

HILLS ROAD TRAFFIC AND SAFETY SCHEME

Note to Members of Cambridge City – South Area Committee

From: Mike Davies, Team Leader - Cycling Projects, Cambridgeshire County Council

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to inform Members about the proposal for traffic and road safety improvements on Hills Road, between Cherry Hinton Road and Long Road. The proposals aim to improve conditions for pedestrians, bus users and cyclists. Public consultation for the scheme runs from 4 March to 7 April 2014. The views of the Committee are welcomed.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The proposed scheme is funded by the Department for Transport (Dft) Cycle City Ambition Grant which Cambridgeshire County Council and 7 other local authorities were successful in bidding for last year. In the original bid, the County Council proposed to deliver a safe, direct, comprehensive network for cycling and walking between key destinations in Cambridge and in South Cambridgeshire. Over a ten year period, the aim is for cycling to have 40% of modal share in Cambridge, and 20% in South Cambs. The growth of housing and businesses in the Greater Cambridge area will put increasing pressure on the transport network. To mitigate the impacts of growth, modal shift must be achieved and the new segregated schemes included in the bid will provide much improved, high capacity cycling facilities which it is hoped will encourage new cyclists amongst existing residents and commuters, and future cycling by residents of the new developments when they are occupied. It is important that residents, who move to the city see cycling as a safe, attractive and convenient form of transport.

- 2.2 In Cambridge, it is proposed to build segregated cycle lanes along sections of three main arterial routes: Hills Road, Huntingdon Road and Trumpington Road. The new cycle lanes will upgrade existing cycle routes and link economic clusters such as Addenbrookes with businesses in the city. In South Cambridgeshire, the provision of new and improved cycle routes is well progressed: the A10 links to Foxton are almost completed, construction on the Wandlebury to Babraham Research Campus cycleway is under way, as is the Whittlesford to Granta Park cycleway; the Swavesey to Buckingway Business Park cycleway will begin this April. All the Cycle City Ambition schemes must be built by May 2015.
- 2.3 The new segregated cycle routes will compliment the City Council's extensive rollout of 20mph zones and cycle parking, as well as other ambitious cycling projects in the city including The Chisholm Trail and the new station multi storey cycle park.
- 2.4 The County traffic counts and accident data will be used for monitoring, and all the schemes will be included in the annual monitoring.
- 2.5 A Stakeholder group has been formed, to discuss and debate the details of each Cycle City Ambition scheme, with the aim of achieving very high quality schemes. Bodies represented include Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, Sustrans, CTC (the Cyclists Touring Club), Cambridge Cycling Campaign, Girton Parish Council and Babraham Research Campus.

3.0 PRE-CONSULTATION FOR THE PROPOSED SCHEME

- 3.1 In Sept/Oct 2013, local Members from Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council were invited to discuss issues for road users on Hills Road, and possible design options for the proposed cycle lanes.
- 3.2 Local businesses, schools, colleges and departments, on or near Hills Road, were also invited to give feedback on their concerns and issues as road users, including CUP, Mills & Reeve, KPMG, Savills, Eversheds, Deloitte, Homerton Business Centre, Hills Road 6th Form, Long Road 6th Form, Homerton College, EF International School of English, and the Perse Upper School. Addenbrookes was also contacted.

- 3.3 On 14 Jan 2014, a meeting was held at Hills Road 6th Form, with the Cambridge Cycling Campaign and Noel Kavanagh (County Cycling Champion) in attendance, to discuss staff and students' concerns as cyclists. A student rep provided a list of improvements in the local area that the student Cycle Campaign would like to see. The conflict between cyclists and buses at bus stops near the college during peak times was highlighted. This issue is currently being looked into by officers.
- 3.4 The views of Members, businesses and colleges were discussed at length with the scheme's design team and the designs were adapted to reflect those views.

4.0 DETAILS OF PROPOSED SCHEME

- 4.1 The budget for the Hills Road segregated cycleway improvements is £1,200,000.
- 4.2 Three separate design options have been developed for the public consultation showing:
1. fully segregated cycleway
 2. raised kerb (hybrid) segregated cycleway
 3. combination of hard kerb (west side) and raised kerb (east side) segregated cycleway

In Options 1 and 3, the hard kerb segregated cycleway will be 2.1m wide; in Options 2 and 3, the raised kerb segregated cycleway will be 2.7m wide. In all three Options, the cycleway will have priority over side roads. Cyclists will travel on a quick, direct, continuous route, without the need to negotiate obstacles or parked vehicles. Cyclists will not pull out so often in front of drivers. Cyclists who currently cycle on the pavement should feel safer on the new cycle lanes. Pedestrians should benefit from reduced cycling on the footway and from the buffer that the new cycleway offers from the main traffic lane.

- 4.3 The extra width required by the new cycleway will be achieved by reducing the central hatching on the road and some of verge and footway, and by maintaining a consistent 3.2m motor traffic lane. However, many sections of the existing footway will be converted to new grass verge.
- 4.4 New 'floating bus stops' will be introduced with the cycle lane going behind the bus stop as has successfully been introduced in Brighton and in parts of London. Bus passengers will wait on the footway and

cross the cycle lane to the 'bus boarder' to get on buses. Cyclists will no longer have to go round stationary buses at stops or negotiate buses pulling in and out of stops. The cycle lane will narrow to 1.5m through the bus stop area to slow cyclists down.

- 4.5 The redevelopment of Homerton Business Centre will see increased cyclist movements to and from Harrison Drive, and especially Purbeck Road, into Hills Road. A new right filter lane from Hills Road into Purbeck Road is proposed as part of the Homerton planning application – it will be paid for by the developers but be built as part of our scheme's works.
- 4.6 At the Long Road junction, the narrowness of the verge and carriageway prevents the southbound, segregated cycle lane from continuing to the stop line at present. However, a new 1.5m cycle lane will extend from the end of the segregated cycle lane for approximately 40m up to the advanced stop box. The latter will be increased to accommodate the high numbers of cyclists heading to the Addenbrookes site who wish to cross diagonally to the shared-use pavement on the south-west corner of the junction. The island between the north and south bound lanes on the north side will be moved slightly to the east. Allowing for the movement of large vehicles turning left into Hills Road means the segregated section of the northbound cycle lane only starts roughly 10m after the junction.
- 4.7 **Option 1** - The fully segregated cycle lanes would provide the greatest level of safety and perceived safety. Cyclists would be physically separated from motor vehicles by a 0.6m wide kerb for much of the proposed route. There would be breaks in the kerb at accesses and side roads. The fully segregated cycle lane would make the motor vehicle lane seem narrower and so encourage drivers to adhere to the 30mph speed limit. With fully segregated cycle lanes on both sides of Hills Road there are concerns that emergency vehicles might be held up as vehicles would only have limited opportunities to move aside for them to pass. Fully segregated lanes might hold leaves and other debris, and would require more maintenance than a standard on road lane.
- 4.8 **Option 2** - The raised kerb (hybrid) segregated cycle lanes would be below the level of the footway but above the level of the motor traffic lane. Cyclists would have a greater level of safety than with the current on-road lanes. The 2.7m width would allow 3 cyclists to cycle side by side and accommodate the high numbers of cyclists at peak times. The raised kerb option would allow emergency vehicles to pass more easily than with the fully segregated option. The height of the

raised kerb cycle lane would be reduced to that of the motor traffic lane at side roads. The visual impact of the raised kerb cycle lane, Option 2, would be less severe than Option 1.

- 4.9 **Option 3** – This is a combination of the fully segregated and raised kerb cycle lanes. There would be a fully segregated cycle lane with a kerb on the west (city-bound) side and a raised cycle lane on the east (Addenbrooke's-bound) side of Hills Road. This would give many of the advantages of option 1 in terms of perceived safety for users, but allows for much easier passage of emergency vehicles.

5.0 NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 The public consultation runs from 4 March to 7 April 2014. Materials will include a leaflet, photo-montages, coloured plans and web pages on the County Council website. The leaflet will be delivered to local residents and businesses in the last week of February. Events are planned on the following dates:

6th March, St John the Evangelist Church, 5.00-7.30pm

14th March, Addenbrooke's concourse, 11am-2pm

26th March, The Perse School, 6.30-8.30

In addition, engagement events are planned at Hills Road and Long Road VI Form colleges.

- 5.2 The County Council is moving to a committee system on 13th May 2014. The scheme will be considered for approval by the Economy and Environment committee. If the scheme is approved works will need to start before 1st May 2015.

6.0 SUMMARY

- 6.1 Members of the Area Committee are asked to comment on the scheme proposals, and are encouraged to attend the consultation events.