Agenda No

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee	**Warwick Area Committee**
Date of Committee	**10 March 2009**
Report Title	**Portobello Bridge, Warwick**
Summary	This report summarises, the results of the recent consultation, the constraints which now exist and proposes future action to overcome the problem of weak footways.
For further information please contact	Stephen O'Connor Section Engineer Bridge Maintenance Tel. 01926412407 steveoconnor@warwickshire.gov.uk
Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?	No
Background Papers	Consultation Report

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:- *Details to be specified*

Other Committees	☐	.....
Local Member(s) (With brief comments, if appropriate)	☒	Councillor K Browne Councillor C Davis Councillor Mrs M Haywood
Other Elected Members	☐	.....
Cabinet Member (Reports to The Cabinet, to be cleared with appropriate Cabinet Member)	☐	.....
Chief Executive	☐	.....
Legal	☒	I Marriott – agreed.
Finance	☐	.....
Other Chief Officers	☐	.....

District Councils	☐	.....
Health Authority	☐	.....
Police	☐	.....
Other Bodies/Individuals	☐	Interested bodies and individuals as listed.

FINAL DECISION **YES** *(If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps)*

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :

Details to be specified

Further consideration by this Committee	☐	Approval of final scheme.
To Council	☐	.....
To Cabinet	☐	.....
To an O & S Committee	☐	.....
To an Area Committee	☐	.....
Further Consultation	☐	.....

Agenda No

Warwick Area Committee – 10 March 2009

A445/03 Portobello Bridge, Warwick

Report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy

Recommendation

That Area Committee supports the proposal for a new independent footbridge on the north side of the existing Portobello Bridge with further consultation on proposals for the south side.

1. Background

1.1 Portobello Bridge carries the A445 Emscote Road across the River Avon between Warwick and Leamington. The location of the bridge is shown in **Appendix A**. The masonry arch bridge was originally constructed in 1831and has been extended with metal structures on both sides to provide footways. Assessment of the bridge has shown that whilst the main bridge structure is satisfactory, the footway extensions are weak. As a result, the older footway on the North side, which is unsuitable for footway loading has been closed. The carriageway has been narrowed to provide room for a replacement footway on the north side. The footway on the south side is suitable for footway loading but not for accidental vehicle loading and has been protected by high kerbs.

1.2 In July 2007, Area Committee agreed that the previous major bridge widening scheme should be formally abandoned in the light of strong objections from English Heritage and a number of interest groups and individuals.

1.3 It was also agreed that further options to resolve the weak edges problem should be developed and consulted upon.

2. Consultation

2.1 A consultation was undertaken in Spring 2008 with local interest groups in which all the possible options were outlined. Because of the recent building work on the old Pottertons site adjacent to the bridge, a number of the options previously considered cannot now be physically accommodated in the available space.

2.2 The majority of support expressed was for the construction of a new footbridge adjacent to the north elevation of the original Portobello Bridge in the position of the existing weak footway.

2.3 It is likely from informal discussion that English Heritage would be able to support this option.

2.4 A copy of the consultation Report is attached as **Appendix B** and provides details of all the options considered and the responses received.

3. Implications of a Footbridge Solution

North Side

3.1 The construction of a new footway bridge would allow more of the existing carriageway to be available for cyclists and vehicles. Currently, part of the carriageway is used for pedestrian access.

3.2 It is not recommended to construct the new separate bridge at a sufficient width to accommodate cyclists as well as pedestrians as there would be issues of conflict between the two groups and safety issues with cyclists joining and leaving the main carriageway. However, the width of carriageway available is less than ideal to include a specific cycle facility. (Standards would require a 3.65m traffic lane and 1.5m cycle lane. If cycle lanes were provided on both sides, the available traffic lanes would be 2.7m wide. Without marked cycle lanes, traffic lanes could be 4.2m wide).

South Side

3.3 Currently on the south side of the bridge, the existing footway extension is weak and is protected by high kerbs. Options exist to:-

(i) remove this construction completely, with or without a replacement,

(ii) carry out strengthening works, or

(iii) retain the high kerbs to protect against accidental wheel loading.

Complete removal and provision of a footway on the existing carriageway would not be recommended as this would make the available carriageway width for cyclists and vehicles similar to the existing situation. Complete replacement would require the construction of a new independent footbridge.

3.4 As with the north side, it is not recommended to create an off-carriageway cycle facility.

3.5 The most economic options for the south side are to rely on the high kerbs for protection or to strengthen the existing footway extension

4. Financial Implications

4.1 The cost of demolition of the existing footway and construction of a new footbridge on the north side would be of the order of £800,000.

4.2 On the south side, strengthening and refurbishment of the existing footway would cost in the order of £400,000 or considerably less to rely upon protection of the footway extension.

4.3 These works could be funded from the Bridge Maintenance Capital Budget, possibly with a need to phase the works over 2009/10 and 2010/11.

5. Recommendation

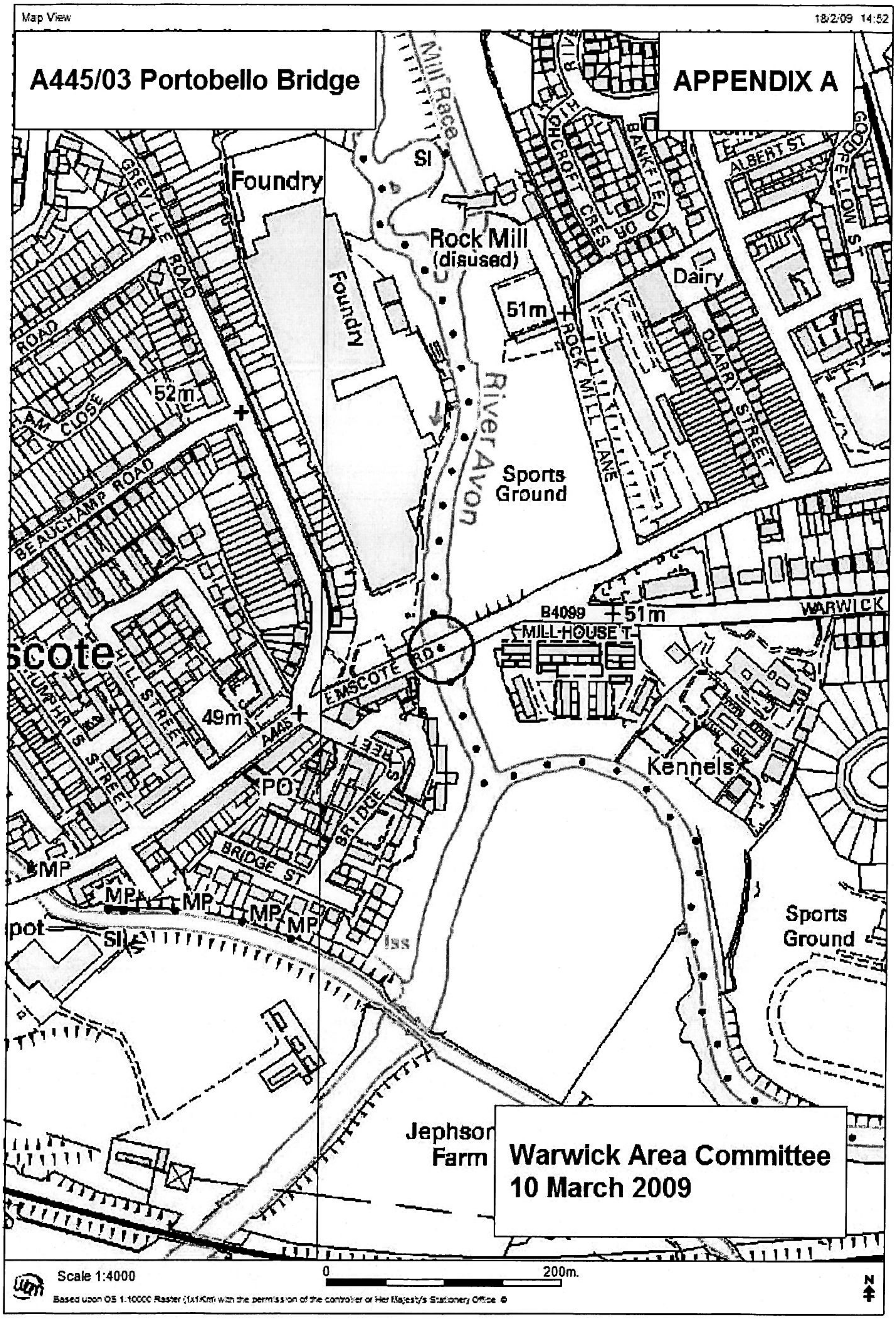
5.1 In the light of the constraints which exist, it is recommended that the north side footbridge option is chosen and that detailed design work is put in hand. Further consultation will be undertaken on the detailed layout of the footbridge and on the preferred solution for the south side, at the appropriate stage.

PAUL GALLAND
Strategic Director for Environment and Economy
Shire Hall
Warwick

3 March 2009

A445/03 Portobello Bridge

APPENDIX A



Warwick Area Committee
10 March 2009

Appendix B of Agenda No

Warwick Area Committee – 10 March 2009

A445/03 Portobello Bridge Warwick

A445/03 Portobello Bridge – Consultation Report

Contents:

1. Very Brief Description of the Problem

The purpose of this report is to consider all possible options to overcome the problem of weak footway extensions on Portobello Bridge

Portobello Bridge carries the A445 Emscote Road across the River Avon between Warwick and Leamington. The masonry arch bridge was originally constructed in 1831 and has been extended with metal structures on both sides to provide footways. Assessment of the bridge has shown that whilst the main bridge structure is satisfactory, the footway extensions are weak. As a result, the older footway on the north side, which is unsuitable for footway loading, has been closed. The other footway extension has a raised kerb to protect it from vehicle impact loading.

The original bridge was designated a Grade 2 Listed Building in June 2001 which meant that a Listed Building Consent would have been required from Warwick District Council for any works with English Heritage being the main consultee.

Warwick Area Committee endorsed the proposal to develop options for alternative pedestrian and cycling provision adjacent to the main bridge and that the options be submitted to public consultation

2. All Possible Options for Consideration

1 Previous widening scheme

2 New cycle/footbridges on both sides

3 New cycle/footbridge on North side only

4 Strengthen extensions

5 Narrow Carriageway

6 Reconstruct concrete deck

7 Extend Arches

8 Do Nothing

3. Preliminary consultation results

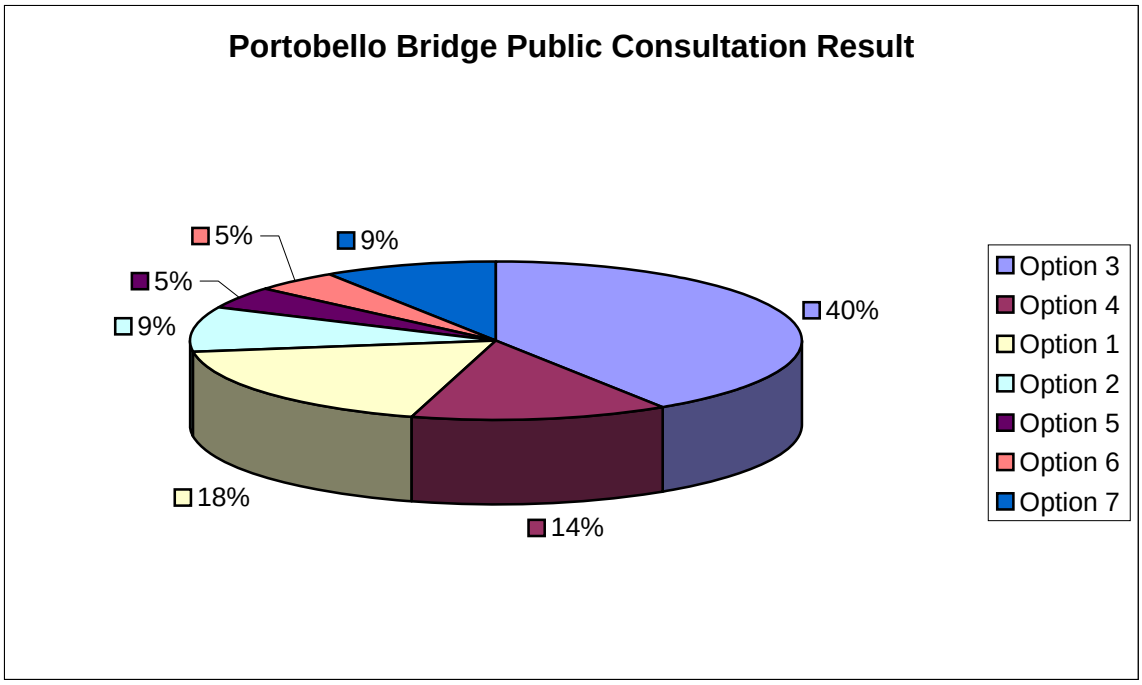
Portobello Bridge – Warwick

Public Consultation Survey

The following comments were received following consultation February 2008

Organisation Consulted	Replied	No Reply	Preferred Option	Comments
1. Action 21	✓		3	
2. Ancient Monument Society				No reply received
3. Andy Patrick	✓		3 & 4	Better Improvement on option 3 footway on north side. Upgrade cycle lane to 1.5m for option 4
4. Age Concern				No reply received
5. Architecture & Built Environment		✓		Declined to give a response at this stage but would like to be informed/consulted during the design stage of a more definitive option
6. Association for the Blind				No Reply received
7. Cllr Browne	✓		1	Silly to build 2nd bridge. Put pressure on EH to accept option 1
8. Cllr Davis	✓		1	Best option is option 1, all others are far less better.
9. Cllr Haywood	✓		2	
10. Council for Disabled People				No reply received
11. CTC Rodney King	✓		3 & 4	Options 3 & 4 would be the best with some improvement to cycle lane width. It should be 1.5m min.
12. English Heritage			3	
13. Landscape Architect – WCC	✓		7	Extending the arches is the preferred option.
14. Living Streets				No reply received
15. Regeneration Group - WCC	✓		7	This option retains the look of the original structure without obscuring it and caters for cyclists and pedestrian more safely by widening carriageway.

16. TPU - WCC	✓		6	Deck reconstruction, this allows continuous on-carriageway cycling provision along this corridor.
17. Warwick District Council	✓		5	Made a comment on every option but with no preference to any. Except for option 5, they seem to prefer it over the others. Narrow Option.
18. Warwick Society	✓		3 & 4	Landscape improvement is essential. Ideas on footbridge design and appearance have been given.
19. Warwick Town Council	✓		1 or 2	The Town Council continues to support the widening option and if it doesn't go through, then two separate footbridges, one at either side.
20. Georgian Group	✓		3	
21. Leamington Society				No reply received
22. Mr Lewenz on behalf of cycleways Group	✓		3	Option 3 would be the best 2nd would be option 4. They would like to be further consulted over the bridge in all future stages of design.
23. Warwick & Leamington Green Party.	✓		3	Option 1 is far the worst option. They would like to know the future forecast of traffic carbon emission levels. Estimates of construction costs of all options. Capacity & local traffic flow at peak times of local roads.
24.Guide Dogs for the Blind Association	✓		1 or 3	Their response was quite general, they made emphasis on having colour and surface texture differentiation between the footpath and cycleway designated areas. So it becomes easier for the blind and partially sited to differentiate between the two. They gave an example of Tachbrook Road.



Option 1 – Widening Option

Option 2 – New Cycle/Footbridge on both sides

Option 3 – Footbridge option on northern side only

Option 4 – Strengthening of Footway Extensions

Option 5 – Narrow bridge deck

Option 6 – Reconstruction of concrete deck

Option 7 – Extending the arches

Option 8 – Do nothing (0 result)

4. Constraints

(a) Cost – Funding

The improvement scheme for Portobello Bridge would be funded by the Bridge Maintenance Group of Design Services EED, from the Capital Funding Programme. It is an annual allocation of funding from the County Council's LTP 2005 'Local Transport Plan' funding allocation. Cabinet Approval would need to be sought for any scheme to proceed, therefore Design Services would need to justify all costs incurred. However, there is a pressing need for this scheme as the bridge's current condition is merely an interim measure and a permanent solution will need to be achieved.

(b) English Heritage Approval

English Heritage did not give approval for the scheme originally proposed (Option 1 Bridge Widening). However, with further informal consultation with English Heritage, Design Services gained some measure of Approval in Principle

for a separate footbridge on the North side only. Clearly, a formal consent based on full details would be necessary if this option is to proceed.

(c) Planning Consent for Health Centre

In August 2007 Warwick District Council gave Planning Permission for a two storey Doctor's Surgery to be constructed adjacent to Portobello Bridge. At the time of the Planning Application the County Council did not have a definitive scheme and therefore was not able to object to the decision of the District Council. The surgery is currently under construction and detailed plans/drawings of the surgery highlight a very close proximity between the surgery and the bridge. This will constrain any possible footbridge or widening construction. However, some solutions notably, the North side footbridge and part widening scheme remain valid and achievable. Please see detailed drawings of scheme enclosed in Appendix A.

(d) Disruption to traffic flows during construction

The construction process for all the various options will have a major effect causing disruption to the traffic flow on Emscote Road. However, some solutions would have more of a disruption to the traffic flow than others and some would need complete road closure. For example Option 7 the arch widening option would need complete road closure. The County Council would try to avoid such a solution because the bridge is on one of Warwick's busiest routes serving the local community, residential areas and schools. All other options would need traffic management and some single lane operation, which would inevitably cause congestion especially during peak times.

(e) Services Diversions and costs

The delivery of some of the options would require service diversion. For example Option 1 Bridge Widening, all services on the Northern side of the bridge would need to be diverted and relocated from their current position to the new widened position. Option 7 Arch widening solution would also require service diversions, but on both sides of the bridge. The approximate overall cost for service diversion for option 1 is £75,000 and for option 7 is £100,000. Option 6 Narrow Bridge would also need Service diversion from both sides of the bridge at a cost of £120,000. All other options would not require any major service diversion.

(f) Cycleways to be minimum of 1.5m wide for safety

It is preferable to separate cyclists from motor traffic because cyclists often feel unsafe in mixed traffic, especially with large volumes of traffic travelling at high speeds. Bicycles and motor vehicles should therefore ideally only be mixed where there is little motor traffic and speeds are suitably low. One of the options is to provide the cycling facility on the carriageway. As it would not be acceptable to require cyclists to cross and re-cross the road, the cycling provision would be maintained on both sides of the bridge. The provision would be part of a major cycling route that links Leamington Spa to Warwick via Emscote Road and Warwick New Road. In October 2008 Department for Transport produced a document named DfT LT Note 2/08 Cycling infrastructure

Design. This document dictates that the minimum cycling width within a carriageway should be 1.5m. Therefore, the cycling provision on both sides of Portobello bridge for all the options will be a minimum of 1.5m.

5. Detailed Consideration of Options

1. Bridge Widening Option

In 2001 It was proposed to remove the existing footways and to widen the bridge in order to accommodate new footways and cycleways and at the same time provide additional carriageway width to enable junction improvements. This scheme was approved by Cabinet with approval to allocate the necessary funding on 29th November 2001, following extensive consultation.

In the absence of any Constraints, the preferred solution for the benefit of bridge users would be to widen the existing bridge sufficiently to allow two standard width traffic lanes with standard footways and cycleways on both sides. It is not presently proposed to carry out junction improvement works. Widening would be on the North side only, because of the close proximity of houses on the South side.

English Heritage has refused to support the bridge widening option because of concerns that widening of the bridge would not permit an unrestricted view of the original North elevation of the bridge. However, it was accepted by them that the south elevation would be improved by the removal of the footway extension on that side.

Even though English Heritage suggested that the major widening scheme be abandoned, the extensions to the bridge which support the footways still remain a cause for concern and it is felt that action must be taken in the interests of safety to remove the extensions from both sides particularly the North and make alternative arrangements for pedestrians and if possible, cyclists.

With no current plans for junction improvements, this alternative option would be to widen the bridge deck on the northern side only and remove both extensions, so that there would be a single two lane carriageway and a combined footway/cycle way at either side.

The major widening scheme as previously considered, is no longer viable because of the construction of the new doctor's surgery, and because there is currently no requirement for a right hand turn into Greville Road. The full widening scheme had a total width of 15,950mm comprising three 3650mm lanes and two footpaths each of 2500mm width. However, a smaller widening scheme could be adopted replacing the existing weak footway extensions. Its width would be 12,800mm, making the entire carriageway comprise two 3400mm lanes, 2 (1500mm) cycle paths and 2 footways each 1500mm in width.

English Heritage have suggested that the original stone parapets should be re-installed instead of the existing steel parapets. However, they would need to be designed to modern highway standards, such as, vehicle impact loading etc.

Advantages of Widening Scheme

- Removal of the substandard footway extensions.
- Resolves pedestrian and cyclist access and safety issues across bridge (Note, there is no significant reported accident record, but a perception of large number of incidents claimed by local cycle group.). Cyclists are deterred by the narrow road width and a perception of danger.
- Provides safe and direct pedestrian facility on all arms of Greville Road/Emscote Road junction.
- The scheme is compliant with current LTP policy for improving facilities for, and encouraging the use of, walking, cycling and public transport.
- The scheme facilitates the completion of an established cycling corridor, which is one of only three potential corridors able to link Warwick to Leamington.
- The widening scheme provides a significantly higher level and quality of pedestrian and cycle facilities than all alternative options.
- This scheme improves public transport access, residential access to the local highway network and access for the commuter traffic on the corridor between North Warwick and South Leamington. Also, access into the centre of Leamington is being well served by the widening scheme.

Disadvantages of Bridge Widening Scheme

- Environmental Issues:-

    - Trees (native black poplar)
    - Visual intrusion.
    - Changes to listed structure.

2. & 3 Footbridge Option

The possibility of the construction of a new separate footbridge on one or both sides of the road bridge was considered. It was felt that this option might be acceptable to English Heritage, following informal discussion with them. If EH don't support the construction of the footbridge then they should be asked to reconsider their opposition to the widening scheme.

The footbridge would be constructed by removing the extension on the adjacent side and having a single footbridge on the northern side, or foot bridges at both sides, thus removing both extensions. The footbridges would each ideally be 3.5m wide to facilitate pedestrian and cycle movement if proved necessary.

Discussion of Footbridges Option

English Heritage would prefer a scheme that has minimal impact on the old structure.

A footway/cycleway would be required on both sides because of difficulty in crossing the road.

There is insufficient width to accommodate a full standard footway/cycleway on one side of the existing bridge carriageway so as to require only one new bridge. Two bridges would be required.

Bridges would be positioned as close as reasonably possible to the existing bridge, allowing access for maintenance.

Positioning the new bridges further away from the existing bridge, possibly on a curved alignment, would increase structure costs and require additional land acquisition. Additional travel distance would be unattractive to users.

The existing bridge extensions would be removed and stone parapets could be replaced on existing arch bridge, if required.

On the South side of the original bridge, removal of the footway would create more space to construct a new footbridge but the alignment of a new cycleway would be substandard unless one or more properties were demolished.

Advantages of Footbridge Option:

- The cost of two footway/cycleway bridges should be less than the original carriageway widening proposal.
- The proposal would be in line with policies to improve condtions for cyclists and pedestrians.

Disadvantages of Footbridge Options:

- Alignment would be very substandard particularly at the South West corner. There is very limited space between existing bridge and adjacent properties. Cyclists would not be able to ride safely at reasonable speed and may have to stop or dismount.
- Potential for conflict between pedestrian and cyclists on both sides.
- Dangerous for cyclists to rejoin carriageway. Limited visibility especially if there were solid parapets.
- Experienced cyclists may opt to remain on carriageway defeating the object of the main scheme. The carriageway would only be marginally wider than currently especially with new stone parapets.
- Users of the new bridges would not be able to view the old bridge.
- Views of the old bridge would be partly obscured by the new bridges.
- No future widening of the old bridge could be carried out without demolishing the new bridges.
- Land would have to be acquired from the developer of Pottertons site to construct the bridge's foundations.
- A number of large trees would have to be removed to construct the bridge's foundations.
- To construct the new bridges it would first be necessary to demolish the existing extensions. Temporary provision for pedestrians and cyclists would have to be made, probably by reducing the carriageway to single lane with traffic signals. This could result in serious congestion.
- Proposal would not be in line with policies to reduce vehicular congestion or improve conditions for public transport users.
- The separate footway/cycleway scheme would not be to full current standards.

4. Strengthening of Footway Extensions

There is an option of strengthening both footway extensions, re-opening the closed northern footpath and removing the displacement of the footway into the carriageway. However, on both sides parts of the carriageway would still need to be utilised as cycle ways. This would be the most economical option. The main advantage of this option is that carriageway would be slightly improved by widening it. There would be limited disruption to traffic movement and to services. However, the main disadvantage would be that the extension footways would have to remain. Aesthetically they are not very pleasing and English Heritage are keen to remove the southern extension in particular which consists of steel universal beams supporting the footway and circular steel columns. It is unlikely that the Northern footway could be retained in its cantilever form and it would probably be necessary to construct a supporting structure beneath it.

Advantages of Option

- Cheapest solution possible in comparison to all other options – except do nothing option.
- Quickest to construct in comparison to all other options – except do nothing option.
- Least traffic congestion suffered during construction period.
- Adequate solution to the current bridge situation.
- Possibly easier to gain approval from all interested parties.

Disadvantages of Option

- Doesn't address the current problem with the bridge so well.
- The bridge remains aesthetically not pleasing with one side different from the other.
- Relies on re-use of old materials rather than a new structure.
- Future maintenance issues

5. Narrow carriageway option

This is an option where the under-strength footway extensions are removed leaving a very narrow carriageway with narrow footpaths. The main disadvantage of this option is that cyclists will not be facilitated and the bridge in future would be subject to further developments by finding alternative means for cyclists and pedestrians. This option could be seen as a temporary measure. Its construction doesn't need extensive traffic management methods or complications.
We would need traffic lights because the carriageway would be so narrow.

6. Deck Reconstruction Option

This option involves the removal of the existing deck and constructing a reinforced concrete deck forming a two lane single carriageway with a combined footway/cycleway at either side. The main disadvantage of this option would be total closure of the road throughout the construction period and redirection of traffic. This would obviously result in extensive traffic disruption throughout

Emscote Road into Warwick and Warwick New Road into Leamington Spa, leading to traffic congestion as far as Myton Road.

7 Extend Arches to Support Footways

This option involves extension of the arches from both sides by doing each side at a time. Removing the fascia of the arch barrel, supporting the deck, widening the bridge then reconstructing the fascia of the arch spandrel. Complete road closure would be carried out throughout the construction period. The main disadvantage of this option is that traffic congestions would be suffered throughout the construction period and it is quite an expensive option bringing disruption to services. However, the main advantage of this option would be that both footway extensions would be removed, revealing the original status of the structure from both elevations

8. To leave the Entire Bridge as it is (Do Nothing)

There is an option of leaving the structure as it is, but in time something needs to be done especially with regard to the weak northern side of the bridge. Large cracks are very visible at present at the edge of the closed footway extension. Also, in the years to come it is expected that traffic volumes using the Emscote Road will only increase thus making the narrow bridge carriageway even more unsuitable

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6. Summary and Conclusion of Preferred/Appropriate Options

Option	Cost Estimate £	Disruption	Cyclist	Pedestrian	Vehicles	Environment	ETC	Comments
1 Widening	**1,250,000**	Oneway traffic during the construction period would be maintained. There would be some disruption to services and public.	There would be provision for cyclists on both sides of the road.	There would be provision for pedestrians on both sides of the road to current design standards.	There would be a 2-way traffic provision to full current standards	Environmentally friendly solution. There would be some tree and shrub cutting for the supports and foundations of the extension.	Aesthetically not pleasing	This option complies fully to all current design standards
2 2 Foot Bridges	**1,200,000**	Minimum disruption to traffic, services and public	There is provision for cyclist on both side of the road	There is provision on both sides of the road to current design standards	2-way traffic provided to current standard	Environmentally friendly solution. Partial tree and shrub cutting at the location of bridge's support and foundations	Aesthetically pleasing. symmetrical bridge	It is extremely difficult to fit a footbridge on the southern side being close to a row of houses.
3 One Foot Bridge	**750,000**	Very limited disruptions to traffic services or the public	Provision for cyclists on both sides of the road	There would be adequate provision for pedestrians on both sides of the road	2-way traffic would be provided in lanes which are slightly substandard in width	Some tree cutting in location of supports and bridge foundations	Aesthetically pleasing	Very limited space between doctor's surgery and bridge
4 Strength - ening	**400,000**	Very limited disruption to traffic, services and public	There would be provision for cyclists on both sides of the road	There would be provision for pedestrians on both sides of the road to current design standards	2-way traffic will be provided which would be substandard in terms of widths	Extremely friendly solution	Aesthetically not pleasing due to bridge being unsymmetrical	One of the most economical option to pursue
5 Narrow	**200,000**	Very limited disruption to traffic, services and public	No provision for cyclists	There would be provision for pedestrians on both sides of the road	2-way traffic would be provided to a marginally low standard	Environmentally friendly solution	Aesthetically not pleasing due to bridge being unsymmetrical	Most economical option to be pursued beside 'Do nothing' option

6 New Conc. Deck	**1,700,000**	A highly disruptive option to pursue due to complete road closure during construction,	There would be provision for cyclists on both sides of the road	There would be provision for pedestrians on both sides of the road	2-way traffic provided to current standard	Environmentally not friendly full of noise pollution, delays and traffic jams	Aesthetically pleasing	It is almost impossible to build due to total road closure needed during construction phase given the general road layout of the area
7 Extend Arches	**2,000,000**	A highly disruptive option to pursue due to complete road closure during construction,	There would be provision for cyclists on both sides of the road	There would be provision for pedestrians on both sides of the road	2-way traffic provided to current standard	Environmentally not friendly full of noise pollution, delays and traffic jams	Aesthetically most pleasing	Most expensive option to pursue. It is almost impossible to build due to total road closure needed during construction phase given the general road layout of the area
8 Do Nothing	**Zero Cost** **But temporary only**	No disruption	There would be provision for cyclists on both sides of the road But on a narrow carriageway	There would be provision for pedestrians on both sides of the road	2-way traffic would be provided to a marginally low standard	Environmentally friendly solution	Aesthetically not pleasing	Cheapest option to pursue. Problem remains as it is only a temporary measure

Conclusions

Various options of improvement to the Grade II listed structure have been investigated. However, it is felt that the maintenance issues at the bridge must be resolved and to do this the cantilever extensions must be removed or strengthened. The existing main bridge structure once the footway extensions are removed will be too narrow to accommodate vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians concurrently. Therefore, the preferred solution must involve either new footbridges at either side or widening of the deck. The deck reconstruction option would have the biggest impact on traffic movement leading into Leamington Spa and Warwick, therefore, it would be the least favoured option.

It has not proved possible to agree the principles of the widening with English Heritage because of the visual impact on the bridge.

All solutions are relatively high cost. However, having a single footbridge is likely to be cheaper than bridge widening option, although, the facilities created would be substandard.

The strengthening of the footway extensions option would be one of the most economical options to pursue. The closed footway on the North side would be re-opened, thus making the carriageway wider and the bridge deck much more symmetrical as both elevations would be the same. However, retention of old materials would create future maintenance problems and could not be regarded as a long term solution.

The deck reconstruction is feasible but would necessitate total closure of the bridge, making it a very difficult option to pursue.

The deck widening option would be acceptable by many because it reinstates the structure back to its original appearance. However, It would also cause major traffic disruptions.

Finally, there is the option of leaving the structure as it is, but this is not a permanent solution.

After a thorough study of the findings of the preliminary consultation process that took place, the majority support was for a single footbridge on the Northern side of the bridge. The next option preferred was the bridge widening option. Some consultees feel that WCC should put pressure on English Heritage to accept the widening option. It is therefore, recommended that a single footbridge on the Northern side be pursued and investigated further.

It is recommended that cyclists be accommodated on the carriageway and therefore to maximize the available width of carriageway available. It is recommended that the Southern footway extension is strengthened if practicable or replaced by a new structure, possibly as a future scheme.

7 What Happens Next?

This report together with more detailed considerations of the two preferred options will be circulated to all consultees and to the public via Warwickshire County Council Website. There will be a period of time for feedback and response. A report will be taken to Warwick Area Committee on 10th March 2009 seeking approval to develop the North side footbridge scheme and develop alternatives for the South side. Detail of these schemes to be subject to further consultation. A Cabinet decision on the approved scheme will be sought. Once the County Council has a definitive scheme in place, the Detailed Design phase of the scheme will commence. This will be in the financial year 2009/10.