

Cycle Seahaven comments - Exceat Replacement Bridge Project

Date: 06 August 2020

- The current bottleneck was maintained from the old narrow bridge design in order to discourage freight, which should use the A27 trunk road. There is no mention of weight restrictions on the bridge so it will inevitably be used by more heavy goods vehicles.
- Cyclists emerging from the NCR2 alternative route which exits from the pub car park need a safe way to cross and merge with the easterly traffic flow onto the A259. It should not be overlooked that this road is part of the National Cycle Network (Route 2) as well as being part of the London to Paris Greenway called the Avenue Verte.
- The whole area from the bridge to Exceat and the Littlington turn off is used by many cyclists, both on and off road, and there should be provision as part of these works to make cycling that gap safer.
- There should be segregated roadway for cyclists using the A259 road. The proposal to combine cycles and pedestrian is not safe or adequate. The shared path is just on the south side of the river, there is no other cycling provision. Travelling west to east a cyclist would need to use a crossing, cycle over the bridge, use another crossing then rejoin the A259! (fig .2) If people cycle on the road it could lead to conflict with motorists as there is a shared path available.
- On page 21 of the recently released DfT “Gear Change” document there are Key Design Principles which this current design doesn’t address (fig .3):
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904146/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf
- The congestion with the existing bridge acts as a traffic reduction scheme - many local people avoid driving through that area at peak times and weekend afternoons. Without that disincentive traffic will surely increase.
- The design only shows uncontrolled crossings. As such there is no way to control the flow of traffic in this area. The A259 from Seaford to the Friston Forest is narrow and has limited sight lines, blind brows and the current bridge provides a pinch point chicane. This may not be good for car drivers, but it has the effect of slowing down traffic, especially on the East to West journey up Exceat Hill. The current bridge creates “packets” of cars which allows cyclists a gap.
- With uncontrolled traffic flow there is concern that the next pinch point will be Sutton Corner roundabout or Seaford town centre. This area is both residential and heavily used by students walking and cycling to school.
- This bridge can’t be looked at in isolation without investigation as to the negative effect it could have on traffic flow through Seaford. Any increase in traffic will lead to detriment to residents walking and cycling. Lowering speed limit on roads leading to and from the bridge should be considered to improve cycle / pedestrian safety.
- These proposals are dangerous in the absence of a traffic management strategy to encompass a much longer stretch of road.

- Existing family friendly cycle / shared paths already connect Peacehaven, Newhaven and Seaford to Exceat. From there one must negotiate a narrow causeway with buses, lorries and cars to get to Friston Forest and Seven Sisters Country Park. Putting in a short shared path will connect the forest and valley network of leisure walking / cycling routes, and beyond, with three major towns.
- The existing footpath between 7S and Exceat bridge (Fig .1) is too narrow for:
the less able: those with walking aids, wheel chairs, guide dogs;
parents with push chairs or more than one child each;
Walkers passing the other direction, without fear of falling down the steep drop onto the carriageway.

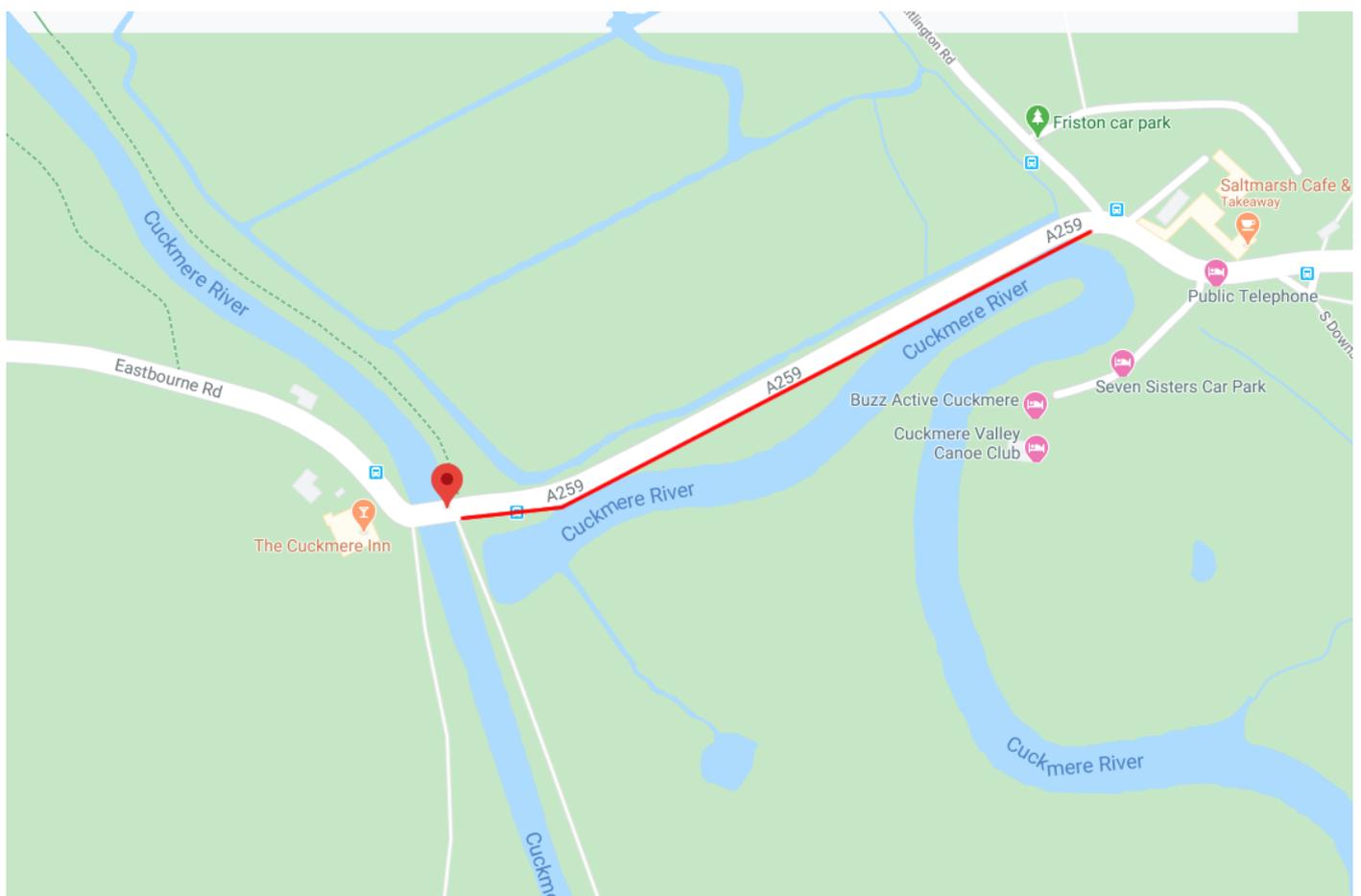


Fig. 1.

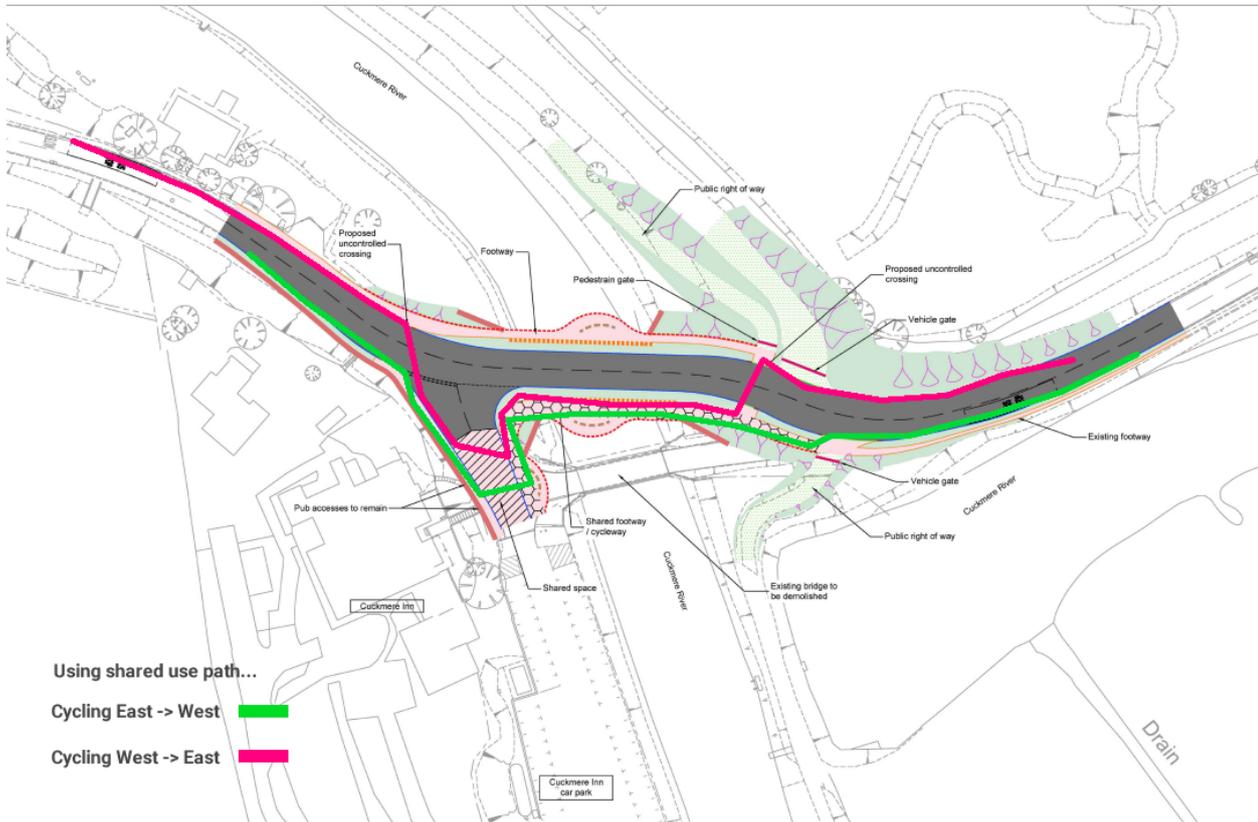


Fig. 2.

Key design principles

Cycling is or will become mass transit and must be treated as such. Routes must be designed for larger numbers of cyclists, for users of all abilities and disabilities.

Cyclists must be separated from volume traffic, both at junctions and on the stretches of road between them.

Cyclists must be separated from pedestrians.

Cyclists must be treated as vehicles, not pedestrians.

Routes must join together; isolated stretches of good provision are of little value.

Routes must feel direct, logical and be intuitively understandable by all road users;

Routes and schemes must take account of how users actually behave;

Purely cosmetic alterations should be avoided.

Barriers, such as chicane barriers and dismount signs, should be avoided.

Routes should be designed only by those who have experienced the road on a cycle.

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Fig. 3.