

Kepax Bridge Pre-Planning Public Engagement Summary Report

The Kepax Bridge Scheme

The Kepax Bridge Scheme proposes the installation of a cable stayed bridge suitable for use by pedestrians and cyclists between the former landfill site off Hallow Road in St John's on the west side of the River Severn and Gheluvelt Park to the east. The project also includes improving walking and cycling links to and from the proposed bridge location. The scheme is sponsored by Worcestershire County Council and Worcester City Council and aims to improve connectivity for utilitarian journeys to places of work, education and retail areas as well as providing new leisure and recreation opportunities. More information about the scheme can be found on Worcestershire County Council's website <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/kepaxbridge>

The Pre-Planning Public Engagement Exercise

The County Council is in the process of preparing a Planning Application for the bridge. There will be a statutory consultation exercise undertaken as part of this process, however, the County Council carried out a Pre-Planning Public Engagement Exercise to help inform the formal application and to gauge public opinion.

The Engagement Exercise formally ran between 17th June and 24th July. It was promoted in print media, on social media and on the County Council website and letters were delivered to residential properties in the immediate vicinity of the proposed bridge location. Participants were provided with information about the proposed scheme and were invited to email their comments to the County Council's Major Projects Team. In addition to this, four public engagement "drop-in" sessions were held; two outside Tesco Express in Martley Road, one on 20th and another on 21st July and two in Gheluvelt Park on 23rd July. Around 160 people attended the events and were encouraged to email their comments to the Major Projects Team.

Summary of responses

275 email responses were received. Of these, 218 expressed support for the scheme, 24 expressed opposition and a further 33 did not expressly support or oppose the proposed scheme but made comments.

The type of comments was broadly as follows:

Comment	Number
Concerns that the bridge might exacerbate/cause parking problems.	38
It is important that walking and cycling links to and from the bridge are improved.	33
Concerns about potential impact on the environment/wildlife.	26
Concerns about anti-social behaviour/security.	24
The money should be spent on something else.	24

Comments on the design of the bridge	12
Other comments referenced the need for litter/dog waste bins, concern re “overlooking”, observations re flood risk, design and suggestions that there is insufficient demand for another footbridge. There were further miscellaneous comments.	No more than 5 people submitted comments for each of this type.

What happens next?

The comments received during the Engagement Exercise will help inform the formal planning application as will comments from statutory consultees. Members of the public will have further opportunities to comment on the scheme as part of the formal planning application process. Information on the website has been updated in line with most of the comments made during the Exercise can be found at: <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/kepaxbridge>

30th July 2020