

NOTES OF BROOKLEIGH DESIGN REVIEW PANEL (30/04/2025)

Panel: Neil Way (Chair), Lap Chan (Vice Chair), Alice-Rose Hoile, Andrew Cameron,

MSDC: Joseph Swift (Senior Planning Officer), Sally Blomfield (Brookleigh Development Manager)

Homes England: Nicholas Milner, Rob Morley

The Western Bridge and Link Road (WBLR) Phase 2:

Description of Scheme

Reserved matters at Brookleigh, for second phase of the Western Bridge and Link Road (WBLR), comprising the construction of a two-lane single carriageway road, with 3m shared surface (cyclist/pedestrian) on the west side of the highway, and a segregated 5m cycleway/footway on the east side. Connecting to the first phase of WBLR at the roundabout junction on the A2300. Provision of Western Bridge, spanning 71m, carrying the highway and cycleway/footway over the River Adur and floodplain, connecting with future phases at the eastern extent. Includes provision of access to future residential areas, signalised crossing points, earthworks, surface water and foul drainage infrastructure, utilities corridors, lighting and landscaping.

Presented to the same DRP Meeting as the application for the Central Section in order to demonstrate synergy between the schemes and so that the proposals for the two road sections can be considered together.

Presenters

Design/Architects: Andrew Burrows

Niltay Satchell

David Vince

Bava Sathan

Graeme Lansell

In attendance

Ward Councillor: Cllr Mustak Miah

The Panel's Comments

The Panel recognised that the Design Team were constrained by highways adoption standards set by WSCC and recognised that the Team had met with WSCC to explore scope of potential changes which could be acceptable.

However, the Panel did not consider that anything had significantly changed about the bridge since the last time this was before the DRP.

The proposal remains car focused, very little had been done on the place making function, with the landscaping areas not being fully developed and feeling more like add on rather than integrated elements, in particular concerns were raised in relation to the bridge.

Overall the panel criticised the proposal.

Bridge

Since the last DRP the proposal has been amended so that it includes a landscaped area, with steps down from the road to the green circle, which provides both the WSCC maintenance zone, while also responding to the buildings within the adjacent development parcels. The bridge pillars have been reduced from 5 cylinder shaped pillars, down to 3 with pill shaped pillars, as well as the addition of fluting to the external concrete elements of the bridge.

The Panel was disappointed with the design of the bridge, it was considered to appear as a very technical solution to provide the crossing. The horizontal lines feel intrusive and alien within the landscape, they do not respond to the natural character of the river and would be more akin to a bridge over a motorway.

Concerns were raised in relation to the width of the bridge, by reducing the width it would allow for a reduction in the supports and serve as a traffic calming measure as it would mean that larger vehicles would need to wait at either end in order to give way, as is common with many other bridges and an example was provided of a new bridge currently under construction in Cornwall.



The panel also had concerns about the intrusive impact the bridge would have on people using the green circle and the long stretching views of this alien structure from the green circle itself. It was recommended that the railings could over sail the bridge or the addition of a secondary feature could be attached to the railings to interrupt the very horizontal appearance and soften the edge of the bridge, possibly allowing it to respond more to the river.

The visualisations from the bridge were misleading as the railings were not shown on the plan.

Parklet

In relation to the parklet area the visualisations do not match the plans; it did not appear to be fully designed; there was no path leading to the seating area which in turn raised questions about accessibility, particularly in relation to the gradient. It was strongly suggested that given the significance of the Parklet to ameliorating the impact of the bridge design, that details should be fully worked up now and not left to a planning condition to be resolved at a later stage.

It was recommended that there should be hard surfacing provided adjacent to the timber seating to improve the longevity of the seating. Due to the level of the planting, views from the parklet down to the river are restricted, this should be reduced to allow for views. Seats should be provided within the parklet itself and details should be provided of steps down to the river.

Highway

The Panel was pleased to see that that the bridleway had been relocated from off the A2300 roundabout and would not be accommodated further up the A2300 as it made the proposal a lot simpler.

The Panel questioned why the white road marking had not been removed, as this actually encourages faster traffic and impacts on design quality. However, the Panel was satisfied that the Design Team had had extensive discussion with WSCC Highways Team about this and acknowledged WSCC Adoption requirements

It was questioned as to why the two bus stops are directly opposite each other and not staggered to allow single file traffic flow if two buses arrived at the same time. However, it was acknowledged that this would be infrequent, would work as a traffic calming measure and was accepted that in order to stagger them it would require significant visibility splays so vehicles would be able to pass a bus safely.

It was again recommended that the radius was removed from the junctions with the main carriageway, creating a Copenhagen Crossing. It was advised that these style junctions should not be used on side roads.

Some concerns were also raised regarding who would have priority at the side junctions as these cross cycle/ped lanes. However, it was acknowledged by other members of the panel that any obstruction would be infrequent and easily negotiated by the majority of cyclists and pedestrians.

The Panel acknowledged WSCC are risk adverse but it was recommended that a workshop be undertaken with WSCC Highways in order to explain what the proposal is trying to achieve from a place making perspective to try and resolve some of the sustained concerns.

Overall Assessment

The Panel had concerns with the proposal, it was not considered enough had be done to address previous concerns and a number of items were lacking details and appeared unresolved.