

Report to Norwich Highways Agency committee
16 March 2017

Report of Head of city development services

Subject Transport for Norwich – Bluebell Road cycling improvements

Item

13

Purpose

To consider responses from consultation and approve installation of Bluebell Road cycling improvements scheme.

Recommendation

To:

- (1) approve the installation of the measures shown on plan Nos CCAG2-28-PH2-007 and 008, including :-
 - (a) A zebra with cycle crossing facilities on a raised table on Bluebell Road just north of the slip road to Newmarket Road
 - (b) Widening of the existing cycle path / footpath on the west side of Bluebell Road from its junction with South Park Avenue to the slip road to Newmarket Road
 - (c) Provide mitigation planting to the tree / hedge line on the west side of Bluebell Road
 - (d) Widening and conversion of the north side footpath on the Bluebell Road slip road to Newmarket Road to a shared cycle path / footpath
- (2) ask the head of city development services to carry out the necessary statutory legal procedures to
 - (a) Confirm the Bluebell Road slip road cycle order.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority a safe, clean and low carbon city

Financial implications

£320,000 to be funded from the City Cycling Ambition Grant and a further £44,000 from other highways maintenance budgets.

Ward/s: Eaton

Cabinet member: Councillor Bremner - Environment and sustainable development

Contact officers

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Background documents

None

Report

Background

1. This scheme covers a strategic neighbourhood link on the cycle network. This is a well used cycle link connecting the blue pedalway in Eaton to the University of East Anglia (UEA) and City Academy.
2. Proposals include widening the southern section of the existing shared footpath/cycle path on Bluebell Road and installing a zebra crossing with parallel cycle crossing facilities on a raised table north of the slip road to Newmarket Road. The footpath on the north side of that slip road would also be widened and converted to a shared footpath/cycle path to join the existing footpath/cycle path on Newmarket Road.
3. Details can be seen on the consultation plans CCAG2-28-PH2-007 and 008, attached as appendices 2 and 3.

Public consultation

4. In December 2016, the head of city development services in consultation with the ward councillors and chair and vice chair of NHAC gave permission to advertise these proposals. The consultation was carried out from 20 January to 20 February 2017.
5. Details of the proposal were advertised in the local press, road notices were erected, statutory consultees and transportation consultees were directly informed. 126 local residents and businesses were written to and details were posted on the web sites of Norwich City Council and Norfolk County Council.
6. Six responses were received. Four from residents and two from stakeholders. A summary of all responses and officer comments can be seen attached as appendix1.
7. The main concern from residents was the removal of the grass strip between the existing cycle path and the road. This was felt to be important to the aesthetics of the road environment and added a safety area between cyclist and vehicles. One point raised was the improvements needed to extend further, from the junction with Eaton Street to the UEA. One resident objected to the footpath on the slip road converted to a shared use path and suggested it would be cheaper to paint a cycle lane on the road.
8. A response from First bus stated they were disappointed a bus lane would not be provided along the slip road as congested traffic slow bus progress and were concerned the proposed zebra would cause more traffic delays.
9. Norwich cycling campaign welcomed the widening of the cycle path / footpath on Bluebell Road, but was disappointed it was not extended from Eaton Street to the UEA. They also agreed with the priority crossing at the Bartram Mowers access.

Considerations

10. The existing shared cycle path / footpath on Bluebell Road is below the recommended width for this type of path. The cycle path / footpath cannot be widened to the west into the tree line as this would be too detrimental to the environment and ecology of this area. Most of these trees are healthy so it is not acceptable to remove them. The small strip of grass on the road side of the cycle path is patchy in places and difficult to maintain. This does provide a green lane effect to the roadscape, but is not considered an important asset to the ecology of the area. Our landscape officer has agreed that the loss of the grass strip could be mitigated by extra planting in the existing tree / hedge row. The only other option would be to widen the footpath into the road. This would increase the cost to an extent it would be undeliverable within the budget and would therefore stop any improvement to this narrow shared path.
11. It is common practice to have a shared cycle path / footpath directly adjacent to the road, there are many examples in Norwich on roads with traffic levels higher than on Bluebell Road. The proposed width of path will allow easier passage for all users .
12. Concerns have been raised about the detail across the access to the new development on Bluebell Road. This is intended to be treated the same as the cycle path / footpath priority junction at the Bartram mowers access as shown on plan No CCAG2-28-PH2-008, attached as appendix 3. Highways engineers are arranging this with the developer.
13. Concerns were raised to the extent of the improvements. Improvements are proposed to connect this section of cycle way to the proposed cycleway on Eaton Street, but these are not finalised at the moment. They will be consulted on with stakeholders at a later stage. Improvements to the north section of Bluebell Road have not been considered with this scheme as the necessary funds to do so are not available at this time.
14. The request from First Bus for a bus lane on the slip road has been considered however, the road is not wide enough to accommodate a bus lane as well as widening the footpath to enable it to be shared use. The volume of buses using the slip road is very low compared to other locations where bus lanes have been provided. The zebra crossing will make a very minimal contribution to congestion in the area.

Timescales

15. Subject to the agreement of this committee is it proposed that the scheme should be constructed towards the end of 2017.

Summary

16. It is recommended that the Bluebell Road cycle scheme is installed as advertised with extra planting in the tree / hedge line of Bluebell Road to mitigate the loss of grass verge..

Integrated impact assessment



NORWICH
City Council

Report author to complete

Committee:	Norwich Highways Agency Committee
Committee date:	16 March 2017
Director / Head of service	Head of city development services
Report subject:	Transport for Norwich – Bluebell Road cycling improvements
Date assessed:	02/02/2017
Description:	To consider the responses to consultation on the Bluebell Road cycle improvement project and agree installation of the proposals.

	Impact			
Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Finance (value for money)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This scheme is judged to be value for money
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ICT services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Economic development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This scheme will help to improve cycle provisions in Norwich and promote a safe, clean and low carbon city.
Financial inclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This scheme promotes financial inclusion by encouraging inexpensive forms of transport.
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)				
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Safeguarding children and adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This scheme is designed to make the road environment safer for vulnerable pedestrians and cyclists
<u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Human Rights Act 1998	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Health and well being	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The scheme promotes cycling and walking, both are proven beneficial to health. It also provides better facilities to encourage people to chose more sustainable forms of transport

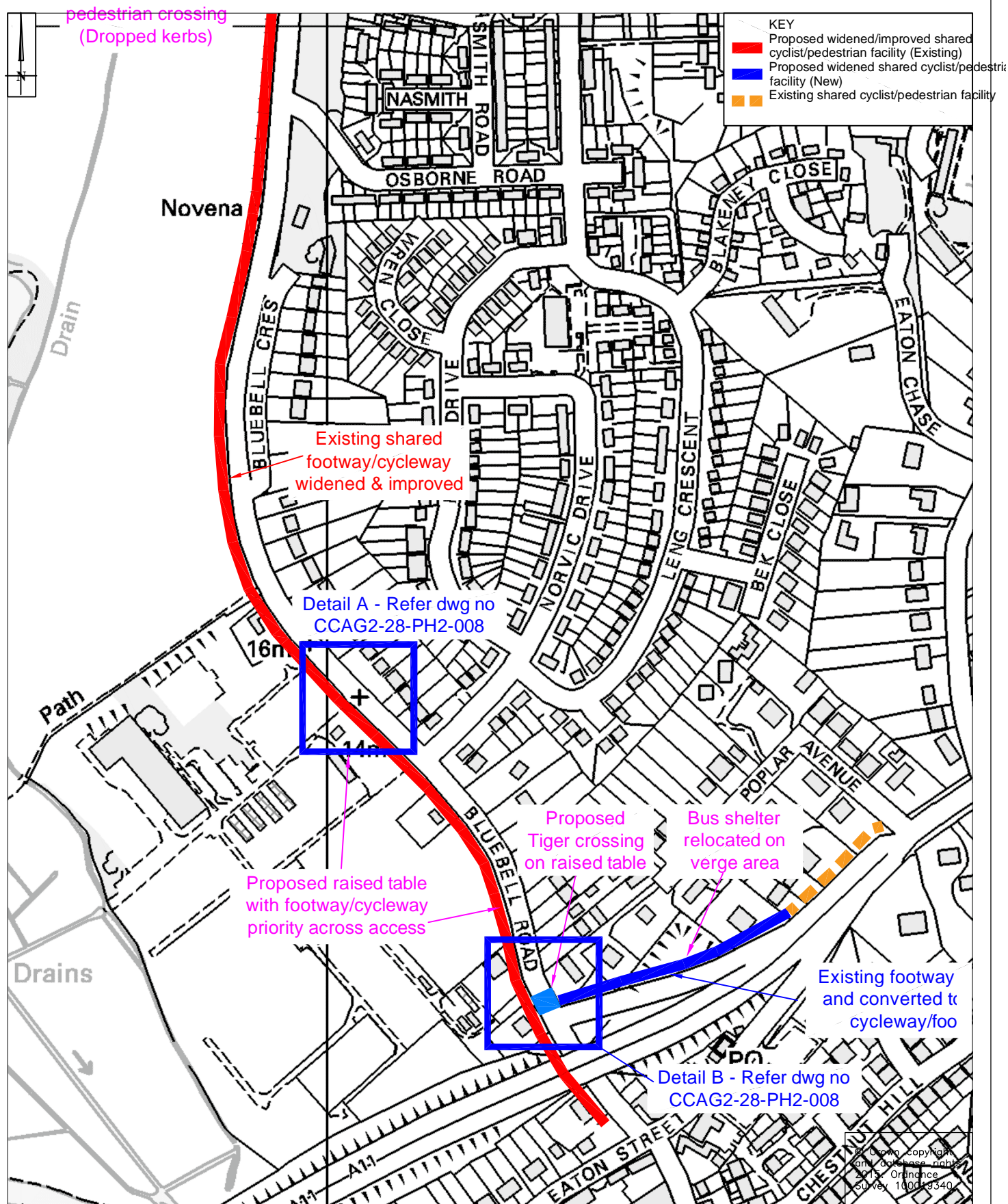
	Impact			
Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Relations between groups (cohesion)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This scheme is designed to help all pedestrians and cyclists.
Eliminating discrimination & harassment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Advancing equality of opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Walking and cycling are low cost forms of transport, available to a wider group of people.
Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This scheme encourages more sustainable forms of transport.
Natural and built environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This scheme is designed to enhance the local environment, mitigation planting will be installed to compensate the loss of grass verge..
Waste minimisation & resource use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pollution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	By encouraging walking and cycling, there should be less pollution from motorised traffic
Sustainable procurement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Energy and climate change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The scheme contributes to the corporate priority 'a safe, clean and low carbon city' by encouraging cycle use, reducing car use and CO2 emissions

		Impact			
(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments	
Risk management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	By improving the current facilities and providing a zebra crossing on Bluebell Road, road safety will improve. There will be some risks during construction and this will be managed by officers and contractor to reduce those risks.	

Recommendations from impact assessment	
Positive	
The scheme should be installed as designed to give better facilities to the cyclist and pedestrian.	
Negative	
It is understood that visbily impaired people are concerned with shared footpath / cycle path facilites. However, by making the existing facility wider this should reduce any conflicts and the new zebra crossing will help pedstrians and cyclists to cross Bluebell Road safely.	
Neutral	
Issues	
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Responder	Comments	Officers response
Resident	Concerned with removing grass strip as keeps cyclist away from traffic and is beneficial to the environment. Change to footpath on slip road is not needed; it would be cost effective to put cycle lane in road. Should be more consideration and better facilities for pedestrians.	The grass area needs to be removed to allow widening of the cycle path. The grass does enhance the streetscape but is not of high value for the ecology of the area. Extra planting will be considered to mitigate the loss of grass. On the slip road, the conversion of the footpath to shared foot path / cycle path is necessary to join the existing facility on the west of Bluebell road, across the zebra crossing and up to the existing shared footpath / cycle path on Newmarket Road. To bring the cyclists onto the road and then back onto the footpath would be a disjointed route for cyclists. Pedestrians will benefit from wider and smoother footpaths on Bluebell Road and the zebra to help cross the road.
Resident	Supports the improvement to surface of existing cycle path / footpath, zebra crossing and new shared path on slip road. Object to removal of grass verge area for landscape reasons and keeps cyclist away from traffic.	Support welcome. The grass area needs to be removed as above, but planting will help mitigate the loss. It is common practice to have a shared cycle path / footpath directly next to a road. The necessary road markings and signs will be used to ensure safety.
Resident	Objects to removal of grass strip for landscape reasons. where should mobility scooters position themselves on path? What will the access to new development be like, drainage concerns and buses manoeuvring at the junction with the slip road.	The grass area needs to be removed to allow widening of the cycle path. The grass does enhance the look of the road but is not of high value for the ecology of the area. Extra planting on the verge will be considered to mitigate the grass strip. Mobility scooters will need to use the shared path as any other path and consider other road users, keeping to one side to allow traffic to pass would be helpful. It is intended that the access arrangements for the new development will be the same as the proposed access details for Bartrum Mowers premises. The scheme has been designed to enhance drainage and allow easy passage of buses.

Responder	Comments	Officers response
Resident	Scheme needs to be joined to Eaton Street proposals. What will the access to new development be like, will all surface be improved on path, are there any changes to bus stop near Norvic Drive, Lamp columns will be in path, why do improvements stop at South Park Avenue, why dropped kerbs at South Park Ave (do not need to encourage use by pedestrians), other suggestions for further north.	There are proposed works to ensure there is an improved connection with the cycle lane on Eaton Street. The new development will have the same entrance treatment as Bartram Mowers site has. On Bluebell Road it is proposed to surface the whole path when it is widened. No changes to other bus stops. Lamp columns will be moved. Cyclists and pedestrians need to access the shared cycle path / footpath to and from South Park Avenue. This scheme covers only the south section of Bluebell Road from South Park Avenue to the slip road to Newmarket Road, the north section of this path will be considered when funds are available.
First Bus	Would have preferred a bus lane up the slip road to Newmarket Road as there are delays during morning peak traffic. Concerned with the crossing on Bluebell Road as it may cause traffic delays.	There is insufficient space to provide a bus lane on the slip road. The cost of widening the carriageway could not be funded under a cycle improvement scheme. It is not thought that the zebra crossing will cause traffic delays. The effects will be less than the existing zebra near North Park Avenue as it is estimated the amount of pedestrians and cyclists using this crossing will be less.
Norwich Cycling Campaign	Welcome the improvement to cycle path / footpath width and surface and priority at side junctions. Welcome the connection to the Newmarket Road Cycle path / footpath by the slip road. Disappointed the path improvements are not connected to Eaton crossroads and from South Park Avenue to the UEA.	Support welcome. As stated above there will be improvements to the connection with Eaton Street, however the northern section is not considered in this scheme because of budget limitations.



Funded by:

DRAWING TITLE
 Bluebell Road, Norwich
 Consultation Plan

Tom McCabe
 Executive Director of
 Community and Environmental Services
 Norfolk County Council
 County Hall
 Martineau Lane
 Norwich NR1 2SG

REV.	DESCRIPTION	CHECKED	DATE

INIT.	DATE	DRAWING No.
SURVEYED BY	OS	2016
DESIGNED BY	VV	12/16
DRAWN BY	VV	12/16
CHECKED BY	LA	12/16
PROJECT TITLE		Bluebell Road - Shareduse Cycle Facility
SCALE	FILE No.	
NTS @ A3	PE4110	

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 100019340

Detail - A

Widen footway/cycleway

Proposed flush footpath crossing at Bartram Mowers access

Detail - B

Widen footway/cycleway by taking away grass strip near kerbline

Realign junction kerbline

Footway/cycleway widened into carriageway

Proposed Tiger crossing on raised table

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Funded by:

Transport for Norwich
Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services
Norfolk County Council
County Hall
Martineau Lane
Norwich NR1 2SG

NEWANGLIA
Local Enterprise Partnership for Norfolk and Suffolk

DRAWING TITLE

Bluebell Road, Norwich
Consultation Plan - Detail A & B

Tom McCabe
Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services
Norfolk County Council
County Hall
Martineau Lane
Norwich NR1 2SG

REV.	DESCRIPTION	CHECKED	DATE

SURVEYED BY	INIT.	DATE	DRAWING No.
OS	OS	2016	CCAG2-28-PH2-008
DESIGNED BY	VV	12/16	PROJECT TITLE
DRAWN BY	VV	12/16	Bluebell Road-Shareduse Cycle Facility
CHECKED BY	LA	12/16	SCALE
			1:250 @ A3
			FILE No.
			PE4110