



## **Letter and FAQs from Bathampton Conker Crossing Trustees, 7<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

We are delighted that through the hard work of our team of design and planning professionals, we have submitted a Full Planning application for the Conker Crossing. Our thanks go to the teams at Format Engineers, LPC Trull, Nicholas Pearson Associates, Hillside Trees and Heritage Planning for making this possible. Also to the individual and business donors that have helped fund this phase.

Please visit the B&NES planning portal to view materials and comment on proposals under the planning ref: [18/04394/FUL](#). Here below is a render of the proposed design, as seen from the existing bridge.



You may notice that there are revisions to the bridge design in response to the public consultation and pre-planning work. In particular the towpath ramp now faces away from the existing bridge and there are steps in place for those who do not need to use the full ramp. We are committed as Trustees to a proposal that is both appropriate to the setting and fundable under current local and/or regional transport policies. We believe this design strikes that balance in this much-loved location and are now asking B&NES to fund the detailed design of this project in the next budget round.

For those who may have more detailed questions, we provide a Q&A on the next page. Or please get in touch.

Best wishes,  
Fiona, Cheryl and Terry  
Bathampton Conker Crossing Volunteer Trustees  
[bathamptonconkercrossing@gmail.com](mailto:bathamptonconkercrossing@gmail.com)  
[Please click to donate - £2500 still to raise for this phase](#)  
[Footage of the issue we're trying to solve](#)

## **Q&A**

### **1. How has the design changed since I saw it at Consultation?**

- The overall design and style of the bridge is the same to ensure it remains sympathetic to the setting. At consultation, 41 responses (67%) wrote that they fully supported the design in the comments box while 9 responses (15%) provided no comments, including on the design.
- In response to pre planning advice from B&NES and Canal & River Trust, we have slightly increased the dimensions of the bridge. The bridge is now 2.7 metres above the towpath (+15cm), 3.1 metres above the canal and for safety reasons given its shared-use, has 2.5 metres of useable space (+30cm).
- These changes extend the length of the ramps to maintain an acceptably low gradient and result in a change of direction for the ramp on the Tynning Lane side. Steps have gone in as a shortcut for those not needing the ramp.

### **2. Why does the bridge have ramps rather than simpler steps?**

- Many families travel across the existing bridge daily pushing buggies and with children on scooters and bikes – they need ramps for safe passage
- We want the bridge to be accessible to users with all mobility levels

### **3. Why is it a shared-use bridge with cyclists and not just a footbridge?**

- It is important to be able to provide ramps for cyclists of all ages – many of the users will be families with children on bikes/scooters
- Bridges are an investment and current focus from B&NES and regional body WECA is on enabling all forms of active travel. For us to be a proposal considered for local authority funding, we need to be able to help unlock walking and cycling.
- We have yet to agree how cyclists and pedestrians would share the space – the towpath currently has a ‘pedestrian priority’ approach for example under the existing bridge
- We do not expect this to be a key route for adult (commuter) cyclists – they would likely follow the existing road/bridge and access the towpath by the George Inn

### **4. Why are you not using traditional materials?**

- The materials we are proposing – cortene deck with stainless steel parapet – are not unusual for footbridges, especially over water. Using modern materials means that they can be engineered to be thinner than traditional materials and have a lower impact on the site – both speeding up construction and overall impact once in situ.
- Our designer Format has sought to echo the industrial heritage of the area in the use of materials and has used the shape of canal boat hulls as inspiration for the bridge deck
- We are working with B&NES to make the bridge suitable for adoption by them. To do this it needs to have as low a maintenance cost as possible. The chosen materials deliver this – wood would not be an option for them and stone would be much slower to construct at higher cost

### **5. Why are two trees proposed for removal and will you be planting more?**

- We have not proposed tree removal lightly. Having taken into account the ask to slightly increase dimensions of the crossing, we have turned the ramp away from the existing bridge to minimise its impact on the listed assets and café. We had already chosen a site that had a natural gap in the trees, but in order to minimise impact on any other trees on the site, especially the oaks on the towpath, we have agreed that removing one diseased tree and a second small one growing in its shadow would be needed. We will be replacing these two trees with six more under the council’s tree replacement policy.