20th August at Thruxton Airfield. This involved highway surveyors accurately marking out the proposed West Street design and Stagecoach testing several of their buses within the new layout. Notes are included in the Transport Assessment providing the details of this exercise and how the design was been amended.

Throughout the engagement with Stagecoach, the proposed design for West Street has been amended in the following ways:

- Larger turning radii for buses to turn around and out of the bus station forecourt;
- Creation of replacement bus layover space in proximity to the bus station to replace that which would be lost along Western Avenue. Earlier designs identified layover space further away, which Stagecoach identified as problematic for their operations
- Additional road markings for bus drivers to assist with manoeuvres within the bus station forecourt and along West Street.
- Movement of the road markings on the West Street/Chantry Street bend further east to provide more clearance around the inside of the bend

During engagement with Stagecoach, it was also identified that they had no provision for refuse storage and collection. As such, new provision has been made within Service Yard E alongside the bin space that will service Unity and Costa.

2.2. Unity

The Unity community bus currently uses the bus stand on Western Avenue. As such, a new location for the community bus needed to be identified. Meetings took place with Unity to understand their requirements and during these discussions the importance of the community bus staying near the bus station and Shopmobility unit were understood. The Council worked with their highway and landscape consultants, Stagecoach and Unity to provide an additional bay within the bus station forecourt closest to the park.

2.3. Residents at Portland Grove and Chantry Lodge

As nearest residents to the scheme the Council began early engagement in September 2024, and three engagement sessions have taken place prior to submission of this application. Residents were informed of the events through engaging with the Chantry Lodge Residents Association and visiting residents at Portland Grove, posting information of the events through their letterbox if they were not available to speak with.

2.3.1. First engagement session

The first engagement event took place on 19 September 2024 between 1pm-7pm and involved a drop-in session for residents held in the residents' lounge at Chantry Lodge. The first event provided residents with information on the changes to the road network that would be required to deliver the new park and an opportunity for residents to ask questions of the project team. The engagement boards can be found in Appendix A.

Some residents raised concern with the scheme in respect of the increase in traffic, noise and air pollution past their properties. These concerns related to the proposed changes to West Street to accommodate two-way vehicular traffic and vehicles associated with Lidl accessing the store from West Street rather than Western Avenue. During the first event it was explained to residents that technical work was underway to further assess the traffic and amenity implications of the proposal and committed to sharing the outcomes of this at a subsequent information sharing event prior to the submission of a planning application.

At this first event residents raised asked whether the following improvements could be incorporated into the road scheme for West Street:

- A loading bay food and parcel deliveries for residents
- A reduction in speed limit along West Street from 30 mph to 20mph.
- Improvements to location and alignment of pedestrian crossings at the bend with West Street and Chantry Street to prevent people crossing on the bend.
- Improvements to the location for chemical deliveries lorries associated with the Leisure Centre.

2.3.2. Petition

A petition was received on 07 October 2024 and was signed by 69 residents from Chantry Lodge and 16 residents at Portland Grove. The reasons for the petition can be found in Appendix B (signatories have been removed for data protection). The concerns outlined in the petition related to an increase in noise and air pollution from increase traffic movements and increased difficulty of crossing West Street towards the leisure centre, college and theatre. The petition was

responded to in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme which forms part of its Constitution.

2.3.3. Second engagement session

A second engagement session took place on 06 December 2024 and was attended by Kit Malthouse MP. This was an opportunity for the MP to listen to the concerns of residents and also for the MP to explain the importance of the scheme to improving the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre. At this session an update was provided to residents on the timescales for the completion of the traffic, air and noise assessments. Residents were also informed that the design of the road scheme for West Street had been amended to incorporate the improvements they had asked for at the first session.

2.3.4. Third engagement session

A final engagement session took place with residents on 17 March 2025. The format was a drop-in session from 3pm – 7pm where a presentation was shown on the outcomes of the Noise Assessment, Air Quality Impact Assessment and Transport Assessment and the implications for residents. There was an opportunity after the presentation for residents to ask questions of the project team and discuss any points of concern. The timescales for the submission of the planning application were also discussed.

2.4. Places Leisure and Brenntag

Engagement has taken place with Places Leisure who operate Andover Leisure Centre in respect of the implications of the proposed scheme and associated changes to the highway network on their operations. During these discussions it was raised that the changes to West Street would impact upon the space available for chemical deliveries for the swimming pool. The Council has worked with Places Leisure and their chemical delivery company, Brenntag, to identify an alternative arrangement for chemical deliveries. The solution proposed within this application identifies a betterment to the existing arrangement. The new chemical delivery location will ensure that the proposed shared footway/cycle way is not partially blocked when deliveries are taking place. This location is also proposed for refuse collection.

2.5. Andover Vision Stakeholders Meeting

On 10 March 2025, members of the TVBC project team, including representatives from LUC, the landscape architects for the Western Avenue Riverside Park project, attended an Andover Vision Stakeholders meeting to undertake targeted

engagement with this forum surrounding several core tenets of the project and its emerging designs. The two-hour session was held in the evening and began with a short presentation from the project manager, outlining the updated Masterplan, delivery partners, funding, and the timeline for road layout changes due to commence in August 2026. Stakeholders were then split into small groups and rotated between three themed discussion tables, each focusing on a key aspect of the scheme. These included changes to the road layout, the emerging park design, and the interface between the park and the theatre. Each table was led by a relevant team member and used visual aids such as technical drawings and illustrative masterplans to facilitate discussion. Targeted questions were used to prompt feedback from stakeholders on the proposals and how they saw themselves using and benefiting from the space. This interactive format enabled stakeholders to engage in meaningful dialogue with project leads and share their perspectives on both practical and experiential aspects of the scheme. Feedback gathered during this session has informed the ongoing development of the designs.

2.6. Public Engagement Events

On 27 and 29 March 2025, public engagement sessions took place in Unit 53 of the Chantry Centre to provide members of the public the opportunity to review the design progress of the Western Avenue Riverside Park project in a drop-in format and provide feedback, both written and verbal, to the project team so that further design development as part of RIBA Stage 4 for the park design, and Detailed Design for the Highways works, would be informed by the feedback from members of the public. Residents engaged with detailed display boards showcasing the scheme's proposals, particularly appreciating visuals on the park's history and accessibility. These boards served as a focal point for discussions with the full project team, enabling direct feedback that informed both immediate design refinements and future project stages. Throughout the sessions, it was ensured that resources representing key technical disciplines were present to respond to queries from members of the public. The engagement sessions were productive and well-attended, with over 400 members of the public taking part in the two drop-in events.

The majority of comments were positive. Examples of the feedback from the public engagement:

Overall, I think the plans offer an opportunity to really enhance Andover and create a very useable and community orientated space.

I think that the scheme is excellent and opens up the river to the public. It has been hidden away between the roads for far too long.

I love, love, love the plans and also the future plans. Like it or not, town centres have changed as we all use shops a lot less, so they need to become places of service and leisure. We are very lucky to have a rare and beautiful river running right through - so making it a focus makes absolute sense. The new theatre coming right into the town centre too will be amazing. Our town is on the up!

Looks amazing - please hurry up! Love the river Anton and the links to history with the watercress beds etc. Less tarmac, more nature - yay!

Love the history that's been looked into. Hoping for lots of signage explaining it all along the river with pictures!

Excellent scheme which will make a massive difference to the town along with the new theatre. Well done.

The outcomes of these engagement sessions are detailed within Appendix D. The display boards utilised at the 29 and 29 March 2025 public engagement sessions have been provided within Appendix E.

2.7. Think Andover Website

As part of the consultation process, the thinkandovertowncentre.co.uk website was utilised to provide the public with the latest news and developments related to the Western Avenue Riverside Park development. These updates ensured that residents remained informed about the progress of the project and any key milestones.

To facilitate public engagement and gather valuable community feedback, residents were also given the opportunity to submit their thoughts, questions, and concerns via email to thinkandovertowncentre@testvalley.gov.uk. All feedback received was collated by Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) and subsequently passed on to the project team for consideration. This input played an important role by ensuring that residents' views were acknowledged and integrated into the consultation process.

3. Future engagement sessions

A programme of targeted engagement will be undertaken to inform the detailed design of the Western Avenue Riverside Park, with a focus on accessibility, inclusivity, and community ownership of the space. Engagement will continue through to delivery, with key touch points planned to gather input at critical design stages.

3.1. Engagement with Community Groups

Engagement will target a range of local organisations representing different community needs and perspectives, with an initial focus on accessibility and inclusive design. Key themes for discussion will include the accessibility of footways and river platforms, choice of materials, design and location of seating and lighting, planting schemes (including sensory gardens), play provision, and opportunities for hosting community events.

Sessions will include a meeting with Purple Oak, an independent charity supporting adults and children with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, and mental health needs, and with Koala, an autistic-led organisation based in Andover providing support for autistic, neurodiverse, and learning-disabled individuals of all ages. Further engagement is planned with groups such as Enham Trust, St James' Place, the Young Mums group, the Future Leaders and Decision Makers Project, and the Cultural Exchange Group.

This will be an iterative process, with regular touchpoints throughout the design and delivery stages to ensure groups have ongoing opportunities to influence key elements of the scheme.

3.2. Engagement with Taxi Operators

As part of the proposed changes to the road layout associated with the Western Avenue Riverside Park project, engagement with local taxi operators is required considering the proposed removal of an existing taxi bay on West Street. Although discussions with TVBC Licensing have confirmed in-principal support for the relocation of one bay to Waterloo Court and the removal of the remaining bays, a formal process under taxi-related legislation is necessary to de-designate the existing rank. This engagement will include seeking further advice from TVBC's Licensing team on the statutory process, likely timescales, and the scope of consultation required. Where possible, this consultation should be coordinated with the wider public consultation on associated Traffic Regulation Orders, with details shared with the local taxi trade to ensure transparency and compliance. A meeting with taxi operators is being arranged to take place in May 2025.

Appendix A – engagement boards from residents meeting, 19th September 2024

1

WESTERN AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT

THE PROJECT

We're planning to create a new picturesque park alongside the River Anton to provide an attractive route for pedestrians and cyclists, whilst improving the ecological habitat.

The new park would open up the river to showcase the crystal-clear chalk stream and offer more green spaces in the town centre. These were two of the key priorities highlighted during the public consultations used to shape the Andover Masterplan.

DELIVERY PARTNERS

Test Valley Borough Council

Hampshire County Council

Southern Water

SUPPORTED BY

WSP LUC

Funded by UK Government

ANDOVER MASTERPLAN

Park scheme as shown in Andover Masterplan

2

EMERGING SCHEME

We would put a two-way traffic system in place on the west side of the river, so that vehicles would still be able to move through the town in both directions

A new cycle path would run along the western side of the park, connecting to National Route 246

A new signalised junction would be created to allow traffic from West Street to turn north and south back onto Western Avenue

The Leisure Centre, Lidl, Portland Grove and Chantry Lodge would remain fully accessible from West Street

Private vehicle access to Chantry Lodge and Portland Grove would be provided both ways via West Street

The existing gyratory would be removed and replaced with a leafy green park featuring pedestrian walkways and cycle routes

Changes to the bus station forecourt would enable buses to turn around and exit back along West Street

Appendix B – extract from petition

We, the undersigned, wish to register our strong objections to the change from single traffic to two-way traffic in West Street, as proposed by the above redevelopment. We object for the following reasons:

- the four-fold increase in traffic along West Street;
- the added pollution in a residential area;
- the increased difficulty of crossing the road from the town centre side to the leisure centre, college and theatre;
- the added noise level, particularly during the early hours, of delivery lorries travelling in both directions.

We would like to propose the following:

- keeping the dual carriage way in Western Avenue as proposed;
- widening of the exit from West Street to allow emerging traffic from the Bus station, Lidl and West Street on to the lane which is currently used as a lay-bye. The vehicles would then join the through traffic at the southern end of the 'park', the two lanes allowing for easier merging of the traffic.

The conversion of West Street into a two-way system would not then be necessary, saving not only the considerable amount of money required to widen the whole road, signage etc., but would also ensure that the residents of the area, and those wishing to walk from the town centre towards the leisure centre, theatre and college are not seriously affected.

We would also like to point out the importance of re-instating the loading bay, for the many delivery vehicles and ambulances, to Chantry Lodge, that are currently having to park on double yellow lines, or the pavement.

Appendix C – Andover Town Centre Masterplan Engagement c. 2019 - 2020

Desire for change



Fun Friday Event: The on-line survey received nearly 3,000 responses



Visioning event with stakeholder groups

Do you think Andover Town Centre could be better?



Stakeholder event at St Mary's Church



Pop-up shop received over 600 visitors

Appendix D – Western Avenue Riverside Park - Public Engagement Summary

This report summarises the feedback from:

- 10 March 2025: Andover Vision Stakeholder Engagement
- 27 & 30 March 2025: Public Engagement Event in the Chantry Centre (Unit 53)
- via Think Andover Town Centre website

In total, 45 responses were received:

Andover Vision Stakeholder Engagement	36
Public Engagement Events in the Chantry Centre (Unit 53)	8
Via Think Andover Website	1

Andover Vision Stakeholder Engagement - Summary from the Landscape Architect:

A few main points were raised during discussions:

- **Sustainability & Infrastructure:** Several people suggested solar panels and batteries on the bunching sheds to power streetlights. Electricity supply was mentioned a couple of times, especially for the sheds
 - **Connection with Public Engagement Sessions on 27 & 29 March 2025:**
Providing an adequate electricity supply was also mentioned by a visitor (see below).
- **Seating & Amenities:** There was a strong interest in having enough seating, especially near play areas, but also some concerns about maintenance (bird droppings under trees, for example). Some people would welcome a coffee truck or the possibility of refreshments being available within the park. Flexible vendor spaces were also discussed.
 - **Connection with Public Engagement Sessions on 27 & 29 March 2025:**
Providing seating and ensuring vendors were encouraged to the new park was also noted by visitors to the public engagement event (see below).
- **Lighting & Safety:** People asked about lighting, particularly near the New Theatre and along the riverside park, to protect the route and prevent any dangerous situations or anti-social behaviour. There were also concerns about seating being used by homeless people and how to design in a way that discourages this.
 - **Connection with Public Engagement Sessions on 27 & 29 March 2025:**
Improving the feeling of safety of the walk from the theatre to the multi-story car park, especially walking through the ‘tunnel’, was noted by a visitor to the public engagement event (see below).

- Heritage & Identity: The design already integrates the site's watercress and boathouse heritage, which was well appreciated. There was also enthusiasm for bringing in more references to Andover's wool industry and the meaning behind the town's name if possible. The Twinning Statue was mentioned as something to protect although it is outside of the Planning application.
 - **Connection with Public Engagement Sessions on 27 & 29 March 2025:**
Visitors to the public engagement event were interested by the historical inspired design (see below).
- Use of the Space: The central square and bunching sheds were seen as the heart of the project, with potential for concerts, markets, and events. People were happy to see more greenery and access to nature. Some had hoped for more direct access to the River Anton, as shown in the Andover Vision, but after discussions, they understood the constraints due to level changes and tree preservation.
 - **Connection with Public Engagement Sessions on 27 & 29 March 2025:**
The opportunities for community events, performances and markets were evident from the feedback provided at the public engagement events. There were several comments about valuing greenery over tarmac and the desire to enjoy the river (see below).
- Boundaries & Connections: Some asked for a fence between Lidl and the vegetation. There were also comments about the underpass and its mural, as well as how much sunlight the pavilion and bunching sheds will get.
- Community Engagement & Education: A children's group that works on planting meadows was mentioned, highlighting interest in involving the community in the park's development. There could be opportunities to integrate interactive or educational elements, such as workshops, seasonal planting events, or nature-focused activities. This could help strengthen local involvement and make the park a more dynamic and engaging space for all ages.

Public Engagement Events: 27 & 29 March 2025

Unit 63 was chosen for its location and accessibility, being situated opposite the site for the new theatre and close to the main access routes from town to Western Avenue Riverside Park (via Waterloo Court and Bus Station). The venue would also attract visitors walking through, and past the Chantry Centre.

The exhibitions were advertised on Test Valley Borough Council’s Facebook page and on posters in the window of Unit 63.



In total, 412 visited the exhibitions and 36 provided written feedback:

Event date	Number of visitors
Thursday 27 March 2pm-7pm	140
Saturday 29 March 10am-1pm	272
TOTAL	412
Number of feedback forms completed	36 (8%)

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Photos from the exhibition:



Reasons for not providing written feedback (provided verbally on way out of event):

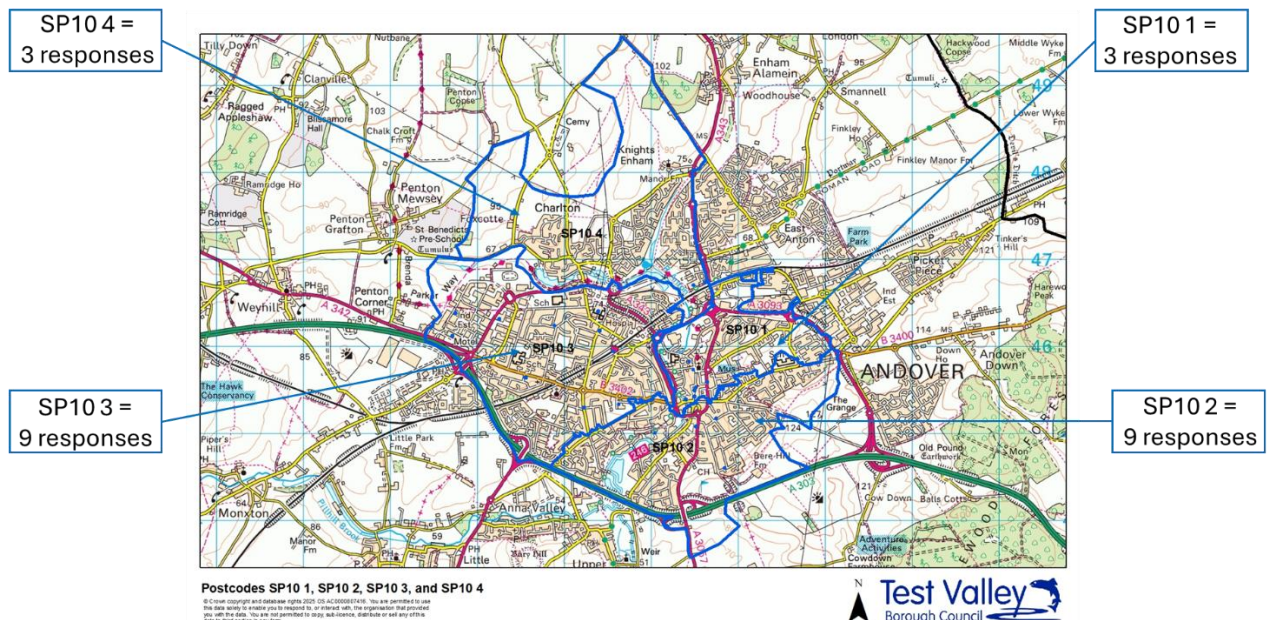
- **Majority response:** “There’s no need, I like it”
- “I only popped in; I don’t have the time”
- “Can I leave a comment online later?”

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Feedback forms contained a postal address and the link to the Think Andover Town Centre website where comments can be sent via email. Therefore, they were provided to visitors who were rushed or who preferred to email to complete at their convenience. One respondent posted a completed feedback form to the council offices after the event.

The feedback forms also requested a postcode, which demonstrated that those who provided feedback live close to the site for Wester Avenue Riverside Park:

- Two-thirds of responses (24 out of 36) were from those who live in the SP10 area
- 5 responses were from those who live in the in SP11 area
- 6 responses remained anonymous
- 1 response was from a visitor from SP9



Overview of all responses:

The feedback provided by 45 respondents (who attended the Andover vision stakeholder event, the public engagement events or provided feedback via the website), has been broken down into 86 individual comments.

Those comments stated by more than one respondent are listed in the table below, and demonstrates that most respondents were positive about the scheme:

Positive Opinion - like the concept/design	25 (69%)
Looking forward to it/excited/hope it is completed soon	10 (28%)
Positive for the town/stop the decline	9 (25%)
Positive Opinion - of the engagement event	5
Like the river being a feature – beautiful feature/want to enjoy it	4
Ensure pop-up cafes/vendors are permitted on site regularly	3
Love the links to the history of the site	2
Provision of public toilets	2
Increase size of main square/undercover area and park (run to the College) for larger events and more vendors	2

In order to comprehensively capture each comment raised, the following responses have been noted below and broken down into 4 topic areas:

1. Individual responses regarding the park:

- Include an outdoor gym
- Include outdoor chess tables
- Include seating to encourage dwell time
- Provide a water/messy play area for children
- Less focus on a play area at this park – Vigo park for fixed playground equipment
- Open & free space is needed
- Prioritise local ecology
- It will be a useable, community space
- Include a bridge over the river
- Ensure a mix of wide accessible paths and side meandering paths
- Consider a policy on e-scooters
- Relocate statue of Chief Cutamatche to the new park
- Interested in a pitch (mobile catering business)
- Ensure adequate electric supply for Christmas lights, Christmas trees, Christmas markets, vendors & events
- Queried location for those who can't walk far (not in wheelchairs)
- Join with Rooksbury; improve accessibility and areas to rest to encourage walking the entire river path
- Consider a more sustainable alternative for York Stone

2. Individual responses regarding Traffic/Highway/Cycle route:

- Concerns regarding Waterloo Court junction – congestion leaving new theatre
- Concerned that traffic will build from West Street junction to roundabout
- Take the cycle lanes under roads at junctions to avoid crossing traffic
- Widen cycle lane to encourage runners - future racing events
- Include a drop off/collection area for Unity
- Include waiting area for collection from bus station
- Ensure pedestrian safety between bus station and Lidl

3. Individual responses regarding other areas of Andover:

- Include improvements to multi-story – to feel safer at night returning to car
- Keep roof on the Chantry Centre
- Invest in night life and activities for young adults

4. Responses regarding the new theatre:

- 7 responses were positive
- 1 thought the theatre was a waste of money
- 1 did not like the arches in the design of the theatre façade

Appendix E – Western Avenue Riverside Park - Public Engagement Display Boards

Proposals for a new riverside park for Andover town centre

1
Welcome

Since adopting the Andover town centre masterplan, Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) has been progressing plans to deliver the aspirations of the community to provide more green space in the town centre and open up views to the River Anton.

We have been working with a team of landscape, highway and ecological specialists, alongside a broad range of other technical consultants, to develop the plans for a new park adjacent to the river which will be created through the removal of the gyratory at Western Avenue.

By replacing the noise and congestion of the road with inviting landscapes and accessible pathways, this initiative will foster a seamless connection between the western side of the town, the river, Town Mills park and the new theatre. The riverside park will bring health benefits, ecological benefits and encourage active travel through the provision of new pedestrian and cycle connections.

Please keep up to date with our plans as they progress:

www.thinkandovertowncentre.co.uk



View looking north of the new central square and river viewing platform within the park



Andover Town Centre Masterplan

2
Andover Vision

- 1 New pedestrian cycle routes as part of the Western Avenue Scheme
- 2 Andover College
- 3 Leisure Centre
- 4 St Mary's Church
- 5 Service Yard
- 6 New river walk along River Anton
- 7 Removal of the Western Avenue gyratory to create the space for the new riverside park
- 8 Chantry Centre
- 9 Waitrose
- 10 New Theatre
- 11 Chantry Centre
- 12 Eastern Avenue
- 13 Guildhall
- 14 Town Mills
- 15 George Yard Car Park



The creation of the park will:

- Bring more green space into the heart of the town centre for people to enjoy. Access to outside space is known to provide physical and mental health benefits.
- Foster a sense of connection between the community and the river
- Provide outside, accessible spaces for all to enjoy
- Create new spaces for events, food and coffee stalls
- Provide ecological enhancements within and along the banks of the river
- Creation of improved pedestrian and cycle links
- Encourage people to visit and spend time in the town.

The Andover masterplan was produced by Hemingway Design following extensive engagement with the community and was adopted by Test Valley Borough Council. The masterplan delivers a strong vision for Andover town centre and envisaged the creation of new green spaces for the community to enjoy and a feeling of connection to the river Anton.

The new park is being funded partly from a government Levelling Up Fund grant of £18.3m. The remainder is being funded by TVBC from the New Homes Bonus, Community Infrastructure Levy and section 106 contributions. Additional funds have been allocated to the scheme by Hampshire County Council from section 106 highway contributions and Southern Water as part of its Chalk Stream Resilience Fund

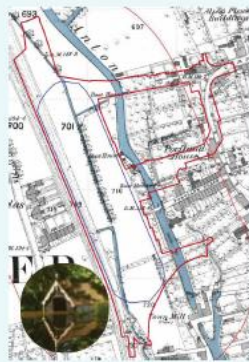


3
Site
History

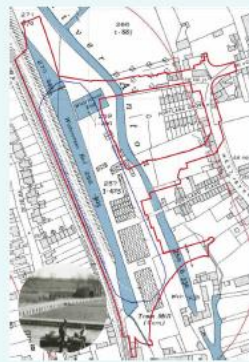
The River Anton has always been part of Andover's identity, and the park's design reflects that. The layout is inspired by the site's past. A series of spaces have been incorporated into the design of the park to echo the former watercress cultivation which once took place here. The railway lines that once carried goods through the town have influenced the paths and movement through the space, while the old boathouse has inspired the elevated promenade, which will give people a great view over the river.

The main components of the design that would be referenced into the landscape layout are:

- Boathouses
- Watercress beds
- Agriculture sheds
- Railway and its embankment



1873
Boathouses are found directly sitting above the former River Anton. The Town Mill was already built on site. The River was running to the East and a channel ran in the middle of the gyratory. The railway was located on the western edge of the site.



1938
Watercress cultivation was introduced to this area. Using the former canal, and creating large beds for the growth of watercress. It seems that the former boathouses were still present on site and potentially used to transport the goods along the River Anton. Agricultural watercress bunching sheds can be seen in the central part of the site.



1969
The River Anton was redirected, the channel was removed, and both were combined into one stream. This would have also removed most of the watercress beds. The railway was also removed and replaced by a road that bridges the river in the South, giving access to the town centre.



4
Design
Concept

A park for the community

The park is designed to feature a central space that serves as a vibrant hub for events and gatherings, fostering community interaction and celebration.

It offers a variety of uses to cater to visitors of all ages, ensuring that every corner of the park provides opportunities for recreation and enjoyment. Accessible routes connect all areas, making the park navigable and inclusive for everyone.

Seating is thoughtfully placed along these pathways, encouraging relaxation and rest throughout the journey. Additionally, a covered space has been incorporated to provide shelter, ensuring that the park remains functional and welcoming in various weather conditions.



5
Design Concept

A space for people to come together supporting the day and evening economy

The park is organised around three main areas: two welcoming entrances and a vibrant central square. Open views towards the river and the town enhance the sense of connection to Andover's natural and urban surroundings. The entrance square serves as a visual focal point, drawing visitors into the park and setting the tone for their experience. At the heart of the design, the central square plays a vital role as a gathering space, hosting events and annual activities that bring the Andover community together. Additionally, innovative play elements are seamlessly integrated throughout the park, providing engaging opportunities for recreation and discovery.

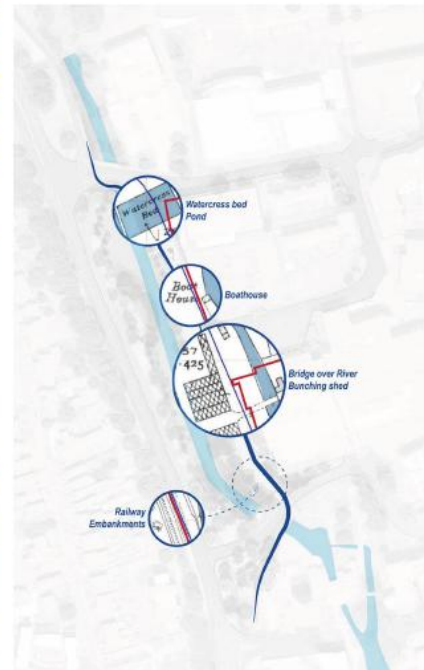


6
Design Concept

A place that values its heritage assets

The park's design draws inspiration from the past, creating unique and engaging spaces that honour Andover's history. It is divided into four distinct areas: the Watercress Beds and Pond, the Boathouse, the Bridge and Bunching Sheds, and the Railway Embankment.

Each space reflects its historical theme through carefully selected materials and a cohesive design language, creating a meaningful connection to the town's heritage. These spaces are organised to follow the sequence of watercress cultivation, from production to hydro-cooling, bunching, and transport, ensuring that the park tells a story while offering a variety of experiences for visitors.



7
Design
Concept

A beautiful new park for the town centre that provides visual connections to the unique and enhanced chalk stream habitat of the River Anton

The River Anton will be enhanced to become a more prominent and vibrant feature of the park. Southern Water, as part of their Chalk Stream Resilience Fund, are undertaking significant improvements to the river Anton that will enhance the chalk stream habitat of the river. The River works will modify the channel bed to create more variation in light and shade, water depth and velocity, helping support new marginal planting and enhance its habitat. While preserving as much of the existing planting as possible, the design introduces vibrant new vegetation to enhance the park's natural beauty.

Images courtesy of Cain Bio Engineering, Southern Water's contractor



Landscape design

8
The new
park

The removal of the existing gyratory road was a transformative decision that paved the way for the creation of a new riverside park for the town.

The park features a series of interconnected spaces, each offering unique experiences that cater to a diverse range of activities. Significant improvements to the River Anton will also enhance its chalk stream habitat.

At the heart of the park lies the central square, a dynamic hub that connects the bus station to the river and the town centre, serving as a focal point for community gatherings and events. Surrounding this square, generous seating and the 'bunching shed' pavilion foster a welcoming atmosphere, while the nearby playground and elevated promenade, inspired from the 'boathouse', offer spaces for both energetic play and tranquil reflection.

At either end of the park, the entrance squares provide welcoming gateways that transition visitors from the urban landscape into the park's beautiful environment. These squares seamlessly connect to vibrant meadow areas on the riverside, designed for active, impromptu play and community picnics.

A dedicated cycle lane runs along the western side of the park, facilitating safe north-south movement for cyclists while preserving the natural tranquillity of the riverbank.

By thoughtfully integrating these varied spaces, the riverside park not only enhances the ecological and recreational value of the area but also serves as a catalyst for community interaction, making it a cherished destination for all.

- 1 Central square
- 2 Pavilion
- 3 River viewing platform
- 4 Play area
- 5 Grass area
- 6 Entrance square
- 7 River enhancement
- 8 Cycle lane
- 9 New Theatre



9 New road layout

- 1 New signalised junction
- 2 Shared foot/cyclepath through new park space
- 3 West Street to be changed to allow for two-way vehicle movements
- 4 New loading bay on Chantry Street
- 5 Reconfigured Bus Station to allow for turning buses
- 6 Segregated cycleway
- 7 New giveway T-junction into/out of Waterloo Court
- 8 Western Avenue layout changed from three lanes heading north to allow vehicles to travel north and south
- 9 Removal of taxi rank and limited wait bay to accommodate bus layover space
- 10 New Unity bus bay
- 11 Re-provision of taxi space outside the new theatre

The Central Square

10 The new park

Orientation

The square has been orientated to look at St Mary's Church. People will have a clear view towards St Mary's church, that has been emphasised in the design. On the other side, the square steps down to get closer to the river, and offers new views to the banks' enhancement.

Flexible space

Multi-purpose central square for community events, gathering space and also a resting spot with views across the river.

The new central square will be comparable in size to the footprint of the Guildhall

River Viewing Platform and Pavilion

The central square stands as the heart of the park. Stretching east to west, it links the bus station to the river, while its north-south pathway improves connectivity between the station and the town centre, making it a crucial crossroads for both pedestrians and community life.

A pavilion and river viewing platform, inspired by the form of the agricultural sheds, serves as a symbolic anchor, paying homage to the area's riverside heritage.

Surrounding the square is generous seating, offering ample opportunities for rest, socialising, or simply taking in the surroundings. The open design of the square provides flexibility, creating the perfect setting for markets, festivals, and various community events, allowing it to transform throughout the seasons.



Northern Entrance Square - 'The Watercress Beds'

The entrance square, positioned at the northern end of the park just beyond the pedestrian crossing, serves as a welcoming gateway that transitions visitors from the bustling streets into the calm of the park. This square is designed as an open, inviting space with ample seating and clear sightlines, encouraging people to gather, pause, and orient themselves before entering the main park area.

12
The new
Park



To emphasise the entrance, varied topography will be crafted, complemented by colourful perennial planting for a lively and welcoming atmosphere. Additionally, the riparian planting will be carefully pruned to open up views toward the River Anton and the western bank, enhancing the visual connection to the surrounding landscape. A water feature will be incorporated into this part of the park to reflect its watercress cultivation history.



Southern Entrance Square - 'The Embankment'

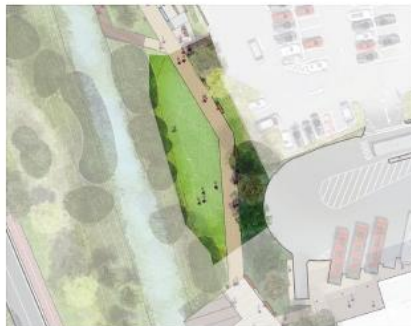
At the opposite end of the park, another entrance space provides a complementary gateway. While using similar materials to the rest of the park for cohesion, this entrance incorporates specific references to the site's past.



13
The new park

The rail transportation that played a key role in watercress movement is honoured through the introduction of metal edges and walls, which double as seating supports. These elements, along with paving lines that echo the historic railways once located next to the site and elevated by banks, create a physical link between the town's history and the park's future development.

This entrance also highlights the drainage line, symbolically connecting it to the water feature in the northern part of the park and reinforcing the park's relationship with the river.



Active Area - 'The Meadow'

On the park side of the river, an expansive meadow area provides an open space that invites active, impromptu play and gatherings. Surrounded by clusters of trees and mid-level planting, this meadow offers a natural setting that fosters a sense of freedom and exploration. Naturalistic planting styles and locally distinctive plant species provide a link to the surrounding countryside.

14
The new park



The generous grassy area is perfect for casual sports, games, and family outings, while the strategic placement of seating and picnic areas encourages visitors to relax and enjoy leisurely meals in a picturesque environment.

This integration of lush greenery and open space not only enhances the park's ecological diversity but also creates inviting spots for community events, such as outdoor concerts or seasonal festivals.

The combination of dynamic play areas and tranquil resting spots ensures that these meadows serve as vital spaces for recreation and relaxation, enhancing the park's overall appeal.

