Portsmouth CITY COUNCIL

Title of meeting:	Traffic and Transportation
Date of meeting:	Thursday 2nd December 2021
Subject:	Active Travel Improvements
Report by:	Assistant Director for Transport
Wards affected:	St Thomas and Charles Dickens
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to obtain approval for the Active Travel Improvements (ATI) budget detailed in Appendix A.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation:

2.1 Approves the delivery of the Active Travel Improvements budget detailed in Appendix A to this report, which will be subject to feasibility and final design work.

2.2 Give delegated authority to the Assistant Director for Transport to work with the Cabinet Member for Traffic and Transportation to approve the final designs for each of the Active Travel Improvements.

3. Background

3.1 Portsmouth is geographically ideal for active travel; with its permeable road network, flat topography, high population density and temperate weather. However, rates of active travel in Portsmouth are lower than similar cities. Residents cite safety and convenience as major barriers to active travel. This was revealed during the 2020 lockdown, when active travel modes more than doubled as motor traffic suddenly declined[1]. This demonstrated that making streets quieter and safer can lead to increased levels of active travel.

[1] Portsmouth City Council, Portsmouth Transport Strategy 2021-2038, https://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/documents/s34549/Appendix%20A%20-%20Local%20Transport%20Plan%204%20Transport%20Strategy.pdf

3.2 Furthermore, it has shown that congestion and traffic is not fixed or immutable. Even now, while workplace attendance is down ~36% on pre-pandemic levels, traffic and congestion has only reduced by ~12%[2]. Consequently, the level of congestion in the city is only partially linked to the perceived need to drive to work.

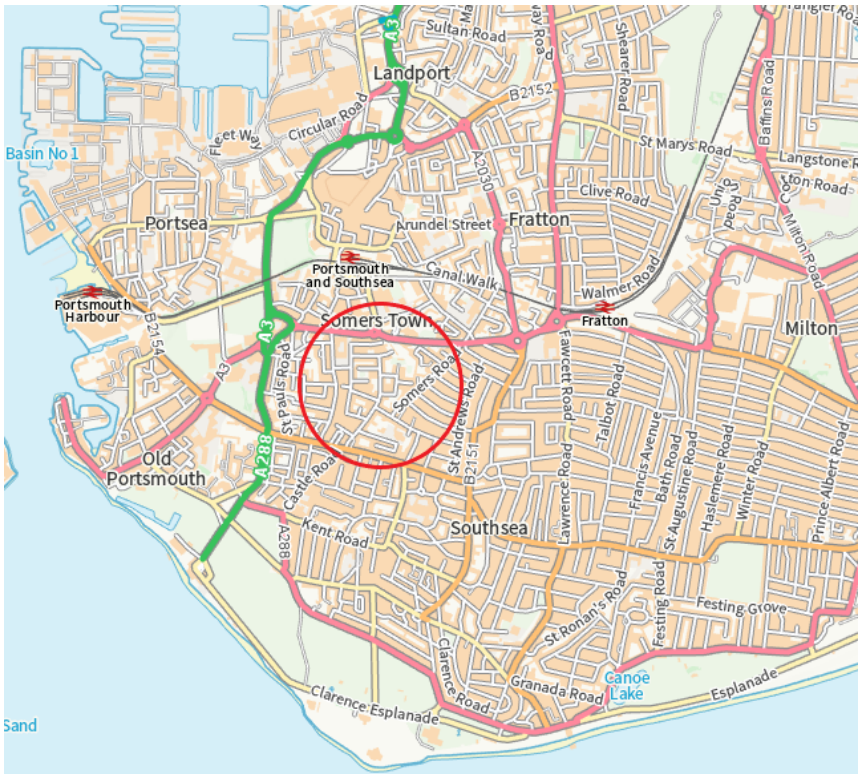
3.3 The ATI budget seeks to unlock some of this latent demand for active travel which was present during the lockdown. While these improvements will have a direct impact on reducing traffic congestion, active travel also addresses many of the Council's strategic objectives[3]. For example, improving active travel routes will help to reduce air pollution, carbon emissions and resident inactivity. This will ultimately make Portsmouth a more pleasant and healthier city to visit, work and live in.

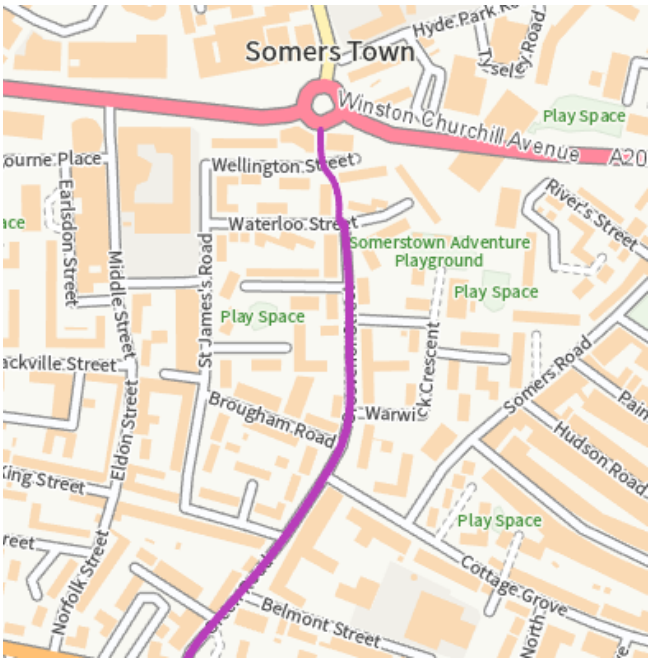
4.0 Active Travel Improvements

4.1 The Active Travel Team have been allocated £100,000 from the Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) 20/21 budget to implement active travel improvements in the city. The team have worked with recommendations from local groups, including the Portsmouth Cycle Forum, and have conducted numerous site visits to identify areas which would benefit from improvements.

4.2 The recommended improvements are primarily located between Isambard Brunel Road and Green Road. This area will directly link to the developing east-west active travel corridor. It is essential that residents living around travel corridors are given good access links. These proposals seek to ensure that residents to the north and south of the corridor can easily and conveniently join and exit the route. The roads and pathways leading to Isambard Brunel roundabout are already frequently used to access the city centre. However, the experience of using the current infrastructure may not feel safe or convenient to all users. Therefore, minor improvements, including creating dropped kerbs and signposting, will be used to enhance this active travel route. Although these improvements focus on a specific area, there is potential to extend the route to other areas of the city, for example to the seafront via Castle Road.

[2] Google, Mobility Report, https://www.gstatic.com/covid19/mobility/2021-10-19_GB_Mobility_Report_en-GB.pdf
TomTom, Daily Congestion Level, https://www.tomtom.com/en_gb/traffic-index/portsmouth-traffic
[3] Civitas, Walking, Cycling and Congestion, http://civitas.eu/sites/default/files/15_quick_facts_eng_final.pdf

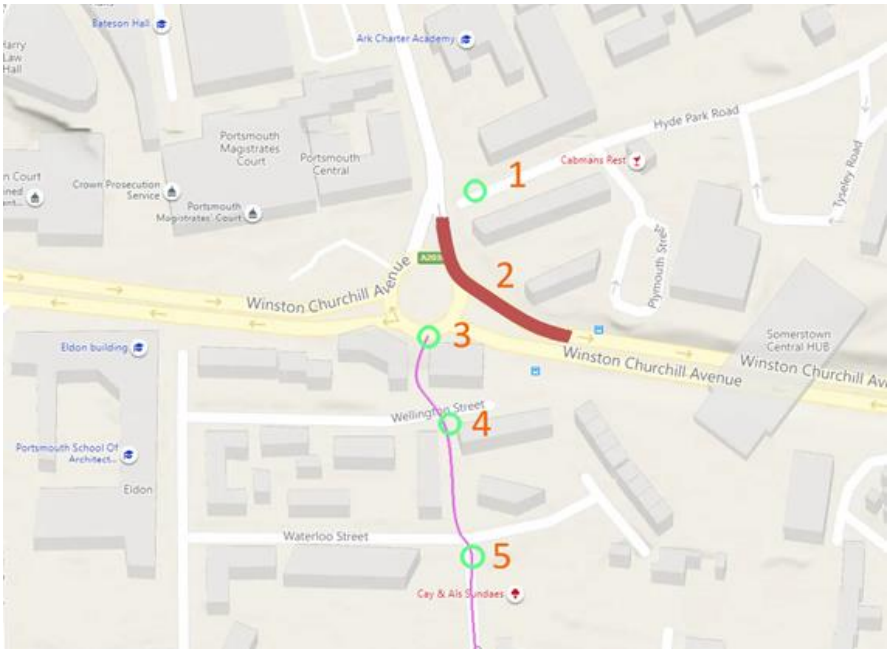




4.3 These improvements will primarily improve access from the south of the city to the east-west active travel corridor and the city centre. This route will be enhanced through five key improvements listed below. Further details on these improvements can be found in appendix A.

4.4 The proposed improvements, in order of priority, are:

1) Install a dropped kerb on Hyde Park Road to allow cyclists to safely join the road from the shared use path.
2) Extend the bus lane and cycle lane on Isambard Brunel Road to form a continuous on-road route for cyclists joining Winston Churchill Avenue.
3) Install a dropped kerb on the Isambard Brunel Road/Winston Churchill Avenue, allowing on-road cyclists to join the shared use path without having to mount the kerb.
4) Install signage and a dropped kerb on Wellington Street to create an accessible transition from Wellington Street to Waterloo Street.
5) Install signage on Grosvenor Street and Green Road to clearly signpost the route.



4.5 Although the improvements are relatively minor in terms of cost and changes to infrastructure, they will significantly benefit the area. This is because most of the route already has low levels of motor traffic. Similarly, local traffic calming measures, like speed cushions, actively calm motor traffic in the area.

4.6 The improvements also compliment several other schemes and city-wide objectives. Respective project teams have collaborated to ensure the design is holistic and consistent with the wider network. This includes connecting the south of the city to the developing east-west active travel corridor and city centre. The route can also be extended in the future to meet the developing active travel needs of residents.

5 Reasons for recommendations

5.1 The key benefits of the suggested active travel improvements will be:

- Making active travel safer, more pleasant and attractive.
- Improving the health and wellbeing of residents by facilitating active travel.
- Reducing traffic congestion, air pollution and carbon emissions.
- Improving connectivity and access across the city for lower-income residents and those that do not have access to a motor vehicle.

5.2 As noted in the Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4), PCC is committed to enabling those who do not currently walk or cycle to make the change towards more active modes of transport. To support this type of modal shift, it is essential that the cycling and walking infrastructure feels pleasant, safe and intuitive to use. Currently, commuters and utility cyclists face multiple stops and delays as they navigate the route. Likewise, the route is not accessible for those using adapted or recumbent cycles. Therefore, the proposed improvements will remove existing hazards and obstacles, and generally make the route more attractive to new and existing users as well as those who are mobility impaired. An alternative, more direct route, will encourage greater utility travel towards the city centre, civic centre, and Southsea.

5.3 One notable delay is caused while crossing the two toucan crossings on Isambard Brunel Road/Winston Churchill Avenue roundabout. Mounting the shared use path and crossing the toucan crossing can add over two minutes to the journey. While the difference in time may seem marginal, the act of stopping and starting is also much more demanding for a cyclist. This is because each stop requires significant energy to get going again, adding the equivalent of 60m-200m to a journey[4].

5.4 As well as the increase in time and inconvenience, the cycle movement directed by the existing measures increases conflict between road users. Firstly, cyclists are directed to leave the carriageway to enter a congested footway (particularly at the start and end of the school day). Conversely, cyclists that remain on the road are competing for space with motor vehicles on Isambard Brunel Road. This is a particular problem for more confident utility cyclists looking to continue south or west from the roundabout. Currently, motorists would not expect a cyclist to take this on-road route. This is because the cycle lane ends on the approach to the roundabout and directs cyclists onto the pavement.

5.5 All these marginal inconveniences add up to make active travel less appealing, and driving more appealing. In turn, this leads to increased driving, congestion, air pollution, carbon emissions and physical inactivity.

5.6 The improvements proposed within the ATI budget will also benefit the city more broadly. Active travel tackles some of the city's key issues and the corporate priorities listed below.

- Make Portsmouth a city that works together, enabling communities to thrive and people to live healthy, safe and independent lives.

[4] Cycling UK, Cycling and Kinetic Energy - Why Riders are Reluctant to Stop, https://www.cyclingnorthwales.uk/campaigning/cycling-kinetic-energy-riders-reluctant-stop/

- Encourage regeneration built around our city's thriving culture, making Portsmouth a great place to live, work and visit.
- Make our city cleaner, safer and greener.
- Make Portsmouth a great place to live, learn and play, so our children and young people are safe, healthy and positive about their futures.
- Make sure our council is a caring, competent and collaborative organisation that puts people at the heart of everything we do.

5.7 This scheme contributes to the following LTP4 Strategic Outcomes:

- Reduced dependence on the private car through increased number of people using public transport and active travel modes i.e. walking and cycling.
- Improved awareness of the different travel options available to people for their journeys, enabling informed choices about whether people travel.
- Improved journey time reliability for all modes.
- Improved road safety within the sub-region.
- Improved accessibility within and beyond the sub-region
- Improved air quality and environment largely through reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Promoting a higher quality of life.

5. Integrated impact assessment

A full integrated impact assessment is included within this report.

6. Legal implications

6.1 The implementation of the improvements recommended in this report is within the powers of the City Council

7. Director of Finance's comments

7.1 The cost of these schemes is £100,000 and will be funded from the 2021/22 Local Transport Plan (LTP) allocation in the approved capital programme.

7.2 The cost will cover design, construction works and a commuted sum associated with the scheme.

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Signed by:

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Full Council 13th October 2021 Local Transport Plan 4 adoption	https://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/documents/s34548/Cabinet%2022%20June%2021%20-%20LTP4%20report.pdf

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by …… on ……

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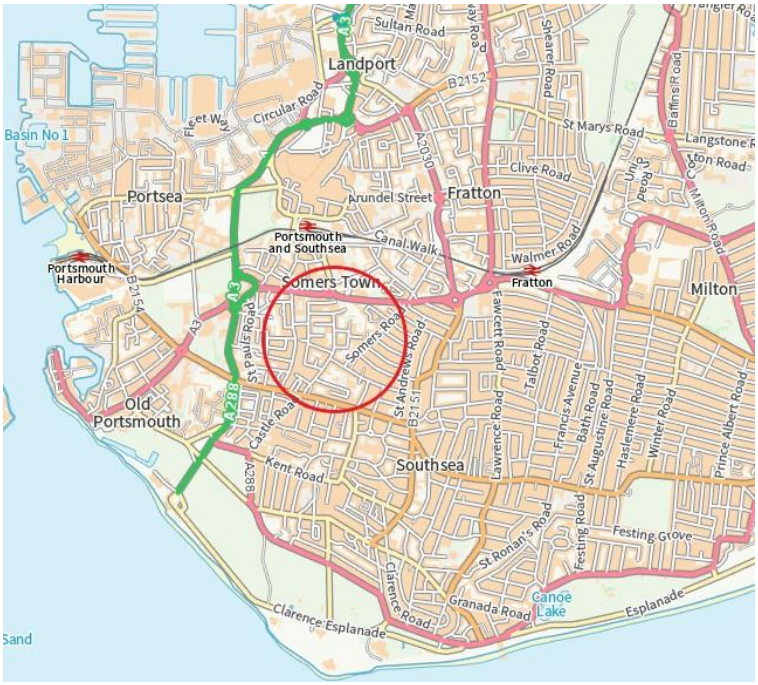
Signed by:

Appendix A:

Active Travel Improvements 2021/2022



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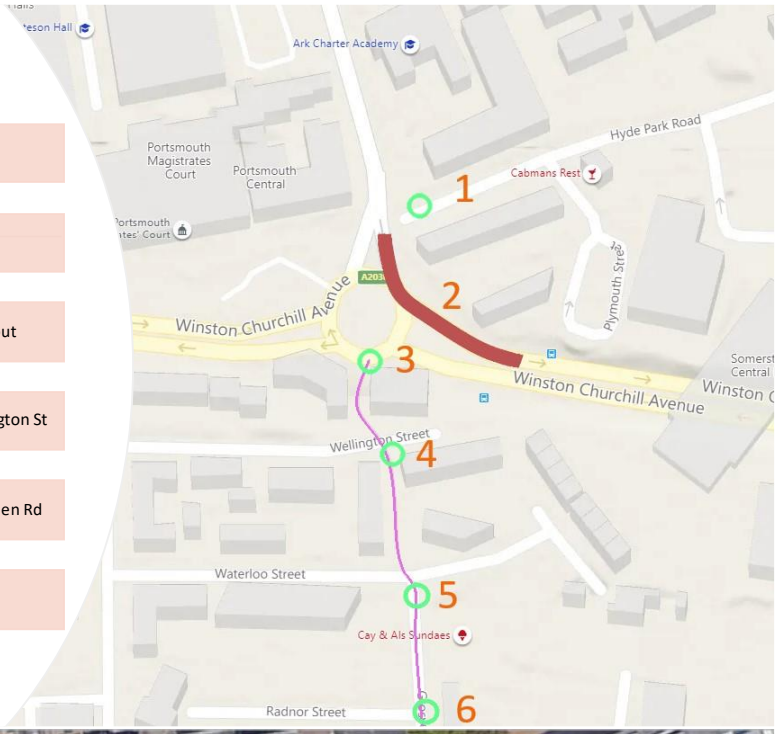
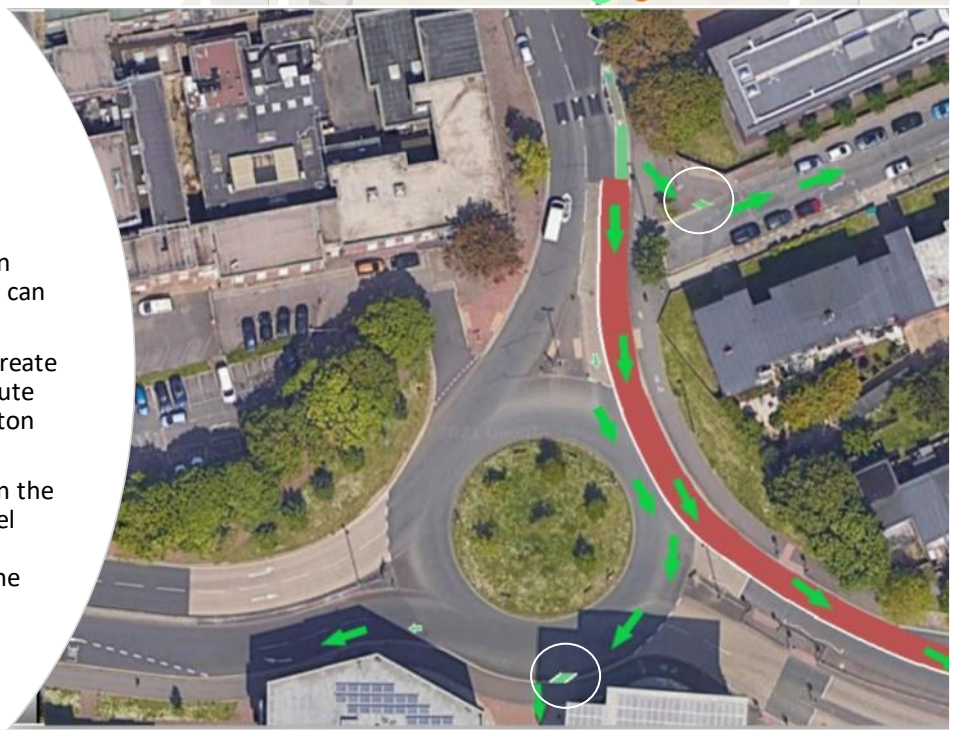
1. Dropped kerb on Hyde Park Rd
2. Extend the bus lane on Isambard Brunel Rd
3. Dropped kerb on Isambard Brunel roundabout
4. Cycling signage and dropped kerb on Wellington St
5. Cycle route signage on Grosvenor St and Green Rd
6. Possibility to extend the route to Castle Rd



Isambard Brunel roundabout improvements

- Install a dropped kerb on Hyde Park Rd so cyclists can safely join the road.
- Extend the bus lane to create a continuous on-road route for cyclists joining Winston Churchill Ave.
- Install a dropped kerb on the south of Isambard Brunel roundabout so on-road cyclists can safely join the shared use path.



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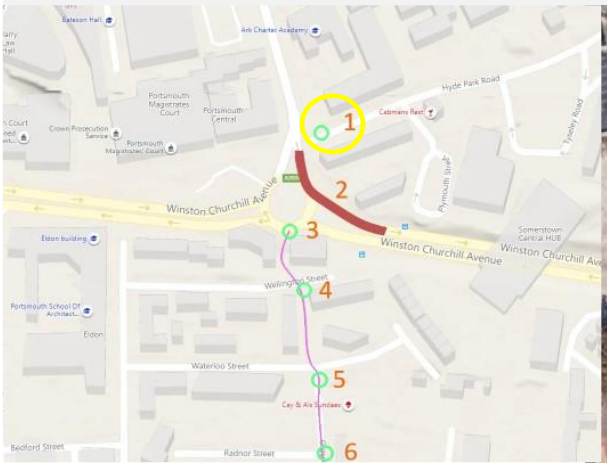
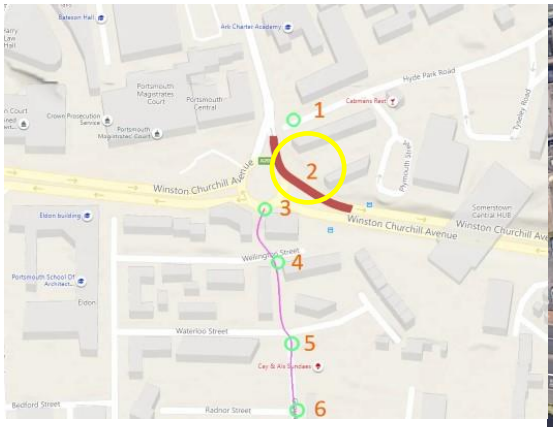
Cycling route from Isambard Brunel roundabout to Green Rd

- Connect Wellington St and Waterloo St by installing a dropped kerb.
- Install additional signage on Grosvenor St and Green Rd to connect the south of the city to the east-west active travel corridor and City Centre.
- Add on-road markings to compliment the existing traffic calming measures, like speed cushions, to ensure the route is safe and pleasant for active travel.

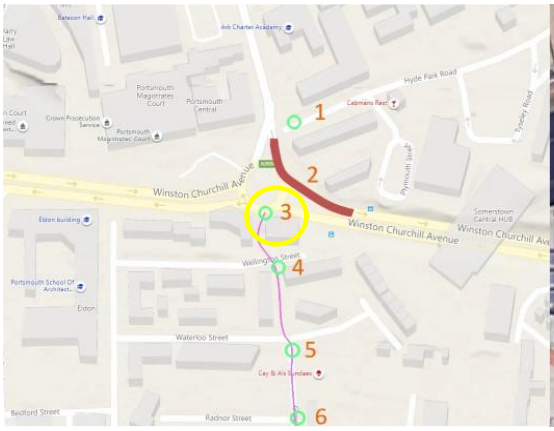
Project	Description	Reasoning
1. Dropped kerb from Isambard Brunel Rd to Hyde Park Rd	Introduce a dropped kerb for cyclists to leave the footway onto Hyde Park Rd.	There is no dropped kerb to take cyclist onto Hyde Park Rd. A cyclist would need to drop down off a full height kerb to reach the carriageway. Increasing risk of injury. Likewise, this route would be inaccessible for those on adapted or recumbent cycles.

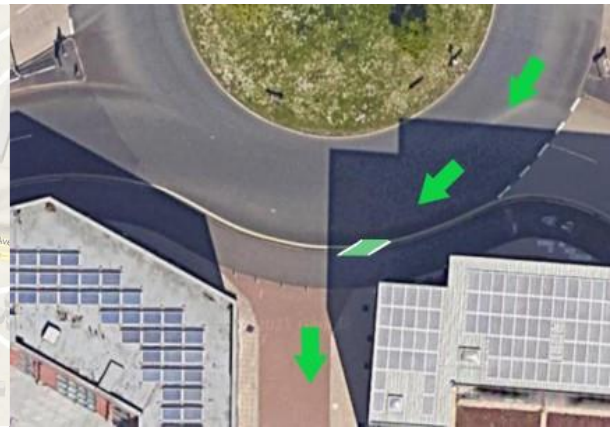


Project	Description	Reasoning
2. Isambard Brunel roundabout bus lane extension	Reintroduce and extend the bus lane from the south of Isambard Brunel Rd turning east onto Winston Churchill Ave.	To allow buses and cyclists to have a continuous route onto Winston Churchill Ave, avoiding conflict between vehicles on the roundabout, and pedestrians on the footway.

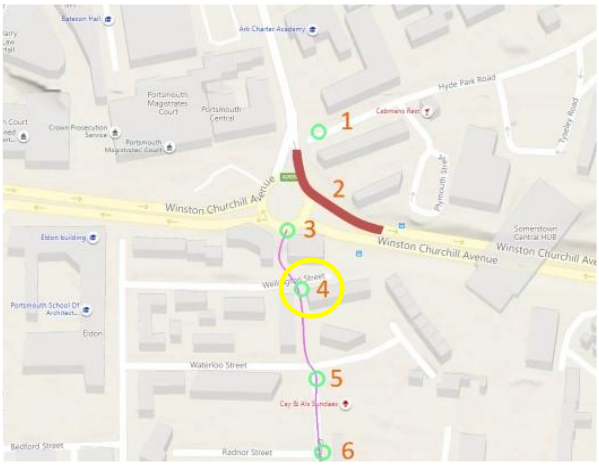


Project	Description	Reasoning
3. Dropped kerb on the southern part of Isambard Brunel roundabout	Introduce a dropped kerb for cyclists to exit the roundabout to head south.	The dropped kerb will allow cyclists to safely join the shared use pavement and join the north-south route through Wellington St, Waterloo St, Grosvenor St, into Green Rd.

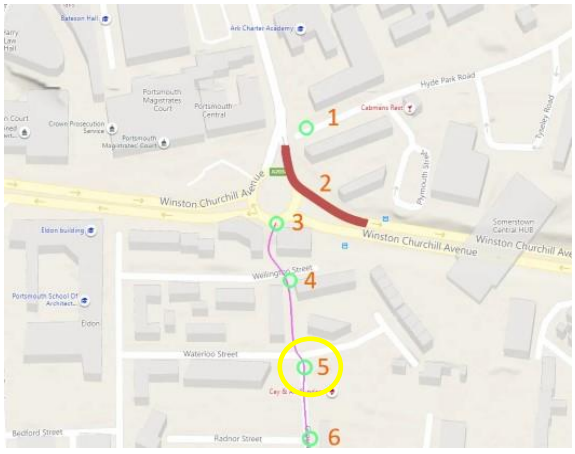


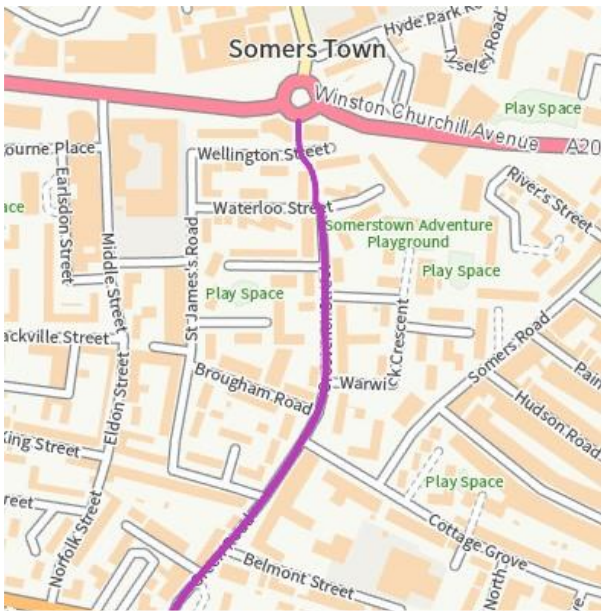


Project	Description	Reasoning
4. Cycling signage and dropped kerb on Wellington St	Install a dropped kerb on Wellington St and further cycle route signage towards Green Rd.	This will create a new route for cyclists to travel from the south of the city to the City Centre and/or join the east-west active travel corridor.

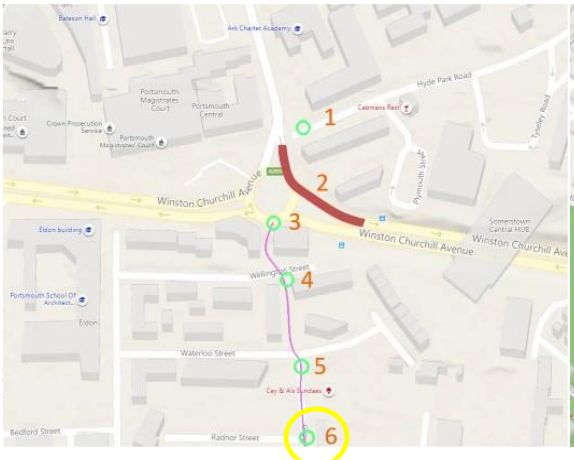


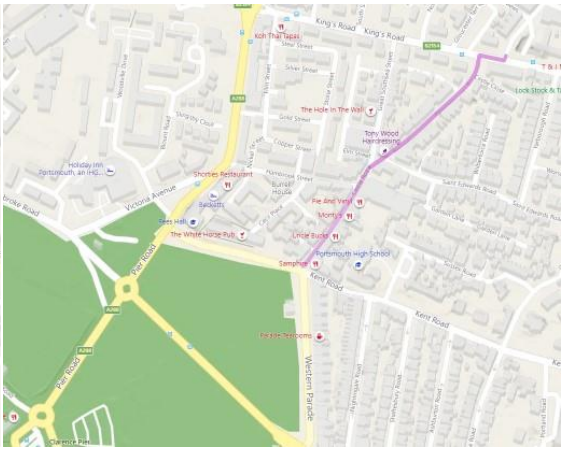
Project	Description	Reasoning
5. Cycle route signage on Grosvenor St and Green Rd	Installing signage to create a cycle route connecting the south of the city to the east-west corridor and the City Centre.	This road has limited motortraffic and actively limits speed through use of speed cushions. It could therefore be used to extend the cycle route with minimal changes to infrastructure.





Project	Description	Reasoning
6. Potential to extend the cycling route from Green Rd to Castle Road and Clarence Pier	Extend the north -south cycle route from Green Rd to Castle Rd and Clarence Pier using signage and minor improvements.	The successful restriction of motor traffic on Castle Rd provides an opportunity to extend the cycle route further south. This could then be further extended to Clarence Pier across the common and Duisburg Way.





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Potential for an extended north-south route

- The successful restriction of motor traffic on Castle Rd provides an opportunity to extend the cycle route further south. This could then be further extended to Clarence Pier across the common and Duisburg Way.
- This extended route will require additional work and may be beyond the scope and budget of the Active Travel Improvements.
- It however demonstrates the potential for our improvements to benefit the wider active travel network.