

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **TOWN FUND Train Station to Town Centre and the Smart & Connected Corby**

**1. Who will pay for this project?**

This project is part of the Government's Town Fund initiative to increase the economic potential of over 100 towns across the UK through local projects. Corby was successfully awarded £19.9m for four projects. Two of these four projects are the Train Station to Town Centre and Smart & Connected Corby.

**2. What else can this money be spent on?**

This fund can only be spent on the four projects originally selected, which were approved by the Government for the £19.9m and no other projects.

**3. What is the scope of this project?**

Corby Station Links – aims to improve the public realm and provide an attractive and safe pedestrian/cycle connections between the town centre, Tresham College and the train station along the southern route of Oakley Road. It will connect the station with the newly opened Sixth Form College and the Multi-use building projects and will contribute to the active healthy travel agenda by reducing congestion and emissions across Corby.

Smart and Connected Corby – This project seeks to establish Corby as a smart and green town centre through harnessing connected and clean technologies. Using the latest technology the highway authority will be able to monitor flows of pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, shoppers, and visitors providing anonymously gathered data to understand the present and predict future trends.

**4. How can I find out the progress of this project?**

The Towns Fund website will be updated to inform the public of progress at different stages. The following link will open a new page [Home - Corby Towns Fund](#). A quarterly newsletter will also be produced and posted on this website.

**5. Active travel – what does it mean and how important it is? How will it benefit me and those with mobility issues?**

The phrase Active Travel refers to taking journeys in a physical way such as walking, cycling or scootering – for work or leisure. Work done around Active Travel seeks to make these journeys easier, safer, more convenient, and appealing. By helping to make the switch to different methods of Active Travel, it will have a positive impact on physical and mental health, traffic congestion, air pollution levels, productivity, and the economy. This will have a direct and positive contribution to the quality of life within our communities. Active Travel is not just for the benefit of 'cyclists' or 'pedestrians'. The vast majority of those who cycle and walk also drive, and a fair percentage of those who drive will walk or cycle as well. There are numerous benefits to increased levels of Active Travel, with the most immediate one for those who depend on motorised vehicles being the reduction in the demand for finite road space, therefore a reduction in congestion. Pedestrians and cyclists take up far less space than cars, allowing the movement of a far greater number of people through a commuter route if they choose to travel on foot or by bicycle, resulting in less congestion and more reliable journey times for everyone. The development of Active Travel infrastructure will provide safer routes also for wheelchair users, those who use mobility aids or adapted bikes, runners, or parents with pushchairs, buggies and toddlers.

**6. Why have the plans changed from original concept?**

In September 2022, North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) asked members of the public and key stakeholders to share their comments on the proposed plans for pedestrian and cycle routes between Corby town centre and the train station. All comments that were received during this period were reviewed, analysed and helped shape the final designs. Throughout the engagement, some common themes were identified, grouped together and some changes were made. Please follow link to the 'You said we did' piece of work detailing the main changes, [You said, we did... Corby Station Link route - Corby Towns Fund](#).

**7. When will the projects be completed?**

Smart & Connected Corby - works will take place between Winter/Spring 2024 and Spring/Summer 2024.

Train Station to Town Centre link road - works will take place between winter/spring 2024 and spring 2025. We aim to have both projects completed in early 2025.

**8. What further engagement/consultation is planned?**

A public consultation is planned between 1st November and 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2023, the collation and analysis of these comments will continue through until January 2024. For more information please visit the website, this link will open a new page [Home - Corby Towns Fund](#).

**9. What Traffic Management can we expect and when?**

There will be a combination of full road closures with diversions, lane closures and temporary traffic signals. All planned road closures or reduction in road use will be detailed on the Corby Town Fund website and on the Governments road works website [one.network](#). Most of the construction works will be conducted during daytime working hours due to close proximity to residential houses from the project areas. There will be a minimal number of night-time works, but they are critical to avoid congestion. We will also work with the local bus operator, Stagecoach to minimise disruption to bus services in this area.

**10. Why does the underpass need to be closed?**

The underpass area has a history of anti-social behaviour (ASB). This closure will result in a reduction of ASB in this area. In addition, the use of cycles in this location riding downhill on these ramps increases the risk of incidents involving pedestrians, people with buggies, toddlers and wheelchair users. Filling in this area and creating a pedestrian footway at the same level as the road (Oakley Road) will make this area safer and more inclusive for people using wheelchairs, buggies or mobility aids as they will not have a steep gradient to use this pathway.

**11. Will trees need to be moved or cut down in this project?**

Any trees which may need to be removed or trimmed back will be kept to a minimum to allow the footways/cycleways to be improved/widened. Every tree that is removed will either be replanted, relocated, or replaced with new trees in the project area where space allows. Further assessment will take place to identify the number of trees which could be affected by the works, including any trees, which would need to be removed as part of the regular maintenance works, such as trees in poor health or dying. Our aim will be to visually enhance the area and compensate any potential loss of the vegetation and trees within the scheme extents.

**12. Why will we lose parking spaces?**

Three parking spaces along the lower end of Elizabeth Street will be removed to accommodate the new pedestrian crossing. These spaces are short stay parking for 30 minutes with no return in 3 hours. There is residential parking adjacent to these bays for residential housing in this area. There will be no other parking spots affected along the full project length. There are various short stay parking spaces along Elizabeth Street and substantial paid parking providing ample parking in the town centre. No changes or alterations to the parking on Oakley Road near East Avenue are expected.

**13. Why put up sensors on a road that is shortly under construction?**

The information gathered by these sensors will give valuable information before, during and after the construction along Oakley Road to show the changes over time along this stretch of road.

**14. Why is it necessary to add cycle lanes when there is a shared path at present?**

The shared path is in need of repair and upgrading to current UK highway design standards and good practice. The new design for this scheme meets the upgraded standards along the majority of this route wherever the highway boundary and street features allow.

**15. Who will maintain the road once constructed?**

Kier on behalf of North Northamptonshire Council will maintain this area.

**16. Who will make sure this new road is not dug up by utility companies once constructed?**

All the utility companies who own assets within the area of the works will be contacted and informed about the planned works. An embargo (ban) will be put in place to ensure this area is not dug up for a period of 3 years (except in emergency situations). The Street works team will monitor this closely and if any of the statutory undertakers breach this condition, they will enforce a substantial penalty fine through the Authority.

**17. This road is not lit well or has sufficient CCTV, will you make this safer?**

Both CCTV and improving lighting along this route is included in this projects scope. Anti-social behaviour will also be reviewed in areas along this road such as the filling of the underpass with updated crossings to make the area safer for pedestrians and cyclists.

**18. This is a busy road, how can I safely cross?**

Several of the crossing points will be improved and some new crossing points will be added to assist in the safety of active travel users along this route. There will be new crossings in Elizabeth Street and additional pedestrian phase at the traffic signal crossing across St Mark's Street.

**19. The tunnel under the train line is narrow, how can this accommodate a cycle path as well as pedestrians?**

These works are not part of this project therefore the approaches to the tunnels and the tunnels themselves will stay as unsegregated facility where non-motorised users share the space, where none of the groups have priority over the others. Consideration will be given to introduce cycle dismount signs in both tunnels. The possibility of undertaking works to widen the railway tunnels was explored and was considered too complex. These works would not be feasible to implement as it would disrupt train operation which would meet objection from Network Rail and rail customers. This change to the plan would require further significant funding which would be

difficult to attain due to this addition indicating the costs would outweigh the benefits, therefore showing the project would not deliver value for money.

**20. Why are the steps to the train station not being made accessible?**

Extensive modelling has been conducted to find an accessible alternative to these steps. The findings of this study show this would be an exceptionally long and winding path to keep the slope at the gradient comfortable and safe for the wheelchair users, electric wheelchairs, cyclists, scooters, or people with prams. The area is covered with different utilities which would require diversion and the works would involve extensive retaining structures. For these reasons and due to the excessive cost of these works it has therefore been identified that it is not a viable alternative to replace the steps.

**21. Will station road be included in these new cycle and pathways?**

Yes, Station Road up to the train station will be included in this project. Some footway widening and street lighting works are to be undertaken there.

**22. Will the path on the Tresham college side be updated?**

Yes, the pedestrian path on the opposite side will also be improved.

**23. The speed of cars on Oakley Road are too fast, will this be reduced?**

Traffic speeds have been reviewed and there will not be a change to the speed limits along Oakley Road. However, traffic calming measures are proposed on Elizabeth Street to maintain good adherence to the 30mph speed limit. Local traffic policing unit will be also consulted to enhance the monitoring of the vehicle speeds and enforce compliance.

**24. Will bikes still be allowed to go on the road or will they be made to use the cycle path?**

Throughout the scheme, the proposals are to introduce a mixture of segregated and un-segregated shared walking & cycling facilities. This will be achieved through widening works or upgrading the existing. New signage and road markings will be introduced. This will be accompanied by improvements to the road surface and street lighting system. The cycle paths will be available for all cyclists to use and will be safer especially for children, but it is up to the individual to choose which they prefer to use however it is not recommended to use Oakley Road due to high volume of traffic and 40mph speed limit there.

**25. How will the cars, cyclists and pedestrians be segregated?**

The cycleway and footway will be segregated using raised road markings, signage, bollards and appropriate tactile paving. The new cycle and pedestrian facility will be located remotely from the carriageway.