

St Ives Greenway- Full Business Case

Report to: Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board

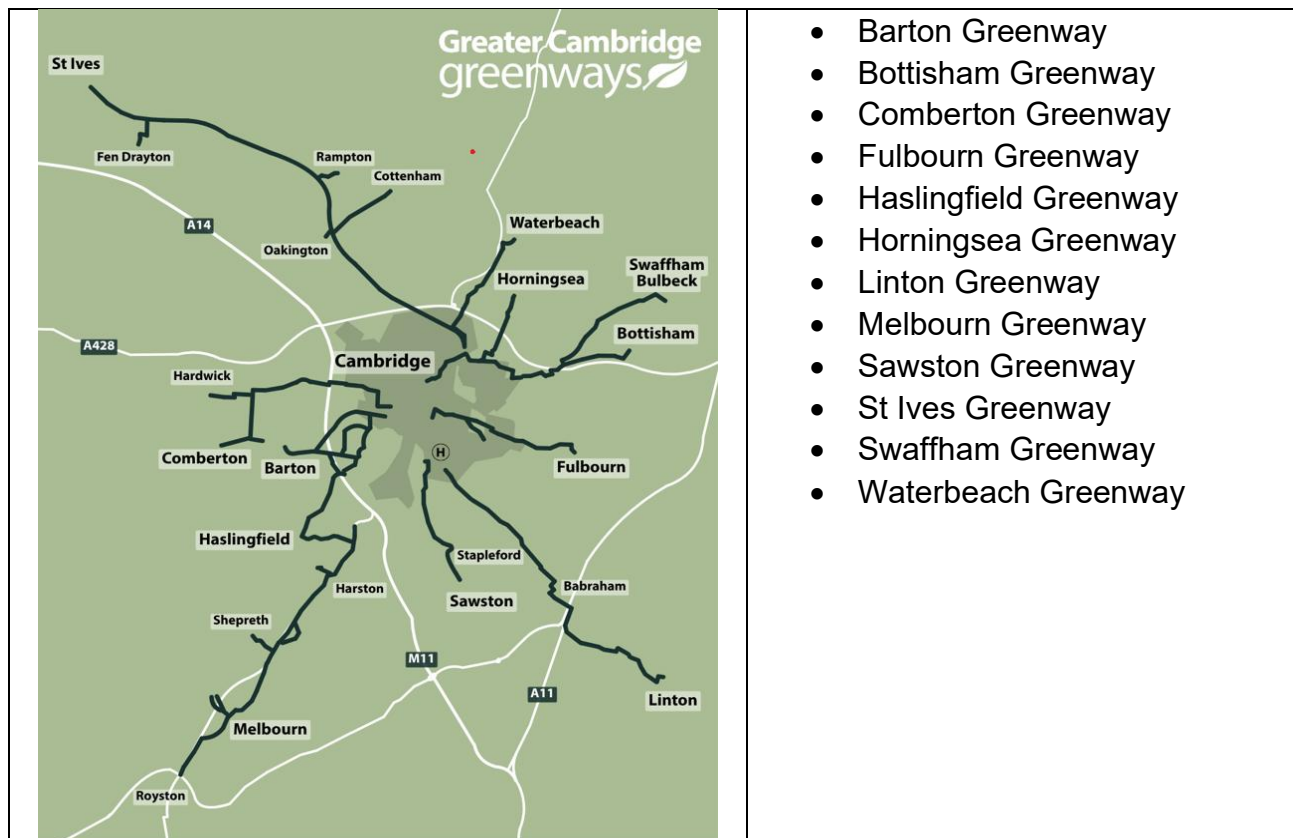
Date: 9 July 2026

Lead Officer: Thomas Fitzpatrick, Programme Director - Transport

1. Background

- 1.1 The creation of an extensive 150km network of Greenways is part of a strategy to encourage people to walk, wheel and cycle into Cambridge and to better connect local areas (some of which are rural). The focus of the Greenways is not only to improve connectivity, but to help reduce traffic congestion and contribute towards improved air quality and better public health.
- 1.2 Greenways are sustainable travel corridors which are intended to make walking, wheeling and cycling in Greater Cambridge both safer and easier for people of all ages. The work focuses on the improvement of existing corridors and the development of new corridors throughout Cambridge, East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire.
- 1.3 The Greenways network has the potential to significantly increase access to a range of sites, including planned housing and employment developments at Babraham Research Campus, Cambridge Biomedical Campus, Cambridge Northern Fringe, Cambridge Southern Fringe, Cambridge Science Park, Granta Park, Wellcome Trust Genome Campus, Waterbeach New Town, and West Cambridge. The Greenways will also unlock new land areas for development and create attractive areas for future investment.
- 1.4 There are a total of 12 Greenway routes being developed, as shown in the network map in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Greenways Network



- 1.5 This paper recommends the Executive Board agree the Full Business Case for the Oakington to Cottenham and Fen Drayton spurs of the existing St Ives Greenway. Agreement of the Full Business Case will enable officers to move to construction of the Oakington to Cottenham and Fen Drayton spurs, subject to gaining permitted development rights and landowner agreements.
- 1.6 Concept work and consultation on the Greenway alignments concluded with Executive Board decisions throughout 2020 to release funding. The Outline Business Case (OBC) for the Oakington to Cottenham and Fen Drayton spurs of the St Ives Greenway was approved by the Executive Board on 29 June 2023 (the paper is available [here](#)).
- 1.7 The existing St Ives Greenway route is shown in *Figure 2*. St Ives is located 22km north-west of Cambridge and, in contrast to other Greenway routes, is already served by the shared use path (maintenance track) running parallel to the Cambridgeshire Guided Busway. The focus of the proposals for the St Ives Greenway is to provide spurs (shown in light green in *Figure 2*) that better link the Greenway to adjacent villages. The Rampton spur has already been completed. The Oakington to Cottenham and Fen Drayton spur proposals are included in the Full Business Case. *Figure 3* shows the Oakington to Cottenham spur, and *Figure 4* shows the Fen Drayton spur.

Figure 2: St Ives Greenway Route



Figure 3: Oakington to Cottenham Spur



Key

- Main Greenway
- Proposed Bridleway
- Proposed Byway
- Potential
- Experimental Traffic Regulation Order

The map displays the Fen Drayton Lakes area, including Fen Drayton Primary School, Swavesey Castle Hill, and Swavesey Primary School. A zoomed-in view of the Fen Drayton Lakes area is shown in the bottom right corner.

- ## 2. Recommendations

- a) Agree the Full Business Case for the St Ives Greenway spurs, with the recommended scope changes for the Fen Drayton spur.
- b) Agree to delegate authority to the Service Director of the Greater Cambridge Partnership to enter into the required construction contracts to build the schemes.

3. Joint Assembly Feedback

- 3.1. Members supported the recommendations to deliver the project and agree the Full Business Case.
- 3.2. Members raised safety issues around illegal access of motorbikes and cars to Greenways. Officers confirmed that they are working with CCC colleagues to look at access controls that can be implemented but acknowledged that it is difficult to prevent completely. There is an ongoing trial of access controls on the Mere Way, officers will be looking at the results of this trial and implementing solutions, as appropriate, on the Greenways.

4. Issues for Discussion

- 4.1 GCP officers have worked closely with the affected landowners along the Oakington to Cottenham and Fen Drayton spurs of the St Ives Greenway route to modify the designs to alleviate their concerns. Conversations are ongoing with landowners to agree land acquisition.
- 4.2 Design consultants have been engaged to assist with gaining permitted development rights for the Oakington to Cottenham route. A Certificate of Lawfulness is currently being sought from the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service and Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC).

Changes to scheme definition since Outline Business Case

Over Link

- 4.3 Following a public consultation carried out in early 2023, and the Executive Board endorsement of the OBC in June 2023, it was agreed at the 28 September 2023 Executive Board Meeting ([papers are available here](#)) that the Over Spur, which provides a link between Over and the Guided Busway, would be paused. This was due to concerns raised by GCP and CCC officers around safety related to increased usage/crossing the Busway. It is proposed that no further work is done on this through the GCP programme and any improvements should be considered in the long term in partnership with the county council.

Fen Drayton Link

- 4.4 Since agreement of the OBC, further consideration has been given to the resurfacing of the Fen Drayton spur, which is an existing link between Fen Drayton and the Guided Busway along Holywell Ferry Road (as set out in Appendix B). As the route has issues with flooding in certain sections, due to its location in wetland areas, it has been discussed with Fen Drayton Parish Council that the scheme should be revised. The flood map and images of this flooding are below:



- 4.5 Given ongoing concerns raised by local residents and the parish council about the speed and number of vehicles using Holywell Ferry Road, it was proposed that a solution could be delivered to discourage improper use of the route through an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) and implementation of drop-down bollards.
- 4.6 Fen Drayton Parish Council would like to undertake a consultation with residents to understand whether an ETRO would be acceptable. The ETRO is a way of testing the impact of a road intervention (such as a closure) and is only made permanent after it has been in place for 18 months and is deemed acceptable by residents. Subject to the outcome of the consultation held by the Parish Council, GCP officers would then ask the Executive Board for permission to deliver the ETRO.

Full Business Case

- 4.7 The delivery of the St Ives Greenway spurs will enhance the existing active travel corridor between St Ives and Cambridge by reaching more villages. The spurs will provide improved links to Fen Drayton, Oakington and Cottenham, and will provide a direct connection with Cambridge City and key employment areas such as Cambridge North and Northstowe.
- 4.8 New links, such as the Oakington to Cottenham spur, will strengthen local and regional connectivity by providing greater access between villages and to major employment clusters and public transport hubs. It will also provide local

enhancement opportunities through the provision of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and Green and Blue Infrastructure.

- 4.9 The Full Business Case for the St Ives Greenway identifies three key benefits of the scheme, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Benefits of St Ives Greenway Spurs

Benefit	Description
Health	Improved pedestrian and cycle connectivity and mode shift from car to active travel will result in an increase in physical activity.
Safety	The creation of a segregated cycle path, new traffic calming measures and improved crossings, and lighting will result in safer journeys for active travel users.
Improved connectivity and accessibility	Improved connectivity to settlements including Oakington and Cottenham will reduce severance between communities and the wider Cambridgeshire area. Accessibility will be improved for those along the corridor to key employment hubs and the city centre.

- 4.10 The economic appraisal for the St Ives Greenway spurs produces a Benefit Cost Ratio of 1.48:1. This shows that for every £1 of investment, the St Ives Greenway delivers approximately 150% return.
- 4.11 The main benefits of the St Ives Greenway are associated with increased physical activity as people switch to active modes of travel which also results in reduced absenteeism and road traffic collisions. Other scheme benefits include improved journey quality, accessibility, air quality and personal affordability.
- 4.12 Delivery of the St Ives Greenway spurs is key in supporting national, regional, and local strategic priorities.

The Full Business Case for the St Ives Greenway spurs can be found in Appendix A [here](#).

Construction

- 2.13 The contractor for construction of the St Ives Greenway will be procured via the Eastern Highways Alliance Framework.

5. Consultation and Engagement

- 5.1 In 2020, engagement on each link of the St Ives Greenway was undertaken and led to the development of the original proposals. This included discussions with parish councils, landowners and stakeholders and was presented to the Executive Board in June 2020 (the paper is available [here](#)).
- 5.2 Between February and March 2023, the GCP held a further extensive consultation on the St Ives Greenway route. The results of the consultation were reported to the Executive Board in June 2023 and a 'You said, we did' report was produced to respond to consultation responses.

- 5.3 Throughout all stages of the project, the designs have been shared with numerous stakeholders, such as residents, parish councils, council officers and ward members; and groups through forums such as the Non-motorised User Group. The alignment through third party land has been thoroughly discussed and the design altered to the landowners' specific requirements (i.e. inclusion of fencing, preservation of trees and natural environment and improved visibility at accesses).
- 5.4 Further engagement with stakeholders will take place as part of the Change of Surface Application through the County Council Public Right of Way process.

6. Options and Emerging Recommendations

6.1 The Executive Board is recommended to:

- (a) Agree the Full Business Case for the St Ives Greenway spurs, with the recommended scope changes for the Fen Drayton spur.
- (b) Agree to delegate authority to the Service Director of the Greater Cambridge Partnership to enter into the required construction contracts to build the schemes.

7. Alignment with City Deal Objectives

7.1 The Greenways network will:

- Contribute to securing the continued economic success of the area through improved access and connectivity;
- Contribute to improvements to air quality and enhancements to active travel, supporting a healthier population;
- Contribute to reducing carbon emissions in line with the partners' zero carbon commitments;
- Helping to address social inequalities where poor provision of transport is a contributing factor; and
- Wellbeing and productivity benefits from improving people's journeys to and from employment.

8. Citizens' Assembly

8.1 The Citizens' Assembly members developed and prioritised their vision for transport in Greater Cambridge. The proposals have the potential to complement delivery of the some of the highest scoring priorities:

- Be people centred – prioritising pedestrians and cyclists;
- Enabled interconnection (e.g. north/south/east/west/urban/rural);
- Restrict the city centre to only clean and electric vehicles; and
- Environmental and zero carbon transport.

8.2 The Citizens' Assembly voted on a series of measures to reduce congestion, improve air quality and public transport. The Greenways network will facilitate active travel as

a sustainable transport option for commuting to employment sites and in doing so improve air quality.

- 8.3 The report and recommendations can be found via this link: [Citizens Assembly Report](#).

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 The budget for the St Ives Greenway spurs is set at £6.7m and no further funding is requested.

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance? Yes
Name of Financial Officer: Rebecca Bertram

10. Next Steps and Milestones

- 10.1 Subject to approval by the Executive Board, officers will take forward the full construction of the St Ives Greenway spurs, subject to land acquisition and planning.
- 10.2 The GCP project team will progress with the negotiations for third-party land access and rights. It is anticipated that most of the construction work will take place in 2027.
- 10.3 It is recognised that there is a potential for the term of the construction contracts to extend beyond April 2028 and therefore beyond the timetable for Local Government Reorganisation. Officers have considered this and determine construction to be necessary to secure best value for money both now and in the future. As part of a procurement process suppliers will be notified of impending LGR and be asked to adapt their bids accordingly in anticipation of novation to new unitary councils. Additionally, all contracts that are anticipated to extend beyond April 2028 contain provisions to take into account novation, alteration or cessation of the service to ensure flexibility and a successful transition. The City Deal funding and delivery programme extends beyond this period and the expectation is that delivery will continue in line with currently agreed plans

List of Appendices

Appendix A	St Ives Greenway Full Business Case
Appendix B	Drawings showing the Oakington to Cottenham Scheme Appendix B St Ives Greenway GA

Background Papers

Source Documents	Location
February 2020 Executive Board	Council and committee meetings - Cambridgeshire County Council > Meetings (cmis.uk.com)
June 2020 Executive Board	Council and committee meetings - Cambridgeshire County Council > Meetings (cmis.uk.com)
September 2022 Executive Board	Council and committee meetings - Cambridgeshire County Council > Meetings (cmis.uk.com)
December 2022 Executive Board	Council and committee meetings - Cambridgeshire County Council > Meetings (cmis.uk.com)
March 2023 Executive Board	Council and committee meetings - Cambridgeshire County Council > Meetings (cmis.uk.com)
June 2023 Executive Board	Council and committee meetings - Cambridgeshire County Council > Meetings (cmis.uk.com)
Jan 2024 Executive Board	Council and committee meetings - Cambridgeshire County Council > Meetings (cmis.uk.com)
Mar 2024 Executive Board	Council and committee meetings - Cambridgeshire County Council > Meetings Calendar
Nov 2024 Executive Board	Council and committee meetings - Cambridgeshire County Council > Meetings Calendar