

**CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, WASTE, STREET SCENE & FLOODING –
CLLR DR MARK McCLELLAND**

HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND WASTE SERVICE

OFFICER CONTACT: Kirsty Rose, 01225 756182, Kirsty.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk

REFERENCE: HTW-32-21

**DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT EMERGENCY ACTIVE TRAVEL FUND – TRANCHE 2
PROPOSED CYCLE SCHEME – HILPERTON TO MELKSHAM**

Purpose of Report

To consider the results of the public consultation and technical assessment on the Tranche 2 Active Travel cycle scheme between Hilperton and Melksham and recommend a way forward.

Consultation

The consultation went live on the Council website on 25 June 2021, closing on 18 July. In addition to a press release highlighting the consultation, properties adjacent to the proposed routes were sent letters informing occupants of the consultation and how to give their feedback. Letters also went to a selection of residents in Trowbridge, Melksham, Hilperton and Semington inviting them to take part in the consultation.

Community Engagement Managers were asked to circulate information regarding the proposed scheme and consultation. The information was sent to the Trowbridge Area Board and Frontline Workers Network, which includes 70 partners and organisations. It was also shared on the Melksham 'Community Matters' website which reaches over 450 contacts within the Community Area.

During the consultation period a total of 531 comments were received.

This report was published on the Wiltshire Council Website with the "Intention to make a decision" by the Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene and Flooding. However, it was subject to further representations have been received and can be found in Appendix 5.

Options Considered

To:

- (i) Progress implementation of a cycle route utilising Byways HILP21, HILP22 and SEMI19A.
- (ii) Progress implementation of a cycle route utilising Byways HILP21, HILP22 and SEMI19A omitting the point closure on Devizes Road, Hilperton
- (iii) Progress implementation of an LTN1/20 compliant cycle route utilising the A361.
- (iii) Progress implementation of a non LTN1/20 compliant cycle route utilising the A361.

- (iv) Not implement a cycle route between Hilperton and Melksham and refer to Department of Transport for funding guidance.

Reason for Decision

Taking into consideration the content of this report, the route utilising byways HILP21, 22 and SEMI19 is the preferred option, and the implementation of the wider proposed scheme should proceed on that basis.

The removal of the Devizes Road point closure from the overall scheme at this time will allow for further consultation with the residents of Hilperton regarding this proposal. It is felt that there may not be sufficient support within the local community to pursue this at the current time. Whilst the inclusion of the point closure would have a positive impact for pedestrians and cyclists due to the removal of through traffic, Devizes Road is a suitably lightly trafficked, low speed route on which cycling and walking can be encouraged.

Wiltshire Council will progress the formal advertisement of the proposed point closure separate to the cycle scheme. This will allow statutory consultation to be undertaken, the outcome of which will inform the next steps for the closure.

The alternative route via the A361 should be considered for future implementation should funding allow; however, the financial implications to the Council are such that this cannot be progressed at this time.

DECISION MADE

I approve that Implementation of a cycle route utilising Byways HILP21, HILP22 and SEMI19A be progressed, omitting the point closure on Devizes Road, Hilperton from the overall scheme. The point closure on Devizes Road will be subject to further, separate, statutory consultation.

This decision was published on 02 December 2021 and will come into force on 10 December 2021.

The following supporting documents are attached:

- Appendix 1 – Route Option Plan
- Appendix 2 – Public Questionnaire
- Appendix 3 – Consultation Responses
- Appendix 4 – Environment Comparison Table
- Appendix 5 - Additional representations
- Appendix 6 – Officer response to representations

The following supporting documents are available from the officer named above:

None



Date1 December 2021.....

Cllr Dr Mark McClelland
Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene & Flooding

**CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, WASTE, STREET SCENE & FLOODING –
CLLR DR MARK McCLELLAND**

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**DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT EMERGENCY ACTIVE TRAVEL FUND – TRANCHE 2
PROPOSED CYCLE SCHEME – HILPERTON TO MELKSHAM**

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the results of the public consultation and technical assessment on the Tranche 2 Active Travel cycle scheme between Hilperton and Melksham and recommend a way forward.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. The use of consultation to help inform decision making aligns to the Business Plan – Strong Communities. “We want people in Wiltshire to be encouraged to take responsibility for their well-being, build positive relationships and to get involved, influence and take action on what is best for their own communities - we want residents to succeed to the best of their abilities and feel safe where they live and work”.

Background

3. In May 2020 the Secretary of State for Transport announced additional statutory guidance under the Traffic Management Act in response to Covid-19 and stated the Government's expectation that traffic authorities make significant changes to road layouts to make more space for pedestrians and cyclists.
4. It was announced that there would be funding to introduce such measures to enable social distancing and to encourage and sustain the increase in active travel as we emerge from the Covid-19 restrictions. This was initially called the Emergency Active Travel Fund. The fund was split into two tranches.
5. Tranche 1 funding was intended to help provide new temporary facilities for walking and cycling in the early months of the pandemic. Wiltshire Council delivered five pedestrian and cycling schemes across the county following a successful funding bid.
6. Tranche 2 funding is for temporary low cost and permanent walking and cycling schemes. The Department for Transport's (DfT) fund criteria are very specific in that the schemes must provide a meaningful reallocation of road space including on strategic corridors. It is also a requirement that schemes are built in accordance with the latest design standards for cycle infrastructure, Local Transport Note 1/20. These new standards are a step change in how cycle infrastructure should be built. This means, other than in short sections, new cycle lanes should have some form of physical segregation from motor traffic. DfT also states “schemes which do not follow this guidance will not be funded.”
7. The publication Gear Change: A Bold Vision for Cycling and Walking outlines the Government's plan for walking and cycling in conjunction with the new design guidance.

8. In July 2020 the DfT invited the Council to bid for funding under the Tranche 2 allocation for permanent measures to promote active travel. The bid amounted to £1.435 million and included schemes at the following locations:
 - a. A420 Bristol Road, Chippenham
 - b. Lowden Hill, Chippenham
 - c. Downton Road Hospital Path, Salisbury
 - d. Hilperton (Trowbridge) to Melksham via Semington
 - e. Easton Lane, cycle link between Chippenham and Corsham
9. In November 2020, the DfT confirmed that the Council had been awarded a conditional allocation of £681,000.
10. This funding amount was below the bid amount and is therefore insufficient to allow delivery of all the identified schemes.
11. Wiltshire Council undertook a public consultation in December 2020 regarding the Tranche 1 and Tranche 2 schemes. The consultation identified the two preferred schemes for implementation as being the Easton Lane cycle link between Corsham and Chippenham and the provision of a cycle route between Hilperton and Melksham via Semington.
12. Further public consultation has now taken place on those two schemes in order to invite comments from members of the public on the proposed cycle link on Easton Lane and with an opportunity to identify a preferred route option for the Hilperton to Melksham scheme. This report outlines the consultation response to the proposed Hilperton to Melksham scheme. A separate Cabinet Member Report has been prepared for Easton Lane, Chippenham.

Main Considerations for the Council

13. There is significant economic interaction between Trowbridge and the neighbouring town of Melksham. However, Melksham is not well connected to Trowbridge for non-car related methods of travel, with limited rail services and no cycle facility.
14. The proposed scheme will deliver a strategic cycle link between the two towns that will be an alternative to driving and public transport. The proposal is for a permanent scheme that links to other routes forming part of the wider Trowbridge and Melksham cycle networks providing a complementary and continuous route.
15. The scheme links Hilperton to Melksham via the village of Semington. Semington is identified as a lightly trafficked route benefiting from an existing point closure allowing through access for buses and cycles only. The scheme also involves the introduction of a point closure on Devizes Road, Hilperton to the west of Stourton Park to prohibit the through movement of motor vehicles creating a lightly trafficked route. A short section of shared use path adjacent to the A361 will be provided linking Devizes Road, Hilperton to a point south west of Trowbridge Rugby Club. At this point, there are two potential route options that have been put forward as part of the consultation.
16. Route 1 would provide a two-way cycle path utilising the verge on the northern side of the A361 between Hilperton and Semington, providing segregation from vehicles.
17. Route 2 would utilise the existing byways linking Hilperton and Semington with improvements to the surface and drainage to improve the route for cyclists.

18. While both routes would remove the need for cyclists to cycle on carriageway along the derestricted section of the A361, promoting safe active travel, they each have benefits and complications which have been outlined in the following table:

Route 1 – A361	Route 2 – Byways HILP21, HILP22 and SEMI9A
Provides a shorter more direct route between Hilperton and Semington	Provides a longer, less direct route between Hilperton and Melksham
Street lighting can be provided along the A361 to illuminate the route at night	Street lighting will not be provided in order to reduce the impact on local wildlife
Construction of a fully surfaced shared use path, specifically for pedestrians and cyclists, in the verge provides segregation from vehicular traffic	The by-ways offer a lightly trafficked route for pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists but vehicle access will be retained.
Will improve pedestrian facility as there is no existing footway	Improvements to the surface to fill existing defects and reduce ponding will be required, but full resurfacing will not be undertaken. The works are unlikely to resolve all existing issues on the by-ways such as occasional flooding.
Good forward visibility for cyclists and pedestrians resulting in reduced potential for conflict between users	Forward visibility between cyclists and other users is reduced and may result in potential conflict points.
Less isolated route due to passing vehicles	Route is isolated from properties and passing traffic
Less need for ongoing maintenance due to pedestrian and cycle only use – no motor vehicle use to increase deterioration of the service	Deterioration of the surface may occur more regularly due to the access for farm traffic etc.
Will be adjacent to winter maintenance route and therefore likely to receive some treatment in icy conditions	Does not form part of the winter maintenance route
Will require removal of trees and vegetation alongside the A361 to accommodate the shared use path	Pedestrian comfort level may be reduced by presence of cyclists
The route may be more attractive for commuting cyclists	The route may be more attractive to leisure cyclists
Will require changes to the existing lay-by opposite Paxcroft Farm	

19. Upon reaching Semington, the route utilises the lightly trafficked road through the bypassed village until meeting the junction with the A350. At this point, the cycle route will link with the existing shared use path leading into Melksham by utilising the existing Toucan crossing across the A350. It is intended to upgrade this crossing and the link to it to improve upon the current facility.
20. A plan outlining the route options can be found in **Appendix 1**.

Consultation Information

21. The DfT on 9 December issued the Active Travel Fund Public Opinion Surveys Good Practise Guidance on how it expected Highway Authorities to engage and consult with local communities prior to the introduction of Active Travel Schemes. Using this guidance, a survey was prepared to consult upon the Tranche 2 cycle scheme proposed for the Hilperton to Melksham route. A copy of the survey can be found in **Appendix 2**.
22. The consultation went live on the Council website on 25 June 2021, closing on 18 July 2021. In addition to a press release highlighting the consultation, properties adjacent to the proposed routes were sent letters informing occupants of the consultation and how to give their feedback. Letters were also sent to randomly selected addresses within Hilperton, Melksham, Trowbridge and Semington inviting residents to take part in the consultation.
23. Community Engagement Managers were asked to circulate information regarding the proposed scheme and consultation. The information was sent to the Trowbridge Area Board and Frontline Workers Network, which includes 70 partners and organisations. It was also shared on the Melksham 'Community Matters' website which reaches over 450 contacts within the Community Area.
24. During the consultation period a total of 531 comments were received.
25. Responses to the consultation were also received from Cllr Ernie Clark, Hilperton division, and Semington Parish Council.
26. Both Cllr Clark and the Parish Council stated a preference for the use of the northern route along the A361, with concern raised that improvement to the surface of the byways may increase vehicular use.
27. It was noted that cyclists currently use the by-ways; however, this is not normally on road bikes.
28. Further comments were received from Semington Parish Council, Cllr Jonathon Seed (Melksham Without) and two members of the public following the publishing of the Cabinet Member decision report.
29. The comments received relate primarily to concerns around lighting of the route, the impact upon wildlife and the choice of surface material for the affected byways. These comments can be found in **Appendix 5** with officer responses in **Appendix 6**.

Consultation Responses

30. A breakdown of the responses showing answers to all questions can be found in **Appendix 3**. The summary below outlines the common themes within the responses.

Provision for equestrians

31. A significant proportion of comments related to the provision of routes for horse riding and ensuring access for horse riding is retained.
32. Respondents are concerned that the utilising the by-ways as part of the cycle network, equestrians will face increased conflict with other users of the route with little option to use alternative routes.
33. Horse riding is already permitted on the by-ways between Hilperton and Semington and this right will not be removed. Cycling is also already permitted on the by-ways, which are open to all traffic although an increase in use by cyclists is anticipated should the scheme progress using the by-ways as the preferred route.
34. A route adjacent to the A361 would not cater for equestrian use. Such provision alongside a high-speed A road, with limited separation from the carriageway, would not be recommended. It is considered that these responses relate primarily to the proposed utilisation of the byway, rather than the proposed provision adjacent to the A361 as equestrian use is already likely to be low due to no current provision.

Provision of a suitable surface

35. A number of comments were received raising concern around the provision of a suitable surface, particularly in relation to Route 2 using the byways. Cyclists request a smooth surface, such as tarmac, to accommodate all types of cycle; however, other respondents stated that a tarmac surface would not be suitable for equestrian use.
36. The disparity between surface requirements for cycles and horses is noted by the design team. The team will review guidance from The Countryside Agency, British Horse Society and the DfT when identifying surfacing materials for the route.
37. It should be noted that much of the existing by-way surface is metalled, albeit in poor condition. To provide a facility that meets the aim of LTN1/20, the provision of a new stable surface throughout the length is considered essential.

Proposed point closure on Devizes Road, Hilperton

38. The proposed point closure on Devizes Road, Hilperton to the west of the Stourton Park junction is included within this scheme to prevent through use of Devizes Road by motor vehicles creating a more pedestrian and cycle friendly route. This position is proposed as a result of information gathered during a local consultation undertaken by Hilperton Parish Council in 2019. A number of respondents commented specifically on this aspect.
39. Devizes Road is a C class route bound by residential properties and providing access to the residential areas of Ashton Road, Cedar Tree Close, Centenary Close and Stourton Park. Stourton Park leads on to Norris Road, Hanewell Rise and Blue Hills Walk.
40. A 20mph speed restriction, with associated traffic calming in the form of raised tables, is in place along with a 7.5t weight restriction (except for loading).
41. Data collected in October 2021 recorded approximately 2,000 vehicle movements per day on Devizes Road. The data suggests that up to 1,500 vehicle movements per day may be classified as through movement.
42. Opinions on this aspect of the scheme are mixed. A number of respondents commented in favour of this proposal as through use of Devizes Road as an alternative to the A361 has been highlighted as an ongoing concern for residents. However, a considerable

number of respondents raised concerns about the impact of such a closure on residents and the increase in journey distance/time. This would impact upon residents of Devizes Road and the residential areas accessed from it, as well as those living in the wider Hilperton area.

43. To aid enforcement, the proposed prohibition of motor vehicles (forming the point closure) has been kept to a minimum with no exception for access. The consequence of this is that residents wishing to access a point beyond the closure may be required to seek an alternative route via Trowbridge Road – A361 Hilperton Drive.
44. A Traffic Regulation Order is required for any such point closures; therefore, a further legal advertisement would be required should this element proceed, allowing all interested parties to comment.
45. Whilst Hilperton Parish Council has expressed a desire to prevent through traffic, and the proposed point closure achieves that while improving the route for cycles and pedestrians, it would be possible to suspend this element from the overall proposal without affecting the delivery of the cycle route as a whole and allow the Parish Council to undertake further consultation with both residents and the wider travelling public.

Technical Assessment

46. There are two routes that may be considered to form the central link of this route between Hilperton and Semington. Alongside the consultation process, a technical assessment of each option has been undertaken in accordance with *Local Transport Note 1/20 – Cycle Infrastructure Design*. This document sets out the design standards to be adhered to when designing and constructing new cycle infrastructure. It is expected that all cycle schemes are designed in accordance with this standard and highway authorities who do not meet these standards may have restrictions placed upon future government-led funding opportunities.

Route 1 - A361

47. The review demonstrated that a shared use path utilising the northern verge alongside the A361 is feasible, with cycles and pedestrians being segregated from motor vehicles; however, to meet the width requirements set out LTN1/20, widening of the northern verge into the carriageway would be required.
48. In addition to a 3 metre cycleway, the high-speed nature of the A361 necessitates a further 2 metre wide strip as a buffer between the carriageway and the cycleway. This is to provide protection to cyclists and pedestrians from passing vehicles. This widening of the verge directly affects the carriageway width on the A361. The carriageway width is currently consistent at 7.3 metres and a minimum width of 6.5 metres would be acceptable. To maintain a minimum width of 6.5 metres, widening of the carriageway into the southern verge is required.
49. Realignment of the carriageway would necessitate additional road construction along the 1.8 kilometre length of this section of the proposed cycle route, with full carriageway surfacing advised so as to eliminate the maintenance issues that arise from a longitudinal joint in the carriageway surfacing and reprofiling of the crossfall. In addition, relocation of drainage gullies and the associated underground pipe work would be required to ensure these features sit adjacent to an amended kerblines.
50. The construction costs associated with the realignment of the carriageway to facilitate a widened northern verge in line with LTN1/20 standards, alongside the works at Semington and Hilperton, are considered to be in the region of £1.8 million based on initial review.

This section of the A361 would require substantial traffic management during the works which are considered likely to take up to six months to complete.

51. The estimated cost of these works is considerably greater than the funding allocation from the DfT. Additionally, completion of construction to meet the March 2022 deadline set by the DfT is not possible.
52. Officers have identified that the construction of shared use path with a narrower buffer strip can be accommodated within the northern verge with limited kerb realignment, removing the need for carriageway realignment. This would not meet the standards set out in LTN1/20 and risks being deemed unacceptable by the DfT in relation to the funding stipulation.

Street Lighting

53. In order to make the route attractive to cyclists during the hours of darkness and to prevent glare from both vehicle and cycle headlights dazzling drivers and riders, the route along the A361 should be illuminated. This is in line with the guidance within LTN1/20.
54. Presently, this section of the A361 is unlit and provides a visual severance between conurbations. Introduction of lighting would remove this delineation between Hilperton and Semington.
55. The introduction of lighting is anticipated to have a detrimental impact upon commuting and foraging wildlife currently utilising this corridor.

Environment

56. A desk top review of the environmental impacts of both routes has been undertaken and a comparison table can be found in **Appendix 4**.
57. The A361 route is not within, nor within 2 kilometres of, an area of nationally designated landscape or biodiversity. It is not within an area subject to an Air Quality Management plan. There are numerous Historic Environment Records in close proximity but none adjacent to the route.
58. In addition to the impacts of lighting noted above, the required removal of semi-mature trees and vegetation along the northern verge would result in a loss of shelter and foraging opportunities for wildlife.
59. The scheme is unlikely to result in additional long term increases in air or noise pollution, although it must be noted that there may be additional noise and emissions during the construction period.
60. Further ecological surveys and assessment are required as part of any further design work on this route.

Route 2 – Byways HILP21, HILP22 and SEMI9A

61. The existing byways between Hilperton and Semington are presently open to all traffic. As well as being a popular walking and equestrian route, the byways provide vehicular access to adjacent fields. This level of access will remain.
62. Cycling is already permitted on the byways; however, this proposal would promote the route as part of the cycle network and be signed as such. To encourage increased use of

the route, it will be necessary to improve the current surface which is in poor condition and not suitable for all cycles.

63. The route along the byways is metalled in places but with areas of significant deterioration creating an uneven surface and areas in which surface water collects. Resurfacing works will be required to ensure a consistent, smooth surface is provided along with drainage works to manage surface water.
64. Whilst this will serve to create an improved surface for cyclists and pedestrians, as well as being most suitable for maintaining vehicular access, a tarmac surface may not be the most appropriate for equestrian use. There are concerns raised by the British Horse Society regarding smooth tarmac surfaces, particularly those using a finer aggregate and increased binder material, resulting in a loss of grip between the metal shoe of the horse and the surface resulting in slips. The choice of surfacing material, and friction properties of the surface, will need to be carefully considered to find a surface that is suitable for all users. Design guidance is available from the British Horse Society and The Countryside Agency to assist with this.
65. A softer surface material, such as an unbound surface or self-binding fine aggregate, would not be suitable given the motor vehicle use and would not cater for all cycles.
66. A review of the route has determined that the widths set out by LTN 1/20 for this multi-user route can be accommodated without any further widening. This means removal of hedgerows and other vegetation is not required, although substantive trimming of vegetation for maintenance purposes may form part of the proposed works.
67. The construction works required to improve the standard of this route along the byways, including the works at Semington and Hilperton, are estimated to be in the region of £612,000. The works can be accommodated within the Integrated Transport construction programme prior to March 2022.

Lighting

68. Lighting is not provided on the byway routes at present. A full system of street lighting to highway standards would be inappropriate for this route due the negative impact upon wildlife as well as the potential to encourage greater use by motor vehicles should the route appear to be part of the road network.
69. Low level solar lighting may be provided at intervals along the route to demarcate the route and provide some illumination for pedestrians and cyclists whilst limiting the impact on the surrounding area. However, there remains a concern that the isolated nature of the route would be a barrier to use by lone cyclist during the hours of darkness. A key element of LTN 1/20 is to ensure that routes are attractive to all users, all of the time.

Environment

70. As with the route along the A361, the site does not fall within, nor within 2 kilometres of, any areas of Nationally Designated Landscape or Biodiversity. It is not within an area subject to an Air Quality Management Plan. There are numerous Historic Environment Records in close proximity but none adjacent to the route.
71. The study recommends no lighting be installed on this route due to the detrimental impact upon wildlife. It also highlights the need for additional drainage as a result of the increase in impermeable surfacing along the route. Excavation for the works may take place in previously undisturbed ground.

72. During construction, there is likely to be disturbance to foraging and commuting wildlife.
73. Further ecological surveys and assessment are required as part of any further design work on this route.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

74. Overview and Scrutiny Committee has not yet been involved in this project or had oversight of the proposals. A report on Active Travel is on the forward plan for the Environment Select Committee.
75. The Active Travel Steering Group, formed of senior officers and the Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport, Waste, Street Scene and Flooding, has overseen the DfT funding bid and the development of the associated proposals.

Safeguarding Implications

76. The provision of an unlit route along the byways as set out in Route 2 may raise concern regarding personal safety, particularly as this route is not overlooked. Whilst this section of the overall route is unlikely to be used as a route to and from schools in the area, commuter cycling use is likely to increase and this would take place during the hours of darkness in winter months. The increased use of this route would help to mitigate these concerns.

Public Health Implications

77. The introduction of measures which promote sustainable measure of travel can lead to improved health through active travel and improvements with air quality through reductions in vehicle emissions.

Procurement Implications

78. There are no procurement implications for the Council associated with this proposal as work will be undertaken by the authority's appointed term contractors.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

79. These improvements for both pedestrians and cyclists are intended to provide local residents with sustainable and safer access to local services while improving links to the wider cycle and walking network. The proposed improvements will offer a direct link between the conurbations of Melksham and Trowbridge via the villages of Hilperton and Semington. The focus will be on providing improved facilities for vulnerable road users.
80. In addition to improving the route for pedestrians and two wheeled cycles, the improvements will benefit wheelchair/mobility scooter users, those who use tricycles and recumbent cycles. Existing users of the routes will not be excluded, although it must be noted that the proposed point closure on Devizes Road, Hilperton may have some impact upon journey times for residents.
81. The most likely protected characteristic groups to be affected by the proposal are age and disability. The impacts of the proposal are likely to be positive rather than negative as the schemes objectives is to improve the highway environment for vulnerable users including these protected groups.
82. Design will ensure existing conflict between users is reduced and crossing facilities will be improved for vulnerable highway users.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

83. The introduction of measures which promote sustainable measure of travel can lead to improved health through active travel and improvements with air quality through reductions in vehicle emissions.
84. The Council's draft Climate Change Strategy (currently under consultation) commits to promoting and developing active travel networks to assist with its aims to achieve a zero carbon mobility and transport system.
85. The additional environmental considerations are set out under 'Main Considerations for the Council'.

Risk Assessment

Funding

86. The funding allocation made by the DfT has a deadline for completion of construction by end of March 2022. It is also set out that schemes completed using this funding are to be compliant with LTN 1/20. The DfT may penalise the authority, either by removal of funding or reduced funding in future initiatives, if these criteria are not met.
87. To provide a route alongside the A361, the Council may proceed with a route that conforms to LTN1/20 but is outwith the available funding. Additionally, the completion deadline may not be met.
88. The route utilising the byways can be delivered to within the available budget and in compliance with LTN1/20. Delivery to timescale is presently achievable; however, significant delays in the decision-making process may negatively impact upon this.
89. Should the scheme not progress, the DfT may require the Council to develop an alternative scheme within the county or return the funding allocation. The Council may be liable for the scheme development costs incurred to date.

Integrated Transport Construction Programme

90. The construction of a cycle facility between Hilperton and Melksham holds a significant place in the annual construction programme within the Traffic Engineering workstream. Should the scheme not progress, this will result in a gap within in the contractors work programme. Due to the current workload of the Traffic Engineering team and constraints relating to funding and road space booking, it may not be possible to find alternative construction schemes to fill this gap at short notice; however, this can be mitigated against via tasks from other work streams, such as reactive footway maintenance works.

Covid-19 Impact

91. The ongoing pandemic poses a risk to the availability of resources, both during the design and construction phases. Delays may be faced due to lack of human resource. This is particularly impactful should it occur during the construction phase and would result in the works, and associated disruption, taking longer to complete.
92. Early Warning Notices have been issued by the contractor in relation to the Term Maintenance Contract as whole to alert the Council to the limited availability and increased lead in times for certain construction materials. Core materials such as concrete, kerbs and traffic signal heads are currently in short supply nationally with

significantly increased lead times. Should these issues persist, the completion of the proposed scheme may be impacted.

Financial Implications

93. In addition to the funding risks set out in the 'Risk Assessment' section, a decision to proceed with an LTN1/20 compliant route along the A361 would require significant financial contribution from the Council's own budgets.

Legal Implications

94. The proposed point closure on Devizes Road, Hilperton requires a Traffic Regulation Order. There is a statutory requirement under the Road Traffic Regulation 1984 to formally advertise the intent to make this Order, allowing all interested parties to comment on the proposal. Should comments be received during the consultation, the proposal will be subject to the Cabinet Member decision process.

Options Considered

95. To:
- (i) Progress implementation of a cycle route utilising Byways HILP21, HILP22 and SEMI19A.
 - (ii) Progress implementation of a cycle route utilising Byways HILP21, HILP22 and SEMI19A omitting the point closure on Devizes Road, Hilperton
 - (ii) Progress implementation of an LTN1/20 compliant cycle route utilising the A361.
 - (iii) Progress implementation of a non LTN1/20 compliant cycle route utilising the A361.
 - (i) Not implement a cycle route between Hilperton and Melksham and refer to Department of Transport for funding guidance.

Reason for Proposal

96. Taking into consideration the content of this report, the route utilising byways HILP21, 22 and SEMI19 is the preferred option, and the implementation of the wider proposed scheme should proceed on that basis.
97. The removal of the Devizes Road point closure from the overall scheme at this time will allow for further consultation with the residents of Hilperton regarding this proposal. It is felt that there may not be sufficient support within the local community to pursue this at the current time. Whilst the inclusion of the point closure would have a positive impact for pedestrians and cyclists due to the removal of through traffic, Devizes Road is a suitably lightly trafficked, low speed route on which cycling and walking can be encouraged.
98. Wiltshire Council will progress the formal advertisement of the proposed point closure separate to the cycle scheme. This will allow statutory consultation to be undertaken, the outcome of which will inform the next steps for the closure.
99. The alternative route via the A361 should be considered for future implementation should funding allow; however, the financial implications to the Council are such that this cannot be progressed at this time.

Proposal

100. That:

Implementation of a cycle route utilising Byways HILP21, HILP22 and SEMI19A be progressed, omitting the point closure on Devizes Road, Hilperton from the overall scheme. The point closure on Devizes Road will be subject to further, separate, statutory consultation.

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:

None