National Cycleway in association with HS2: Preliminary Feasibility Study

Birmingham International to Leamington Spa
with an additional loop via Coventry and Warwick University: Fieldwork Note Annex B14

Kenilworth to Leamington Spa details in support of the K2L Project: Dec 2015
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The main Kenilworth Road to Leamington Spa is an unpleasant and stressful route to cycle even though its 5 miles distance from Abbey Fields through Kenilworth to Leamington Spa and its station is a very easy distance for many.

The road is completely unsuitable for families, or novices of any kind. There is continuous and heavy traffic, the very difficult junction with the A46, and few opportunities to get off the road onto a footway, even if this was permitted. There are no satisfactory alternative routes to the direct main road.

For all these reasons local interest groups and the Council have long wished to implement the K2L Cycleroute. The HS2 National Cycleway study endorses this route and its aspiration to be a route built to the highest quality suitable for every type of cyclists, and indeed pedestrians as well. To this end we set out a number of sketch cross sections showing how the standards sought for this National Cycleway project can be met. Ideally the route would be entirely segregated from the traffic and set well back from the road so as to create an attractive place to encourage more people to cycle. Where this is not possible a minimum width of 3.5m is required, with a 0.5m wide margin to the edge of the road, and a 0.5m wide verge to any fence or boundary. In the urban areas a careful reassessment of road space will be necessary, and particularly on the wide Kenilworth Road into Leamington Spa where the target should be a 5m wide promenade together with 2m wide verge planted with a line of avenue trees to enhance the approach to the town centre. And continuity, in one form or another must be arranged at each and every side road crossing and junction.

The following pages set out these target recommendations. Where these require land negotiations it should be borne in mind that compromising the route will inevitably limit its usage and the returns on any expenditure, and that the reduced construction costs of building outside the highway boundary and thereby avoiding service and road closure costs can be very advantageous.
This page sketches out the target cross sections which we recommend for the K2L National Cycleway route. It is critical that substantial sections of the route are set well back from the road as recommended in the Dutch CROW guidelines which are the standard sought for the whole National Cycleway HS2 Project. Inevitably there will be some more constrained sections, as through Blackdown, where this is not possible and here modest engineering works, and the most careful discussions with neighbours are needed to gain that most vital additional couple of metres of width.
Photographs and views through Kenilworth

These pictures are shown so as to give some idea of the options which might be available in this sensitive and crucial area. The central objective must be to maintain a smooth traffic flow (as it is not feasible to direct the traffic from the shopping street at present) and to enhance the public space so as to make the town centre of Kenilworth as attractive a space as possible.

1 View looking south down Abbey End towards the Town Centre. Here there should be the possibility of making this one way southwards (with Borrowell Lane going northwards to Castle Road). This would allow half the width of the road to be taken up by a tree lined promenade, to effectively extend Abbey Fields southwards as far as the Square.

2 View looking south in Shopping Street showing the space which could be gained by widening the east side footway and narrowing the carriageway.

3 View looking south along Warwick Road. Here the east side footway could be widened by 2m if the cross hatching and central island were taken out and a single stage zebra crossing provided for the convenience of the public instead.

4 View south of Waverley Road. There is generally more space here. The road could be narrowed to release space for a wide pavement on the east side of the road, sufficient for shared use, and for a line of avenue trees.

5 The gyratory crossing the railway has ample space for creating a wide shared use path around its eastern side, if necessary by releasing the width of the largely redundant inside footway. A careful crossing – ideally a raised zebra detail – is required at the start of Birches Lane. This should be arranged to be on the direct desire line of the cycling route.
Either side of the A46

North of the A46, planned new development should give the opportunity of an excellent avenue or promenade through to the A46. It is planned to signalise this major junction which can provide for a cycling phase, arranged on the desire line of the route without detours. Between the A46 and the Bericote Road junction, it is planned to dual the main road so additional land for a path set well back from the road can be acquired at this time. Both the B4116 and the Bericote Road will require light controlled junctions.

2 Section either side of B4115 where road is to be dualled and additional land can be taken to set path well back from highway.

3 Chainage 400 and 600m opposite Chesford Bridge House and Blackdown Manor. Here the new path needs to run inside the field edge to achieve an attractive and good quality route.

Note the chainage references refer to the K2L technical plans prepared by the County Council.
4 Chainage 780m: Section opposite Hill Wooton Road junction where there is a wide bank of Highway Land

Excellent mature trees

St. Giles Playing Field

Path to be constructed on “rootguard” mesh or similar under mature trees

Plant new avenue trees

4m

Highway boundary 2m 1m 3.5m 2.5m

Leamington Road

2m

3.5m

5 Chainage 940m: Section north of Rugby Club entrance

Excellent mature trees

Pipe ditch 450 dia

Rugby club carpark

Leamington Road

Varies - 3.5m minimum along Rugby Club boundary. Note south of Rugby Club entrance this verge can progressively widen to 20m as the line of the old road veers away.
6 Chainage 1230: Section showing path on line of old road at back of Malle Manor garden

Existing fence in highway boundary
Location of existing tarmac path with same services
Maintain existing vegetation as screen against traffic noise

1m 3.5m 1m Varies

7 Chainage 1380: Section showing advantage taken of excellent new fence set back from main road, over boundary of Walcote House

Excellent new fence
Highway boundary
Remove square posts
Keep all remaining tree cover

3.5m 0.5m 0.5m

8 Chainage 1480: Acquire 3m of land to let path through. Remove existing fence and trees on Jephson House land

New acoustic fence 2.5m high
Remove existing trees
Level ground

0.5m 3.5m 1.0m

Leamington Road
9 Chainage 1600m and 1880m: Cut back bank to achieve minimum level width of 4.0m for the path (note at 1640 consider replacing bus stop with floating version as this stop is little used?)

10 Chainage 1780m: Opposite Cranford House just to the south of Blackdown Roundabout

Cut back bank and use material as fill at chainage 2010m

Note: there is scope to narrow carriageway in this area

11 Chainage 1990m: Opposite South Lodge

New acoustic fence

This dimension is 4.5m over most of South Lodge which would allow for a hedge to mask the fence

12 Chainage 2010m: Construction of earthworks across narrow gulley, 40m long

Plant slope with specimen trees

Remove existing fence

Build out with fill to give a total bank width of 5m
13 Chainage 2120m: Opposite Kinsley School Playing Fields. Divert into edge of playing field to enhance the quality of the experience of the overall route and take advantage of mature trees along this boundary.

- Retain existing mature trees
- New green weldmesh fencing 1.8mm high
- This area is generally unused by school

14 Chainage 2520m: Opposite North Leamington School Fields. Reposition existing boundary fence.

- Reposition existing green weldmesh fence
- Maintain tree boundary

15 Chainage 2580m:
- opposite driveway, remove hatching and right turning provision here
- Remove central hatching and shift kerb 2m to the west to give adequate space for the path

16 Chainage 2900m onwards:
- Generally remove right turning lane to enable a wide tree lined promenade to the Town Centre to be created
- Relay kerbs 2.5-3.0m into carriageway
- Encourage neighbours to plant trees
- Plant new avenue
- Leamington Road (remove hatching and tight turning lane to allow new kerb line)
Through Leamington Spa

The opportunities are shown here by means of photographs.

1 Approaching the Gardens at the north of the Parade the footway could be further inclined to allow trees to be planted and the existing crossing modified to reach the Gardens. Widen a single path around the gardens for shared use.

1a The Tavistock Street/Bedford Street could be managed with 2 way cycling along these one way streets.

2,3,4 Views along the Parade sharing the space available either for a “promenade” shared use, or wide cycle lane.

5 Construct ramp straight ahead to replace steps to bridge in Pump Room Gardens.

6 York Bridge.

7 Link path to Spencer Street could be widened by reconstructing wall to right further back.

8 Existing Spencer Street Crossing leads through to the Station.
Location of sketches and photographs