

Hilton NMU feasibility study, April 2019

Connecting Hilton, getting out of vehicles, increasing convenience - how Hilton Parish Council is progressing pathways to St Ives.

Working with the County Council, funded by Cambridgeshire Community Foundation (CCF) the Parish Council is making progress. So far:

Transport Initiatives LLP (TI) have started the feasibility study and produced early outline findings

The funding of this study has been provided by CCF

We are optimistic we will get a feasible option and, if it is approved at County and local level, we can explore next steps to securing funds for its construction.

Please do let us have your ideas and comments and we hope to create opportunities for you to speak with the TI folk in due course.

The information below gives more detail of what the feasibility study aims to do, how it will assess the options and what those options are.

Cambs County Council have appointed **Transport Initiatives LLP (TI)** to undertake the feasibility study on which route options, if any, are worthy of developing into a proper **non-motorised user (NMU)** pathway that ultimately enables cyclists, pedestrians, disability vehicle users from Hilton to get to and from St Ives Park & Ride.

This study is being funded by **Cambridge Community Foundation** who are also actively involved in monitoring progress.

We are delighted to say that the PC working group has met with the CCC and TI and this study has now begun with initial data suggesting a thorough analysis is underway. The timeframe for the study is that the PC will receive a draft report in late June 2019, in time for discussion at the July PC meeting. The final report will be with us by November 2019. The scope of the study is shown in the extract below from the TI proposal to CCC:

“Study into a high quality link for walkers, cyclists and equestrians between Hilton and St Ives.

CCC envisages that the study work will entail the following tasks:

- o Assess the feasibility, value and practicality of providing a Non-Motorised User (NMU) link between Hilton and St Ives and/or Fenstanton.
- o Outline and evaluate the alignment options for NMU provision with consideration to onward connections.
- o Make an assessment of the benefits/dis-benefits, cost implications and risks involved with each option and present recommendations.

“The brief identifies five alignment options and calls for assessments of these for people walking, cycling or riding horses. It states that other options can be considered if these become apparent.

The options, along with some potential continuation routes providing additional connectivity options, are shown below.

The five options are:

- o **St Ives Road**
- o **Hilton Road**
- o **South of new A14**
- o **To Hemingford Grey via Mere Way**

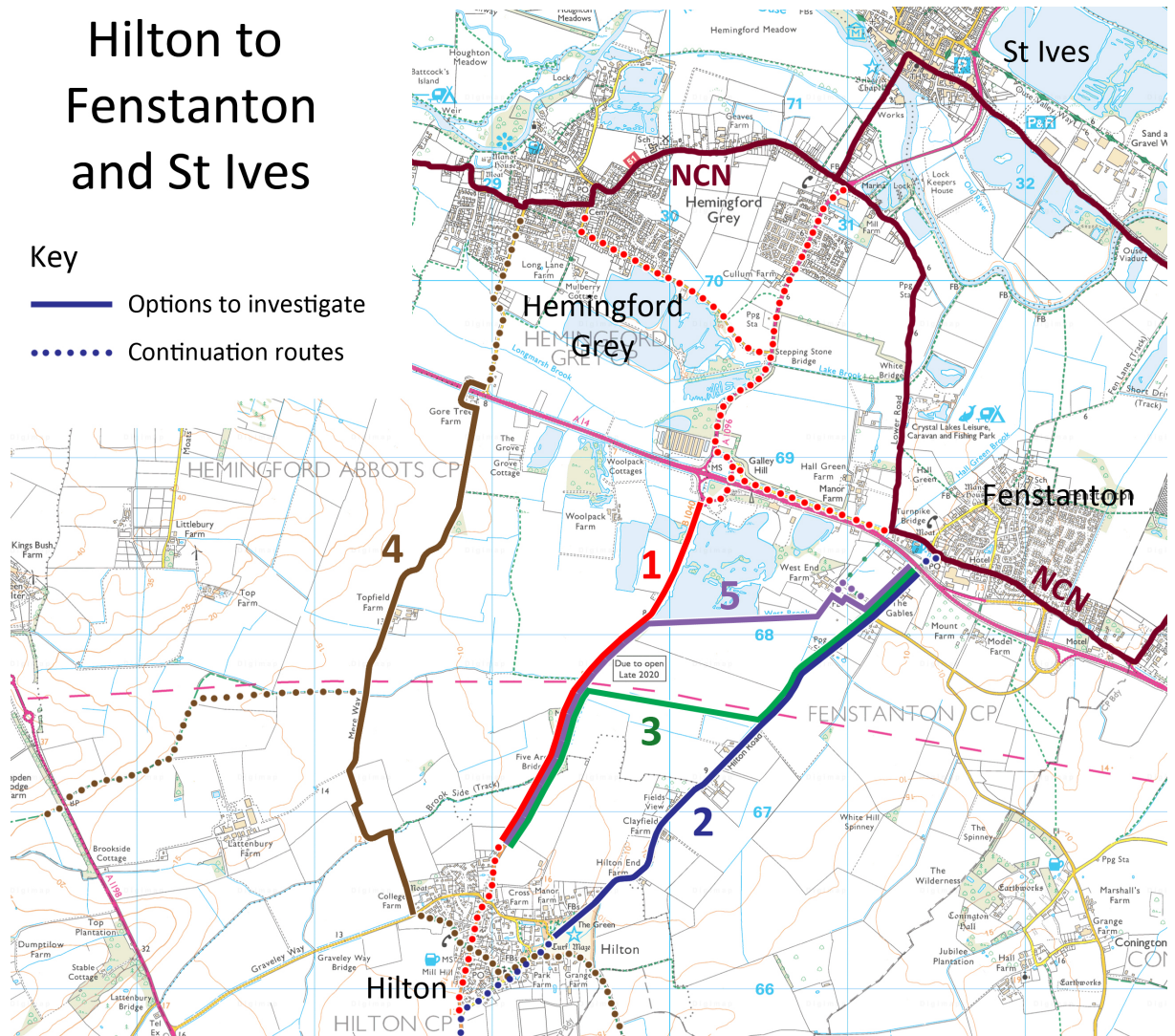
o To Fenstanton via footpath 87/7

The options and some potential continuation routes are shown below.

Hilton to Fenstanton and St Ives

Key

- Options to investigate
- ⋯ Continuation routes



Plan 1. Route options

“Assessment

Route options will be assessed using the appropriate tool. The options will be separately assessed for pedestrian, cyclists and equestrians. The different user’s needs are different. For instance, equestrians may not need option 4 surfaced but probably won’t fit through the subway on options 2, 3 & 5.

The Route Selection Tool in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure (LCWIP) guidance will be used to assess the options for cycling, using the following criteria:

- o Directness - Length and time taken to ride each route option will be compared.
- o Gradient (including bridges)
- o Connectivity - The number of connections that can be made to the route.
- o Safety - The tool is focused on traffic safety but we would also take account of personal safety.
- o Comfort - The tool measures surface quality but we would add in issues such as poorly dropped kerbs.

The LCWIP Walking Route Audit Tool uses similar but slightly different criteria to assess walking:

- o Attractiveness
- o Comfort
- o Directness
- o Safety
- o Coherence

The walking tool is heavily urban centric so we will need to amend the criteria to reflect a more rural situation where footways are a rarity rather than ubiquitous.

The options will be assessed for equestrian use using a modified version of the Route Selection Tool (see below).

We will assess each route option with three different levels of intervention.

- o Base option - direction signing, surfacing required to make them passable and any legal procedures such as converting footpaths to bridleways or cycletracks.
- o Intermediate option - pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians using the carriageway with measures to slow traffic
- o High-intervention option - measures to remove users from the carriageway as much as possible.

We will assess other issues associated with each option:

1. Benefits/disbenefits – we will produce an analysis for each option summarising its benefits or disbenefits for users.
2. Costs – we will produce outline designs for any changes required for the routes, to allow outline costs to be developed. These costs will include land acquisition (if required), engineering works, highway measures, signing and lining and TROs. Cost will be based on our own experience but if available we would prefer to use the Council's own schedules of rates to cost routine items.
3. Risk – there are a number of things that introduce an element of risk, both of delaying the routes and preventing them from being implemented at all. These include problems of land acquisition and objections to footpath conversion orders or TROs.

We can devise schemes to minimise the risk of objections or devise “fallback” schemes or cheap alternatives to demonstrate potential or that can be used while problems with the preferred scheme are resolved.

We will produce a 3x3 risk matrix for each route option, based on a combination of likelihood and severity.

Conclusions and recommendations

We will produce a final report setting out our conclusions for the preferred option(s). This will include a detailed schedule of actions, broken down into short-, medium- and long-term.

The report will include plans showing the route options, graded by a Red-Amber-Green code, making it the relative priorities of the options clear.

“Consultation and engagement

We will take the opportunity while surveying the routes to invite key local stakeholders (as recommended by the County Council) to join us while surveying some of the routes. This will follow the CRIM (Cycle Route Inspection Meetings) model used in London.

It will be made clear that this is not a replacement for formal consultation and that our recommendations will be subject to further discussion by the County Council.”

The initial work has started looking at the following for each of the route options and additional possibilities:

- The quality of the start and end points - how users move onto and off of the pathway
- Safety or danger features at all points along each route
- Links onto and from the route to onward NMU routes, roads, footpaths
- Traffic speeds and flows along Hilton / Fenstanton Road and Potton Road
- Visibility for entering or leaving an NMU path and for crossing a road if required
- The initial implications for works required to make a route feasible.

There is much more work to do but we are off to a good start!

At some stage the TI team may well wish to speak with members of the parish, landowners, those with particular interests and if you have any questions, comments, concerns or special topics you would like us too raise with the CCC for consideration please do contact our clerk, Nicola Webster, on hiltonparishclerk@gmail.com.