

WTC Comments on East Suffolk Council ('ESC') Draft Cycling and Walking Strategy Document

Planning Committee Approved

Introduction

The following comments are to be added to the comment boxes in the online consultation document at the various relevant positions provided therein for general comments and comments on each specific route. Document referred to herein as attachment are to be added to the attachment box to each comment section.

General Comments

Woodbridge Town Council ('WTC') has reviewed the draft strategy in the light of the data collected by ESC and WTC councillors' knowledge of the use by cyclists and walkers of roads and footways within Woodbridge and its immediate environs.

Further WTC has taken into consideration the following:

- The likely significant impact of the current design being finalised on its behalf by Suffolk County Council Highways for several 20mph zones within the town boundaries as well as the likely increasing of the speed limit by SCC along the B1438 between the A12 and the junction with Old Barrack Road/California from 30 to 40mph.
- The likely significant impact of the SCC proposed A12 improvements between Seven Hills and Woods Lane, specifically the revision to junctions at the three roundabouts on the outskirts of Woodbridge and the dualling of the single lane section between the B1438 and B1079 junctions.

WTC, in its review of the consultation, has also examined the ESC proposals based on its belief that IM 15 and 17 should be the primary strategic route for cyclists travelling from Ipswich/Kesgrave/Martlesham to Woodbridge and/or Melton. WTC is of the view that further cycling accesses into Woodbridge can be added from IM17 which provide an alternative option that may better meet the core design objectives in section 4 of the Department of Transport LTN1/20 than some of the routes in the ESC draft strategy. These will be commented upon in detail under the comments section for individual routes.

Route IM 15 – Crown Point to Sandy Lane

Whilst this route is not within Woodbridge, it is the single proposed access route to Woodbridge along the strategy's Ipswich to Melton corridor. It is fundamental to increasing cycle traffic between Kesgrave/Martlesham and Woodbridge/Melton. Woodbridge Town Council ('WTC') thus consider the route should be recategorized as very high priority.

WTC consider it is crucial to make this section more attractive for cycle use as it is a part of longer distance inter community access.

The highway has a significant volume of vehicular traffic. The current southbound only, non-segregated, road painted cycle lane from Sandy Lane to Crown Point works satisfactorily but there is no similar northbound lane. WTC recommend that a similar lane is added northbound

and that a local 20mph limit be introduced from just west of Crown Point to just east of the Bealings Road with signs also indicating cycle lane presence to make this section safer for use both along it, and at the junctions which have significant vehicular junction movements. WTC recognises that further improvements would be difficult to incorporate.

North of Bealings Road to Sandy Lane WTC believe that a segregated cycle path and footway should be incorporated on the eastern side of the highway as available land and minimal vehicle access off that side of the highway occur. This section has higher foot traffic due to circular walks associated with Martlesham Creek. WTC consider the development of IM16 as a walking route will increase this foot traffic markedly.

Route IM 16 – Sandy Lane

Woodbridge Town Council ('WTC') agrees this is a very high priority route and agree a modal filter at the railway is appropriate. WTC support this route.

The section west of the railway bridge is a single-track highway with passing places and will continue to have frequent commercial vehicular traffic including lorries as there are a numerous businesses along it. The steeply sloping banks, flat gradient and highway unevenness leads to drainage issues i.e., puddles during and after rain. It is thus unattractive as a walking route. WTC believe it will remain so unless a segregated footway is added. WTC recommend this is on the northbound side as there are minimal vehicles accessing across that side of the highway.

North of the railway there will remain limited commercial traffic along the route to service the horticultural premises near the railway with increasing residential traffic north of Dukes Park. North of Dukes Park the narrow highway has short sightlines and lack of footways up to Broomheath. WTC believe this could be improved with a white-lined unsegregated combined cycle and walking lane.

The junction with the Ipswich Road is unattractive for Woodbridge bound cyclists from a safety perspective. Further, for walkers along Ipswich Road to/from the west it is necessary to traverse, between this position and 20 Ipswich Road, from the north side footway to the south side footway to walk on a footway into Woodbridge. For these reasons WTC recommend a crossing arrangement for cyclists and walkers be added at the Sandy Lane/Ipswich Road junction to encourage use.

Finally, WTC recommend this route be lit with low level lighting where there is no current streetlighting.

Route IM 17 – Outer Woodbridge

Woodbridge Town Council ('WTC') consider IM 17 should be the primary strategic route for cyclists travelling to/from Ipswich Kesgrave/Martlesham to/from Woodbridge and Melton. As such it should be recategorized as very high priority and is supported by WTC.

WTC recommend ESC examine further new links to this route from Woodbridge to aid access. Specifically, WTC's view is a new route via Clare Avenue and Warren Hill Road and Ipswich Road/Cumberland Street and Cherry Tree Road would be particularly attractive to walkers and cyclists. (see attachment). It would have less issues than the proposed route IM 18.. The section of Ipswich Road/Cumberland Street that is the B1438 is currently being assessed with SCC to be a 20mph zone.

IM 17 between Seckford Hall Road and B1079 roundabout could usefully be diverted for much of its length onto the access track behind Peterhouse Crescent which extends all the way to

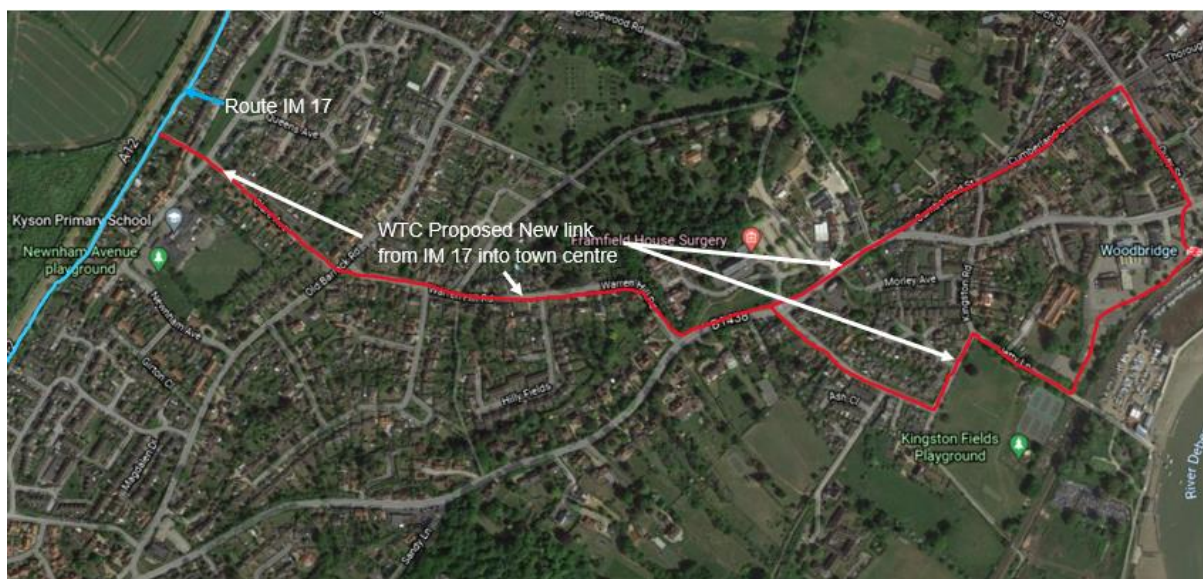
Bilney Road rather than being immediately alongside the A12. It would be more attractive and safer being more remote from the A12. There would be minimal impact on the mature trees than the ESC proposed route beside the A12 would have. This current access track is little used and unattractive with some fly tipping. It also has a track linking it to Peterhouse Crescent directly in line Clare Avenue.

WTC consider the section of IM 17 from the B1079 to Hasketon Road will be particularly difficult to improve to make it safer. There are numerous vehicular crossings to properties, a parking area and the entrance/exit from the Shell filling station along this stretch. Driver's attention will remain more on joining/leaving the A12 than on cyclists or walkers. It would be an unattractive section of IM 17 which may impact use of this route. WTC recommend that this section be removed and the bulk of proposed IM 21 forms part of the IM 17 route.

WTC request consideration is given at the B1079, or close by, for IM 17 to include access for cyclist and walkers to the west of the A12 particularly to the garden centre and associated businesses. WTC suggest ESC incorporate a crossing at this location in its strategy. WTC note a crossing at this location may form part of SCC's A12 improvements proposals.

Whilst outside the boundary of Woodbridge, WTC consider ESC will have considerable difficulty with incorporating a cycle lane down Woods Lane given the recent new footway is sub-standard in width, due to land constraints and the highway is sub-standard in width. An alternative route linking to IM 22 via Warwick Avenue and Bredfield Road should be considered.

Attachment to add to comment box



Route IM 18 – Sandy Lane to Woodbridge Station

Woodbridge Town Council ('WTC') has numerous concerns with this route, that the strategy designates as very high priority. WTC does not support this route. The route is proposed as a lit segregated track which, if compliant with Department of Transport IT1/20 design guidelines would be a minimum of 4m wide. WTC see the following specific issues.

- The route traverses the southern edge of Porters Wood over a significant length. It will require removal of numerous trees in an area of woodland used and valued by a large number of Woodbridge residents.

- The route has severe gradients at the top of the valley slope which would be unattractive to both cycle riders and walkers unless slackened by significant earthworks.
- The route from halfway down the valley slope and along the western edge of the railway is prone to flooding. The government surface flooding map (see attached) show a high risk of flooding. Additional maps at <https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk/map> also show this section of the route has high risk flood water velocities and depths of floodwater between 300 and locally over 900mm, also deemed high risk. WTC consider substantial earthworks and drainage works would be essential to make this a safe route.
- The fields are grazed by cattle; fencing, gates and crossings would be essential.
- The routes traverses Kingston Field. The Field is constrained by covenant to recreational use only within the land transfer to WTC. Further the alignment of the route conflicts with the current use of the area specifically
 - WTC's developing proposals for a community garden,
 - the new basketball area
 - the mini football area
 - cuts across the entrance to the highly used children's playground
 - cuts across the entrance to the Pavilion,
 - would require a number of mature trees to be removed close to Jetty Lane,
 - fails to incorporate use of the new crossing to Jetty Lane taking a technically difficult and unacceptable alignment across the entrance to the allotments.
- WTC have concerns about the safety of a cycle track that traverse the heavily used Station car park where there is considerable foot traffic crossing the proposed track alignment.

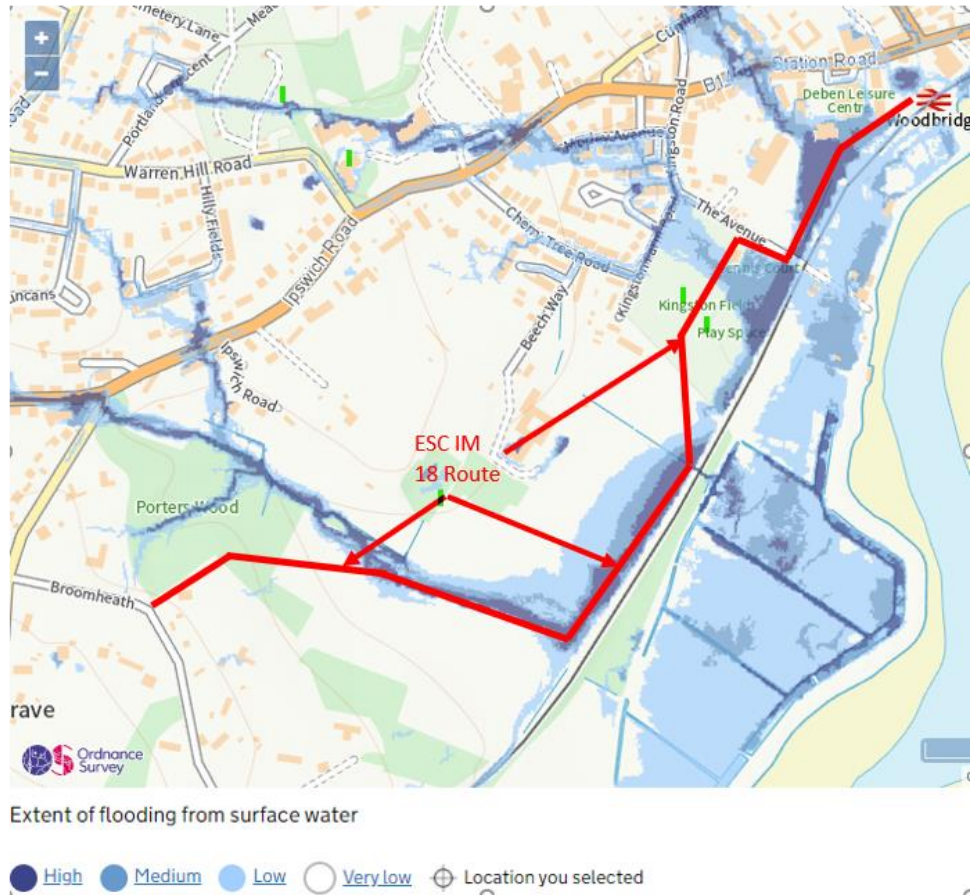
Further the development of this proposed route would be costly in terms of land purchase and engineering works required.

WTC consider the aims of IM18 may be better met by use of IM 17 and a new route using Clare Avenue, Warren Hill Road and Cherry Tree Way as discussed in our comments on IM 17.

WTC is also of the view that given the likely cost of IM 18, if ESC consider there should be an link from IM 16 into the town centre/railway station, then re-modelling of the Ipswich Road from Sandy Lane to Cherry Tree Road to incorporate a segregated cycling and walking route would be more appropriate and less damaging.

Attachments to add to comment box

Flooding Issues on ESC Proposed IM 18 Route



Route IM 19 – California to Quay Street

Woodbridge Town Council ('WTC') is of the opinion that this route is unlikely to be successful in attracting cyclists and walkers. It is far from direct and has the following other unattractive features

- The crossing of Ipswich Road is at location with considerable vehicular traffic movements both along, and on and off, Ipswich Road posing risks to cycling and walking users.
- The section along the east side if Fen Meadow is too steep for cyclists and ends in a blind corner with Fen Walk.
- To have adequate width the current attractive tree and hedge lined path along the east side of Fen Meadow would be severely impacted
- The section along Fen Walk cannot be widened to provide adequate width.
- The ESC alternative proposal to using Fen Walk, taking the route through the Abbey junior school grounds and entrance, has safeguarding issues

WTC however consider the proposals for Quay Street and Cumberland Street have considerable merit. If combined with the alternative route we propose in our comments on IM 17 these aspects of the route would be welcomed.

If ESC wishes to continue to develop this route WTC recommend that the section from Warren Hill Road to Cumberland Street is amended to use the full length of Warren Hill Road and then Ipswich Road to Cumberland Street.

Route IM 20 – Thoroughfare/Melton Road

Woodbridge Town Council's ('WTC') view is that a route between the centre of Woodbridge and Melton should be very high priority and not high priority as the draft strategy proposes.

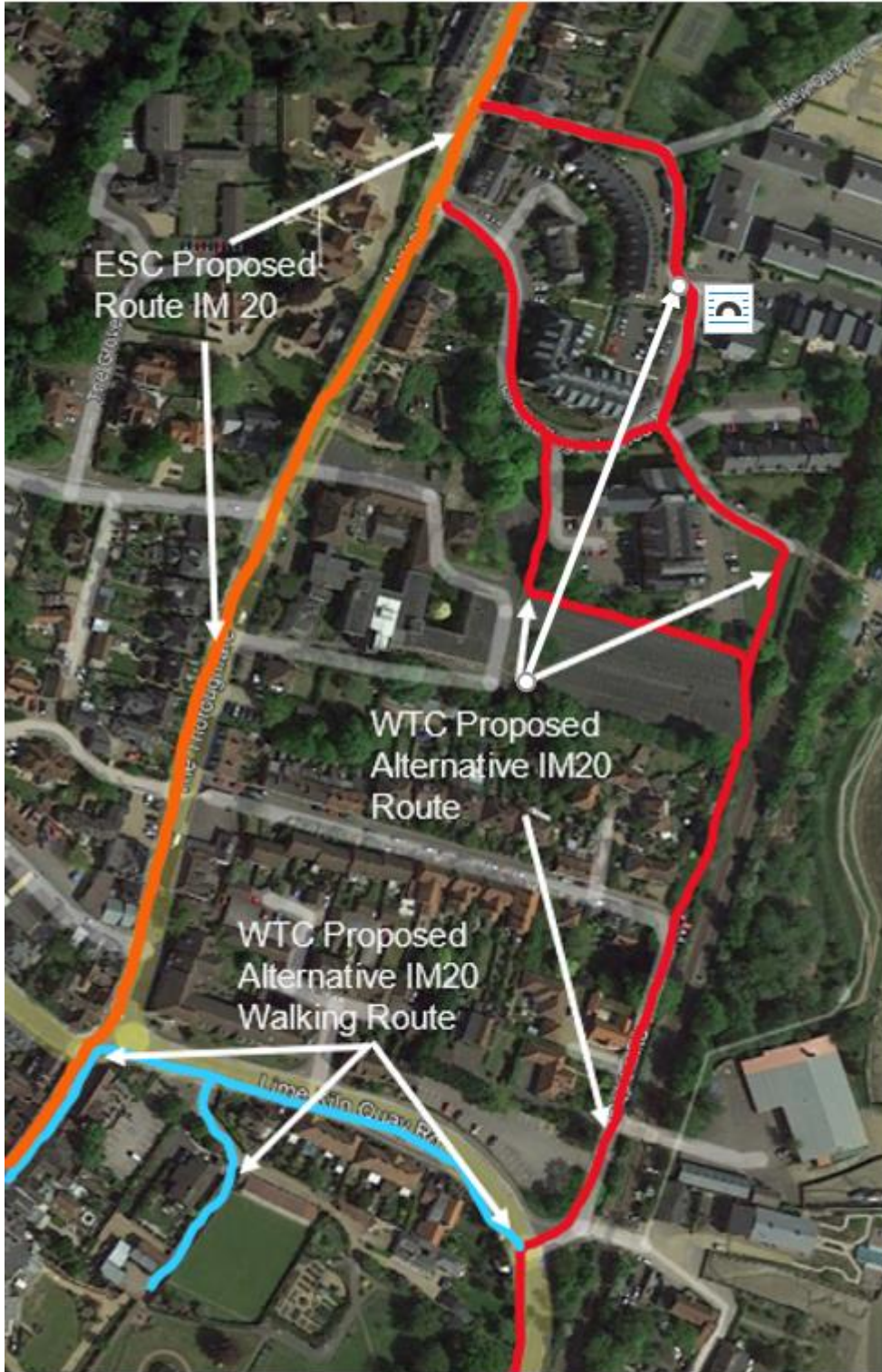
WTC would wish to clarify that the road between the traffic lights and Pytches Road is the northern part of the Thoroughfare and thus the draft strategy recommendation incorrectly refers to the traffic lights being "*north of the Thoroughfare*".

WTC, whilst highly supportive of more cycling, do not wish to see the Thoroughfare between the traffic lights and Cross Corner as a busy cycle route due to the considerable foot fall and cross pedestrian use. WTC see this area as a destination with cycle parking adjacent to it. To that end WTC is about to add cycle racks at Selwyn Gardens, adjacent to the traffic lights. WTC welcomes the Strategy's intention for further cycle storage, but this should be adjacent to, but not along, this part of the Thoroughfare.

WTC's view is that the proposed route is also compromised by

- The narrow highway between Old Maltings Approach and Pytches Road which is unattractive to cyclists given the considerable vehicular traffic and, in particular, lorry traffic.
- The traffic lights and the adjacent highway to the north is not a safe environment for cyclists. The proposed advance stop lines would place cyclists in an exposed position regarding traffic turning into the Thoroughfare towards Melton from Lime Kiln Quay Road and would encourage cyclists to weave through traffic or divert onto the eastern footway in this narrow section to get to the advance stop lines.

WTC recommend that at Old Maltings Approach or preferably New Quay Terrace and New Quay Lane, the route should divert off Melton Road to cross onto ESC's land to reach Deben Road and then onto Lime Kiln Quay Road with a dedicated crossing at that junction. A segregated cycle track could be formed along the current footpath of Quayside to the Hamblin Road lights with foot traffic directed up to Selwyn Gardens to either go via Elmhurst Park to Hamblin Road or the Thoroughfare south of the traffic lights. Current foot traffic on the Quayside footway is minimal. Cycle traffic to/from Woodbridge Station from/to Hamblin Road could use the current pedestrian crossings and then the B1438. WTC's is seeking, with SCC, to make this stretch of the B1438 a 20mph zone.



Route IM 21 – Farlingaye High School

Woodbridge Town Council ('WTC') support this route and consider that, from a local perspective, this route is of very high priority. WTC would wish to see its implementation as soon as possible to address the safety issues with school children along the Hasketon and Grundisburgh Roads part of the route.

WTC in its comments on IM 17 consider this route would be a preferable link between the B1069 and Hasketon Road for that stretch of the IM 17 Outer Woodbridge route due to safety concerns.

WTC suggest that to ameliorate traffic queuing at peak school times and issues with traffic filtering in from Bilney Road, Grundisburgh Road be made one way eastbound and Hasketon Road one way westbound. The latter could be aided by linking the pedestrian crossing lights on the A12 just to the north of Hasketon Road, to new traffic monitors on Hasketon Road, to allow traffic to filter out safely onto the A12 southbound.