

East Wisbech Broad Concept Plan

Transport Planning Report January 2018

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Background

Significant East Wisbech BCP transport work has been completed. The work to date has included traffic modelling work and assessments to determine access points. The traffic model includes all the key roads in and around the area including the streets that would connect the development to Wisbech Town Centre and the wider transport network. Access points have been considered for walking, cycling and vehicle access. Additional work now needs to be undertaken with the County Council as Highway Authority to further ascertain the suitability of the access points. There is also a need to consider any key requirements at each location which may affect the deliverability of each access location. These access points also need traffic modelling to determine suitability for the site and its surrounding road network.

Transport Planning Objectives

- Investigate whether the proposed access point locations are deliverable for the East Wisbech site.
- Identify any other opportunities for suitable access point locations.
- Determine if there are any obvious barriers to the development of the access point locations.
- Establish Highway requirements for each proposed access point.
- Establish Highway requirements for upgrades/improvements to existing roads as a result of the East Wisbech site development.
- Test resulting access points options using traffic modelling to determine suitability for the development and the surrounding road network.
- Establish an initial idea of cost for infrastructure required.

Site Visits

All 13 access point locations and zones 1 and 4 were visited during the two site visits that took place in October and November 2017.

The site visits were attended by representatives from Cambridgeshire County Council Highways, Fenland District Council Transport Policy and Fenland District Council Development Services.

In addition discussions and feedback regarding the proposed locations was sourced from relevant partners including Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Planning Policy Team.

Access Point Analysis - Summary

Based on site visits and other discussions the conclusions set out below were agreed.

Please note that proposed access points identified as suitable for the development will either require upgrades to existing surfaces or the provision of new roads and junctions where none currently exist.

No access points

Zone 1 – No potential access points were identified in this area for vehicles or pedestrians due to the layout of the existing housing in this area.

Location 6 – This location is within the curtilage of a Listed Building. To establish whether an access point of any sort could be achieved here would require full investigation by a conservation specialist. Without this investigation this location cannot be considered.

Walking and cycling only

Zone 4 – There are a number of opportunities in this zone to promote the existing walking routes connecting to Green Lane and beyond.

Zone 5 – There is a gated access point in this zone which connects to Meadowgate Lane. *This is not a public right of way however and therefore it is unclear at this stage as to whether this location could be used as a walking and cycling access point for the site.*

Location 1 – This is an existing walking route offering travel in four directions. Some locations on the existing pathways will require upgrading for better cycling provision.

Location 1a – This is the site of a public byway made up of a narrow mud track, this would need to be widened and resurfaced to be suitable for cycling.

Location 3 – The gap between the properties at this location will require levelling and surfacing to create a suitable access point. The existing space available here is not sufficient for vehicle access.

Location 5 – This location is currently the vehicular access point for the existing allotments within the designated BCP site area. It is not wide enough to accommodate additional traffic. The existing single track would need to be upgraded for increased pedestrian and cyclist access. If this location was to continue to be the vehicular access point for the allotments additional work would be needed to ensure the safety of all users.

Location 9 – There is an existing mud pathway at this location which would need to be upgraded and resurfaced to become a suitable walking and cycling access point for the BCP site.

Vehicle, walking and cycling access

- Location 2* – This location is the existing vehicle access point through the site (Sandy Lane). The development will require a wider road surface than is currently at this location and suitable provision for walking and cycling. Particular emphasis regarding forward visibility concerns at the bend must be considered as part of the work required at this location.
- Location 4* – There is currently enough space at this location for vehicle access. However, the width at this location is not sufficient to create the required junction onto Stow Road to accommodate access to the whole development. This will depend on additional space being acquired either side of the gap. Without additional width this vehicle access point would serve up to 6 homes only. There is no existing road surfacing or junction connecting to Stow Road at this location and therefore this would need to be provided.
- Location 5a* – There is currently no existing space to create an access point to the East Wisbech BCP development in this location. However if space could be achieved this location would provide 4 options for traffic dispersal from the site. To achieve this provision of a mini roundabout would be required.
- Location 6a/7* – The gap from this location down to Location 8 is continuous with the exception of the junction at Sandy Lane (Location 7a) and therefore sufficient for vehicle access points. However, the drainage ditch network at this location must be taken into consideration. There is no existing road surfacing or junction connecting to Burrettgate Road at these locations and therefore these would need to be provided.
- Both Burrettgate Road and Broadend Road will require upgrading and the addition of adequate walking and cycling provision.
- Location 7a* – This location is the site of the existing access point (Sandy Lane). The direct connection between this access point and Location 2 should be addressed to reduce the risk of rat running through the development to access the A47.
- Location 8* – The space in this location is sufficient for a vehicle access point. There is no existing road surfacing or junction connecting to Broadend Road and therefore this will need to be provided. This location will require the consideration and modification of the sharp bend at Broadend Road.

Traffic Modelling

In partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, Skanska were appointed to undertake additional traffic modelling. Such work was needed to understand whether the identified access points are suitable to accommodate the levels of traffic that will be generated.

The access points identified in this document were successfully tested using a high level spreadsheet traffic model. This showed a relatively even spread of traffic across the 6 vehicle access points tested.

The volume of traffic expected to be generated from the site was calculated using comparison data from a similar site (Cardea, Peterborough) and information from the Wisbech Area Transport Study model, traffic surveys and the 2011 Census.

The conclusion of the modelling is the implementation of four/five access points to the development in the locations identified would be enough to accommodate the traffic generated by the development.

The modelling did not identify what would be required at each access point (i.e. type of junction). The report also recommends that a further study is undertaken to assess the impact of traffic generated by the site on the wider highway network within Wisbech.

Full details of the traffic modelling can be found in the Skanska Technical Note (Appendix 1).

Highway Requirements

The highway requirements for the site will vary dependant on the type and level of traffic using the access points. Discussions should be held with Cambridgeshire County Council Transport Assessment Team and Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Team to confirm design standards and transport assessment methodologies.

As a general guide these measurements should be considered:

- Roads for car/van use only (no buses or HGVs) require a minimum width of 6.5 metres.
- Roads to accommodate cars, vans, buses and regular HGV movements require a minimum width of 7.3 metres.
- Requirements for roundabouts or traffic lights depend on traffic levels.
- Rural (low footfall) shared use paths can be 2 metres wide although 2.5 metres is preferable.
- Segregated pedestrian and cycle paths require a minimum of 3 metres.
- For pedestrian routes to access schools and/or a local centre maximum path widths and segregated cycle paths are preferred.

Access Point Analysis – full notes

ZONE 1

On exploration of the area to the north of the development no walking, cycling or vehicle accesses were identified. The whole area is very built up with a number of cul-de-sacs incorporating retirement homes or flats. Entry points to these locations are via narrow roads with high numbers of parked cars and would therefore be unsuitable as vehicle access points to the East Wisbech BCP site.

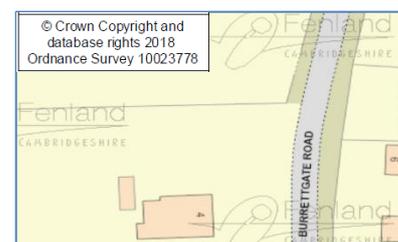
Opportunity for a walking/cycling option in this area might be identified with further investigation. This will require closer scrutiny of the area.

ZONE 2

Location 6: Between 2 Burrettgate Road and 4 Burrowgate Road.

Option unsuitable

There is no discernible gap between the two properties at this location. Both plots seem to be relatively large so there may be enough space between the buildings on the plots to accommodate a vehicle access point. However, this location is within the curtilage of 4 Burrettgate Road which is



a Grade II Listed Building. To establish whether an access point of any sort could be achieved here would require full investigation by a conservation specialist. Without this investigation this location cannot be considered.

Alternative options to the north of this site were not apparent for similar reasons. Argyll Gardens was considered, however, this is accessed via a private road of limited width and is therefore unsuitable.

An alternative option would be to develop an access point approx. 343 metres further south along Burrettgate Road as there are no buildings at this point.

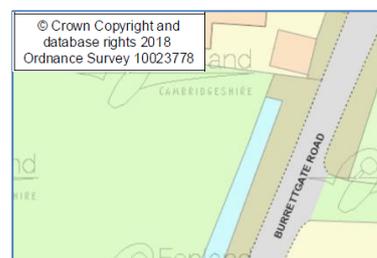
Please note: There are no footpaths on either side of Burrettgate Road along its entire length. These will need to be added and the road widened to accommodate additional traffic regardless of the access point location in this area.

ZONE 3

Location 6a: Burrettgate Road (approx. 343 metres south of Location 6).

Option for walking, cycling and vehicle access

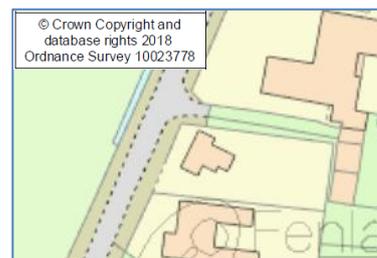
There are currently no buildings in this area and therefore nothing to suggest this is not a good location for an access point for vehicles including buses and HGVs. The hedgerows lining the west side of Burrettgate Road make it difficult to determine whether there are drainage ditches in this location however they are apparent on the maps.



Location 7: Burrettgate Road (approx. 230 metres north of Sandy Lane).

Option for walking, cycling and vehicle access

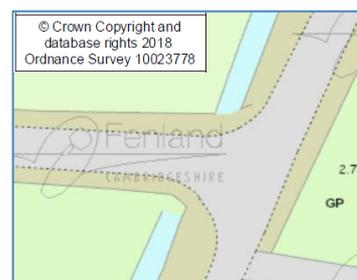
This location is slightly further south of Location 6a. There are no buildings along the western side of the road between Location 6a and Location 8. Therefore there is also nothing found here to suggest this is not a good location for an access point for vehicles including buses and HGVs.



Location 7a: Sandy Lane and Burrettgate Road/Broadend Road junction.

Option for walking, cycling and vehicle access

This is the existing vehicle access point through the East Wisbech BCP site. There is already a junction here connecting to Burrettgate Road and Broadend Road. The direct connection between this access point and Location 2 should be considered as there is a need to reduce the risk of rat running through the development to access the A47.

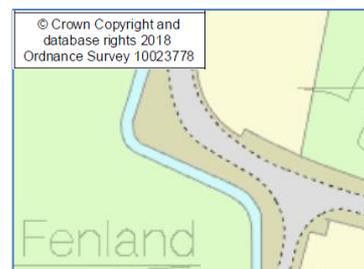


Work will also be required to establish if upgrades are needed for the junction here and the existing road surface. There is no current provision on Sandy Lane, Burrettgate Road and Broadend Road for walking and cycling so this will also need to be addressed.

Location 8: Broadend Road corner.

Option for walking, cycling and vehicle access

This location is a sharp bend leading from Broadend Road (Westwards) to Broadend Road (Northwards) toward Burrettgate Road. The bend is a tight right angle with poor visibility caused by hedgerows to the north.



Just short of the bend there is a narrow lane (Green Lane) leading to a small number of widely spaced residential properties. This lane ends at the A47 with no through route for motor vehicles.

There seems to be enough space at this corner to develop a suitable road layout to provide a vehicle access point for the East Wisbech BCP site. No immediate barriers were noted to cause concern as long as the road angles are appropriate and any visibility issues addressed. There may be drainage ditches along the west side of Broadend Road that will need to be considered but these were not visible during the site meeting due to hedgerows.

ZONE 4

Green Lane is a narrow lane leading to a small number of widely spaced residential properties and is therefore unsuitable for additional vehicles.

There are two existing public footpaths that link Green Lane to Wisbech via the East Wisbech BCP site. These paths are reasonably well used and provide access to the wider countryside. These links are important to retain and improve upon.

ZONE 5

This zone, with the exception of Meadowgate Lane, is open fields and therefore access in this location is not an immediate priority. However, it is important to keep in mind that future development of neighbouring sites in this zone may change requirements in the future.

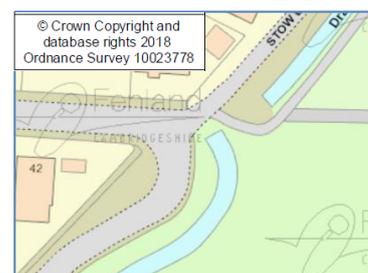
There may be one access point in this area for walking and cycling which connects to Meadowgate Lane however it is not a right of way or public footpath. No other options have been identified at this stage.

ZONE 6

Location 1: Orchard Drive/Stow Lane junction.

Option for walking and cycling access only

Orchard Drive is a very quiet but reasonably wide road with a good sized junction leading to Money Bank. There are a number of cars parked along the road but this is not considered to be a cause for concern.



Stow Lane is a dead end providing single lane access to private dwellings to

the north of Orchard Drive and dual lane access to private dwellings and Stow Gardens cul-de-sac to the south.

At the Stow Lane Junction it looks feasible to continue Orchard Drive in a straight line into the new development for vehicular access. However, Policy LP8 in the Fenland Local Plan clearly states that proposed access(es) to serve the East Wisbech development must ensure there is no unacceptably net adverse impact on existing residential amenity. On this basis this location is considered unsuitable for additional vehicular traffic and therefore an option for a walking and cycling access only.

There is an existing public footpath already leading into the development site at this proposed access point location. The path is currently a single mud track which would need widening and constructing as a footway/cycleway if it was to be used as a shared use path. However, this particular path is currently sheltered by some shaped bushes/trees. This location has high amenity value, it is well kept and very attractive and therefore it would be preferable to retain this character.

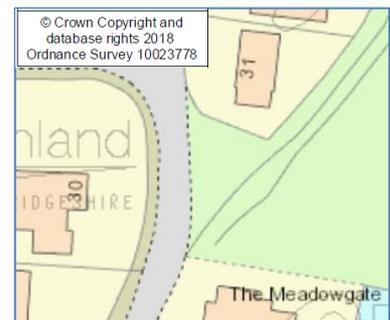
The path along Stow Lane (running from north to south of the site area) looks to be well used by pedestrians and although only a mud track, cyclists were seen using it during the site visit. It is a priority for the East Wisbech BCP to preserve and improve the existing walking and cycling links in the area and therefore the preservation of this route is particularly important. The path runs from the middle to the bottom of the East Wisbech BCP area along its western border and therefore this is also an important option to consider as an access point for any school and local centre in the new development. The Stow Lane end of the path is made of single carriage asphalt and is the primary access for a number of residences. This could make increased footfall potentially hazardous. An option to address this could be to bring this path across the existing ditch and into the East Wisbech site to provide a metalled link between Orchard Drive and Sandy Lane.

Location 1a: Quaker Lane/Meadowgate Lane/Stow Lane.

Option for walking and cycling access only

This location is the existing southernmost access point for the public footpath (Stow Lane) which runs north to Sandy Lane. It is important to maintain this right of way and maximise the opportunity in this location to link the BCP site to existing walking and cycling routes in Wisbech.

There is a wide gap at the entrance to the existing path which was also investigated for potential as a vehicle access point for the site. However, due to the residential amenity of Quaker Lane it is considered unsuitable for additional traffic. There are also visibility issues which would affect vehicles turning onto Quaker Lane from the BCP site which also makes this location unsuitable.



Location 9: Meadowgate Lane.

Option not considered

This location was not included in the site visit due to concerns regarding increased traffic in this area. However, this location is an important site for pedestrian and cyclist access as it links well with pedestrian through routes at Arles Avenue, Elizabeth Drive and Westmead Avenue.

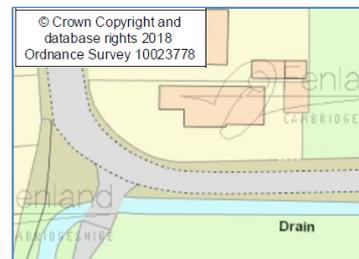
There is an existing public footpath in this location which is important to retain as it provides links to the existing walking and cycling routes mentioned above.

ZONE 7

Location 2: Stow Road and Sandy Lane.

Option for walking, cycling and vehicle access

Stow Road is a straight residential road of reasonable width with no immediate issues apparent. The existing footpaths are also of a reasonable width. However the pathways at the junction of Bush Lane/Stow Road are impeded by the overgrown bushes of residential front gardens. Forward visibility around this bend is substandard. It is preferable for this issue to be designed out. With this addressed this location is considered to be a suitable option.



Sandy Lane currently has no footpaths and as the draft plan suggests this would be an access route for the site it would be important for this to be added. It is likely that this access point would become one of the primary routes and therefore a segregated cycle path would be preferred.

It is expected that Sandy Lane would need to be widened to accommodate bus traffic. Additional width is also needed for a footpath and cycle path. There is a large ditch running along the south edge of the existing road and also a property on the north edge where the road turns onto Stow Road. These could complicate options for widening Sandy Lane at this point.

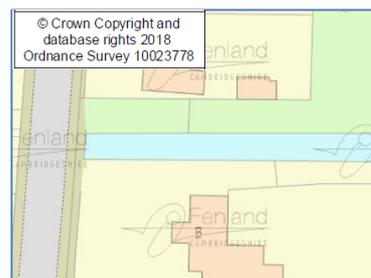
It has been noted that although this road is currently a direct link between Stow Road and Broadend Road measures should be taken to reduce its appeal as a 'short cut' to the A47 for residents west of the East Wisbech BCP site.

Location 3: Between 125 Stow Road and 133 Stow Road

Option for walking and cycling access only

It is difficult to determine the width of available space between the two properties as the view is blocked with landscaped foliage.

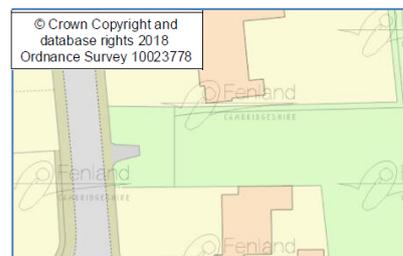
There are no obvious issues noted regarding access onto Stow Road at this point. Therefore, as long as there is sufficient width of 3 metres for a segregated cycle and footpath (or 2.5 metres shared use) this location could be suitable for a walking and cycling access.



Location 4: Between 103 Stow Road and 105 Stow Road

Option for walking, cycling and vehicle access

This location is currently single dirt track presumably used to access the fields and orchards behind the residential buildings on Stow Road. It is easily wide enough for cycle and footpath access. However, to enable it



to be used as a vehicle access point for the East Wisbech Site additional width would need to be achieved to allow for the necessary bell mouth junction needed to connect to Stow Road.

Without the additional width this location could be used for vehicular access for up to 6 homes as a shared access point only.

Location 5: Between 57 Stow Road and 61 Stow Road.

Option for walking and cycling access only

This location has a single dirt track used as a vehicle access point for the area in the northwest of the BCP site currently used for allotments.



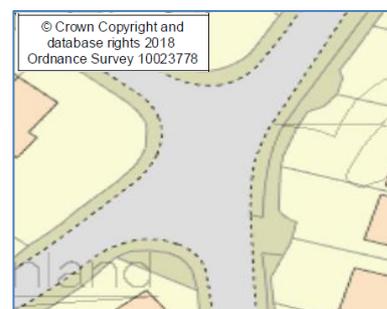
The width of the space available is not sufficient to provide an access point suitable for additional motor vehicles. Once beyond the boundary of 57 Stow Road the track turns north at an acute right angle to avoid 59 Stow Road. Therefore both these properties restrict the opportunity to increase the width of this lane to accommodate a vehicular access point for the BCP site.

The current width is suitable to use this location as a pedestrian/cyclist access point. However, if this location was to remain a vehicle access point for the allotments, measures would need to be taken to ensure the safety of all users.

Location 5a: Stow Lane and Trinity Road and Staithe Road Junction.

Option for walking, cycling and vehicle access

There is currently no existing space to create an access point to the East Wisbech BCP development in this location. However if space could be achieved this location would provide 4 options for traffic dispersal from the site. To achieve this provision of a mini roundabout would be required here.



Conclusions and Recommendations

This report has identified potential access points for the East Wisbech BCP site. These are:

Walking, Cycling and Vehicle access points at

- Sandy Lane and Bush Lane
- Stow Road by junction Staithe Road
- Stow Road by Felsted Avenue
- Burrettgate Road – Between Burrett Road and Sandy Lane
- Broadend Road and Sandy Lane
- Broadend Road by Green Lane

Walking and Cycling access only at

- Stow Road – site of former nursery
- Stow Road – north of Bush Lane
- Orchard Drive and Stow Lane
- Quaker Lane and Stow Lane
- Green Lane

There may be scope to achieve access points in addition to those recommended above. However this will require investigate beyond the work completed for the purpose of this Transport Planning Report.

Additional work is needed to establish exactly what will be required at each location. This work should include discussions with Cambridgeshire County Council Transport Assessment Team and Cambridgeshire County Council Highways Team to confirm design standards and transport assessment methodologies.

It is also recommended that a further study is undertaken to assess the impact of traffic generated by the site on the wider highway network within Wisbech.