

**Report to:** Greater Cambridge Partnership Joint Assembly

2 November 2017

**Lead officer:** Chris Tunstall - Cambridgeshire County Council

---

## **Histon Road: Bus, Cycling and Walking Improvements**

### **Response to LLF Resolutions**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. Histon Road is a key radial route into Cambridge which is constrained in its width, which contributes to congestion and makes the consideration of improvements difficult.
- 1.2. It experiences significant congestion at peak times which impacts on bus journey times making journeys unreliable, unattractive and longer than necessary, as well as affecting the convenience and comfort of cycling trips along the corridor.
- 1.3. The key objectives for the Histon Road project include:
  - a) Comprehensive priority for buses in both directions wherever practicable;
  - b) Additional capacity for sustainable trips to employment/education sites;
  - c) Increased bus patronage and new services;
  - d) Safer and more convenient routes for cycling and walking, segregated where practical and possible;
  - e) Maintain or reduce general traffic levels; and
  - f) Enhance the environment, streetscape and air quality.
- 1.4. The project supports the Greater Cambridge Partnership's priority of achieving efficient and reliable movement between key existing and future housing and employment sites and is being delivered as part of the Tranche 1 infrastructure programme.
- 1.5. In particular, the project will support the delivery of new housing at Northstowe and provide improved links with employment sites within the city. The project is being developed concurrently with a similar scheme for Milton Road, as there are links and dependencies between the two projects.
- 1.6. In June 2016, the Executive Board agreed to take forward for further design work the initial ideas included in the 'Do Maximum' option excluding the idea of banning the right turn into Warwick Road and the idea of 'floating' bus stops, to develop two preferred design options, one including and one excluding the changes at the Victoria Road junction. The Executive Board report setting out the 'Do Maximum' concept scheme and the related Board decisions can be found under the following link.  
<http://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/ielListDocuments.aspx?CId=1074&MId=6632&Ver=4>
- 1.7. The Board also supported the development of traffic management measures to mitigate displaced traffic and parking for the purposes of further consultation.

- 1.8. The Board noted the important role of the Local Liaison Forum (LLF) in involving local Councillors and stakeholder groups in the development of the detailed layout plans for consultation.
- 1.9. A detailed programme of LLF workshops took place through the Autumn and Winter of 2016/17 from which emerge a set of resolutions based on the LLFs 'Do Everything' concept, as set out in **Appendix A**.
- 1.10. Officers have prepared responses to these resolutions setting out the implications in **Appendix B**. The proposed officer responses to these resolutions present a significant deviation from the original 'Do Maximum' option, therefore officers require agreement from the Executive Board in order to proceed with the project on this basis.

## **2. Key issues and considerations**

### Junctions

- 2.1. The LLF has proposed alternative designs to the three main junctions along Histon road as set out in **Appendix A** and covered by resolutions 1 – 5. It is considered that these alternative designs do offer ideas that are useful to inform any future design iterations, especially with regard to enhancing cycle and pedestrian facilities. However, changes to the original 'Do Maximum' designs may affect traffic flows through the junctions which will need to be fully assessed.

### Bus Priority

- 2.2. One of the original aims of the project was to enhance bus priority on Histon Road. This was achieved partially in the 'Do Maximum' option by providing an inbound bus lane from King Hedges road to Gilbert Road. This option would require removal of highway trees and verges, and the purchase of gardens along a specific stretch of the road. The LLF is strongly opposed to such measures and as such officers will be recommending that consideration be given to the inbound bus lane being truncated at the point where these issues start to arise with the use of alternative solutions such as bus gates and bus hurry calls at junctions being then considered. Whilst this may well have an impact on the level of bus priority that can be achieved it will be reported on as part of the revised concept scheme in March 2018. This is covered by resolutions 6 and 7.

### Cycling and Walking

- 2.3. The reduction in Bus priority measures does allow much greater space for the provision of higher quality cycling and pedestrian infrastructure which is also a key objective of this scheme. However, in order to achieve full potential there is a requirement to remove parking along the southern end of Histon Road which will require the identification of alternative provision for those affected. Resolutions 8 and 9.

### Extent of Scheme

- 2.4. The northern extent of the current scheme is to the Kings Hedges junction. A more sensible end point would be further north at the junction with the A14. Officers will be recommending this to the Board. Resolution 12.

### City Access

- 2.5. The Scheme is being developed on the premise of a reduction in traffic in the Core City Centre of 10 -15% based on 2011 figures by 2031. To achieve this will require significant modal shift to more effective and efficient forms of transport. Resolution 11.

### **3. Options and emerging recommendations**

- 3.1. The first option is to take steps to deliver the 'Do Maximum' proposal, incorporating where possible some of the points raised in the LLF resolutions. This course of action provides the maximum in terms of bus priority objectives but at the expense of delivering against the other objectives of the scheme. Officers will not recommend this course of action as it is now clear following the work done with the LLF that this would be met with intense public opposition and that the compulsory purchase of land presents a major risk to the eventual cost of the project and timescales for delivery.
- 3.2. Having recently discussed the resolutions with the LLF chairs, officers will be recommending that the Board support the majority of the LLF resolutions. Where a resolution cannot be fully supported, it will be recommended that the Board at least support some of the principals set out by the given resolution.
- 3.3. As a result of this course of action, the provision of bus priority measures through the use of bus lanes may be impacted, but it is anticipated that alternative solutions such as bus gates, or bus hurry calls at junctions may be used to gain back some of the bus priority being sought and as a result meet scheme objectives.
- 3.4. Supporting the resolutions places far more emphasis on the provision of excellent and safe facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, a key objective for Histon Road. General support for the resolutions also removes the need for compulsory purchase of land and may also allow for the retention of existing trees, or at least space for replacement trees and verges where existing trees still need to be removed. Resolution 10.
- 3.5. There may still be some concern to the loss of parking on Histon Road, but officers believe that removal of this parking is key to being able to provide a safe route for cyclists in the narrower sections of Histon road.

### **4. Next steps and milestones**

- 4.1. Officers will present their recommendations and responses to the Histon Road Resolutions at the Executive Board meeting in November 2017.
- 4.2. Subject to the outcome of the November Meeting Officers plan to bring a revised concept scheme for Histon Road to the Executive Board in March 2018.

### **5. Recommendation to Joint Assembly**

- 5.1. The Joint Assembly is asked to comment on the progress and recommendations of officers to the Executive Board to provide an alternative set of measures to the 'Do Maximum' proposal.