



**GREATER  
CAMBRIDGE  
CITY DEAL**

Securing future prosperity

**Report To:** Greater Cambridge City Deal Executive Board 10 November 2016

**Lead Officer:** Graham Hughes, Executive Director, Cambridgeshire County Council

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## **The Chisholm Trail**

### **Purpose**

1. This report summarises the progress being made to deliver The Chisholm Trail, and seeks approval to construct Phase 1 (subject to planning permission being granted).

### **Recommendations**

2. The Board is asked to:
  - a) Note the scheme progress being made in terms of planning approval, land procurement and stakeholder engagement;
  - b) Give approval to construct Phase 1 of the scheme, subject to gaining planning permission;
  - c) Delegate powers to approve the construction contract and selection of contractor for Phase 1; and,
  - d) Support the continuation of land negotiations.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- a) Safer, direct and more convenient largely off-road route for cycling and walking;
- b) Improved access and reliability of journey times to employment areas, educational establishments, retail sites and residential centres;
- c) Links into a network of existing cycle routes;
- d) Minimal impact on motor traffic and public transport journey times;
- e) Provision of safe, convenient, direct, non-car access to the main Cambridge railway station and to the new Cambridge North rail station;
- f) Create more capacity for sustainable trips along the rail corridor;
- g) Links to strategic priorities for City Deal Cross City cycle improvements;
- h) All of the above contributing to a positive economic impact; and,
- i) Enhancement of the environment, streetscape and air quality, as well as improved access and linkages to open spaces.
- j) The scheme offers high cost/benefit.

## Background

3. In January 2015 the Greater Cambridge City Deal Executive Board agreed that The Chisholm Trail should be part of the City Deal prioritised programme. In August 2015 the Board gave approval to consult on the proposed route, and then on 3 March 2016 the consultation results were reported and approval was obtained to submit a planning application.
4. Full details of the project can be viewed by selecting the option 'The Chisholm Trail' at this link: [www.tinyurl.com/hxcv7ms](http://www.tinyurl.com/hxcv7ms). The strategic and policy basis for progressing the scheme are set out in a previous report, which can be seen at this link [www.tinyurl.com/h6lsm5o](http://www.tinyurl.com/h6lsm5o). **Plan 1** shows the proposed route.
5. Since the project was considered by the Executive Board in August 2015, discussions have been progressing with the landowners, including Cambridge Past Present & Future and Network Rail. Signs are encouraging that some form of agreement can be made in each case. Obtaining planning consent is likely to be a catalyst in finalising the land deals.
6. Land agreements however remain as the highest risk item. Given the project's linear nature, failure to conclude one deal is likely to result in a delay in allowing works to commence, or worse the need to reconsider the route, possibly diluting the benefits in terms of directness, safety and/or pleasantness. Officers will continue to engage closely with landowners in a bid to finalise the land agreements.
7. £8.4m of City Deal funding has been allocated to the project. Although a significant figure, this is still felt to be an appropriate budget given the extensive engineering work required on some elements such as Newmarket Road underpass, the difficulties of construction access, and the likelihood of having to relocate statutory undertakers and Network Rail apparatus. Early work exploring construction, programme and costs has been undertaken with three contractors to test the budget.
8. The project is being developed in two phases, with Phase 1 being progressed through to planning and construction ahead of Phase 2. This is due to development dependencies associated with the Ridgeons (Cromwell Road) site, the City Council depot and Network Rail land. Phase 1 relates to the section north of Cromwell Road, and Phase 2 is south of Cromwell Road. **Plan 2** shows the phasing.
9. To complete the Chisholm Trail and to make the onward link to the new station and Busway route to St Ives, a crossing over the River Cam is needed. A planning application to build the Abbey-Chesterton Bridge is being considered by Cambridgeshire County Council's Planning Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> December. The delivery of this bridge, subject to gaining planning consent and the necessary land, is anticipated in 2018.
10. A Local Liaison Forum (LLF) is now established which combines The Chisholm Trail and Abbey-Chesterton bridge. The LLF has met twice in public, following an initial set up meeting. Generally the public and stakeholders are supportive of the project.

## Value for money case

11. Initially The Chisholm Trail was assessed alongside other potential Tranche One City Deal projects and was found to offer good economic benefits within the long list of schemes being considered. The narrative around improved journey ambience and improved linkages to key destinations has been tested further by independent

consultants, and has been found to give a cost benefit ratio of 3.04:1. This is based upon the Department for Transport's Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit, and as such the scheme can be regarded as having a high benefit cost ratio.

### **Planning and Commons Consent**

12. A planning application for Phase 1 of The Chisholm Trail (Coldhams Lane to the river) was submitted in late July and (validated in mid August). The planning application can be viewed at [www/tinyurl.com/hsuy492](http://www/tinyurl.com/hsuy492). A number of matters of clarification and additional information relating to ecology, drainage and transport were required. These have led to some delays in the process.
13. A petition objecting to the scheme was submitted along with one of support, resulting in a Development Control Forum (DCF), which is to be held on 26<sup>th</sup> October. The purpose of the DCF is to try to reach a compromise with objectors. The application will be determined by the Joint Development Control Committee in January. The planning process will test the environmental impacts of the scheme and consider the mitigation measures proposed.
14. To widen paths on Coldham's Common, consent from the Secretary of State is required. The County Council have recently completed this process for works on Midsummer Common, but in this case at least one objection is likely from a local group opposed to any development on the common. A Public Inquiry may therefore be required.
15. A public Inquiry would have a minimal impact on the programme, as works on Coldham's Common could take place after the construction of the Newmarket Road underpass, however there is a risk that permission to widen paths is not obtained, and thus the onward link from the underpass and the routing of the trail would be less direct. A more conservative approach would be to await Commons Consent before building the underpass, but this would give a delay of 3-5 months with work not commencing until early 2018.

### **Phase 1 Construction Procurement**

16. Processes to procure a contractor to build the scheme are underway. A 'mini tender' will be undertaken through the County Council's Eastern Highways Framework contract. Six companies will have the opportunity to bid for the work based on a 60/40 quality/cost split. Officers will evaluate the tenders, and a moderation exercise will then be undertaken by Procurement staff.
17. The preferred tenderer will emerge as the company with the highest score from the quality/cost process. It is recommended that the final decision to award the contract be delegated to the Executive Director of Economy, Transport and Environment, Cambridgeshire County Council, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Greater Cambridge City Deal Executive Board.
18. It may be possible to combine Phase 1 of The Chisholm Trail and Abbey-Chesterton bridge into one construction project which could give efficiencies. Approval to construct Abbey Chesterton bridge is a decision for Cambridgeshire County Council's Economy and Environment Committee. The decision is currently programmed for the meeting on 12 January 2017.

## Phase 2 Development

19. The current plan is still to deliver routes on the east and west side of the rail line from Coldhams Lane to link up to Cambridge Railway station. This requires the use of lightly trafficked roads, Network Rail land and development land associated with Ridgeons and the City Depot site. Planning consent is not needed for on road sections.
20. In trying to progress plans for Phase 2 the Project Team is effectively constrained by the pace of developments, and by Network Rail's potential future aspirations for its land, possibly to be retained for rail purposes such as overnight storage of Crossrail rolling stock. A possible solution would be to consider an alternative means of taking the Trail to the station by the use of a new bridge over the rail line between Mill Road bridge and Coldhams Lane. The idea of a new bridge linking Romsey with Petersfield was raised during the public consultation on the Ridgeons development, and as a result of safety concerns around cycling on Mill Road bridge. **Plan 3** shows the area in question. In due course, and with population and employment growth, the current Phase 2 proposals as well as the bridge, would be worthy of consideration in ensuring a comprehensive and convenient network for pedestrians and cyclists in the Romsey and Petersfield areas.
21. The initial Phase 2 proposals included a ramp or bridge link to Carter Bridge. Officers are working up some options for improvements to Carter Bridge that include making it easier to maintain in future.

## Summary

22. It is recommended that the City Deal Board endorses the officer recommendations to progress the project to construction.
23. The following table provides outline dates for delivery:

#	Milestone or Phase	Date
1	Initiation – Project Initiation Document and preparation	Complete
2	Route profiling and outline phasing	Complete
3	Public consultation and exhibitions	Complete
4	Land negotiations, and Phase 1 Planning Application submission	Complete
5	Board approval to construct Phase 1 scheme	Autumn 2016
6	Detailed design, preparation of contract documents and appointment of contractor for Phase 1	Summer 2016 to Spring 2017
7	Finalise necessary land and permissions for Phase 1 and mobilise contractor.	Summer 2017 to Autumn 2017
8	Finalise Phase 2 in readiness for Planning Application	Summer 2016 to Spring 2018
9	Construction of standalone phases (those north of Coldhams Lane first, as they are not dependant upon development sites)	2017 to 2020

## **Implications**

24. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

### ***Financial and Other Resources***

The current budget of £8.4m is felt to be appropriate

### ***Legal***

No significant legal implications have been identified at this stage, although they may emerge as the project progresses through statutory processes.

### ***Staffing***

Project management is undertaken by Cambridgeshire County Council's Major Infrastructure Delivery Team.

### ***Risk Management***

A comprehensive project risk register is available.

### ***Climate Change and Environmental***

The proposed measures have the potential to reduce congestion and improve air quality in the longer term through encouraging a shift towards sustainable transport modes.

### ***Consultation Responses and Communication***

Extensive public consultation has been undertaken. A Local Liaison Forum has been established.

### ***Community Safety***

The largely traffic free nature of the new route will make for safer journeys away from motor traffic.

## **Background papers**

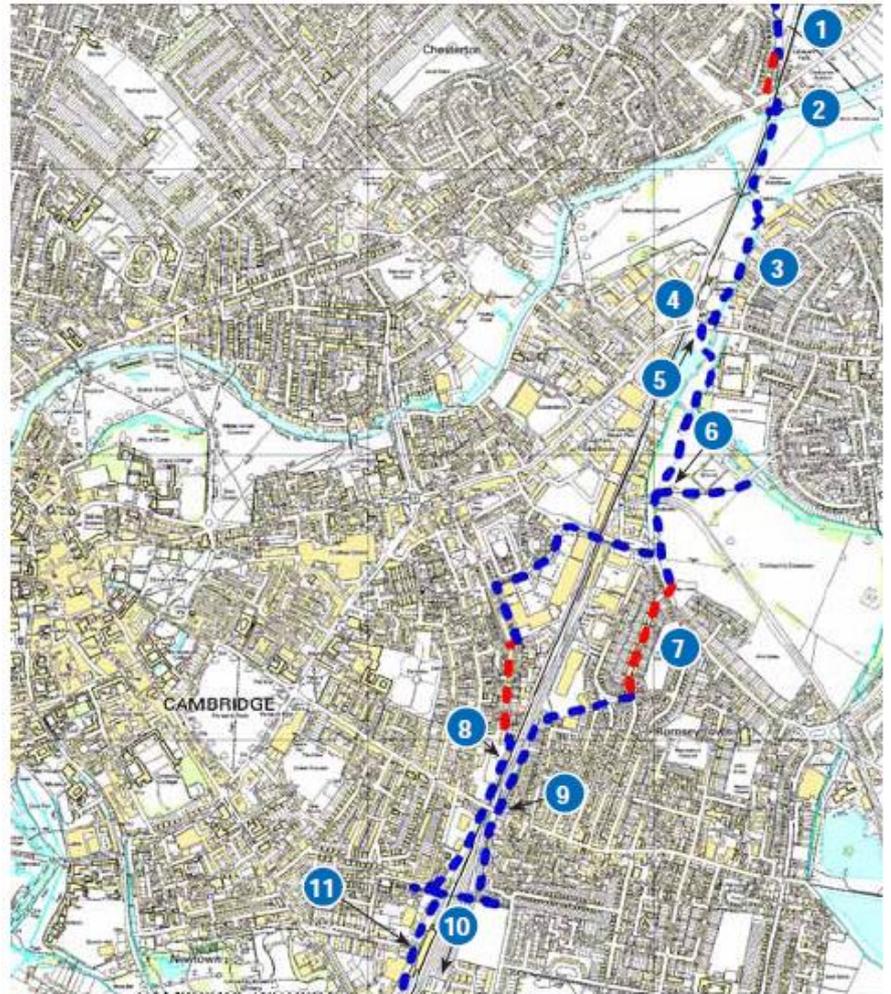
No background papers were relied upon in the writing of this report.

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## PLAN 1 – Proposed route

The outline of the route can be described as follows:

1. Planned link to new rail station at Chesterton and The Busway cycle and pedestrian route to St Ives.
2. New bridge over the Cam alongside the mainline railway bridge (a separately funded project).
3. Cambridge, Past, Present and Future's land makes the crucial link between Coldham's Common and Ditton Meadows.
4. The Leper Chapel (Chapel of St Mary Magdalene) would become a focus of the route and enhanced by landscaping.
5. New access under Newmarket Road.
6. Existing underpass under Ipswich Line.
7. From Coldham's Common along Brampton Road or Cromwell Road and through the planned Ridgeon site development.
8. The route to the west of the railway line crossing the existing cycling bridge, links through the Beehive Centre, along Ainsworth Rd and along the edge of the City Council's Mill Road Depot.
9. Pass under Mill Road side arches on both sides of the railway, thereby avoiding dangerous crossings.
10. Along the railway line to the Carter Bridge from Devonshire Road to Rustat Road.
11. From Carter Bridge to The Busway via the main Rail Station



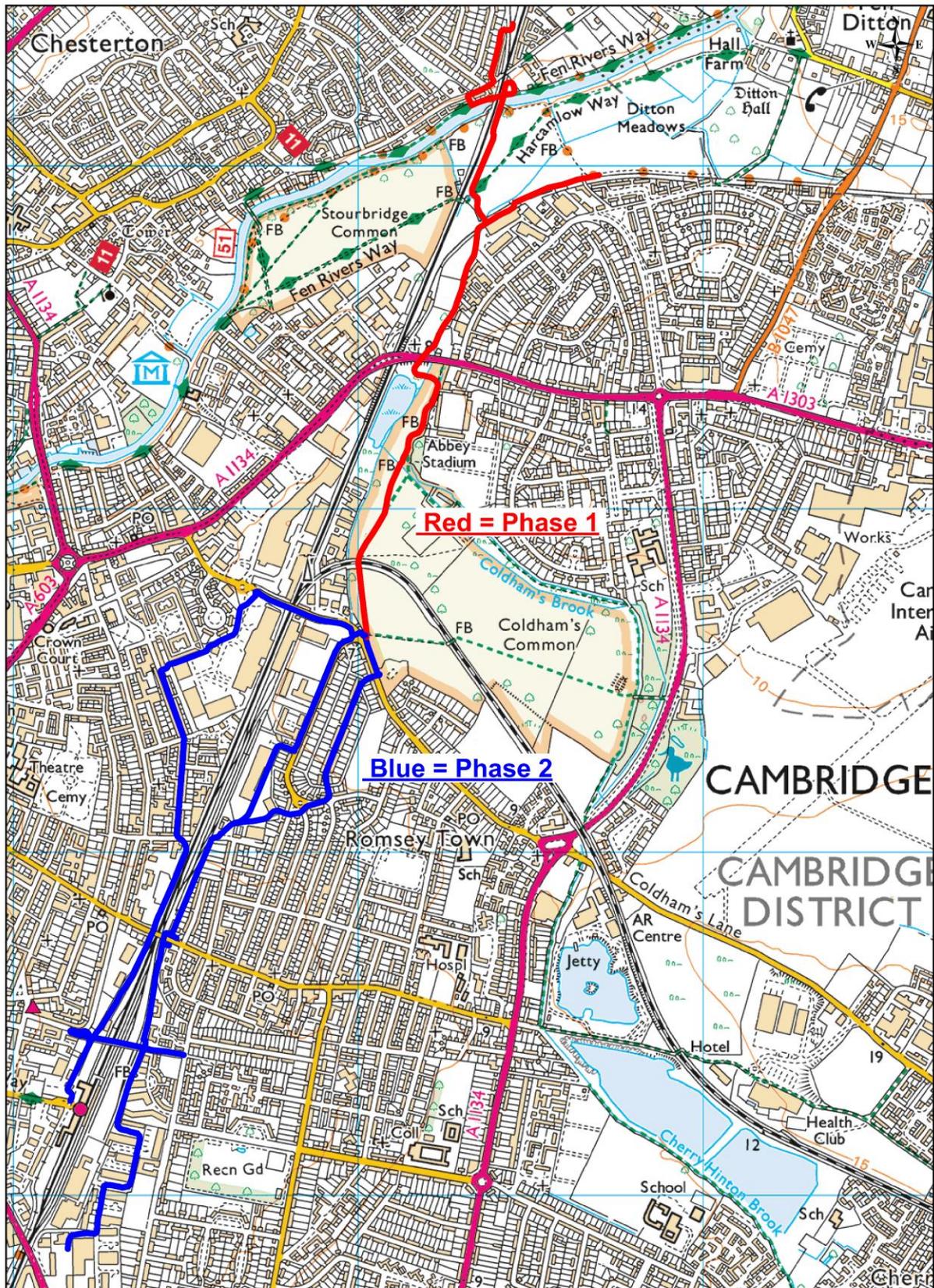
Map showing the proposed route of the Chisholm Trail from Cambridge Central Station to the planned Cambridge North Station at Chesterton

### KEY

— On quiet roads

— Traffic free sections and paths

# PLAN 2 – Scheme Phasing



Scale (at A3): 1:10000

Centred at: 547326,258594

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### Possible Bridge Location

