



## St Botolph's Circus Regeneration

Promoter's Response

October 2023

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## 1 Introduction

St Botolph's Circus is a crucial gateway into Colchester City Centre. It sees the meeting of the A134 Southway, with St Botolph's Street, Mersea Road and Magdalen Street. It is an important meeting point of different forms of transport.

However, St Botolph's circus currently underperforms and is an area that has long been acknowledged as requiring investment. It is complex to move around, has poor connectivity to other modes of transport and poses accessibility issues. It also suffers from poor air quality and antisocial behaviour.

Following previous consultation (2019), and feedback on people's aims for this part of the city, a successful 'Levelling up Fund' bid was submitted by Colchester City Council in partnership with Essex County Council. This proposed a new crossroad layout to replace the existing St Botolph's roundabout.

A six-week public consultation took place between June and July 2023 to inform Colchester residents of the details of these new proposals and gather public opinion on the plans. The consultation undertaken was presented alongside the wider Colchester City Council Masterplan with respondents encouraged to give views on both elements. The consultation was primarily digitally focussed with an online survey, however hard copy brochures were also available and in-person events and meetings were run. The Consultation Report gives more details about these consultations and analysis of the data which is summarised below.

In total, 532 responses to the consultation were received, including 499 survey responses. A large majority of these survey responses (88%) were sent by residents of Colchester, and 98% of respondents said they currently use St Botolph's junction.

Throughout the consultation report, the public offered a mixed view, with responses highlighting both positive and negative elements of the proposals. Among the survey's key findings were:

- 54% agreed or were neutral that the proposals would make St Botolph's safer and more attractive.
- 56% disagreed that the proposals would encourage more people to walk, cycle or use public transport in the area.
- 54% opposed the proposed layout option.
- 50% agreed that improving the interchange at St Botolph's Circus is important.

Three questions gathered qualitative feedback on sustainable travel uptake, the proposals, and the objectives. While those negative towards the proposals were more likely to leave qualitative feedback, concerns over the same areas were recurrent. Firstly, respondents frequently referred to the scheme as not needed or claimed it is not a priority. Many asked for road repairs to fix potholes in the area before working on St Botolph's. The biggest concern over the new design was the replacement of the roundabout with a junction layout. Respondents voiced strong concerns that this could have an adverse impact on traffic flow in the area.

Within the qualitative data gathered on sustainable travel uptake, some respondents voiced concerns that those who wish to cycle already do so, and thus the proposals would not increase cycling. Despite this, people were generally more accepting of the cycle paths than other areas of the proposals. However, many argued that the cycle paths need to connect to a wider network and that there was a need for a crossing point on the western arm of the junction.

The new pedestrian infrastructure was generally welcomed, including more support than opposition for removing the underpasses. This could be seen most strongly by those living closer to the junction. As with cycling, requests were made for additional crossings. However, many felt that while the scheme would improve accessibility, pedestrian numbers would fail to increase as there is little incentive to visit the surrounding areas and city centre.

Respondents also noted that general improvements to public transport services were needed and requests for a new bus station and bus station improvements were also common. Some respondents noted that Colchester residents simply prefer to use cars, and this will continue to be the case regardless of these proposals.

Qualitative feedback on the proposals highlighted areas of concern in the proposed design, the majority relating to car use across the junction. Respondents frequently raised concerns over access to specific areas or roads. Again, traffic issues were a predominant theme, with respondents concerned that the new junction layout could cause congestion. The cycling and pedestrian elements were welcomed more positively, whilst some commented that the proposed seating areas would not be used due to their proximity to traffic.

Feedback on the objectives generally agreed that the scheme could reduce antisocial behaviour at St Botolph's, but highlighted concern this will move it elsewhere. Respondents asked for increased policing and security to tackle this. Regarding increasing footfall, respondents again argued that improvements in the city centre and surrounding areas are needed to provide incentives to walk across the junction, and this should be considered in the wider city centre masterplan. Respondents felt the wider transport links would not be used as long as Colchester residents remain committed to their driving habits and public transport continues to require improvement. Many also felt the proposals could have a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of residents due to pollution from traffic jams caused by the new road layout.

The consultation has provided a valuable insight into the public's views about the proposed St Botolph's Circus regeneration. The feedback received will play a vital role in informing the decisions made by Essex County Council as this project progresses in the future.

## 1.1 Consultation Survey

The consultation took a primarily digital focus with a single point of entry ([www.colchester.gov.uk/colchester-city-centre](http://www.colchester.gov.uk/colchester-city-centre)) for respondents to find details on the St Botolph's proposals alongside the wider City Centre Masterplan.

A consultation brochure was made available digitally and in hard copy (available at <https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/essex-highways/st-botolphs-circus/>). This detailed the

proposals for the regeneration, providing background to the scheme including the reasons why a regeneration is necessary, how the scheme fits into the wider developing Masterplan, how it will be funded, how it has progressed from the 2019 consultations and what it hopes to achieve.

The main body of the consultation brochure explained the new proposals, and what respondents could expect to see if the proposed changes were implemented. Detailed explanations of how the new junction would function, the new features it would provide, and how these would benefit respondents were given. Artist impressions and road layout images were included, allowing those reading the brochure to visualise and understand the proposed changes easily. The survey welcoming opinions on the plans was included at the end of the consultation brochure.

## 1.2 Analysing the data

To analyse the qualitative feedback received from the survey, via email and written responses, an emergent coding approach was used. To enable this, a code framework was created, with every consultation response read and reoccurring themes and trends identified.

In total, 532 responses to the consultation were received. These included:

- 499 online responses
- 26 emailed responses (All of these offered general responses)
- 7 written responses (All of these offered general responses)

## 1.3 Key findings and consultation report

The consultation has provided a valuable insight into the public's views about the proposed St Botolph's Circus regeneration. The feedback received will play a vital role in informing the decisions made as this project progresses in the future.

It is clear that from quantitative feedback provided there is a split in opinion with 50% of respondents agreeing that improving St Botolph's is important, 54% agreeing or neutral that the proposals would make St Botolph's safer and 46% supporting the proposed layout.

Those opposed to the scheme tended to provide more detailed qualitative feedback and the key themes of questioning priority, the perceived need to maintain a roundabout for traffic flow and the impact on congestion were reoccurring throughout.

While the proposals look to create a balance between different transport modes, respondents were generally supportive of the creation of new cycle paths and improving accessibility, although concerns were raised in relation to the need for direct crossings instead of staggered ones, the importance of segregation and the need to link to the wider network.

The importance of the bus station area was also clear, with a number of respondents focussing on that area and the impact on buses as being a greater immediate priority.

Key design features such as the removal of the underpasses also saw differing views, with most generally supportive, but some concerned that this would simply shift anti-social behaviour.

Equally, while some respondents saw the benefit of the plaza areas in creating new open spaces, others felt that these would not be used due to the lack of local economy and the proximity to Southway.

Overall many responses were mixed with both negatives and positives about the scheme, its design and its ability to meet the identified objectives. This demonstrates the challenge of rethinking a highways-dominated junction into one that caters for different users.

The full public consultation report can be found on the [project webpage](#).

## 2 Latest progress and design evolution

The feedback and comments provided through the consultation and to the previous consultation in 2019 have demonstrated that while there is a level of support for the aims of the scheme, further work is required in relation to some of the core design elements.

Issues such as traffic management, westerly traffic movements, crossing points, air quality and the impact on the environment were raised by a number of respondents and responses to these points are covered below.

The project team will now be looking closely at how the design can be evolved to consider these elements, while also ensuring that the scheme meets the aims set out within the funding provision.

The next step in this process will be the announcement of 'preferred option', This option will then be subject to further detailed design. The public will have the opportunity to provide any additional comments on this as part of the 'Traffic Regulation Order' process, the legal process required to make changes to the highway network.

Updates on the scheme will be published on the Essex County Council website at [www.essexhighways.org/st-botolphs-circus](http://www.essexhighways.org/st-botolphs-circus)

## 3 Our response and actions

The following section sets out our response to key themes and points raised during the public consultation.

The issues have been split into the following sections:

- Project construction
- Traffic and traffic modelling
- Junction design and access to specific locations
- Walking and cycling
- Public transport
- Environment, public realm and heritage

It should be noted that the points relate to the key queries, issues or points raised in the consultation responses. We also received a number of more general statements and

positive feedback, which have all been read and acknowledged but we did not feel required a 'response'.

### 3.1 Project construction

Theme of Issue/concern	Example comment	Essex County Council response
<p><b>Road repairs to address potholes across Colchester are more of a priority.</b></p>	<p><i>I'm sure there's better things to spend the money on, e.g., Road repairs, potholes</i></p>	<p>Potholes and maintenance in general is a priority for the council and substantial levels of funding are invested into maintaining the highway on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Earlier this year the Government announced more funding was to be made available to councils to help fix potholes, recognising the impact of the harsh winter.</p> <p>However, alongside maintenance it is important to look at where there are funding opportunities to also improve the general area. The Government's Levelling up Fund is one such fund dedicated to support projects and highways schemes to enable regeneration of specific areas.</p> <p>The successful bid put forward by Colchester City Council in partnership with Essex County Council is to specially regenerate the area around St Botolph's, tackling some of the identified issues.</p> <p>In itself it is not a critical highways scheme, but as part of a wider regeneration project, creating a better balance between different types of transport users of the junction, improving connectivity and accessibility to the City Centre and supporting economic renewal the scheme is an important one. This is recognised in the success of the bid in receiving funding.</p> <p>It should also be noted that the funding cannot be transferred to other projects or maintenance. If the project does not proceed, the money will not be available to the councils.</p> <p>However, it should be noted that in progressing the regeneration of this area and developing new infrastructure, improvement to the highway/footways/surfacing etc will be undertaken that otherwise would not be possible.</p>
<p><b>How much will the project cost?</b></p> <p><b>How much of this will be provided by the levelling-up Land fund?</b></p>	<p><i>It would be helpful to know how much levelling-up funding you have been awarded for this project?</i></p>	<p>The Levelling Up Fund bid covers a number of projects and schemes across the city. In total Colchester has received £19.66 million. Details on this can be seen here <a href="http://www.colchester.gov.uk/levelling-up-fund">www.colchester.gov.uk/levelling-up-fund</a>.</p> <p>In total £9.3m of Levelling up Funding has been budgeted towards regenerating the St Botolph's area alongside £2.5m in Section 106 money (money paid</p>

		<p>to the council by developers for community infrastructure as part of a legal agreement).</p> <p>At this stage in the design process we are looking to gain views on the concept crossroad design. As we move forward and develop the plans in more detail, as well as undertake further survey work and assess ground conditions, the costs will be further refined.</p> <p>Ultimately these will be considered alongside the consultation feedback, engineering feasibility, traffic modelling and environmental surveys and the plans will be refined accordingly.</p>
<b>Land costs</b>	<i>Have you got agreements in place with landowners?</i>	As all of the scheme falls within the highway boundary (highway land owned by the council), there is no requirement for additional land or associated land costs.
<b>How long will the project take and how disruptive will it be?</b>	<i>Would like to know more about the plans for how it will be delivered, the timescales, and maintenance moving forward.</i>	<p>It is currently estimated that construction would begin in May 2025 and take approximately 21 months to complete. However, following feedback received and ongoing review of the design (as per question above), this will be refined and could be reduced.</p> <p>The full programme for construction will be developed by the contractor and would need to be approved by the council. This would look at factors such as required lane closures etc. Often the quickest way to undertake a project requires the most disruption and we recognise that there needs to be a careful balance between undertaking the work quickly and minimising traffic disruption.</p> <p>Once complete the scheme would fall with the council's ongoing programme of maintenance. While there would be little initial maintenance required we would look to ensure that new planting and trees become established.</p>
<b>Existing conditions</b>	<p><i>Has the deteriorating condition of the St John's Abbey wall been considered?</i></p> <p><i>Are you aware of the springs next to the wall? – these were an issue when the roundabout was originally built</i></p> <p><i>The ground levels alter significantly in</i></p>	<p>We are aware of the condition of the wall, the springs (which a number of attendees at the consultation raised) and the different ground levels.</p> <p>At this point in the design process the scheme has reached a point where it is appropriate to gain feedback through our consultation, which, along with the feedback from 2019 has given us a good overview of local views.</p> <p>However, alongside this as we move forward there are a number of ongoing works which will help refine the proposals. These include heritage surveys, environmental surveys, ground investigations and buildability reviews.</p> <p>The purpose of these pieces of work, alongside the consultation feedback is to help create a full picture of</p>



	<i>the area – has this been considered?</i>	<p>the scheme, the works required, and the cost of undertaking it. Ultimately the final design will need to take into account the existing conditions</p> <p>Ultimately we must ensure that the project meets its objectives and delivers value for the money, and this is under constant review.</p>
<b>How will construction be managed to reduce impact on the wider areas?</b>	<i>I am opposed to that area being constricted or unavailable for cars and pedestrians for many months whilst you undertake the work. It will impede the school run for me and make it much harder to use the train station too.</i>	<p>The full programme for construction will be developed by the contractor following a tender process and would need to be approved by the council.</p> <p>This would look at factors such as required lane closures etc. Often the quickest way to undertake a project requires the most disruption and we recognise that there needs to be a careful balance between undertaking the work quickly and minimising traffic disruption on what is a major road, as well as ensuring people can continue to use the junction.</p> <p>Access to the train station and bus facilities are important and these must be maintained through construction.</p> <p>Once appointed we would expect the contractor to set out their approach to engaging with the local community to ensure that all key milestones, traffic management etc is well communicated.</p>

### 3.2 Traffic and Traffic Modelling

<b>Theme of issue/concern</b>	<b>Example comment</b>	<b>Essex County Council response</b>
<b>Has traffic modelling been done to assess the impact of removing the roundabout?</b>	<p><i>Whether the modelling on the junction will reduce congestion or not I am not sure.</i></p> <p><i>This proposal will cause complete chaos. Traffic will become infinitely worse.</i></p> <p><i>Will traffic be worse after removing the roundabout and replacing it with a junction?</i></p>	<p>Yes, traffic modelling work has been undertaken to look at various elements of the consulted design.</p> <p>One of the aims of the scheme is to create a better balance between traffic and pedestrians and cyclists who are not currently well catered for.</p> <p>In particular, accessibility is a centre issue at the junction. The current layout requires people to use steps or make considerable detours. The proposed scheme will reduce step-free walking distance by two-thirds. This is further responded to in section 2.4.</p> <p>It is also important to highlight that the area is within an Air Quality Management Area meaning that any changes need to be carefully considered.</p> <p>Conversion to full traffic signals would allow more precise control of the movement of people and vehicles through St Botolph's and the potential for better co-ordination of traffic between junctions.</p> <p>Signalisation would also mean pedestrians and cyclists will be able to safely cross north-south and</p>

		<p>east-west with average wait times of one minute or less.</p> <p>Across the majority of the day traffic will be able to pass through St Botolph's within one cycle of the lights; during peak periods it will take slightly longer to get through the junction, in common with most urban areas, but modelling indicates no significant increases in queues or delays (less than one minute on average).</p>
<p><b>Have potential increases in traffic from the developments at the Wick and new houses in the area been considered in the traffic modelling?</b></p>	<p><i>CCC has put the area in the local plan for 1000 homes with expected start in 2025 ... all that traffic will pile onto St Botolph's Junction.</i></p>	<p>Yes, modelling looks at planned housing growth and likely future traffic levels.</p> <p>Within the wider city context one of the key aims of transport planning is to support more sustainable and active travel (walking and cycling). A large number of car journeys in Colchester are very short and could be undertaken by alternative means if barriers were removed.</p> <p>We know that accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists is currently poor at the St Botolph's Junction and there is poor linkage to those communities to the south of the City Centre.</p> <p>Improving this and ensuring St Botolph's links into the wider walking and cycling network will help reduce local car use.</p>
<p><b>Ability to travel westward</b></p>	<p><i>There doesn't seem to be any provision for traffic leaving either St Botolph's or St John's car park to turn back to travel in a westerly direction along Southway.</i></p> <p><i>Has the amount of traffic this will cause to move through the bus station been considered?</i></p> <p><i>How will you be able to leave the Britannia Way Car Park and head west?</i></p>	<p>The re-designed junction does mean changes to people's journeys for those looking to travel back along Southway in a westerly direction.</p> <p>Those leaving St John's Car Park and looking to travel west would need to use Osborne Street/ Stanwell Street where they would be able to then turn right back onto Southway.</p> <p>Current indications suggest this would have a minimal impact on the bus station area, but this is being looked at in more detail.</p> <p>Those leaving Britannia Way Car Park would be able to travel in all directions with a left and right hand turn in place.</p> <p>As the design continues to evolve we are considering these points, as it is important to ensure that the scheme does not negatively impact on surrounding areas.</p>
<p><b>Has introducing link roads and ring roads to Colchester been</b></p>	<p><i>You should focus on a substantial southern ring road to Colchester</i></p>	<p>The A120 and the new A120/A133 Link Road are schemes designed to take traffic away from Colchester and ultimately we want to encourage the right traffic on the right roads.</p>

<p><b>explored to help ease traffic?</b></p>		<p>However, we know a lot of journeys being made in the City Centre are extremely short. If everyone in Colchester used a different form of transport twice a week this would remove 150,000 peak hour car journeys from the city's road network.</p> <p>It should also be stressed in relation to this particular funding, the emphasis is on regeneration rather than a highways scheme.</p>
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### 3.3 Junction design and access to specific locations

Theme of issue/concern	Example comments	Essex County Council response
<p><b>Why a crossroads?</b></p>	<p><i>Why not just leave this as a roundabout, the traffic will flow better?</i></p>	<p>The consulted option looks to reuse road space from the existing roundabout in order to provide new public realm, walking and cycling infrastructure and economic development space.</p> <p>While roundabouts do allow for traffic to flow, the conversion to traffic signals would allow more precise control of the movement of people and vehicles through St Botolph's and the potential for better co-ordination of traffic between junctions.</p> <p>We are however, continuing to assess traffic modelling, as while we want to ensure a balance between different users, we also need to ensure that there is no negative impact on the wider road network.</p>
<p><b>Entrance to Britannia Way Car Park</b></p>	<p><i>Will the entrance to Britannia Way Car Park remain light controlled for both vehicles and pedestrians?</i></p>	<p>No, as the design would take the entrance/exit of the car park away from the junction, traffic would filter onto St Botolph's Street where the signals would be located.</p> <p>The entrance/exit would be an 'informal' crossing point for pedestrians and cyclists, so would have road markings, but no dedicated crossing.</p>
<p><b>How will cars access St John's Green if approaching from the West?</b></p>	<p><i>I have no way of accessing St John's Green where I live by car. You've literally cut off access to our property.</i></p>	<p>The proposals consulted on would mean that those travelling from the west would not be able to use St Botolph's to return in an easterly direction.</p> <p>This would mean those accessing St John's Green would need to access either from Maldon Road or by travelling further along Southway to then travel back in a westerly direction.</p> <p>We are aware that this will impact on surrounding roads and are looking closely at this to assess the design in more detail</p>

<p><b>Has potential traffic caused by queuing on the slip road for Britannia Way been considered?</b></p>	<p><i>Access to Britannia Way car park has a very short slip road in this suggestion. Cars could possibly back up across the junction and I do not see any 'Keep Clear' marking on St. Botolph's to ensure traffic can cross.</i></p>	<p>The artist impression / plans provided are illustrative. While it is not detailed, there would need to be 'keep clear' markings on the road to ensure vehicles can enter the car parks safely.</p>
<p><b>Reducing lanes</b></p>	<p><i>I think the vehicle lanes proposed should be reduced to a maximum of two, which would increase the size of public realm for pedestrians/users of the space.</i></p> <p><i>Has consideration been given to reducing the northern section of Mersea Road to one lane where it runs alongside the St John's Abbey Wall?</i></p>	<p>One of the key aims of the scheme is to find a balance between supporting more walking and cycling, regenerating the area through the provision of high quality public realm and maintaining traffic flow through what is a busy junction.</p> <p>We are continuing to review the design and options, however reducing the number of lanes would negatively impact on traffic and wider congestion, so is not an option we are considering.</p>
<p><b>Leaving the Magistrates Court/Train station?</b></p>	<p><i>Those leaving the Magistrates Court/Train station are forced onto Magdalen Street. If access is needed to Southway or Mersea Road, where can a U-turn be made?</i></p> <p><i>This layout restricts how people can get into places like the courts, if coming from Hythe direction you are forced to travel down to the roundabout outside the police station in order to double back and return</i></p>	<p>We recognise the layout means vehicles using the train station/Magistrates Court would be required to travel west along Southway and use side roads to return east.</p> <p>This impacts a relatively small number of vehicles, however we are looking at the design to assess where there are any opportunities to increase access.</p>

<b>Wider impact on network?</b>	Will the plans have an impact on where Magdalen Street forks into Military Road?	No, the plans will not impact on this junction.
<b>Nearest drop-off area</b>	<i>There should be a space for people to pick up or drop off people by car at the train station.</i>	The existing drop-off facilities will be retained at the station. The new area of public space would be created by reusing what is currently road space on the roundabout.

### 3.4 Walking and Cycling

<b>Theme of issue/concern</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Essex County Council's response</b>
<b>Pavement repairs are needed at many locations across Colchester.</b>	<p><i>The paths around the city are in such a poor state around the city that people suffer slips, trips and falls regularly.</i></p> <p><i>Use the money to repair the roads and pavements which are in a shocking state of repair.</i></p>	<p>As per the response above, the money provided through the Government's Levelling up Fund is specially for this project. The funding cannot be transferred to other projects or maintenance. If the project does not proceed, the money will not be available to the councils.</p> <p>However, one of the key aims of this scheme is to improve accessibility meaning that as well as new pavements, existing pavements within the scope of the scheme will be enhanced.</p>
<b>Walking and cycling needs</b>	<p><i>What are you basing your statements on that this is an area people walk and cycle?</i></p>	<p>The funding provided for the scheme is through a successful Levelling up Fund bid which is evidence based. Full details can be found by accessing the bid documents at <a href="http://www.colchester.gov.uk/levelling-up-fund">www.colchester.gov.uk/levelling-up-fund</a>. Supplementary to this, pedestrian counts have been undertaken.</p> <p>It is also important to recognise that St Botolph's is an important transport interchange, it connects people to train and bus services and is a key route into the city centre from communities to the south, so there is a clear opportunity to remove some of the barriers to walking and cycling that currently exist.</p> <p>As a cycling route, St Botolph's is also a key part of the city's network and forms part of a wider project to improved Colchester's fragmented cycling facilities. In recent years, emphasis has moved towards supporting us to walk and cycle more, particularly for very short journeys. In the city around 20% of us travel just 2km or less to work, and if everyone used a different form of transport twice a week this would remove 150,000 car journey from the city centre each week.</p>

<p><b>Why are the crossings staggered? Could they be changed to direct crossings instead?</b></p>	<p><i>I would much prefer it if the crossings were not staggered but straight through.</i></p>	<p>This has been looked at closely, recognising the need to strike a balance between providing a safe inviting facility for cyclists and pedestrians and the impact on traffic.</p> <p>The crossings provided are LTN1/20 compliant (design guidance for the delivery of cycle facilities) in that the crossing widths and island widths are in accordance with LTN1/20 requirements.</p> <p>In regard to the need to stagger the crossings, a straight crossing takes more time before traffic can start i.e. when someone just starts to cross when the green man ends, they would need more time to walk 12m and clear the crossing (straight crossing), than 7m of one half of the staggered crossing. That additional time is taken away from green time for traffic, which negatively impacts on congestion.</p>
<p><b>Can the cycle path and pedestrian routes be kept physically separate?</b></p>	<p><i>Cycle infrastructure must be physically separated from cars in order to be safe and attract users.</i></p>	<p>The walking and cycling infrastructure will be clearly segregated from cars and wherever possible from each other.</p>
<p><b>Why is there no crossing on the west of the junction?</b></p>	<p><i>Looking at the top-down image, the junction lacks crossings on the left arm junction forcing people to walk all the way around the junction to cross the road. I think it's a simple decision that would boost walking/cycling even more.</i></p>	<p>As per above response, the design aims to strike a balance between supporting walking and cycling and maintaining traffic flows, which are sensitive to any changes.</p> <p>There is a crossing further to the west at Stanwell Street, however, we recognise from feedback that people would like to see the crossing point relocated to ensure all arms of the junction can be safely crossed, and we are assessing this within the developing design.</p>
<p><b>The cycle paths need to connect to a wider network across Colchester.</b></p>	<p><i>The cycleways need to be fully segregated, especially at the crossings, they need to follow desire lines and link up with a wider network.</i></p>	<p>Taking on board the comments received, the design is being reviewed to provide connections to the wider network allowing for fully segregated facilities where space is available. This aligns with the work being undertaken on walking and cycling through the creation of a Colchester 'Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)'. This is being consulted on this autumn (2023).</p> <p>Connections to the wider network, include finding a balance between providing a safe facility for cyclists and pedestrians and the impact on traffic i.e., shared use with different surface textures for pedestrians and</p>

		<p>cyclists where available width is restricted, i.e., north of A134 Southway (south of the NCP car park).</p> <p>This approach is LTN1/20 (design guidance for the delivery of cycle facilities) compliant where pedestrian flows are low and alongside arterial roads, and at and around junctions where cyclists move at slow speeds.</p>
<p><b>Linking to Stanwell Street</b></p>	<p><i>A great addition would be a cycle path to the Stanwell St crossing</i></p>	<p>Linking to Stanwell Street is being considered as part of the connections to the wider network described above (utilising the footway south of the NCP car park).</p> <p>We also recognise that the existing shared southern footway between St John's Green and Stanwell Street is sub-standard, and we are investigating the provision of a suitable facility on St John's Green that connects other walking/cycling routes and the Stanwell Street crossing.</p>
<p><b>How will compliance with LTN 1/20 be achieved?</b></p>	<p><i>The proposed cycleways do not take a direct line across the corners and do not follow any natural desire lines. This is especially true of the NE / SE &amp; SW corners.</i></p>	<p>The design looks, wherever possible, to follow LTN 1/20 guidance (design guidance for the delivery of cycle facilities), by incorporating pedestrians and cyclists at crossings (Toucan crossings), ensuring crossing widths and island widths are wide enough (LTN1/20 compliant) and comfortable crossing layouts (islands same level as carriageway).</p> <p>We are continuing to assess this and as the design evolves we will continue to assess against LTN1/20 and design guidance, as well as work with independent design reviewers and our Road Safety team, challenging the design.</p>
<p><b>Advanced stop lines are not advisable</b></p>	<p><i>Advanced stop lines go against the latest design thinking and can be dangerous for cyclists</i></p>	<p>We have investigated this further in reference to latest design guidance (LTN1/20) and taking your comments on board, have decided to remove the advanced stop lines at the junction.</p> <p>They were originally added to assist with right turning movements, but upon further analysis and design development, they will be removed, and instead suitable segregated facilities will be provided at and around the junction.</p>
<p><b>Why not keep the existing underpasses and renovate them?</b></p>	<p><i>Current underpass arrangement already separates pedestrians from road traffic. Routing them through a green area well away from fumes. Antisocial</i></p>	<p>The aim of removing the underpasses is partly to help reduce anti-social behaviour / fear of crime and this had significant support from those living close to the junction.</p> <p>There is already considerable CCTV in this location managed by Colchester City Council, however anti-social behaviour is still a concern in this location.</p> <p>The wider issue is around accessibility. The current layout requires people to use steps or make</p>

	<p><i>behaviour can be discouraged by improvement to the underpasses, not removing them.</i></p> <p><i>Adding CCTV and security measures could help tackle the antisocial behaviour</i></p>	<p>considerable detours. For example, the current route from Mersea Road to Colchester Town Railway Station is 180 metres with steps. The alternative routes either use an uncontrolled crossing avoiding the subways or the subways to the north-west of the roundabout before going to the crossing over St Botolph's Street and crossing Britannia Way.</p> <p>As well as the extended journeys to over 330 metres these routes are unsafe, have unsuitable ramps for wheelchair use and mobility scooters and do not permit cycling.</p> <p>The proposed scheme will reduce step-free walking distance by two-thirds.</p> <p>In addition to the above points setting out the reasons for removing the underpasses, accessibility, streetscape, and active travel design guidelines recommend implementing design principles that are safe, comfortable, direct, and attractive for all users, which contribute to placemaking and a healthy street environment where people want to spend time travelling on/ through. Simply renovating the existing underpasses would not meet these design principles and they will remain uninviting and areas that users, especially vulnerable users, will avoid. Therefore, questioning the appropriate utilisation of the allocated funding just to renovate rather than significantly improve.</p>
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### 3.5 Public Transport

Theme of issue/concern	Example	Essex County Council's response
<p><b>Colchester needs a new bus station. Are there any plans to build one?</b></p>	<p><i>At present there is no dedicated bus station, buses lay over in Osborne Street, Head Street and High Street. We need a purpose-built Bus Station, like all cities have, that gives travellers access to other bus routes.</i></p>	<p>The funding provided is specifically focussed on the St Botolph's Circus regeneration. However, the need for improvements to the bus facilities are important and widely acknowledged.</p> <p>The proposals for St Botolph's are the first step in improving and regenerating the area, They will help lay the foundations for future bus interchange improvements. This will form part of the developing City Centre Masterplan</p> <p>To support this, we are also currently undertaking a 'bus capacity study' to better understand how people are using public transport to help develop future plans.</p>
<p><b>Bus improvements</b></p>	<p><i>Buses are always late and don't stick to timetables.</i></p> <p><i>Increased and cheaper bus</i></p>	<p>This specific scheme is looking at infrastructure requirements, but we appreciate the desire for improved passenger transport services. As such, the council's passenger transport team as well as bus companies have been actively engaged as part of the developing City Centre Masterplan.</p>



	<p><i>services are required</i></p>	<p>More widely, Essex County Council is also undertaking work around Enhance Partnership bus operators and have developed a Bus Service Improvement Plan. Details can be seen here: <a href="http://www.essexhighways.org/getting-around/bus/bus-strategy">www.essexhighways.org/getting-around/bus/bus-strategy</a>.</p> <p>In Colchester we are (as above) currently undertaking a 'bus capacity study' to better understand future need.</p> <p>Services in the city are evolving and the future development of the city Rapid Transit System will also offer new and more frequent local services. Details can be seen here: <a href="http://www.essexhighways.org/colchester-rapid-transit">www.essexhighways.org/colchester-rapid-transit</a>.</p> <p>In regards to the scheme itself, we are aiming to ensure more journey time consistency, so ensuring public transport becomes more reliable.</p>
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### 3.6 Environment, Public Realm and Heritage

Theme of issue/concern	Example	Essex County Council's response
<p><b>Seating area locations</b></p>	<p><i>I'm not sure of the purpose of the seating areas around the cross roads – who will want to sit there?</i></p> <p><i>There needs to be a barrier between the seating and the road.</i></p>	<p>The provision of public realm space recognises that this is an area where pedestrians and cyclists are accessing the train and bus stations as well as shopping and using amenities in the local area.</p> <p>The provision of seating alongside potential pop-up shops and amenities such as bike storage are elements within the ambition of creating a nicer environment for people to spend time.</p> <p>Improved public realm space created in areas such as Rawston Road/Lexden Road are well used and have helped to improve the look of the area.</p> <p>The artist impressions set out an illustrative plan, however further detailed work will be undertaken to look at where elements such as seating, planting etc should be located.</p>
<p><b>What are we doing towards Air Quality Management?</b></p>	<p><i>The traffic will not decrease so neither will the air quality improve.</i></p>	<p>As the scheme falls within an Air Quality Management Area it is important to ensure that any changes do not make the air quality worse. Air quality modelling has been undertaken and this will be carefully assessed as the design develops.</p> <p>The increase in walking and cycling provision will help reduce some of the barriers to active travel, particularly for those undertaking very short journeys. And alongside other initiatives in the city will help reduce traffic in the centre.</p>

		Through the introduction of full signals, we will also have the opportunity to use technology to manage congestion and traffic flow, which would have a benefit on air quality.
<p><b>Good public realm space should include the provision of public toilets near transport hubs. This is essential for families and people with disabilities.</b></p> <p><b>Are there plans to provide any toilets at the junction?</b></p>	<p><i>Lack of any public toilets.</i></p>	<p>There are no plans for additional public toilets at this stage.</p>
<p><b>There is a lack of bike storage on the proposed designs. Could this be added?</b></p>	<p><i>There need to be safe places to store bikes and lockers to put electric bike batteries in.</i></p>	<p>Bike storage is planned and shown on the plans. As a 'transport hub' we recognise the importance of providing good storage facilities for cyclists. We will continue to engage with local cycling groups around this as the design evolves.</p>
<p><b>The roundabout has existing habitats and mature trees. Is this being considered?</b></p>	<p><i>I have concerns about the loss of an albeit limited green space with mature trees in the centre of the roundabout.</i></p>	<p>As the design evolves we will be undertaking environmental surveys to fully understand the biodiversity within the current roundabout and any required mitigations.</p> <p>The scheme would require the removal of the mature trees from within the roundabout area. However, these would be replaced with additional semi-mature trees, ensuring a net increase.</p> <p>We are mindful of ensuring that the number of trees being removed is as minimal as possible and this is being considered as part of the evolving design.</p>
<p><b>Public art</b></p>	<p><i>Will the murals within the underpasses be preserved?</i></p>	<p>Yes, the murals within the underpass would be preserved and relocated in discussion with local interest groups. We are not in a position to provide any further details on this as this stage.</p>
<p><b>Has the provision of tourist hubs/information</b></p>	<p><i>There seems to be no allocation for a tourist hub for information. If you want to increase</i></p>	<p>This is not currently being considered, but will be flagged with Colchester City Council as a potential opportunity.</p>

<b>centres been considered?</b>	<i>this area of revenue, you need one hub in each area.</i>	Through the provision of public realm space the aim is to attract pop-up shops/stalls and this could be a potential opportunity.
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