

Wivenhoe to University Cycle Link

FAQ

1. What is the Wivenhoe to University Cycle Link?

A: The cycle link along Colchester Road, between the University and Wivenhoe has been a long term aspiration. A consultation was undertaken in 2013 to confirm the preferred option. The University committed funding towards the link and the scheme is now being undertaken. The existing footway is being widened to create an unsegregated-shared pedestrian and cycle route which will be 3.0 metres wide.

2. Why is the new cycle and pedestrian path not segregated – one half for cyclists and the other half for pedestrians?

A: A cycle and pedestrian path that is segregated has to be much wider to give both pedestrians and cyclists adequate room to travel in both directions. The expected usage of the route means that a shared unsegregated route is the most appropriate option.

3. Why are we doing this scheme?

A: For a number of years there has been a desire to create a cycle route between the University and Wivenhoe and the university contributed towards an improved cycle route, to promote non car travel to and from the university. Other reasons include;

- a. Both students and staff travel between the two destinations and the distance and time taken to walk are such that cycling is often a preferred option
- b. The road is a busy route and carries a significant number of vehicles including Large Goods Vehicles and buses.
- c. The existing footway is very narrow and poorly lit

4. The scheme was due to be completed by Christmas but work has only just started? Why?

A: Due to unforeseen delays relating to land acquisition, we were unable to begin work when we had hoped. As a result this has led to a delay in the start of the construction. We are aiming to complete the scheme by March 31st 2016.

5. How long will the work take?

A: The work will take approximately four months. This includes a period before

Christmas 2015 and from Jan 4th 2016.

6. Why is it going to take that long?

A: The work required to create the cycleway is extensive and includes;

- a. Widening the road/street so that there is sufficient width for both a new shared cycle and pedestrian route and motorised traffic on the carriageway
- b. Removing trees and hedges to enable the road to be realigned
- c. Installing new drainage
- d. Providing new street lighting along its length to ensure a safe route for both pedestrians and cyclists
- e. Installing a toucan crossing in the vicinity of the Flag public house to provide a safe crossing point for both cyclists and pedestrians.

7. Why do you have to close the road?

A: Much of the road will have to be removed to create the new wider carriageway and to install the new drainage. Throughout the work period there will also be people working within the site and construction vehicles manoeuvring, so to maintain the safety of the workforce and the general public the road needs to be closed. The road and footway are too narrow to allow the majority of work to proceed while also maintaining a minimum lane width, the minimum footway width and allowing for traffic management equipment and safety zones.

8. How long will the road be closed for?

A: The road will be closed from 4th Jan with the scheme due for completion 31st March 2016.

9. What about the access for local bus and school services?

A: Local bus services are currently being allowed to use Colchester Road under convoy to continue to serve Wivenhoe and the University but from 4th Jan 2016 will be unable to travel through the site. We are liaising with the bus operators about services in the New Year and will provide further information in due course.

10. What about access for residents living on Elmstead Road and Vine Drive?

A: We will maintain access for residents on Elmstead Road and Vine Drive but there will be periods when Colchester Road between Elmstead Road and Vine Drive will have to be closed. Letters will be sent to those affected in advance of these periods and advance notice signs will be put up a minimum of 2 weeks in advance. We are working to minimise disruption through the period of the works.

11. Will there be pedestrian and cycle access whilst the work is ongoing?

A: Pedestrian and cycle access will be maintained throughout the work. It should be noted that due to the restricted space available cyclists will have to share the footway with pedestrians and for this reason will not be allowed to cycle within the site and will have to dismount.

12.

13. Will access be maintained for the emergency services?

A: The emergency services have been informed of the road closure and whilst we will maintain access for emergency vehicles when we can, it is anticipated they will use the most appropriate route and are not confined to using the official diversion route.

14. How much is the project costing?

A: £1.3 million

15. Why is it costing this much?

A: The new route is wider than the existing highway and therefore there was a need to either acquire land or have areas of land dedicated as highway. This has to be accounted for within the overall costs.

- a. The work required to create this new route is extensive. The main activities are
 - i. Utility diversionary works
 - ii. Vegetation and tree clearance
 - iii. Carriageway realignment and reconstruction
 - iv. Drainage (Gullies, ditches and soakaways)
 - v. Widened footway/cycleway
 - vi. New Road Signs and Markings
 - vii. New Street-lighting
 - viii. Toucan Crossing
 - ix. Fencing and Landscaping

16. Why have we chosen the current diversion route?

A: When necessary to divert traffic we have to put in place a signed diversion onto roads which are of the same suitable standard as the road being closed.

17. The diversion route is going to encourage rat running and speeding, what are you doing to mitigate this?

A: The official diversionary route has been signed but there will be alternative re-routing due to local knowledge. The impacts of the diversionary route will be monitored.

18. How will local businesses receive deliveries?

A: We are in discussion with affected local businesses regarding access for deliveries and we will give local businesses advanced notice of any times when access may not be possible. Where possible we will work with them to find an acceptable alternative on those occasions.

19. What about lost business takings?

A: We want to minimise the impact on businesses and residents by completing the work as quickly as possible. However, when a highway authority or statutory undertaker carries out works under its statutory powers or duties, it is not liable to pay compensation for loss of trade. Nevertheless, if you think you are entitled to make a claim you can do so by contacting Essex County Council on 0345 603 7631.

20. Will there be any overnight or weekend working?

A: At this stage overnight working is not planned. However work will continue at weekends. If overnight working is considered at a later stage the local environmental health officer will be consulted to agree permitted noise levels and working hours.

21. How will you keep local residents and businesses updated, before and during the works?

A: The Essex Highways website will be updated with information and we will also provide updates to the Town Council to share with local residents and businesses. A further letter to local residents and businesses will also be issued in the New Year.