

## **CYCLING PROJECTS UPDATE**

### **Note to Members of Cambridge City – South Area Committee**

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

**Date: 5 October 2015**

#### **1.0 HILLS ROAD TRAFFIC AND SAFETY SCHEME**

- 1.1 The Hills Road segregated cycle lane scheme is funded by the Department for Transport (DfT) Cycle City Ambition Grant. The scheme aims to make cycling safer, and thus more attractive, between key employment, education and residential centres. It also seeks to improve the pedestrian experience by segregating cyclists from pedestrians, whilst also improving bus stop infrastructure to aid bus users. The scheme was approved by the County Council's Economy and Environment Committee on 8 July 2014. The detailed design was then completed, and construction began on 26 January 2015.
- 1.2 Progress in the first few months of the construction works was slower than expected due to delays in agreeing protection measures for utility services encountered, and a generally poor start by the sub contractor who had been appointed relatively late on. It was apparent early on that the original works programme of 37 weeks would be difficult to achieve, and clearly the programme provided was over optimistic, reflecting the client's original deadlines for completion associated with funding deadlines, rather than a realistic construction programme.
- 1.3 Improvements in contractor performance and efficiency have been apparent in recent months, helped by additional labour, more efficient working methods and the allowance of a longer working window during school holidays. Progress is now more rapid, though the poor start has meant a completion date later than first hoped.
- 1.4 Lighting contractors Balfour Beatty have been working ahead of the cycleway works, as they proceed to remove old lighting columns and install new ones. This has generally worked well, but on occasions this has added delays to the cycleway works and created undesirable narrowings through the site area.
- 1.5 The site compound area has moved a number of times. In urban areas it is always difficult to establish a convenient location for compounds without impacting on residents.
- 1.6 Due to the specification of the red asphalt material that is being used as the final cycle lane running surface, it is only possible for the batching plant to produce approximately 80 tonnes of this material at any one time. This 80 tonnes equates to approximately 300 metres of cycle lane based on the current widths and thickness of the material being laid. Consequently we have to complete and make ready this kind of length prior to it being surfaced and thus there have been lengths of temporary surface left in place for long periods of time.
- 1.7 The first length of red surfacing material was laid on 18<sup>th</sup> July, with a further visit on 26<sup>th</sup> July. At the time of writing the next visit looks likely for 27<sup>th</sup> September. The laying of red material has had to be delayed on a number of occasions due to events at Homerton College, Race for Life and other works in the area.
- 1.8 With an embargo on roadworks throughout December, realistic completion of the works is now set for March 2016.
- 1.9 County officers are well aware that local members and residents have been dissatisfied with progress on the scheme, and in particular the long periods of time for which temporary surfaces have been in place. Officers have responded to much correspondence and have attended meetings with residents to try to address concerns. Officers have expressed their disappointment to the contractor at a senior level.

- 1.10 A number of lessons have been learnt from the delivery of the scheme by both Cambridgeshire County Council and main contractor Skanska. Clearly sub contractors need to be appointed as early as possible and consulted so that a much more realistic programme can be provided. Skanska designed the scheme, and their design team need in future to engage more closely with their construction team, as well as sub contractors. Longer mobilisation and lead in periods for projects are desirable to ensure that likely issues and matters of buildability can be addressed, and final designs made even better. The reality of how funding is provided means that this is generally not possible.
- 1.11 The problems of delivering the scheme have rather blighted the fact that once complete the new cycle lanes will improve capacity and safety for cyclists, whilst separating them from both pedestrians and motor traffic including buses. As the city grows it is essential that more people consider non car options to ensure that the city is not grid locked.
- 1.12 Details of the scheme are on the County Council website. Officers can also be contacted on 01223 699906 or at Transport Delivery [Transport.Delivery@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Transport.Delivery@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) .

## **2.0 THE CHISHOLM TRAIL**

- 2.1 The Chisholm Trail is a proposed new foot and cycle route that links the existing and new stations, as well as each end of the Busway cycle route, thus creating a north-south predominantly traffic free route linking many of the main residential areas and employment centres. In so doing, the route proposed follows as close to the rail line as possible, except where there are blockages caused by buildings or other sites in the way. This is a Greater Cambridge City Deal project, with a budget of £8.4 million.
- 2.2 Public consultation runs from 19<sup>th</sup> October to 30<sup>th</sup> November, and will include four public drop in sessions, with a questionnaire also available to complete on paper or on line.
- 2.3 Full details of the proposal, including a detailed route document can be viewed at this link: <http://tinyurl.com/gdlarbl>
- 2.4 Features of particular interest associated with the proposals include use of spare bridge arches at Mill Road, a new underpass at Newmarket Road, and a new bridge crossing the river Cam linking Abbey with Chesterton, close to the existing rail bridge.
- 2.5 Land take along the trail may mean that there is scope to provide small areas of public open space and scope to provide seating, tree planting, play equipment, interpretation boards and public art, thus widening the scope and overall appeal of the project beyond simply that of transport.
- 2.6 The bridge element of the Chisholm Trail is being funded by Department for Transport Cycle City Ambition Grant and Section 106 developer funding. A number of bridge options have been developed by a specialist bridge architect. Approval to develop one of the designs further, and to submit a planning application, will be sought from the County Council's Economy and Environment Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> November.
- 2.7 The bridge designs can be seen at this link <http://tinyurl.com/o5d8ezs>

## **3.0 CAMBRIDGE STATION TO LEISURE PARK FEASIBILITY STUDY**

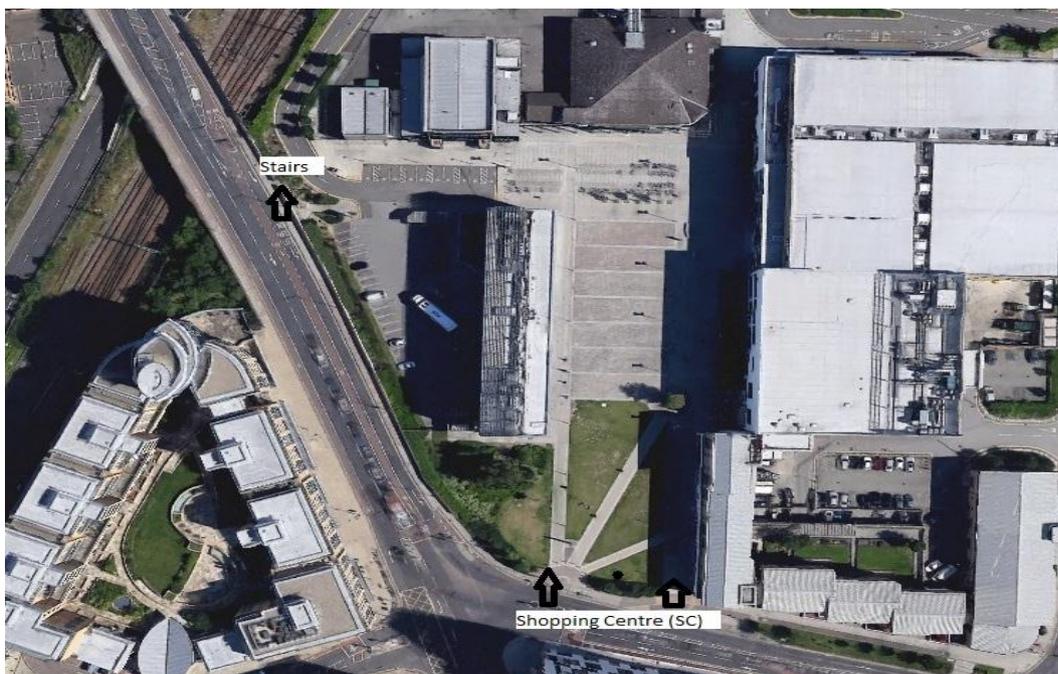
- 3.1 Approval was given by the County Council's Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2012 to undertake a feasibility study into a new pedestrian bridge linking Cambridge Station to the Leisure Park site. The suggestion to undertake this work was made by both South and East Area Committees (any bridge would span both areas). £25,000 was allocated to undertake the study.
- 3.2 The scope of the study was to look at potential options to improve access and reduce journey time to the Leisure Park for pedestrians, users with impaired mobility and for users with pushchairs.
- 3.3 The brief was to map existing journey times from the Station to the Leisure Park and compare them with the journey times of the options. Options information included estimated cost, distance and time savings.

- 3.4 The Study was completed in February 2015 and can be seen in full at <http://tinyurl.com/o5ro4xl>
- 3.5 The present route from the station, shown below, would take approximately 12 minutes 40 seconds on foot, at a pace of 4km/h. However, for pedestrians capable of using the existing steps on Hills Road Bridge, journey time would reduce to 11 minutes 7 seconds from the station.

**Plan 1 – current walking route (shown in red) or via stairs (shown yellow)**



- 3.6 To assess potential usage a traffic count was carried out on Hills Road Bridge over two days, on Saturday 7 March 2015 and Thursday 12 March 2015 for a 12 hour period from 0700-1900. On both days the weather was mild and clear. The pedestrian points measured and data are shown on the Photo and table below.
- 3.7 Each individual in the table number represents a single pedestrian trip up or down the stairs or in or out of the Shopping Centre (SC).



### Data for Pedestrian Access via Stairs and Shopping Centre (SC)

Stairs Saturday 7	Stairs Thursday 12	SC Saturday 7	SC Thursday 12
2438 Able Bodied 0 With Disability	3372 Able Bodied 0 With Disability	4388 Able Bodied 0 With Disability	7771 Able Bodied 3 With Disability

3.8 The following options were considered, and these are shown in **Appendix 1**.

- A new bridge over the railway joining the CB1 development east of the Cambridge Signal Box with the multi-storey car park along Clifton Way (Option 1)
- A new bridge from Hills Road just north of the Busway underpass to Clifton Way, alongside The Junction nightclub (Option 2);
- A new ramp from the top of the existing stairs along Hills Road south of the railway bridge, extending over the access to the hotel car park at the end of Clifton Way and heading towards the Leisure Park (Option 3A);
- A new ramp from the top of the aforementioned stairs, running along the existing Hills Road retaining wall and returning upon itself before finishing near the base of the existing stairs (Option 3B);
- A new lift provided at the location of the existing stairs, as proposed elsewhere as part of Project Cambridge (Option 3C)
- A new built-up ramp immediately south of the hotel (Option 4).
- Do Nothing

3.9 Indicative cost estimates have been developed based upon work in other areas. These costs could increase by as much as 30% if certain risks came to fruition through detailed design such as complex utility services that need moving, or if railway 'track possessions' take longer than anticipated.

Option	Description	Cost
1	Bridge between Signal Box to multi-storey car park	£3.3 million
2	Bridge between Hills Road Busway Bridge to The Junction	£3.3 million
3a	Ramp over car park access to Cinema building	£1.6 million
3b	Ramp along Hills Road wall	£1.3 million
3c	Lift access provision at existing steps	£0.5 million
4	Ramp access south of Hotel	£0.1 million
DN	Do Nothing	£0

3.10 Travel time difference for each option is identified in the table below. The times in the current travel time cells, cover walking all the way around the route shown in red on **Drawing 1** above, or using the stairs, into the Leisure Park from Hills Road bridge, as shown in yellow.

#### Time Savings

Option	Current travel time	Option Travel time	Time Saving (or increase)
1	12m 40s / 11m 7s	9m 8s	3m 32s / 1m 59s
2	12m 40s / 11m 7s	11m 35s	1m 55s / +28s
3a	12m 40s / 11m 7s	11m 33s	1m 57s / +26s
3b	12m 40s / 11m 7s	11m 56s	44s / +49s
3c	12m 40s / 11m 7s	11m 15s	1m 25s / +8s
4	12m 40s / 11m 7s	12m	40s / + 53s

#### Option Breakdown and Major Risks

3.11 Option 1 - Is a complex solution, the area around CB1 is very restricted in places to develop a bridge on both sides of the rail lines. The lines themselves have overhead equipment that needs to be avoided by a minimum height; this would lead to a bridge similar in height and length to the Carter Bridge. This option has a landing onto the multi-story car park where an external lift would

be placed to return pedestrians to ground level. The times stated for journey times could increase significantly if the lift was busy and people needed to wait.

Risks include:

- The area is very busy mainly due to the CB1 development and significant rail and Busway infrastructure, this includes signals and buried services and may significantly increase the cost of this option
- Possessions over the railway access are costly, often complex and time dependant, any delay would incur a significant extra cost and a delay that could lead into many months
- It is probable that Network Rail would insist on a cover such as that on the Carter Bridge further increasing costs and adding to maintenance
- If the lift on the car park breaks down the bridge would be unusable unless stairs were also provided.
- If the lift is available 24 hours then there is an increased risk of vandalism, this could be reduced by camera monitoring at extra cost
- If the Lift is closed during the small hours then the bridge would also need to be closed
- Risk of failure of a remote lift with people in it, particularly on a hot or very cold day or late at night. The lift will have a call button but not being a manned facility, response could be slow.

3.12 Option 2- Is also a complex solution similar to that of option one, but reduces the risk of closure by lift failure. This drops people off utilising a ramp in the area opposite the car park. Due to the height required for the bridge the ramp would be similar in length to that on the east side of the Carter Bridge. Space for this ramp is very limited and it would need to be developed as a tight switchback, this can be difficult for those using wheelchairs and pushchairs.

Risks include:

- Area restrictions as in option 1
- Railway possessions as in option 1 and the potential for significantly increased costs
- A cover may be required by Network rail as in option 1
- More likelihood of this being used by cyclists, as is currently the case on the green Dragon bridge, despite being designed for pedestrians only.
- Putting in place controls to prevent cyclists would also deter other users such as those with pushchairs and wheelchairs.

3.13 Options 3a and 3b – This provides a ramp either into the cinema area option 3a or alongside the Hills Road bridge wall, option 3b. A ramp in this area could visibly detract from the areas open pleasant appeal. The ramp would need to be level and high enough for delivery vehicles to enter and leave creating a long ramp area.

Risks include:

- High risk of impact on buried services. This would significantly increase costs if these needed to be diverted
- Possibility of visual element being seen as a planning issue

3.14 Option 3c- Provides for a public lift, this could benefit those with impaired mobility, wheelchair and those with pushchairs. There would be ongoing maintenance and staff costs to bear. There are very few lifts available in open public spaces; Most are closed during times when facilities are not available.

Risks include:

- In the small hours lift a may be at increased risk from vandalism or other misuse. It could be closed when the cinema and other facilities are closed.
- Personal security may be a risk using a lift late at night, a well-lit glass sided lift could reduce this but that can provide an increased target for vandalism; If glass is broken in a lift it would be out of use until it is replaced.
- Risk of failure of a remote lift with people in it, particularly a risk to users on a hot or very cold day or late at night when response may be slow
- Closure of a facility such as this for extended periods could have an impact on public confidence in our ability to deliver meaningful infrastructure

- 3.15 Option 4 –provides a ramp at the south of the hotel. This is very close to the actual turning and pedestrian area. However it may be difficult to justify, given its location and proximity to the normal entrance at the shopping centre access to the Leisure Park.

Risks Include:

- Possibility of unmarked buried services that could increase costs

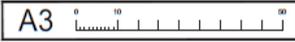
- 3.16 Option DN – Doing nothing is a real opportunity largely due to the benefits already realised from the development of the CB1 area opening up and reducing the journey to the Leisure Park from the rail station by almost five minutes to its current journey time.

**Conclusions**

- 3.17 Option 1 to option 3b would not be considered to offer a significant reduction in journey time for pedestrians, nor do they significantly improve the route by providing enough benefit to justify the costs both in construction and ongoing maintenance.
- 3.18 Option 3c could benefit users with impaired mobility, wheelchair users or users with pushchairs with the installation of a lift alongside the existing stairs on Hills Road Bridge. However as can be seen from the data very few people with disabilities arrive via the pedestrian routes. This option would also have a maintenance cost attached to it and could be closed for extended periods if vandalised or unserviceable for other reasons.
- 3.19 Option 4 provides very little time saving benefits and could increase in costs substantially if buried services need to be relocated.
- 3.20 Recent improvements delivered as part of the CB1 development have provided better access to the Leisure Park. The officer recommendation based upon the consultant's report is that the idea of a new bridge should not be progressed any further. The conclusion is that the 'do nothing' option is seen as the preferred outcome.

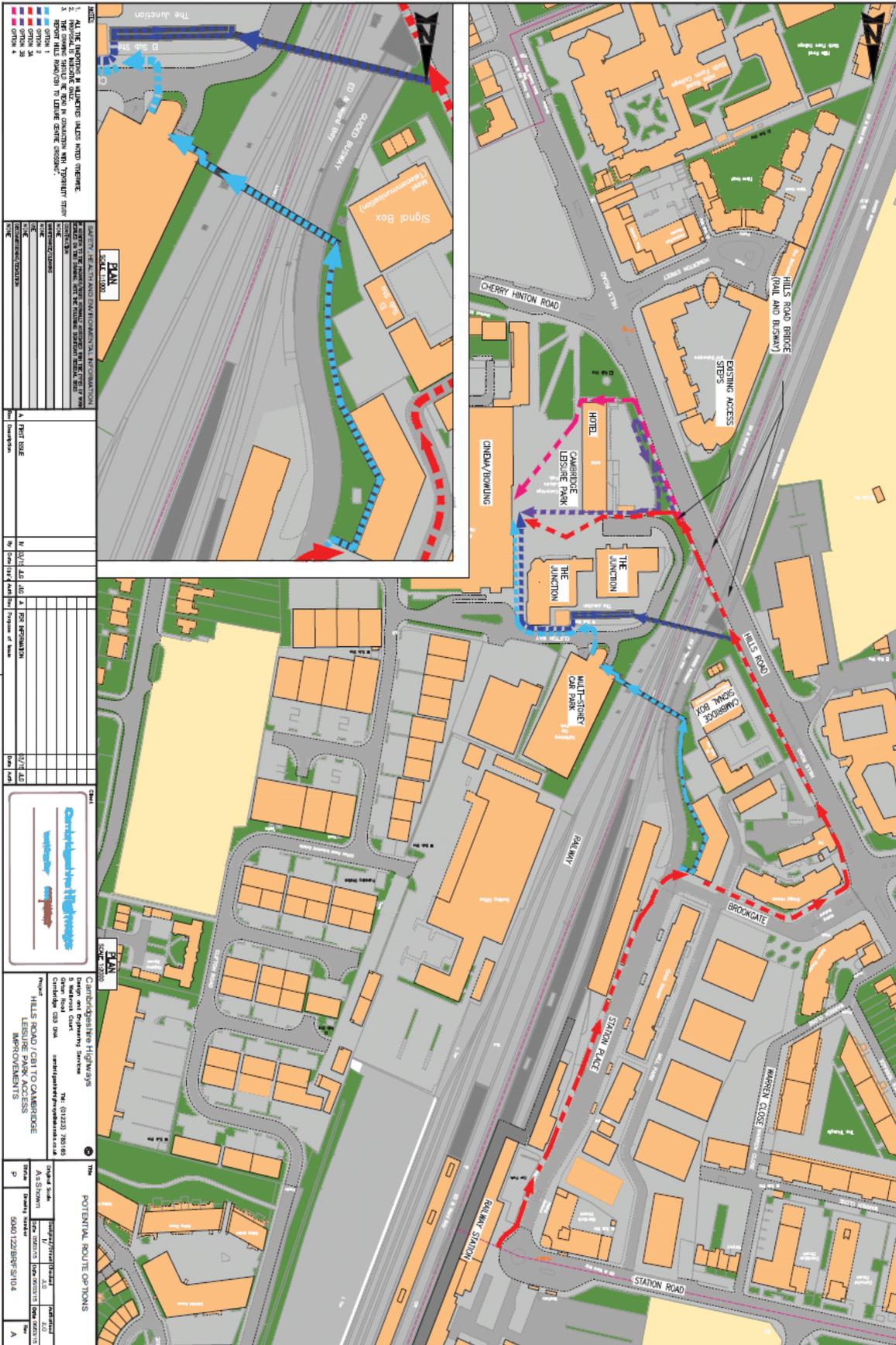
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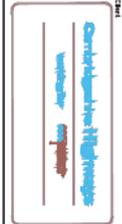
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DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY
10/10/2023	ISSUED FOR PERMIT	[Name]



Cambridge Leisure Park  
 Leisure Park Access  
 Hills Road / Cam to Cambridge Leisure Park Access  
 10/10/2023

Project	5040122/BRF/S/104
Client	Cambridge Leisure Park
Drawn by	[Name]
Checked by	[Name]
Scale	1:1000
Date	10/10/2023