WARWICKSHIRE

Interfaces between HS2 and existing/potential cycling routes

Route maps and notes  February 2017

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A note on the interfaces between the HS2 Project and existing planned and potential cycling routes in Warwickshire

The HS2 Project will cut across numerous local cycling routes and footpaths. The quality of its provisions will affect both everyday journeys and visitors to some way however small. The detail of the design of bridges and diversions, and the quality of provision for new paths will contribute greatly to the attractiveness of local journeys and to the overall level of cycling in the future along a broad swathe of the country.

In addition, unless we anticipate future plans and potential routes, the HS2 project may end up frustrating the development of popular cycling routes along its route.

These notes bring together the interfaces with HS2 of the proposals arising from the recent study into a National Cycleway along the general corridor of the HS2 project, and a number of other isolated locations arising from “cycle proofing” considerations. In this last respect these notes have only considered the limited number of locations where there are clear opportunities or advantages from providing for dedicated cycling facilities either crossing or parallel to the HS2 route. We have excluded most minor roads where there is no need, as traffic flows will be small and those major roads where there is no reasonable or foreseeable expectation for anticipating a cycling route in the future.

The standards set out in the HS2 Assurances refer to current design standards. Their recommendations are set out in Appendix 1 and may be summarised as follows:

1. Types of parallel facility in relation to the volume of traffic in highway.
2. Typical cross sections showing Cycleway standards. Note that the Dutch GROW guidelines followed by the study of a National Cycleway associated with HS2 puts great store on the attractiveness of cycling routes and requires considerable verge widths near heavily trafficked roads.
3. Types of crossing requirements and standards in relation to traffic flows.
4. Gradients should be 1:20 or less except in areas where the adjacent road gradients are anyway steeper.
5. The surface of the routes should be of an adequate width and finished with a sealed surface to provide a durable and high quality route to encourage more people to cycle.

Here in Warwickshire a number of the key opportunities have already been identified by the Council and confirmed through undertakings given by HS2. The additional locations discussed here have arisen from the recent study into the opportunities for making a National Cycle route along the general corridor of the HS2 Railway, and from considerations viewed through the perspective of the cycle proofing process.

A Summary of HS2 Phase 1 and Phase 2A and existing and potential cycling interfaces in Staffordshire

1. Claydon to Wormleighton
2. Wormleighton to Ladbroke
3. Ladbroke to Southam
4. Offchurch: Welsh Road
5. Cubbington to Offchurch
6. Stoneleigh Road
7. Coventry Road
8. Warwick University
9. Burton Green
10. Coleshill to Chelmsley Wood
11. Coleshill Hall Bridge
12. Lichfield Road
13. Water Orton
1 Claydon and Lower Boddington to Wormleighton

The proposed National Cycleway follows the general alignment of HS2 from Wormleighton to Ladbroke. Whilst most of this lies within Warwickshire the first section is in Northamptonshire. The volume and speed of traffic on the main Warwick Road from the junction with the Claydon Road would suggest that a separate cycle track should be constructed along the south side of the new road to provide the first part of a traffic free route to Wormleighton.

1 Follow minor road from Claydon. The reconstruction of this road should be suitably low key in order to minimise traffic on it.

2 Construct new path along field edge to avoid the much busier road here.

3 Continue along the field edge to Wormleighton.

4 Planned works access track to the Oxford Canal.
2 Wormleighton to Ladbroke

This section of the National Cycleway cannot be delivered via existing low flow roads (because there are none) or other corridors such as disused railways or canal towpaths. We have no choice but to follow the corridor of HS2 making the best use of all the sections of access road. They are providing and creating short links to join these together. The elements are as follows:

- A separate cycle track south of the main road from its junction with Claydon Road (in Northamptonshire).
- Use of the Wormleighton access track down to the Oxford Canal and the bridge to be provided over the canal to reach the towpath.
- A new path at the foot of the railway embankment on the west side of HS2 to join Radbourne Lane. This takes in three sections or access track or diverted farm road.
- Follow this road as far north as possible.
- Or continue on the west side of the railway boundary to reach Windmill Lane.
- Either way a safe crossing of the Banbury Road to Ladbroke will be required.

The total length of new path could be as little as 1.4kms and it would transform cycling access south from Southam.
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3 Ladbrooke to Southam

HS2 has already given Warwickshire an undertaking to construct a segregated path on the west side of the main road to connect Southam and its new housing developments, to Ladbrooke. This undertaking is a good example of meeting the cycle proofing requirements and standards associated with the new road construction here.

As far as possible the new path should be set well back from the road. This is partly to provide a more pleasant environment for pedestrians and cyclists, but also to overcome the problem of being dazzled by the lights of oncoming traffic at night.

**Notes on the main map**

1. Connect through to the road to Ladbrooke village.
2. Possibly follow the farm road so as to keep away from the immediate vicinity of Banbury Road. If not provide a clear crossing of this farm access.
3. Ramp up to bridge at 1:20
4. Design asymmetrical bridge with wide path for shared use on the south side and only a minimal width on the north side.
5. Ramp back to ground level at 1:20 on earthworks against the side of the road embankment.
6. Connect to the provision in the new housing development.
4 Welsh Road underpass at Offchurch and Cubbington Link

HS2 have already provided the very welcome undertaking to construct a new bridge over the Fosse Way on the line of the old railway. This will extend the Council’s existing greenway across and beyond this major barrier and enable good railway paths to be extended to Rugby and Long Itchington. The latter route would provide an alternative to the currently used Stonebridge Lane, which in turn would reduce the need to cycle proof the Fosse Way, or to provide this busy road with dedicated crossings.

But the rearrangement of Welsh Road at the entrance to Offchurch cuts across the railway path and provision for a safe crossing is required.

Here a simple precast subway would be much the best option as it would reduce the climb up from the railway path in either direction and better fulfil access for all requirements.

Notes for location plan
1. HS2 bridge for existing Greenway will be high above the railway below and could be the chance for a spectacular view of the trains
2. Planned bridge on line of old railway to cross Fosse Way
3. Future railway path to Long Itchington and Southam
4. Future railway path to Rugby
5. Location of difficult crossing of Welsh Road where a new underpass or subway would be appropriate
6. Opportunity for a traffic free link to the Hunningham road and Cubbington for the east side of Leamington Spa.

Notes for detailed plan at Offchurch (above right)
1. Location of planned new bridge over the main road. This work will supersede the cycle link shown on this plan.
2. Bridge to take existing greenway over HS2.
3. Recommended link to Cubbington.
4. Welsh Road is being rebuilt at this point and will carry more and faster traffic. The only safe crossing appropriate for the greenway is a subway which will have the added advantage of reducing the climb in either direction at the point where the former railway cutting has been infilled. There would still be a certain amount of climbing, as the subway would be constructed as high a level as possible so as to keep its length to a minimum, but the ramp gradients could be graded out and eased.
5. Greenway continues to Leamington Spa.
5 Cubbington to Offchurch

In its early discussion with HS2, Warwickshire sought a cycle route from Cubbington to the Offchurch Greenway. Whilst this did not result in an agreed undertaking, the proposal remains as a valuable way out of Learmington Spa, a resource for Offchurch and Cubbington, and an alternative to the unsuitable Welsh Road. The elements of such a link would comprise the following:

- A new path along the boundary of HS2, on one side or the other, from the Offchurch Greenway to join the Hunningham Road.
- Following the existing bridleway past Fields Farm.
- A short link on one side of the River Leam or the other to reach the works access road.
- Follow this onto Cubbington via the Lower Grange access (or continue with a new path along the south side of HS2 to join Mill Lane).

The total length of new path could amount to as little as 1.2kms.
6 Stoneleigh Road

The reconstruction of this road with its various junctions could be a difficult locality for cyclists if proper provision is not made in anticipation of a cycling route to Leamington Spa. For the time being the focus should be on providing a safe and attractive way of connecting the Stoneleigh Abbey drive (and potential route from Kenilworth) with the minor roads to Stareton, Bubbenhall and beyond, as well as giving access to the entrance of Stoneleigh Park.

1. Stareton Road.
2. Pick up the works access road to reduce costs and avoid the junction.
3. Widen the east side footway of the bridge (and narrow the west side) so as to provide for shared use there.
4. Provide a raised crossing of this farm access road and a parallel path following the road or its boundary.
5. Ramp up at 1:20 to cross the road via a widened splitter island, before ramping down again to ground level.
6. Continue through landscaped area to join old drive-way.
7. Drive-way provides the basis of a route through to Kenilworth.
7 Coventry Road

This main road should be provided with a traffic free cycle track on its north side to anticipate an upgrading of the existing cycle lanes.

Location map (left)

Provision for cyclists along Coventry Way and the optimum route to Warwick University

1 Existing railway path constructed to a high standard and with a recently built bridge over the main road
2 Current national cycle route to Warwick University due to be diverted
3 Suggested diversion along planned bridleway so as to minimise gradient changes
4 Separate cycleway along west side of the main road could be the basis of a direct route from Kenilworth to Coventry.

Notes on main map (right)

1 Future cycle track to University and Coventry
2 Provision alongside main road as part of road reconstruction
3 Potential continuation of cycle track to join Greenway route for Kenilworth.
8 Route to Warwick University

Rather than redirect the existing course of NCN52 up the hill to cross the line of HS2 on the planned bridleway bridge, we suggest that NCN52 is rerouted to run further north on the Kenilworth Greenway railway path to then follow the alignment of the new bridleway. This will enhance the overall route as well as eliminate a now gratuitously down and up again planned diversion of the existing route to Warwick University.

1 Existing Greenway route along former railway.
2 Existing line of NCN52 to Warwick University. We suggest that this alignment is abandoned by equestrians as well as cyclists.
3 Upste this diverted bridleway to the full cycling to University standards.
4 All weather route to University.
9 Burton Green

The undertakings that HS2 have given for the continuation of the Kenilworth Greenway as a traffic free route are very welcome. Care should be taken to ensure that the rerouted Greenway does not have gradients which exceed 1:20. In addition on one side of Cromwell Lane or the other a gently ramped link path is required, again not steeper than 1:20. Note that the Greenway route is to continue all the way to Berkswell Station where the railway path is in Solihull’s jurisdiction. Notwithstanding these separate authorities, great care should be made to complete the Greenway, all through to a high standard.

Notes for the detailed map

1. Existing Greenway has recently been resurfaced to a high standard.
2. The arrangement of this ramp should provide for a gentle and even gradient, it should be set within a landscaped area as far as possible rather than being confined in a narrow fenced off corridor, and a raised crossing is required to give continuity across the little used works access road.
3. Provide for a ramp at a gradient of 1:20 to reach Cromwell Lane
4. Design the underbridge with some relief patterns or artwork to reflect the interesting point that HS2 runs just below.
5. Keep this cutting wide open and free of planting so as to enhance the security of the underbridge area.
6. The Greenway continues. Do not plant up the field side boundary but leave wide open views across the countryside to the south. This will be a welcome change to the current tree lined corridor.
10 Coleshill to Chelmsley Wood

This is a most valuable connection across a difficult area, but one where most of the necessary structures are in place. The planned agricultural road is a bit of a deviation, but provided the surface is constructed to be a good quality, it should be acceptable. If the detailed design can shorten the diversion, this would be very useful.

Note that this route is close to Coleshill Bridge where another useful provision could be made.

Location plan (right) showing the proposed National Cycleway route running through to Coleshill on its way from UK Central

1 Proposed National Route via existing structures under and over the Motorways.
2 Opportunities for a further connection along the side of the main Birmingham Road.

Notes on main plan

1 Existing footpath along line of farm track. At this end it is overgrown but still clearly the course of a road whilst nearer Coleshill it is much better condition.
2 Works access track as part of HS2 scheme
3 Existing large underbridge leads through to residential areas
4 Existing series of good farm accommodation bridges over the motorways
5 Final section to Coleshill requires a safe crossing of the fast Stonebridge Road – probably a bridge.
6 Link green lane by an extension around the foot of the embankments so as to avoid being adjacent to main road.

11 Coleshill Hall Bridge

This road should be provided with a traffic free path on its south side in anticipation of a cycling route from Coleshill to Fordbridge. But note that a route at the foot of the embankment, under the end of the viaduct would be preferable to running next to the main road through underbridges.
**12 Lichfield Road**

The existing cycling route from Coleshill Industrial Estate and Coleshill stops at the main road. Cycle proofing this road will require a new cycle track and slight controlled crossing of the main road under the HS2 Viaducts.

**13 Water Orton**

Both Birmingham City Council and Warwickshire Council have constructed fragments of a route along Orton Road. If any road works are to be carried out in this area as part of HS2, then a new separate cycle track should be provided for along the south side of the road.
Appendix of common standards omitted