

**Forward Plan reference number:** FP/596/12/19

<b>Report title:</b> Chelmsford City Growth Package: Hybrid cycleway - New Street, Chelmsford	
<b>Report to:</b> Councillor Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure	
<b>Report author:</b> Andrew Cook, Director for Highways & Transportation ( <a href="mailto:Andrew.cook@essex.gov.uk">Andrew.cook@essex.gov.uk</a> )	
<b>Date:</b> 20 December 2019	<b>For:</b> Decision
<b>Enquiries to:</b> Ian Turner, Major Projects Sponsor, Tel 0333 136890, e-mail <a href="mailto:iturner@essex.gov.uk">iturner@essex.gov.uk</a>	
<b>County Divisions affected:</b> Chelmsford	

## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report relates to a hybrid cycleway improvement scheme (“the Scheme”) on New Street, Chelmsford between Rectory Lane and Victoria Road as part of a series of highway capital improvements across the city under the Chelmsford City Growth Package (“CCGP”).

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve the construction of hybrid cycleway improvements on New Street, Chelmsford.

## 3. Summary of issue

- 3.1 ECC has secured grant funding from SELEP to deliver a range of transport improvement measures under the CCGP. This proposal is consistent with the conditions attached to the grant funding.
- 3.2 The purpose of the Scheme is to provide a continual signed cycle route suitable for all users along New Street to replace the existing advisory cycle lane. This Scheme improves the cycle facility to a permanent cycle facility which is a safer and less confusing route for use by cyclists and all non-motorised users.
- 3.3 ECC and Essex Highways have developed a number of objectives for the CCGP project that align with the SELEP funding requirements and the Scheme promotes the following three objectives:
  - Improved Connectivity – to improve connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists between the University and the Chelmsford City Centre, as well as cyclists using the east to west link through Brook Street.

- Sustainable Transport Offer – to offer an attractive and effective choice in provision of sustainable travel to increase use and reduce pressure on the road network
- Healthier Environment – promoting walking and cycling to reduce the impact of air pollution and raise health standards.

3.4 The proposed improvements along New Street Chelmsford replace the existing advisory cycle lanes with improved cycle facilities along both sides of the road by introducing a kerbed cycle lane independent to the footway. These hybrid cycle lanes (cycle lane at a higher level than the carriageway and at a lower level than the footway) will necessitate changes to the Highway such as realigning existing kerbs and constructing new ones with associated drainage infrastructure and surfacing undertaken to suit. Where these changes are not possible due to space restrictions, the facility will be provided by use of white lining or shared facilities, both of which are still an improvement on the current arrangement.

3.5 The Scheme also includes a parallel crossing (for pedestrians and cyclists) just north of the railway bridge, to provide a link from Brook Street (east side from Old Springfield) to the new development (west side) leading to the Railway Station, so benefits the east to west corridor as well as the north / south. This crossing complements the route perfectly and comprises the construction of a new dropped kerb, white lining, surfacing and associated lighting works (both street lighting and belisha beacons). Advisory cycle lanes will be used where the shared segregated and hybrid facilities are not possible.

3.6 The Scheme helps to facilitate and improve health and wellbeing of the residents of Essex and visitors to the City by encouraging a switch to cycling and walking as a mode of transport. It will also provide access to work, education and training and essential services and leisure activities.

3.7 A high-level public consultation attended by members of the public, residents and local interest groups was held over the summer 2017. Following that consultation the Scheme was selected to be part of the CCGP to provide sustainable modes of travel and the Scheme was formally advertised in the press and via Public Notices placed on site on 10 October 2019. The advertising of the Scheme led to representations from one consultee in particular and the details of which (including responses and additional comments) can be found in Appendix A but are summarised under broad headings as follows;

- (i) Adding in additional cycle facilities for non-confident cyclists between Marconi Road and New Street.

This concern was addressed by highlighting two alternative options for non confident cyclists, both of which form part of the design but these alternatives were not accepted by the objector.

- (ii) Proposal to move the parallel crossing further north.

ECC's responded explaining that the original zebra crossing point was fixed by a planning condition and was upgraded to include cyclists. The option to move it simply is not available.

- (iii) The width and position of the proposed northbound advisory cycle lane in front of the layby appears to put cyclists in conflict with parked cars.

ECC responded to explain that the design allowed for an extra width between parked cars and cyclists to mitigate this issue.

- (iv) The segregated footway / cycle route should have a raised table across all the side roads to make cyclist presence more obvious and to give them a priority.

ECC explained that this would be inappropriate as the hybrid cycle way passes in front of the side road junctions. The cyclists already have the priority of being on the main carriageway.

- (v) Suggestions regarding the cycle direction signing.

ECC responded and referred to the cycling strategy and the rationale behind the signing decisions.

- (vi) It was suggested that the proposals shown on the plans and notice do not seem deliverable from observations on site.

ECC responded on the basis that this observation did not have merit.

- 3.8 Following further correspondence from the consultee, additional responses were sent but the representations made have not been withdrawn.
- 3.9 All representations have been considered carefully and it is recommended that the Scheme proceeds as advertised.
- 3.10 The proposed works will be carried out by Ringway Jacobs or their sub-contractors pursuant to the Essex Highways Contract. ECC will carry out an audit on all works within the CCGP to ensure value for money is being achieved.
- 3.11 The Scheme as advertised is set out in Appendix C.

## **4. Options**

### **4.1 Option 1 - Implement the Scheme as proposed and advertised.**

Following careful consideration of the representations raised in opposition of the Scheme, the recommendation is to continue with the proposed improvement works and for the Scheme to be implemented as originally designed, safety audited and advertised. The Scheme would be subject to monitoring and further Road Safety Audits after implementation. The Scheme complies with the conditions attached to the grant funding.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

### **4.2 Option 2 - Incorporate some or all of the representations made by consultees.**

The Scheme design already incorporates as many of the representations as possible. The reasons for not agreeing to some of the representations are well founded in that they do not comply with policy, design or planning conditions. It is also noted and accepted that there may be other representations which could fall under the bracket of an alternative design opinion.

As the representations cannot be reasonably accommodated, it is not recommended to pursue this option.

### **4.3 Option 3 – do nothing and abandon the Scheme**

This is not recommended as it would mean residents of Essex and visitors to Chelmsford will not benefit from the Scheme that the consultations identified as a requirement. Instead, they would continue to rely solely cars or other vehicles as a mode of transport and the Highway network will struggle with the increase in demand from economic and residential development.

## **5. Issues for consideration**

### **5.1 Financial implications**

#### **5.1.1 Proceeding with the Scheme in line with Option 1 (from Section 4 above), has already been identified within the CCGP budget and the construction cost allowed for. Proceeding with this Scheme will not manifest as a change to the budget as it has already been apportioned.**

## **5.2 Legal implications**

5.2.1 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 gives the Council a statutory duty to exercise its traffic functions to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic of all kinds, including pedestrians and to provide suitable and adequate parking facilities. So far as practical the Council is also required to have regard to:

- (a) the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises;
- (b) the effect on the amenities of any locality affected so as to preserve or improve the amenities of the areas through which the roads run;
- (c) the importance of facilitating the passage of buses and their passengers.

ECC should ensure that the Scheme is in accordance with these duties.

5.2.2 The Traffic Regulation Orders required to carry out the Scheme are already in place.

5.2.3 The Scheme cannot be implemented until consultation process has been resolved or formally considered by the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure which is the purpose of this Report.

5.2.3 The Scheme must comply with the conditions of the grant funding awarded by SELEP.

## **6. Equality and Diversity implications**

6.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc. on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

6.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

6.3 The equality impact assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular

characteristic. The scheme proposals will have a positive effect on all members of society by providing greater flexibility and choice of means of access around the City.

## **7.List of appendices**

Appendix A: The responses and actions in response to the representations from the party who responded to the scheme proposals advertising.

Appendix B: Equality Impact Assessment.

Appendix C: Advertised Scheme

## **8.Background Papers**

None

<b>I approve the above recommendations set out above for the reasons set out in the report.</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Councillor Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure</b>	30.12.19

**In consultation with:**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Director Highways and Transportation</b>  <b>Andrew Cook</b>	24.12.19
<b>Head of Major Projects</b>  <b>Erwin Deppe</b>  <b>Grahame Wickenden on Behalf of Erwin Deppe</b>	20.12.19
<b>Director, Legal and Assurance (Monitoring Officer)</b>  <b>Katie Bray on Behalf of Paul Turner</b>	20.12.19