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Introduction

Introducing the scheme

As a crucial gateway into the city centre and a meeting point for different forms of transport, the regeneration of St Botolph's Circus is a vital part of Colchester's developing city centre Masterplan.

Long acknowledged as requiring improvement, thanks to a successful bid to the Government's Levelling Up Fund, Colchester City Council and Essex County Council have been granted a unique opportunity to move this project forward and invest in improving the St Botolph's area for future generations.

Within this consultation brochure we have set out our proposals for a re-generated area, removing the existing roundabout and creating a new layout that not only works for drivers, public transport, pedestrians and cyclists, but also provides a place people can spend time.

As the first stage of regeneration it also lays the foundation for future improvements to the wider transport interchange area and sets the standard for other projects delivered within the Masterplan.

Your views are important in helping shape both the St Botolph's scheme and the wider plan and we would welcome your input on both.

To find out more visit www.colchester.gov.uk/colchester-city-centre

You can also contact the St Botolph's team directly by emailing stbotolphs@essexhighways.org





Need for the scheme

St Botolph's Circus is a critical part of Colchester's transport network and a vital gateway into and out of the city. Situated to the south of the city centre the junction sees the meeting of the A134 Southway, with St Botolph's Street, Mersea Road and Magdalen Street.

The junction is partially signalised and is complex to move around, particularly on the north side, where vehicles must cross the roundabout approach lanes on St Botolph's Street to gain access to the Britannia Way car park.

The Magistrates' Court car park and the Railway Station accessible parking bays are directly off the roundabout, which leads to further safety issues for both drivers and pedestrians.

St Botolph's Circus is an area which has long been acknowledged as requiring investment. As part of the masterplan regeneration, it has been identified as an area that needs improvement to support wider objectives in the city. Whether you are a driver stuck in traffic, a bus user travelling from the bus interchange, a cyclist trying to safely travel into the city centre or a commuter arriving at the station, the area should provide safe and easy connections.

The reality is very different

It has poor connectivity

 St Botolph's Circus is a meeting point for cars, pedestrians, cyclists, trains and public transport, but does not effectively cater for people changing between types of transport or trying to access the city centre or local amenities.

It contributes to a splitting of communities

 St Botolph's Circus separates those living south of the junction from the city centre

It has poor accessibility

 St Botolph's Circus does not cater for the movement of people with disabilities offering indirect, longer and often unsignalised crossing alternatives.

It has poor air quality

 St Botolph's Circus is road dominated, causing air quality issues and is designated an 'Air Quality Management Area'.

It has high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour

 St Botolph's Circus has unattractive subways and isolated locations which can feel unsafe. They are poorly lit and can feel intimidating.

It is an under-utilised local area

- The St Botolph's Circus area does not provide the gateway feel to the city centre it should and is a lost opportunity for local economic growth.
- The lack of high-quality public realm and poor use of space discourages footfall and people spending time in the area which impacts local businesses.
- It restricts access to local heritage sites such as St Botolph's Priory.



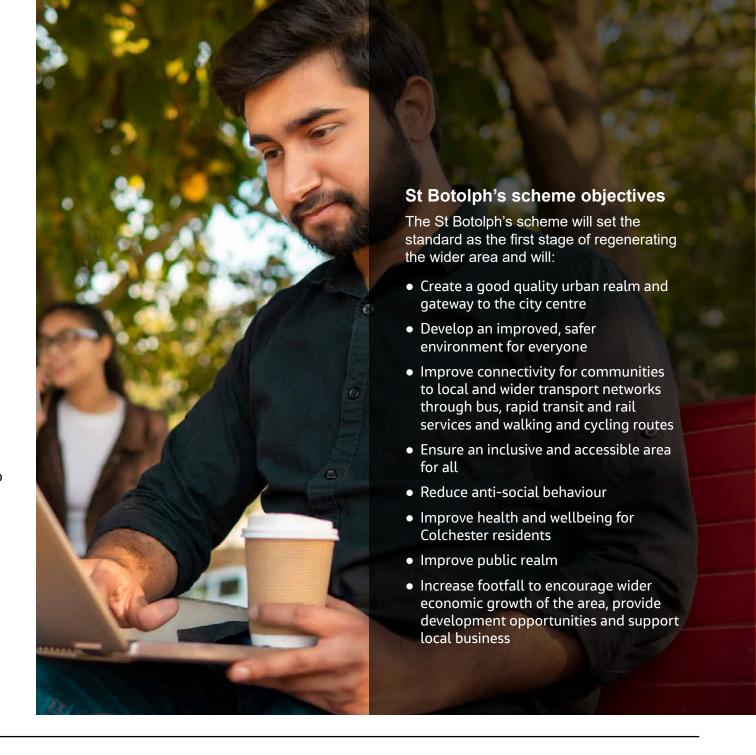
Public Consultation Brochure

The developing City Centre Masterplan

St Botolph's Circus is an important part of the developing Colchester City Centre Masterplan. Led by Colchester City Council the Masterplan is a strategic plan setting out how the city will evolve over the coming years, building on Colchester's rich heritage and vibrant local economy.

The Masterplan will see the development of a number of projects. In late 2022, through a successful bid to the Government's Levelling Up Fund and in recognition of its importance to the city, it was announced £19.6million of funding was to be made available to deliver the first stage of regeneration of the area.

This provides a unique opportunity to move this project forward and invest in improving the St Botolph's area for future generations.



Consultation history

In 2019, recognising the need for improvements at St Botolph's, we undertook a consultation on a re-design of the roundabout. This proposed that the roundabout would be adapted to increase capacity for more vehicles, new crossing points would be created and the underpasses infilled to improve safety.

While there was recognition that this design reduced anti-social behaviour, it was felt the lack of focus on walking and cycling did not adequately improve connectivity. You also told us that the proposal did not go far enough to improve the look and feel of the area or create the welcoming gateway the city needs.

Additionally, the design did not adequately provide safety features, highlighting that safety, particularly for cyclists is poor.

Reflecting on the consultation responses, and the clear need to focus on St Botolph's as a gateway to the city centre, as well as a meeting point of transport, the scheme has been refined.





Levelling Up Fund and evolution of design

The successful bid to the Levelling Up Fund allows us to focus on St Botolph's itself, but in doing so it will also lay the foundation for future improvements to the wider area, such as improving the area as a transport interchange.

The funding bid (<u>www.colchester.gov.uk/</u>
<u>levelling-up-fund</u>) set out the need to create a
new gateway into the city centre which support
regeneration, stimulates business growth,
reduces anti-social behaviour and improves
health and wellbeing.

The concept set out in the bid, building on the consultation feedback given in 2019, removes the existing roundabout and replaces it with a signal-controlled crossroad, creating a new plaza area.

This will help improve connectivity, creating a balance between the needs of different transport users. It will provide a safer environment, help regenerate the area and support the wider city centre Masterplan by re-connecting the community, delivering a gateway feel into the city.

Following the announcement that the funding bid had been successful, this has enabled us to further develop the concept into more detailed designs.

Three slight variations of the concept have been assessed in more detail the results of which have set out a design which we are presenting in this consultation.



What you told us in the previous consultation



Improve connectivity

Reduce the feeling of a major road splitting the community.



Improve the look and feel

Creating a gateway into the city centre.



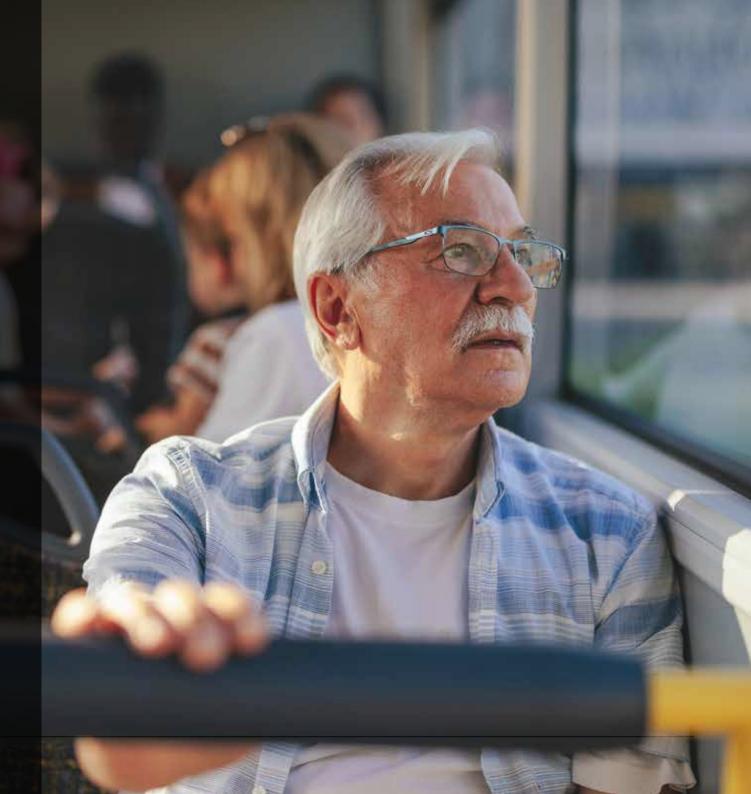
Tackle safety issues

Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in the area.



Ensure it works for different users

Recognising that it is a meeting point of cars, buses, trains, pedestrians and cyclists.



Scheme plan

Recognising the regeneration aims set out in the Colchester City Centre Masterplan, and the feedback provided to the 2019 consultation, the successful 2022 Levelling Up Fund bids set out an indicative 'staggered crossroad' layout replacing the existing roundabout.

This will allow for road space to be re-purposed, with the development of public-realm space, while also tackling issues at the junction and improving accessibility and connectivity without impacting significantly on traffic.

This approach also aligns with the 'Colchester Future Transport Strategy' (www.essexhighways.org/colchester-future-transport), supporting and encouraging alternative modes of transport in the city centre area.

How has the scheme evolved?

Following further development of the design, a number of variations on the scheme have been identified.

These all tackle the key issues at the junction and look to achieve the scheme objectives.

LUF bid design

A 'Staggered crossroad' with no right turn from St Botolph's Street to A134 Southway.

This design offers benefits in terms of creating public space and maintaining highway capacity. However, due to a lack of right hand turn at the junction, traffic is routed instead via Osborne Street and Stanwell Street through the existing bus facilities, which could cause further congestion in this area.

Crossroad design

A 'crossroad' with a right turn from St Botolph's Street to A134 Southway.

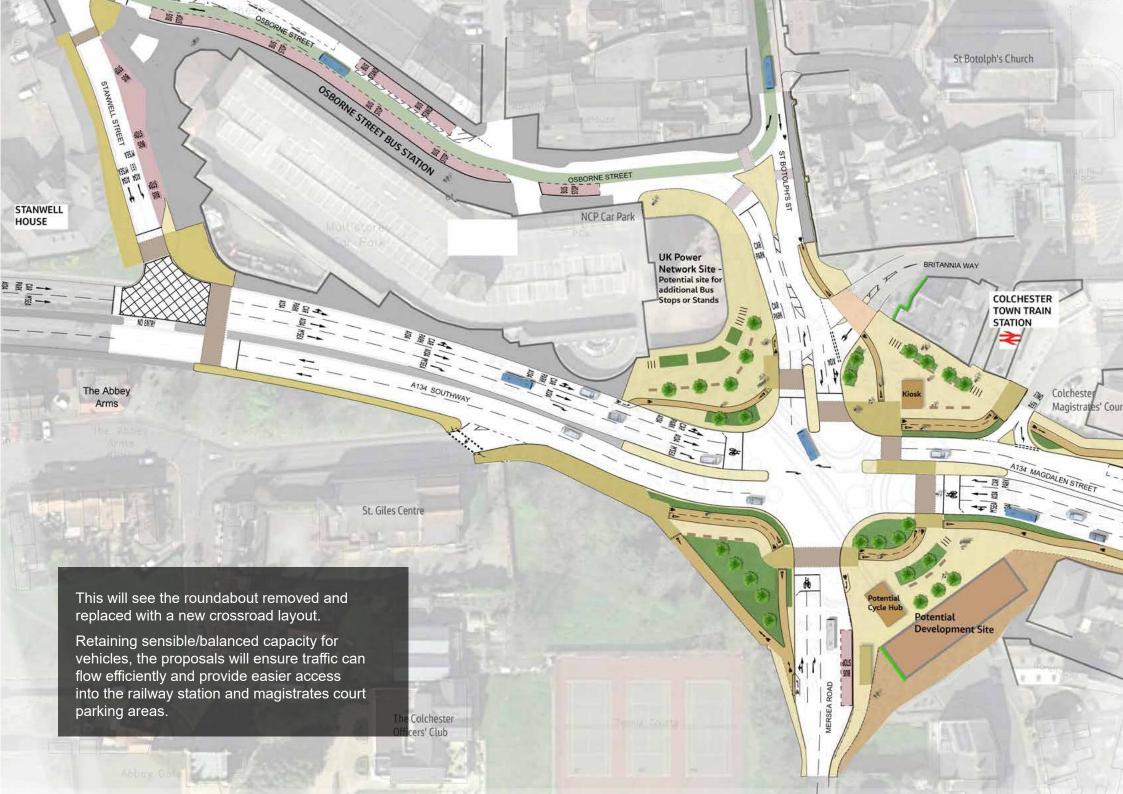
This design offers slightly less public space than the LUF bid design however, it offers a better balance of traffic movement ensuring that wider network effects are manageable as traffic is not routed through Osborne Street and Stanwell Street.

Crossroad design with left turn lane

The same crossroad design but with an additional dedicated left-turn lane from A134 Southway to St Botolph's and Osborne Street.

In comparison, this design could offer slight benefits in terms of additional highway capacity at St Botolph's Circus. However, it reduces new public space and requires an additional road crossing. We will continue looking at the dedicated left turn in detailed design and may take it forward if it provides enough benefit.

From these variations, we believe that the crossroad design offers a good balance between managing capacity and congestion, the impact on the wider network, and creating the new open space to support the regeneration of the area and are therefore presenting this for consultation.





The scheme has now reached a stage at which we would welcome your views on the design, how well the scheme meets our objectives, and whether the re-designed junction would change how you use it.

What the scheme will deliver?

Improving the transport interchange will allow further improvements in the future to increase the transport interchange capacity and bus facilities as the Colchester City Masterplan develops.

The removal of the roundabout will allow road space to be re-claimed, enabling **a new pedestrian plaza and green spaces**, seating and other public realm improvements, as well as pop-up shops, cultural and artistic opportunities. economic regeneration and development opportunities.

In doing so, we would significantly **improve the look and feel** of a key gateway to the city and support its heritage and economy.

Segregated (away from traffic) cycle paths and walkways that provide clear routing, improving safety and connections into the city centre, tackling a key barrier to walking and cycling and supporting a safer, greener, healthier approach to transport by encouraging people to reduce short car journeys and use more sustainable alternatives where possible.

And the removal of the unattractive and intimidating subways will help **reduce crime** and anti-social behaviour in the area and help **improve accessibility**, particularly for vulnerable users and those with mobility issues.

Alongside the developing proposals for St Botolph's, Colchester City Council are consulting on the wider city Masterplan, setting out how the city centre will evolve over the coming years. Your input into this consultation, as well as our plans for St Botolph's, is critical in helping us to refine and shape these plans as we move forward.



Benefits of the proposal for St Botolph's

Creation of a gateway to the city centre

The proposal for St Botolph's Circus will help create a vibrant gateway to the city centre, levelling up the area in line with the developing City Centre Masterplan and will set the standard for future Masterplan projects.

It will be a place for movement and people 24/7, not just a focus on a few peak hours of the day.

Transport interchange

As a 'transport interchange' St Botolph's combines different ways to travel where people can change from one form of transport to another, for example from Colchester Town Railway Station to a local bus route, future rapid transit services or a short walk into the City Centre.

The proposal at St Botolph's Circus will make this transport interchange safer, easier to navigate and more desirable to use for everyone, no matter what type of transport or active travel options they are using. This can contribute to our other objectives like economic regeneration of the area, reduced severance, improved accessibility and greater health and wellbeing.

This scheme will set the foundation for future improvements around the railway station, bus facilities and wider city centre. For example, a bus capacity study is being undertaken to understand how the bus services on Osborne Street operate and how the proposed changes to St Botolph's Circus will support future public transport service delivery.

Ultimately making travel in and around Colchester simpler, more convenient and better quality.

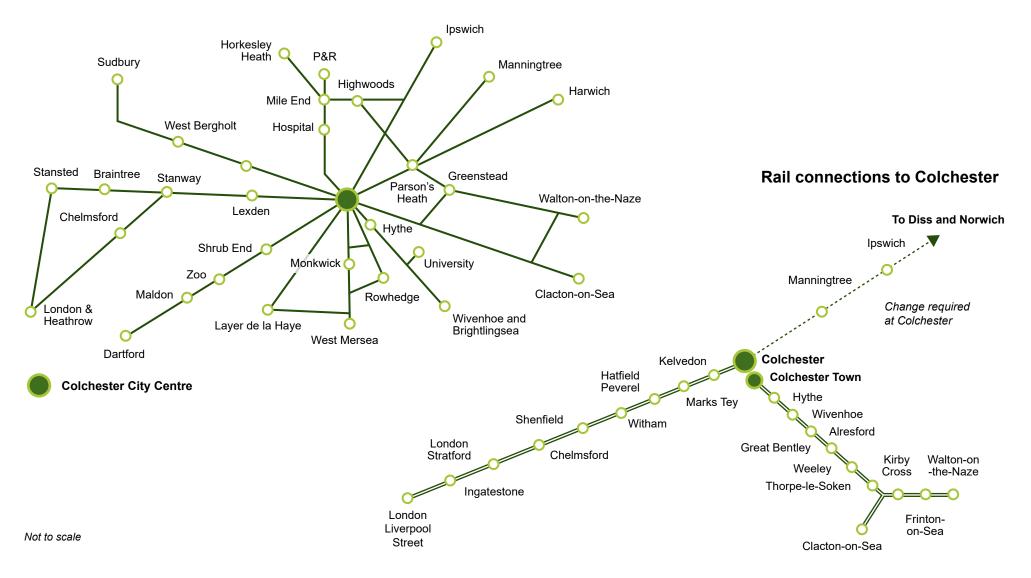
It will retain the current connectivity for cars and access to parking they currently enjoy.

As a wider objective to the scheme we recognise the need for improvements around the railway station and bus station area. Alongside this project, a bus capacity study is being undertaken to understand how the bus services on Osborne Street operate and how the proposed changes to St Botolph's Circus will support future public transport service delivery.

This will lay the initial foundations for future improvements which will be progressed in line with the wide City Centre Masterplan.



Bus and coach connections to Colchester



Public Consultation Brochure

Over half a million journeys are made at Colchester Town Railway Station every year.

Within 1km of the scheme approximately 10-12 minutes' walk there are six schools, the city centre retail area, one railway station, one bus station and eight heritage assets.

There are 5431 weekly departures from the bus station and 5469 departures from Head Street.

There are also over 5000 weekly departures from the bus station and 5500 departures from Head Street.

Improving accessibility

Delivering improved accessibility and experience for all ages, genders and abilities with direct, street-level crossings and the provision of segregated space for pedestrians and cyclists.

We recognise the need to improve and create safer journeys for pedestrians and cyclists in an area that can currently feel unsafe, as well as improve the experience for those with mobility issues or visual impairments.

Reducing anti-social behaviour

Removing the unsafe and often avoided subways and reducing antisocial behaviour in the area. Removing inactive subways will create a safer environment that makes this area more inviting for all ages, genders and abilities at all times of the day.

The area is a hot-spot for anti-social behaviour and this regeneration offers the opportunity to 'design out' crime, make the area feel safer at night and remove some of the elements which cause fear of crime.

Improving connectivity

Creating safe, direct and well-designed walking and cycling routes along key desire lines and interchange routes makes this area more attractive for pedestrians and cyclists and will make it easier to access the city centre, railway and bus stations.

Current routes at the junction sever the residents to the south of the city centre, often meaning that they need to use the car to get around. These improvements give more choice and freedom of movement to those who live within walking or cycling distance of city centre amenities, facilities and shops.

Better health and wellbeing

By establishing these safer more desirable routes at the junction we are encouraging more people to walk and cycle in the Colchester City Centre area.

This will create a healthier environment for active travel, ultimately improve air quality and in turn improve the wellbeing of local residents. The proposed planting and trees will provide more shade and enhanced air quality improvements.

Improved public realm

The public realm enhancement will create a catalyst for wider regeneration by 'reclaiming' road space from the roundabout to create more inviting, accessible and useable spaces.

This redesigned junction will be an attractive gateway into Colchester City Centre. An interchange forecourt between the railway and bus stations, reflecting a high-quality area that celebrates the Priory related conservation area.

There is also opportunity to enhance amenities for walking and cycling with more direct routes, better wayfinding, seating, and cycle parking (bike racks and covered cycle hub).

We also propose landscape planting to enhance air quality, shade provision, biodiversity and sustainable drainage system solutions for this new gateway.

Semi-mature trees will also be planted, ensuring no reduction in the number of trees in the area.

Supporting local business

The re-design of the junction to reclaim space from roads to usable public realm will provide the opportunity for a new mixed-use development in the south-eastern part of the junction.

It will also create additional space for new plaza areas, creating a place people can spend time and offers the opportunity for new businesses such as pop-up cafes and street food vendors.



Current view outside Colchester Town Station



Management of traffic

This scheme proposes to open St Botolph's Circus to everyone and as such careful management of traffic is required.

St Botolph's is part of a network of junctions that collectively influence the movement of people and vehicles through the city centre. Being located close to the heart of Colchester means that it is important to carefully balance the place and movement functions of the junction.

We have therefore undertaken transport modelling to look at how the new design will work. Transport modelling is a useful tool in giving a good idea of how a road or junction will operate. Using a variety of data sources and predicted levels of transport growth, it is an important part of the design process and can help us to look at the balance between traffic needs, the opportunity to re-take road space for regeneration and improving the walking and cycling provision.

What the modelling has shown us is:

- Conversion to traffic signals will 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.
- 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 there will be no significant increases in queues or delays (less than 60 seconds on average).
- Cyclists will be able to safely navigate the junction using controlled facilities with average wait times of one minute or less.
- Signalisation means pedestrians will be able to safely cross north to south and east to west with average wait times of one minute or less.
- Signalisation of the junction will help improve journey time reliability for buses moving to/ from the Osborne Street bus station.



Current view of roundabout exit to St Botolph's Street





Environmental considerations Air quality

Improving air quality is an important aim across Essex and is a particular issue within a number of city/town areas. Each council in the UK must review and assess air quality in their areas and where objectives are not likely to be met must declare an 'Air Quality Management Area'. The area around St Botolph's Circus falls within one of these areas.

Essex County Council are currently developing an Essex Air Quality Strategy which looks at measures to address air quality and this is due to be consulted on this summer. We predict that with technological developments (e.g. zero-emission vehicles), small changes in speed and traffic at the junction and a long term strategy of supporting more walking and cycling for short/local journeys, this scheme can support the objective of improving air quality in Colchester.

Furthermore, we can also enhance air quality by reclaiming road space to create new public space with tree planting and landscape opportunities.

Noise

We will be monitoring and assessing noise impact at St Botolph's Circus both in construction and when the scheme is in operation, managing any adverse impacts.



Walking and cycling routes

The proposals aim to improve the experience for pedestrians and cyclists, making it safer and easier to walk or cycle, better connecting people with the city centre, and the wider walking and cycling network.

The maps on the next page show the importance of St Botolph's as a key part of the walking and cycling network. Over 20,000 people in Colchester live within a 20 minute walk of St Botolph's and 110,000 within a 20 minute cycle.

Cycling

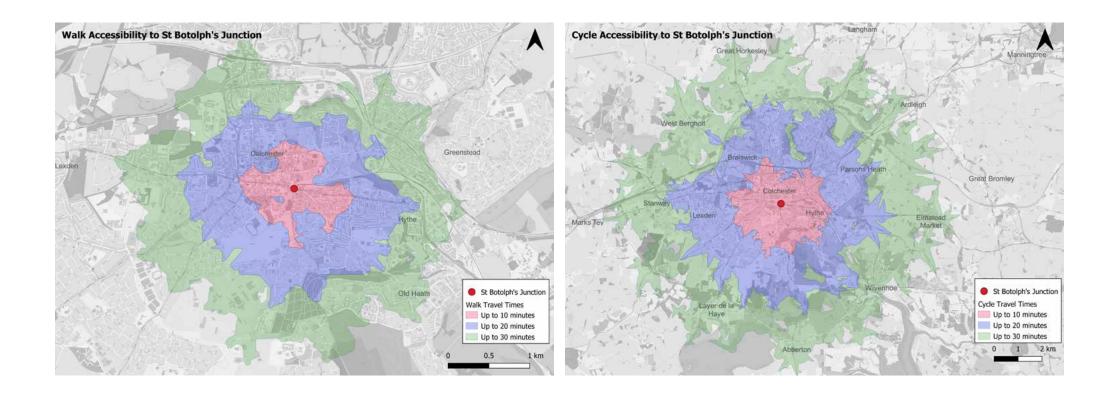
Cycling provision around St Botolph's will be compliant with the latest design guidance (known as LTN 1/20), ensuring adequate width for the cycleway and that it is separated from traffic and pedestrians. The current concept drawing included is work in progress and focuses on the imminent area around the crossroads area for the segregated cycling and walking detail.

Detailed cycling proposals will be drawn up at the next stage of design. The illustrated diagram here provides further clarification as to how we will continue to develop the design to reflect the high standards of connectivity/

Recognising the role of St Botolph's as a destination and a place of onward travel, the proposals will see cycle parking/storage facilities, and the foundations put in place to connect the area to the wider cycle network, as well as ensuring alignment with the wider City Centre Masterplan.

In recent years, emphasis has moved towards supporting us to walk and cycle, particularly for short journeys. In the city around 20% of us travel just 2km or less to work by car and through projects such as the Active Travel, LCWIP (Local Walking and Cycling projects) and Town Deal which you may have read about, we are looking to tackle some of the barriers to cycling and better connect what is currently a fragmented cycle network.







Walking and accessibility access

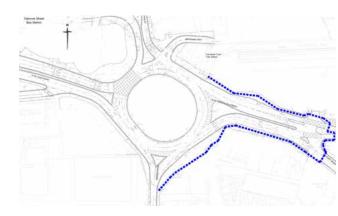
As part of the proposals, the provision of segregated walking infrastructure and dedicated crossing points, as well as improved pavement facilities will make walking easier and more enjoyable.

Accessibility will also be improved. The current layout requires people to use steps or make considerable detours to access St Botolph's.

For example, the current route from Mersea Road to Colchester Town Railway Station is 180 meters with steps. This means using the unattractive subways and excludes people with mobility issues.

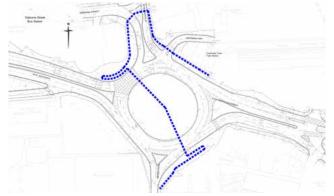
The alternative routes either use an uncontrolled crossing avoiding the subways or the subways to the north-west of the roundabout before going to the crossing over St Botolph's Street and crossing Britannia Way. As well as the extended journeys to over 330mtrs these routes are unsafe, have unsuitable ramps for wheelchair use and mobility scooters and do not permit cycling.

The proposed scheme will deliver a universal experience for all users that reduces the step-free walking distance by two-thirds. Ensuring that the direct street level crossings are suitable, signalled and safe.



330 metres – avoiding underpasses but an uncontrolled crossing

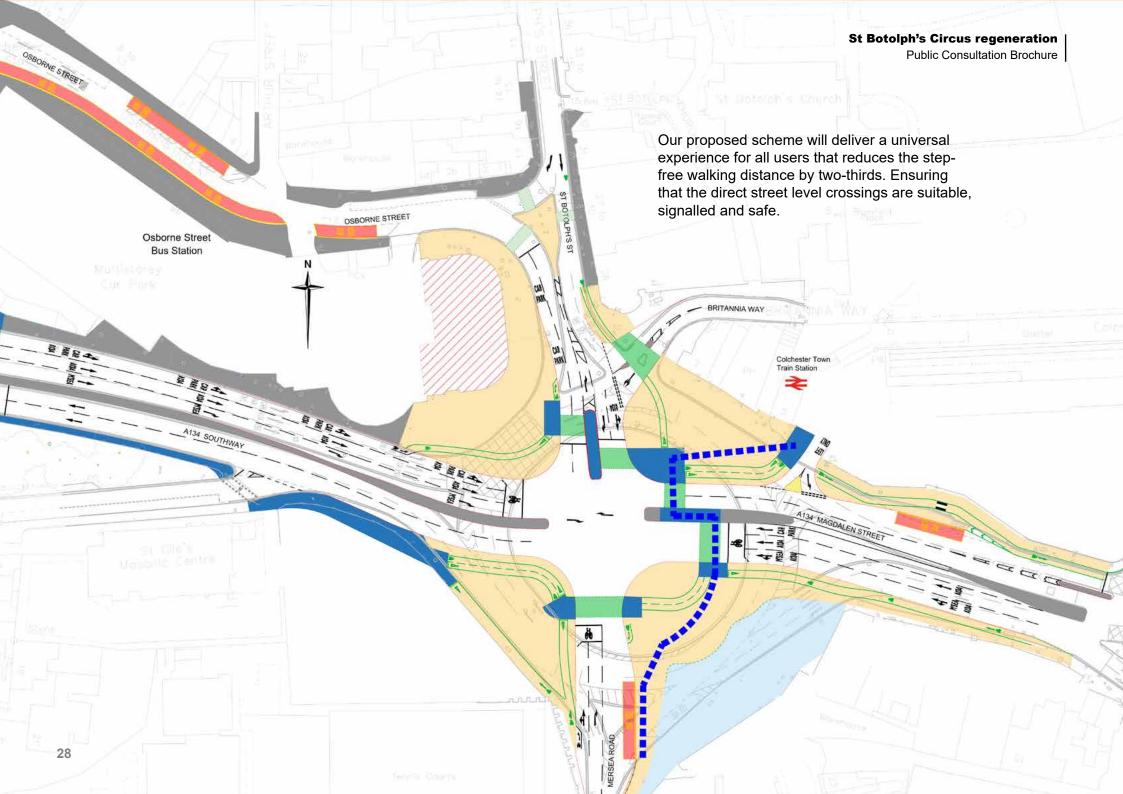


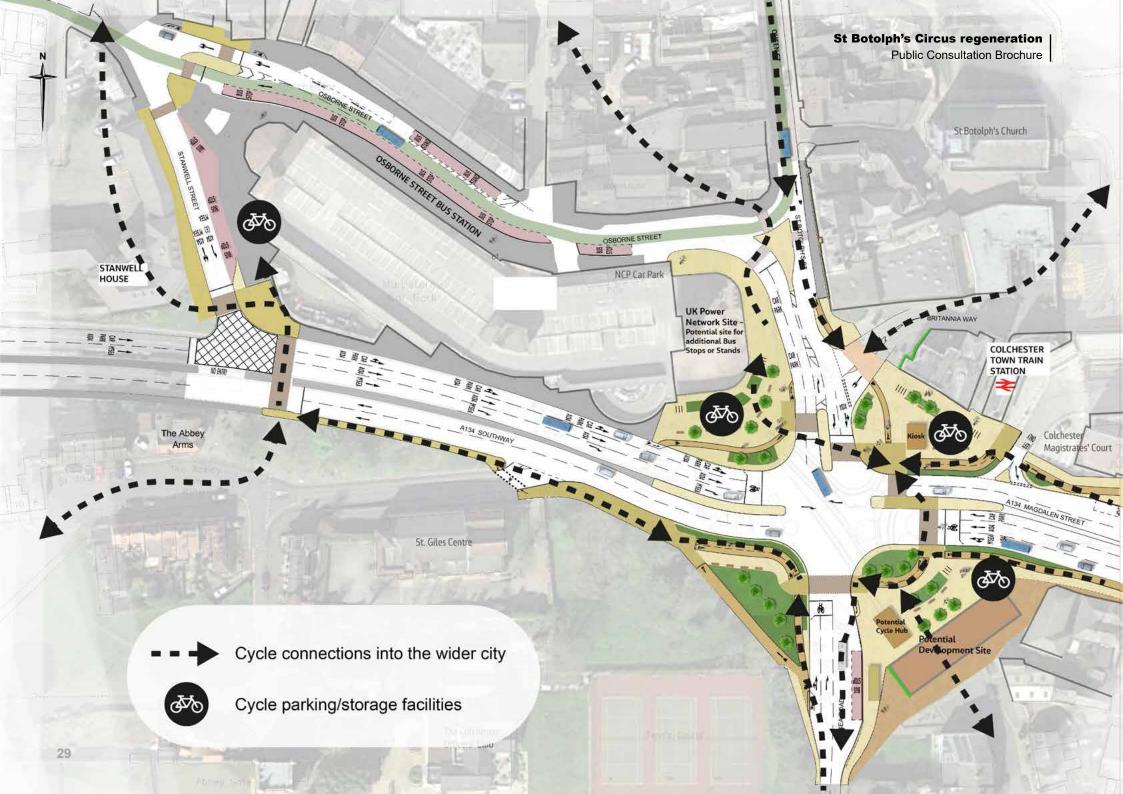


350 metres – step-free but sub-standard ramps and no cycling permitted



180 metres





Get involved

We would like to get your feedback about our proposals for the St Botolph's Circus scheme.

That's why we are holding this consultation, which is running from 19 June 2023 until 31 July 2023.

All of your consultation feedback is important to us and will help to shape our proposals going forward.

Find out more

Events

There will be events running throughout the consultation period. This is your opportunity to ask our project team any questions you have about the scheme.

Culver Square

Wednesday 28 June 2023 12pm-4pm

St Botolph's Church

Monday 17 July 2023 2pm-8pm



Public Consultation Brochure

You can provide feedback by completing our questionnaire.

The easiest way to do this is to complete it online www.colchester.gov.uk/colchester-city-centre/. There is space to make comments and you can take your time, saving it and returning at your convenience.

Alternatively, you can complete a paper copy All you need is an envelope. Freepost address: FREEPOST ESSEX HIGHWAYS ENGAGEMENT TEAM

If you are unable to complete the questionnaire, you can email us with your feedback at stbotolphs@essexhighways.org. Please state clearly that your email is your St Botolph's consultation feedback to ensure it is accepted.

www.colchester.gov.uk/colchester-city-centre/

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stbotolphs@essexhighways.org

FREEPOST ESSEX HIGHWAYS ENGAGEMENT TEAM

We cannot accept responsibility for ensuring responses that are sent to any channel other than those described above are included in the consultation process. All responses must include at least your name and postcode.

All responses should be received by 23:59 on 31 July 2023. Any responses received after this date may not be considered as part of the consultation process.

Contact

Please get in touch with us if you have any questions about the scheme or the consultation process.



stbotolphs@essexhighways.org



Customer Contact Centre

0345 743 0430



How your feedback will be used

All the feedback we receive will be carefully considered by the team working on the St Botolph's Circus scheme.

All comments and suggestions will be logged as a record of feedback received. We will then undertake a programme of analysis and produce a consultation report. This report will summarise and respond to the feedback received and will be made available to the public.

The feedback provided through the consultation will feed into the design process and be considered alongside other key factors.

Next steps

Timeline

Objective fulfilment

The design must fulfil the objectives of the scheme.

2 Cost/benefit

The cost of the project must be covered by the agreed budget and available funding. It must also show sufficient benefits in relation to its cost.



3 Environmental considerations

The design must adhere to protecting the local environment as much as possible, avoiding environmental showstoppers. It should try to mitigate as much as possible any adverse effect on noise, air quality and local residents.

5 Stakeholder feedback

The feedback from consultation is one part of the process. It is important that we listen to stakeholders' views and feedback about the scheme while it is in design to ensure we can make improvements based on comments where feasible.

4 Cost/benefit

The project must work within the budget set and funding available and must show sufficient benefits in relation to this cost.

June 23	August 23	Autumn 23	Spring 25	2027
Consultation	Consultation report	Promoter's response	Construction begins	Scheme in operation

Survey

Intro / Demographics

Please provide the following information Full Name	2.	Please tick this box if you are happy to be contacted about the St Botolph's Circus project in the future.		5.	If you are responding on behalf of a business or organisation, please tick this box to confirm you have permission to do so.	
	3.	Which of the following best describes y	ou?			
		Someone who lives in the Colchester		6.	If you are under the age of 18, please tick this box to confirm you have	
Postcode		Someone who works in Colchester			parental consent to respond to this consultation and for your data to be	
		Someone who visits Colchester			used for the purposes outlined.	
Email Address		If you are responding on behalf of a bus or organisation, what is the name of tha business or organisation?				

В	ehaviour	ę	What is the purpose of your mos journey through St Botolph's Cir		
7.	Please tick this box if you travel through the St Botolph's Circus junction		Accompanying children (excluding to/from school)	Strongly agree	
8.	8. If yes, how often do you travel through the	ıe	Business travel	Agree	
	junction?		Grocery shopping	Neutral	
	Everyday		Healthcare (including pharmacy)	Disagree	
	1-3 days		Leisure	Strongly disagree	
	4-6 days		School run		
	Fortnightly		Shopping	11. To what extent do you agree the proposals will encourage more people to walk, cycle or use public transport through this area?	
	Monthly		Travel into the city centre	Strongly agree	
			Travel to/from work	Agree	
			Travel to/from college university or other form of adult education	Neutral	
			Visiting family or friends	Disagree	
			Other	Strongly disagree	
			Not applicable		

Scheme Proposals
12. To what extent do you support the proposed layout option?
•
Strongly support
Support
Neutral
Oppose
Strongly oppose
13. To what extent do you agree that improving the transport interchange at St Botolph's Circus is important?
Strongly agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree

Strongly disagree

Scheme Objectives

15. To what extent do you agree that the proposals for St Botolph's Circus will

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Create a good quality urban realm and gateway to the city centre					
Develop an improved, safer environment for everyone.					
Improve connectivity for communities to local and wider transport networks through bus, rapid transit and rail services and walking and cycling routes.					
Ensure an inclusive and accessible area for all					
Reduce anti-social behaviour					
Improve health and wellbeing for Colchester residents					
Improve public realm					
Increase footfall to encourage wider economic growth of the area, provide development opportunities and support local business					

16. Do you have any further comments relating to these objectives

<i>(</i>	

GDPR

All This survey is for you to provide information to be used by the St Botolph's Circus scheme.

Under the GDPR we have a legal duty to protect any information we collect from you. The information will only be used for the purposes of this project and will not be kept longer than is necessary to do so, up to a maximum of five years. We (Essex County Council) will share this information with our partners, Jacobs and Colchester City Council, but we will not share your personal details with any other agency unless we have concerns that you or another individual may be at risk of harm or if it is required by law. We do not collect personal information for commercial purposes.

If you would like to find out more about how www.essex.gov.uk/privacy or call 03457 430 430.

Essex County Council has a Data Protection Officer who makes sure we respect your rights and follow the law. If you have any concerns or questions about how we look after your personal information, please contact the Data Protection Officer at DPO@essex.gov.uk or by calling 03457 430 430 and asking to speak to the Data Protection Officer.

In order to ensure the continued development of our Diversity and Equality practices, everyone that we work with is asked to complete the information below. You are not obliged to answer any of the questions, but the more information you supply, the more effective our monitoring will be. If you choose not to answer questions, it will not affect your participation. The information you supply below is confidential and will be used solely for monitoring purposes.







