

**A10 HARSTON, PROPOSED WALKING AND CYCLING IMPROVEMENTS**

*To:* **Economy and Environment Committee**

*Meeting Date:* **10<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

*From:* **Graham Hughes, Executive Director – Economy, Transport and Environment**

*Electoral division:* **Sawston**

*Forward Plan ref:* **2016/043**      *Key decision:* **Yes**

*Purpose:* **To note the results of the consultation on proposed walking and cycling improvements in Harston, and to consider the implementation of the proposals.**

*Recommendation:* **Committee are asked to approve the implementation of improvements for cyclists and pedestrians on the A10 at Harston, consisting of:**

- a) An improved foot and cycleway on the west side; and,**
- b) A new controlled crossing located between Church Street and Station Road.**

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## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The proposals aim to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists on the A10 through Harston. The A10 is a former trunk road which carries around 12,000 vehicles a day, and provides a link between the A505 at Royston and the M11 at Trumpington. In the Trumpington area and north of Harston, there has been considerable housing growth, and there are also a number of business parks and employment sites in the local area.
- 1.2 Levels of cycling are relatively low in Harston compared with other villages immediately to the south or west of the city. The 2011 census revealed 9% of people cycling to work from Harston, compared to 23% from Barton and 18% from the Shelfords.
- 1.3 Currently there are narrow shared use paths on both sides of the A10. The narrowness brings cyclists into conflict with pedestrians, and makes for a very unsatisfactory situation for all parties. Confident, commuter cyclists tend to stay on the road, mixing with heavy traffic and having the effect of holding traffic up due to the central islands, which are intended to act as traffic calming.
- 1.4 The scheme is funded by the Department for Transport (DfT) Cycle City Ambition Grant which Cambridgeshire County Council and seven other local authorities were successful in bidding for in 2013. In the 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.
- 1.6 The Cycle City Ambition programme initially comprised seven schemes, including Huntingdon Road and Hills Road in Cambridge and four schemes in South Cambridgeshire, which are now complete. In 2015 the initial funding of £4.1m was increased further to £10m, and the content of the programme was expanded to include funding towards Abbey-Chesterton bridge, A10 Cambridge to Royston and Quy to Lode.
- 1.7 Cambridgeshire County Council and Greater Cambridge City Deal have been working to develop and improve a continuous, safe cycle route from Cambridge to Royston along the A10 corridor. The adopted Transport Strategy for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire promotes the implementation of sustainable transport interventions on corridors. Such a route would link to employment sites and transport hubs, as well as encouraging more sustainable local trips between villages along the corridor.
- 1.8 Whilst it is envisaged that few people would cycle on a daily basis on the entire length of a route between Royston and Cambridge, it is recognised that many people would use distinct sections, perhaps to cycle to a railway station or between villages. The corridor is full of trip generators such as employment sites, railway stations, educational establishments, leisure destinations and housing developments. Within a mile or so of the corridor lies a further network of villages and employment sites, hence the corridor acting as a spine route.
- 1.9 **Plan 1** shows the progress so far in implementing a cycle route from Cambridge to Melbourn. The section from Melbourn to Royston (not shown on the plan) is subject to a Growth Fund bid.

- 1.10 A key part of the route is the section in Harston. The scheme needs to cater for local trips within Harston to the school and shops, as well as longer distance commutes on the A10. The facility needs to be of sufficiently high standard to attract all types of cyclists, minimising conflicts with pedestrians and ideally removing cyclists from the carriageway to allow buses, commercial vehicles and general traffic to have reliable journey times.

## **2. PROPOSALS**

- 2.1 Currently there are narrow shared use paths on both sides of the A10 through Harston. The proposed scheme seeks to implement a three metre wide shared use path on the west side of the road, together with a new controlled crossing on the A10, and improved crossings of accesses and side roads.
- 2.2 To accommodate the improved foot and cycleway a layby will be reduced in size on the west side, with some spaces retained and additional spaces added on the east side. There are a number of shops and businesses in this area.
- 2.3 There are no proposals impacting on bus stops included in the scheme.

## **3. CONSULTATION**

- 3.1 An initial public consultation for improvements in Harston took place in November 2015 with a number of well attended public exhibitions held. 554 responses were received, with 85% supporting the initial proposals. The proposals were then modified into a final scheme, taking into account the issues raised and comments made.
- 3.2 A further consultation exercise was undertaken on the modified scheme in June 2016 with an extensive letter drop undertaken in Harston and a drop in event held. The most common comments made related to concerns about loss of some parking bays, loss of a length of guardrail, drainage issues and concerns about Church Street junction.
- 3.3 The concerns made by residents generally were echoed by the Parish Council and local Councillors.
- 3.4 CTC (Cyclists Touring Club) Cambridge were keen to see an improved crossing facility included between Church Street and Station Road which has been accommodated in the proposals. Camcycle requested that priority be offered to cyclists at the two Church Street junctions which has been investigated, but on balance the improvements here will be confined to shortening the crossing points and making it easier to cross, but not with priority.

## **4. PROGRAMME AND COSTS**

- 4.1 The scheme budget is £1.2million though there is some flexibility across the Cycle City ambition programme.
- 4.2 Until detailed design is complete and discussions have concluded with contractors it is not possible to offer a firm programme. Some of the works can be executed working from the grass verge, without traffic signals in place causing minimal delays, but some works using temporary traffic signals are inevitable. The establishment of an advisory diversion route, to

minimise traffic delays is being considered. Prior to starting work, there will be extensive publicity including details of the programme and traffic management that will be in place.

## **5. MAIN ISSUES**

- 5.1 The plans that were consulted on included the loss of approximately six parking spaces (outside a hair salon), to accommodate the wide shared use path on the west side. Concern has been expressed about this from residents, local Councillors and the Parish Council. Although additional bays will be provided on the opposite side, to address local concerns officers propose to accommodate at least two parking bays with a limited waiting restriction on the west side, but 'dooring' from parked cars may remain a risk.
- 5.2 Safety concerns have been raised around the proposed removal of pedestrian guardrail on the bend north of Church Street junction. Clearly the guardrail adds to a feeling of protection for users on what is a very busy road, but its presence reduces the useable width of the path. Officers propose to narrow the carriageway at this location in order to widen the foot and cycleway and retain the guardrail.
- 5.3 Drainage at property entrances is a concern for some residents. Between the BP garage and London Road there is a cross fall towards the properties as the A10 is effectively on a causeway through the village. The provision of drainage measures across driveway entrances feeding into a drainage system will be included in the scheme.
- 5.4 A number of suggestions were made relating to remodelling Church Street junction. Much of the land there is not public highway, and there is a historic pump at this location. Due to these constraints, and the likely costs, such remodelling is realistically beyond the scope of the project. There is some contention about who ought to have priority. Motorists turning off the A10 have to make a quick decision and find a gap in heavy traffic, so giving priority for cyclists might be problematic, despite the fact that it is desirable to provide continuous facilities to make them attractive as per the consultation response from Camcycle. Officers propose to tighten the kerb radii to reduce the crossing distance for cyclists, but not to give them priority.
- 5.5 County Councillor Orgee broadly supports the scheme on the basis that pedestrian guardrail near Church Street is retained and some parking remains outside the hair salon on the west side of the road. He feels that Church Street junction should have been remodelled as part of the scheme, though as set out in 5.4 above this is not realistically possible.
- 5.6 Harston Parish Council are supportive of the scheme, and also would like to retain the guardrail as well as ensuring at least two parking spaces are retained outside the hairdressers.
- 5.7 Careful thought will need to be given to construction methods and working hours. The importance of the route and lack of alternatives means a road closure would not be possible. The relatively built up nature of the A10 through Harston means that it is not possible to undertake the works at night. Restricted working hours of 9.30am to 3.30pm looks to be the only option, and is likely to lead to some traffic delays for some months. Officers will explore all options for publicity and signing of advisory diversion routes in a bid to minimise disruption. Surfacing works and some other operations could be programmed

for weekend working.

## **6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 The final proposed scheme is shown in **Appendix 2**.
- 6.2 In summary, the scheme has been amended in response to the consultation, but still offers major benefits to cyclists and pedestrians, and should improve road safety and the perception of safety. Both local members and the Parish Council broadly support the proposals.
- 6.3 The Cycle City Ambition programme funding ceases on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018, so work would need to commence by September 2017 at the latest. Other than political approval there are no other approval processes to work through, so unless approval is delayed the scheme should be deliverable within the timeframe.

## **7. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

### **7.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all**

More people cycling contributes to a healthier population, improved productivity, reduced traffic congestion, reliability of journey times and adds capacity into an already constrained road network, all of which contributes to economic wellbeing.

### **7.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives**

Currently many people feel unsafe cycling, although cycling is potentially a form of economic, reliable transport that allows them to access employment or training and hence independence, and the opportunity to incorporate active travel into their lives. The proposals address a route that is perceived by many cyclists to be unsafe.

### **7.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people**

Wider, shared use paths should make for less conflict with elderly and disabled people.

## **8. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 Resource Implications**

The scheme is capital funded by the DfT from an overall programme budget of £10.1million. There is flexibility, but the overall scheme budget is £1.2million. The scheme is being designed to ensure minimal maintenance and revenue costs.

### **8.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category.

### **8.3 Equality and Diversity Implications**

There are no significant implications within this category.

### **8.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications**

There has been extensive public and stakeholder consultation as set out in Section 3.

If the recommendations are approved officers will contact stakeholders following the meeting to tell them of the Committee decision.

The start of works will be widely communicated to residents and the travelling public.

### **8.5 Localism and local member engagement**

There has been extensive public and stakeholder consultation as set out in Section 3.

The Project Team have engaged with, and updated local members throughout the scheme development and consultation process, and have discussed the recommendations with them.

### **8.6 Public Health Implications**

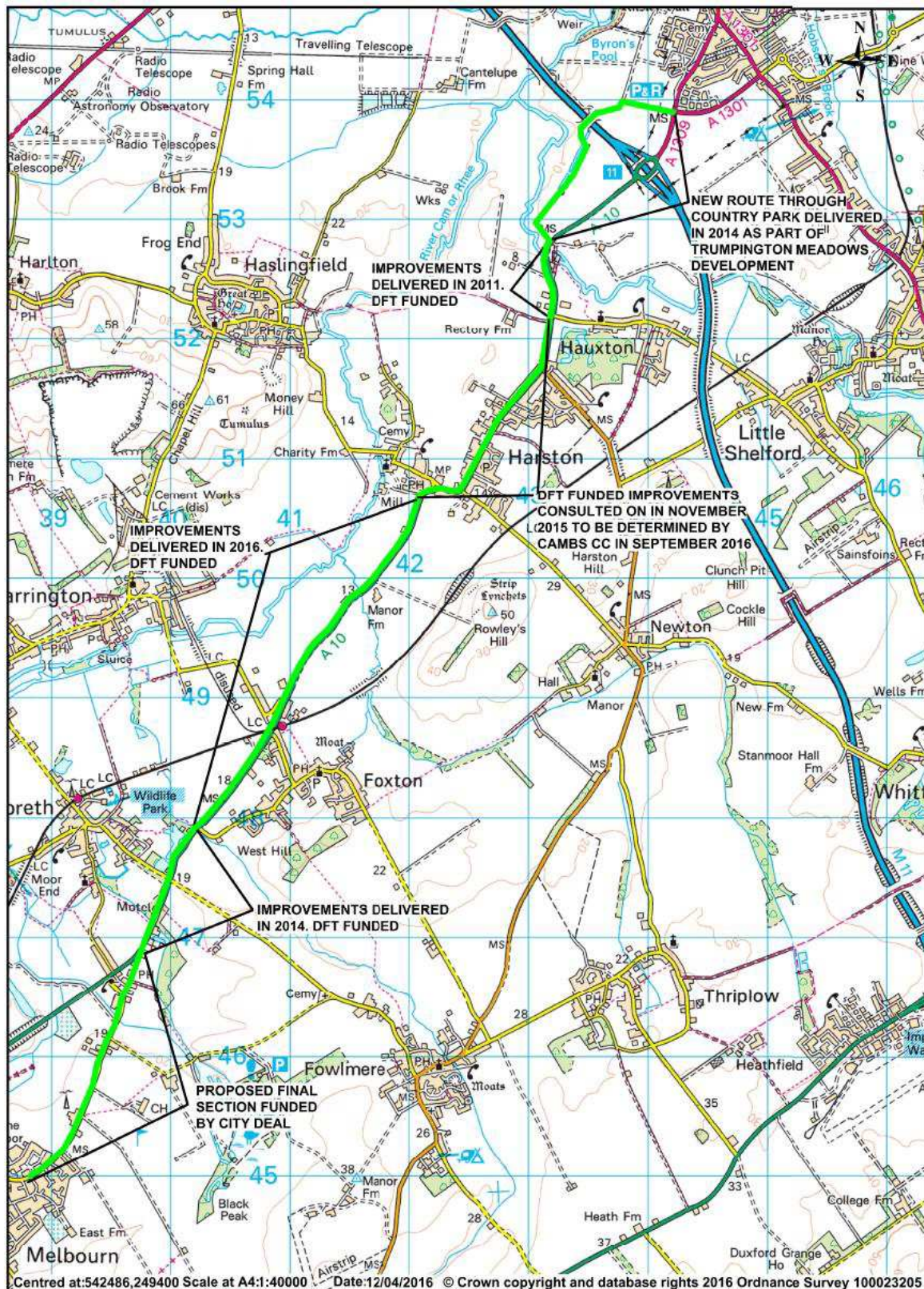
More people cycling and walking undoubtedly contributes to improved public health. Cycling is a physical activity that can prevent ill health and improve health. It is important that people are supported and encouraged to be physically active and any efforts should focus upon interventions that mitigate any barriers like perceived safety risks.

<b>Source Documents</b>	<b>Location</b>
Consultation responses	Room 310, Shire Hall, Cambridge



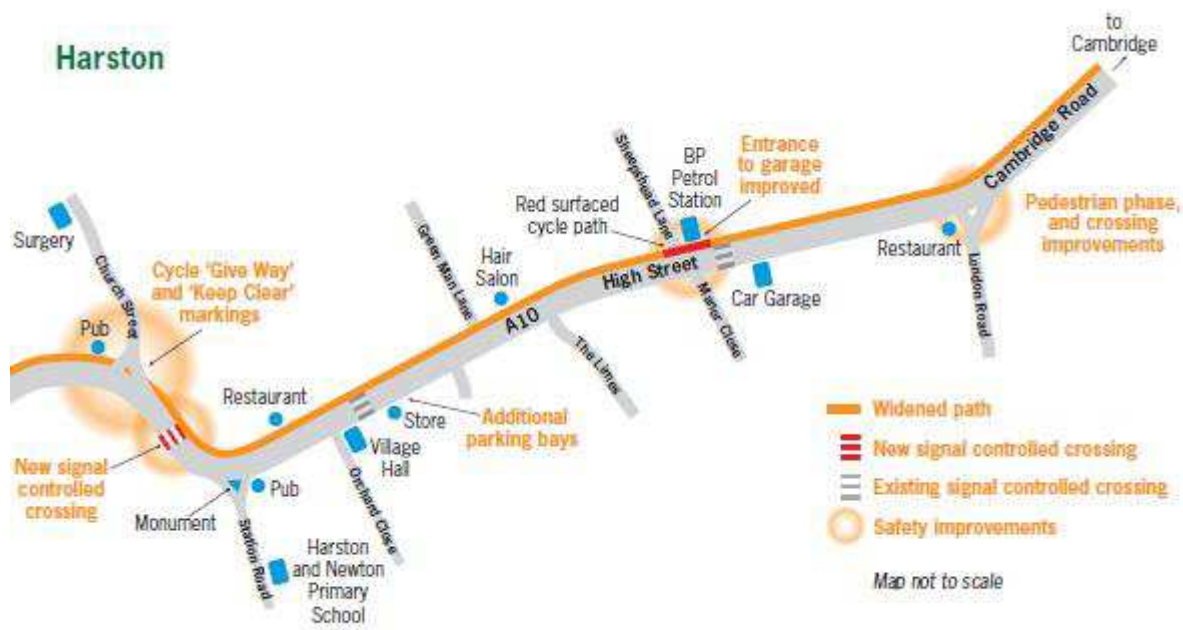
## PLAN 1 – Cambridge to Royston cycleway, section by section status

### Cambridge to Melbourn Cycle Route



The length from Melbourn onwards to Royston is subject to a Growth Deal bid

## Plan 2 – Proposed scheme





<b>Implications</b>	<b>Officer Clearance</b>
<b>Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?</b>	Yes Name of Financial Officer: D Parcell
<b>Has the impact on Statutory, Legal and Risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?</b>	Yes Name of Legal Officer: F McMillan
<b>Are there any Equality and Diversity implications?</b>	Yes Name of Officer: T Oviatt-Ham
<b>Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?</b>	Yes Name of Officer: M Miller
<b>Are there any Localism and Local Member involvement issues?</b>	Yes Name of Officer: P Tadd
<b>Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health</b>	Yes Name of Officer: T Campbell