



Name of meeting: Economy & Neighbourhood Scrutiny Panel

Date: 24 August 2021

Title of report: A62 to Cooper Bridge Corridor Improvement Scheme

Purpose of report: To provide an overview of the recent public consultation findings ahead of reporting to Cabinet

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Not Applicable – no decision is being sought
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u>	Key Decision – N/A
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes – project is being called to Scrutiny ahead of proceeding to Cabinet and Outline Business Case submission
Date signed off by David Shepherd – Strategic Director – Growth & Regeneration	13/08/2021
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?	N/A
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	N/A
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr McBride –Regeneration Cllr Mather - Environment Cllr Firth –Town Centres

Electoral wards affected: Ashbrow

Ward councillors consulted: Cllr Homewood, Cllr Uppal, Cllr Pinnock

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered?: Yes

1. Summary

Congestion, long journey times and poor air quality is currently experienced in the Cooper Bridge area and on the A644 and A62 nearby. The A62 and A644 have been identified as key routes which, through improvements, could support the creation of jobs in the area, relieve congestion, reduce journey times for general traffic, and improve pedestrian and cycling accessibility.

The A62 to Cooper Bridge Corridor Improvement scheme is being developed to address these issues, it's strategic aims are to:

- relieve congestion and improve journey times and reliability
- support economic and housing growth
- improve road safety
- improve pedestrian and cyclist facilities to encourage more use
- support the improvement of air quality

Following the public consultation on the preferred option for the scheme, the team wish to present an overview of the consultation results, and an update regarding potential design changes ahead of attending Cabinet and submitting the Outline Business Case for the project.

2. Information required to take a decision

N/A – no decision is sought; the Scrutiny panel are invited to note the contents of this report and endorse the next steps.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

A six-week consultation has been held during June and July, approximately two thousand letters and leaflets were distributed to the local community across both Kirklees and Calderdale, in addition to letters to statutory stakeholders and interested parties.

A summary of the response to the consultation is available at **Appendix A**.

Whilst comments are still being analysed, a review of cycling arrangements is underway in addition to the potential Oak Road design changes, set out in Appendix A, because of feedback received.

Follow up meetings will be held with key stakeholders throughout the development of the design.

Subject to the conclusion of ongoing design reviews the team will agree with Ashbrow members how best to communicate any proposed changes to the local community and keep them informed throughout scheme development.

A further pre-application consultation will be held in 2023 following completion of the detailed design.

3.2 Working with Partners

A £69.3m budget has been ringfenced for the project funded from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's (WYCA) West Yorkshire plus Transport Fund (WY+TF). The scheme is therefore being delivered in accordance with the WYCA Assurance Framework.

Additionally, the scheme crosses the boundary between the Kirklees and Calderdale districts, therefore whilst led by Kirklees Council the project is being developed in partnership with Calderdale colleagues who are represented on the scheme's project board.

3.3 Climate Change and Air Quality

The scheme aims to reduce congestion and improve journey times through this section of the network, this is supportive of the council's aspiration to improve air quality in this location. This will be achieved not just through reducing congestion, but also by incorporating Intelligent Transport Systems which will enable optimum speed information to be communicated to drivers when travelling between junctions. Additionally, it facilitates vehicle prioritisation enabling HGV and Public Transport to be prioritised through junctions further supporting improved air quality.

3.4 Other (e.g., Legal/Financial or Human Resources) Consultees and their opinions

In addition to the previously mentioned public consultation other consultees have included Strategic Housing with reference to Bradley Park. Legal and Financial colleagues are consulted in relation to ongoing matters which will include input in the Cabinet Report. There are no Human Resource issues to report

4. Next steps and timelines

The project will be included on the agenda for Cabinet on 27 September ahead of the Outline Business Case being submitted to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Subject to securing funding to proceed with the scheme it is anticipated a planning application will be submitted in 2023 and, if approved, construction will begin in 2024.

5. Officer recommendations and reasons

It is recommended the Members of Scrutiny note the contents of this report and endorse progression through the next steps.

6. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

Portfolio Holders will be present at the Economy & Neighbourhood Scrutiny Panel

7. Contact officer

Keith Bloomfield, Programme Manager, Major Projects

8. Background Papers and History of Decisions

N/A

9. Service Director responsible

Joanne Bartholomew, Service Director Development

Report to: Economy & Neighbourhood Scrutiny

Date: 11 August 2021

Subject: A62 to Cooper Bridge Corridor Improvement Scheme Public Consultation

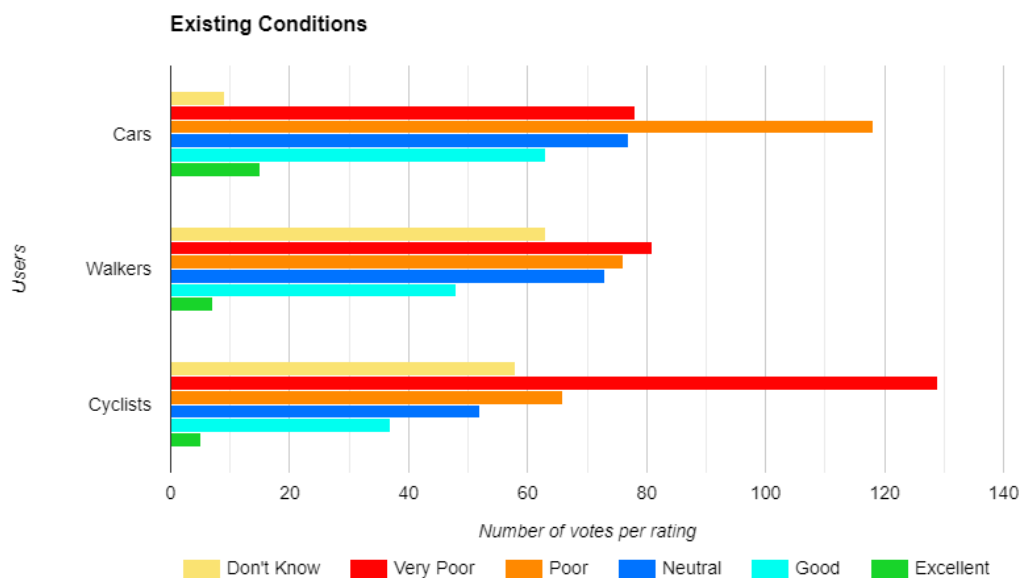
1 Purpose

The following report sets out the headline results of the recent public consultation for the A62 to Cooper Bridge scheme. A formal consultation report is still being prepared and will be published in the coming weeks.

2 Public Consultation

A public consultation was held between 7 June and 18 July on a preferred option for the scheme. 367 surveys have been completed, 41 questions were asked via the Your Voice website and 25 emails were received. Feedback is now being analysed and a consultation report will be published in the coming weeks. Indicative survey statistics are:

Existing Conditions: People were asked to rate the existing conditions in this area for the following users, cars, pedestrians, and cyclists. The results were:

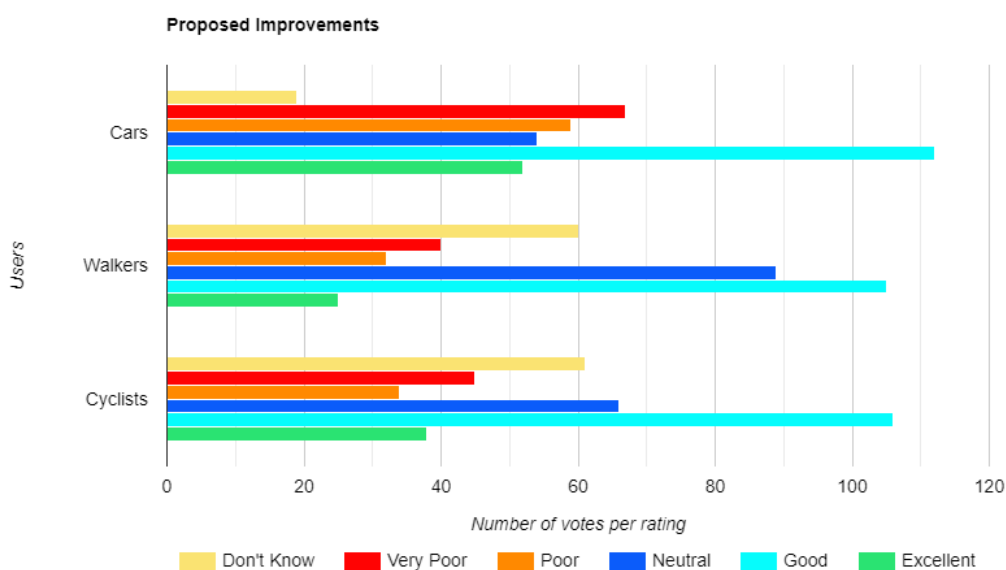


(362 response(s), 5 skipped)

53% of those who responded to the survey agree the existing conditions of the area are either poor or very poor for cars and cyclists, with 42% sharing this view of the existing pedestrian infrastructure.

From the survey results, most responses rated the existing conditions either poor or very poor for all three user groups. Note that the largest rating for very poor was pertaining to the cycling facilities. Relatively few rated the existing infrastructure as good or excellent, with the existing car infrastructure achieving the most support but still with only 20% rating it in either category.

Proposed Improvements: People were asked to rate the proposed scheme against the same categories.



(364 response(s), 3 skipped)

44% believe the proposed scheme is good or very good for cars, 39% and 35% agree with this view of the proposed cycling and pedestrian facilities respectively.

From the survey results, most of the responses rated the proposed improvements either good or neutral for all three user groups. The rating of very poor and poor have notably decreased for all three user groups, however there is still some opposition to the proposals.

34% think the proposals are poor or very poor for cars compared with 21% and 19% believing the same of the scheme cycling and pedestrian facilities.

Comments / Suggestions:

A further comments section was given for accompanying remarks to be provided, the top themes for objections to the scheme are as follows:

Oak Road / Leeds Road

Oak Road and Leeds Road residents' concerns are directed at the diversion of traffic down their roads, specific concerns include:

- how this will impact property/parking access,
- safety for residents especially children given the proximity to the recreational ground,
- environmental impacts, particularly in relation to noise and air quality
- increased HGV numbers and their contribution to the above factors were of note.

Many also believe that making this change will only move the queuing of traffic to a different area and cause the junction from Oak Road onto Bradley Road to be busy and a dangerous junction to get out of.

The main safety concerns came from the residents on Oak Road and Leeds Road a number suggesting a reduction of speed limit.

Other safety concerns were also raised from residents who do not trust road users to follow the new layout properly, with concerns about the light sequencing being a problem too.

This also included more general anxieties for the lack of safe crossing areas for both pedestrians and cyclists within the scheme and pedestrian routes not being upgraded sufficiently.

Cyclist Consideration

There were concerns that the cycling routes are not being sufficiently upgraded and this causes concern for the safety of cyclists on the roads around the area. Comments suggested the routes already make those who cycle feel unsafe and that the proposed improvements suggest nothing will be done to improve this.

Environmental Concerns

Most concerns regarding environmental issues covered the lack of compatibility with the climate change agenda. Many mentioned Kirklees and Calderdale's recent declaration of a climate change emergency and how they believe this scheme contradicts that message. Most of these simply do not support a highway infrastructure improvement scheme when some would rather the focus be on alternative 'greener' ways of transport being prioritised (bus routes and cycle paths).

Concerns for tree damage or removal, existing bridge architectural value and air quality from increased pollution were also voiced.

3 Next steps

Consideration is now being given to establish where amendments to the design can be made to take account of the feedback received. This is ongoing and will be subject to consultation with officers and, in due course, emergency services. Specific interventions being explored include:

- A full review of the cycling design – the Kirklees Cycling Campaign made a range of suggestions. These are being considered along with other cycling comments received, ahead of a meeting with the Kirklees Cycling Campaign.
- Speed limit reductions – these are currently being considered for Leeds Road (between Oak Road and Bradley junction) and Oak Road.
- Traffic calming measures on Oak Road
- A potential limitation to HGV use of Oak Road.

Following a recent briefing with Portfolio Holders and Ashbrow members a non-technical summary has been prepared summarising the justification for the scheme and the reason for recommending the diversion of traffic onto Oak Road. A copy of this document is available at **Appendix B**.

An updated Frequently Asked Questions document is also provided at **Appendix C**, this summarises the FAQs provided ahead of consultation and all questions and answers provided throughout the consultation period via the Your Voice website.

