SOUTH BATH

TRANSPORT OPTIONS

Welcome to this exhibition about proposals for a new transport solution linking south Bath with the city centre.

INTRODUCTION

In earlier planning consultations in the Combe Down area, a recurring theme emerged: concerns about transport and traffic. As a strategic landowner, Curo has an opportunity to do something to address transport issues that could bring significant benefits to local residents and the economy.

Curo is a housing association, a landlord and housebuilder. We believe that housing cannot be looked at in isolation; a comprehensive approach should be taken when creating great communities. Curo has been working with specialist engineering, design and planning firm Arup to identify possible transport solutions for the area and now we want your views on what this work has found.

curo

ARUP

SOUTH BATH

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City Centre

Bath Spa Railway Station

Beechen Cliff

Oldfield Park

Lyncombe HIll

Lyncombe Vale

Bloomfield

Perrymead

Prior Park

Mulberry Park Development

Fox Hill

Odd Down

Combe Down

N

Steep landscape: 100m incline in just a mile

WHY DO WE NEED TO DO SOMETHING? 3

Following a review of evidence and policy the following challenges have been identified:

1. It is a long held ambition of Bath and North East Somerset Council to reduce traffic and emissions in the city. Congestion and poor air quality pose a threat to Bath's UNESCO World Heritage assets (see Action 26 of the Bath World Heritage Status Management Plan 2016-22).

2. Connectivity between south Bath and the city centre is poor with long, unreliable journey times and congested roads. As the city continues to grow, these problems will increase unless alternative travel methods are provided and encouraged.

3. We want the people of south Bath to be able to access jobs and services in the city centre and improve links to the rail and bus stations for journeys beyond.

4. The steep landscape of south Bath will always be a barrier to walking and cycling. Better transport links will encourage people out of their cars and improve air quality and congestion.

5. To make a real impact any solution needs to be quick, affordable, convenient and capable of transporting thousands of people each day.

OUR OBJECTIVES

We have referred to emerging and adopted council policy when evaluating options for a new transport solution linking south Bath with the city centre. These include the Bath Core Strategy Placemaking Plan, Bath Transport Strategy and Joint Local Transport Plan. The proposals have been developed with the following aims in mind:

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Support and enable inclusive economic growth, competitiveness and job creation through the provision of enhanced transport facilities that help tackle congestion.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Realise environmental benefits by improving air quality, reducing carbon emissions, supporting climate resilience, minimising noise impacts and protecting and enhancing Bath's World Heritage assets.

IMPROVED ACCESS

Improve equality of access to services and opportunities by delivering a sustainable, affordable, resilient and convenient transport link.

IMPROVED CONNECTIONS

Deliver improved connections and journey time savings between the city centre and south Bath as part of an integrated transport network for the city.

VIABLE SOLUTION

Deliver a viable solution supported by a robust business case with a clear means to gain planning consent and operate sustainably.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Improve quality of life; promoting safety, health and wellbeing.

More information on policies relevant to our proposals is available at **www.southbathtransportoptions.co.uk**

TRANSPORT OPTIONS ASSESSMENT

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A long list of transport options has been assessed against the project objectives and specific characteristics of south Bath. A summary of the assessment results are outlined below. For further information please refer to the Transport Options Report at www.southbathtransportoptions.co.uk

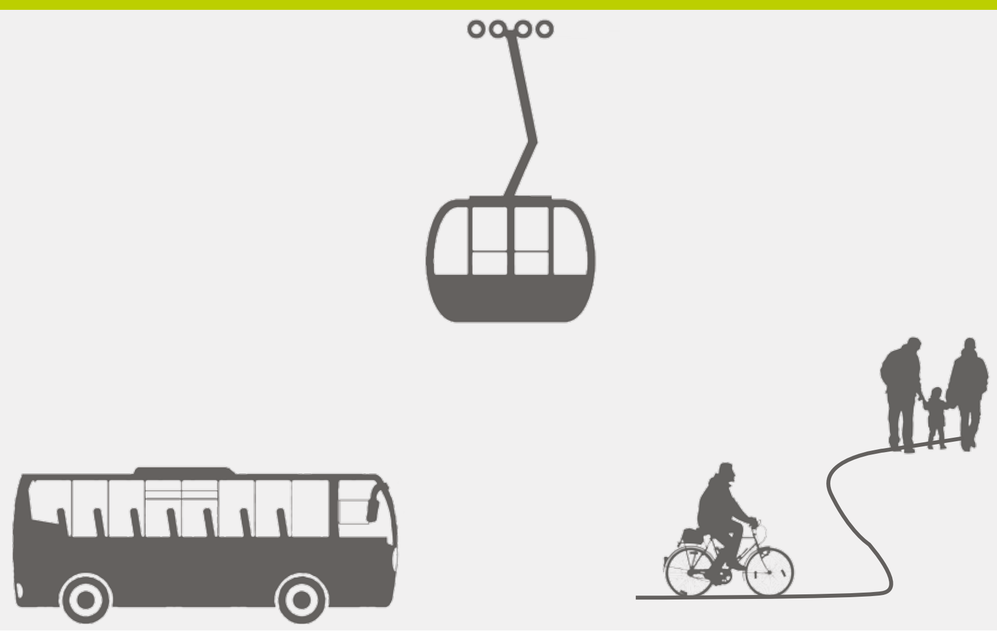
LARGER PROJECTS

Larger projects included a tram, funicular railway and a new road. Whilst meeting some of the objectives, these projects are not feasible either because of physical and technical constraints or they are simply too costly to be realistic.

SMALLER PROJECTS

Smaller projects included extended cycle hire, car clubs and small bus improvements. These schemes do not make a compelling case on their own as their overall contribution to the objectives would be low.

SHORTLISTED PROJECTS



Three projects were identified as most effective against the project objectives and shortlisted for further assessment, namely, an express bus package, a cable car, and a package of smarter travel choice measures.

SHORTLISTED TRANSPORT OPTION A

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EXPRESS BUS

An express bus package including better and more frequent buses, bus priority measures and new and improved bus stops.

EXPRESS BUS

A clockwise circular 'express' bus route serving south Bath with a new fleet of low emission medium sized buses suited to the city's narrow roads.

NEW STOPS AND TERMINAL

New bus stops and a new terminal at the A36/A367 to help buses avoid congestion with a new footbridge to the bus station.

Journey time savings will be modest from the current schedule.

Little scope to provide additional bus lanes therefore the service will get caught up in traffic.

The maximum capacity of the system would be around 600 people in a peak hour.

CONCLUSION

Improved services with higher frequencies would make this service attractive to some people and the project would integrate into the existing transport system. Due to physical constraints and congestion along the route only modest journey time savings could be achieved, which would limit the benefits and impact. It is unclear how the project would be funded or whether it would be able to pay its own running costs through ticket sales.

SHORTLISTED TRANSPORT OPTION B

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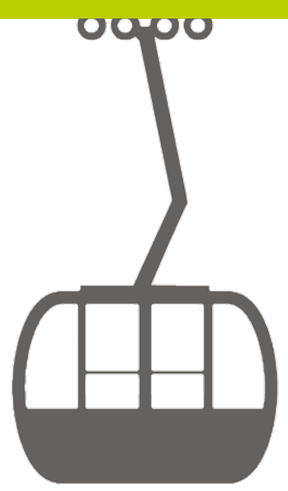

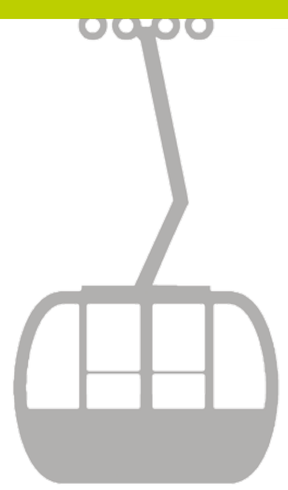

CABLE CAR

A cable car system providing a link between the city centre and south Bath.

TWO STATIONS

Two stations, one to link with the bus and train stations and another in south Bath, with towers high enough to carry the cable above properties and trees.

© Kent Anderson

TWO LARGE CABINS

Two large cabins running in relay, rather than lots of smaller cars would minimise visual impact.

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Journey time savings would be significant, with a trip taking around 6 minutes including loading times.

A cable car would not be affected by traffic or congestion and would be low emission.

The maximum capacity of the system would be approx. 800 in a peak hour.

CONCLUSION

A cable car would provide a new transport option in south Bath with the opportunity to link into bus and rail networks and provide increased speed, resilience against congestion and capacity. Although the system would be designed to mitigate the impact on landscape and properties as far as possible, there would still be some impact. A cable car could be attractive for private investment and could cover its costs through ticket sales.

SHORTLISTED TRANSPORT OPTION C

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SMARTER CHOICES

A ‘smarter choices’ package, incorporating walking and cycling improvements is made up of many of the smaller projects considered as part of this study. The focus would be on physical improvements supported by smarter choice travel planning measures to encourage a change in people’s preferred travel methods.

CYCLING ROUTE

A main cycling route from Widcombe Parade to Fox Hill, changes to the junction at Widcombe Parade and Prior Park Road. A ‘cycle lift’ up the steepest part of Fox Hill.

NEW BRIDGE

A new pedestrian and cycle bridge to link Bath Spa station via Railway Place.

TRAVEL PLANNING

Personal Travel Planning advice along with services to help people change how they travel. This could include working with employers and schools to reduce car trips and providing facilities such as new electric cycle hire stations, adult cycle training, car share groups and more car clubs.

CONCLUSION

Healthy, active and sustainable travel would be boosted by this option and taxi share and car clubs may be popular if critical mass is reached. The steep landscape of south Bath and distances between destinations means that take up of walking and cycling would be low and of limited appeal for many people even with improvements. This option would require public subsidy to set up, and an on-going subsidy to maintain many of the services.

PREFERRED OPTION

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A cable car emerged from the review as the most achievable and affordable way of making a meaningful impact on transport in south Bath.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

- Journey times of between 3 and 6 minutes
- Small physical footprint compared to other transport options
- Low noise and low emissions
- Direct link to the existing public transport system
- New tourist attraction and a different perspective on the city
- Capacity to transport thousands of people each day
- An affordable and quick way of connecting south Bath to the city centre
- Accessible and convenient for residents and commuters
- Regeneration of the area to the rear of Bath Spa railway station

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- Planned closures for maintenance - once a year for around a week
- Heritage considerations. Impact on landscape and World Heritage Site
- Impact on some private property
- Potential environmental impacts such as tree loss, green belt and open space
- Very high winds could occasionally close the system
- Visual impact of stations, towers and cables

EUROPEAN CITIES WITH UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES AND CABLE CARS

Dubrovnik, Croatia

Barcelona, Spain

Porto, Portugal

CABLE CAR SOUTH BATH

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The proposed cable car system could include: Two stations, one at Bath Spa railway station and another in the Mulberry Park area; towers to carry the cables and two large cars rather than lots of smaller cabins in order to reduce the visual impact of the scheme.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Should the scheme go ahead the following would be key considerations for any design.

1. A unique and innovative design that celebrates Bath's history and World Heritage Status.

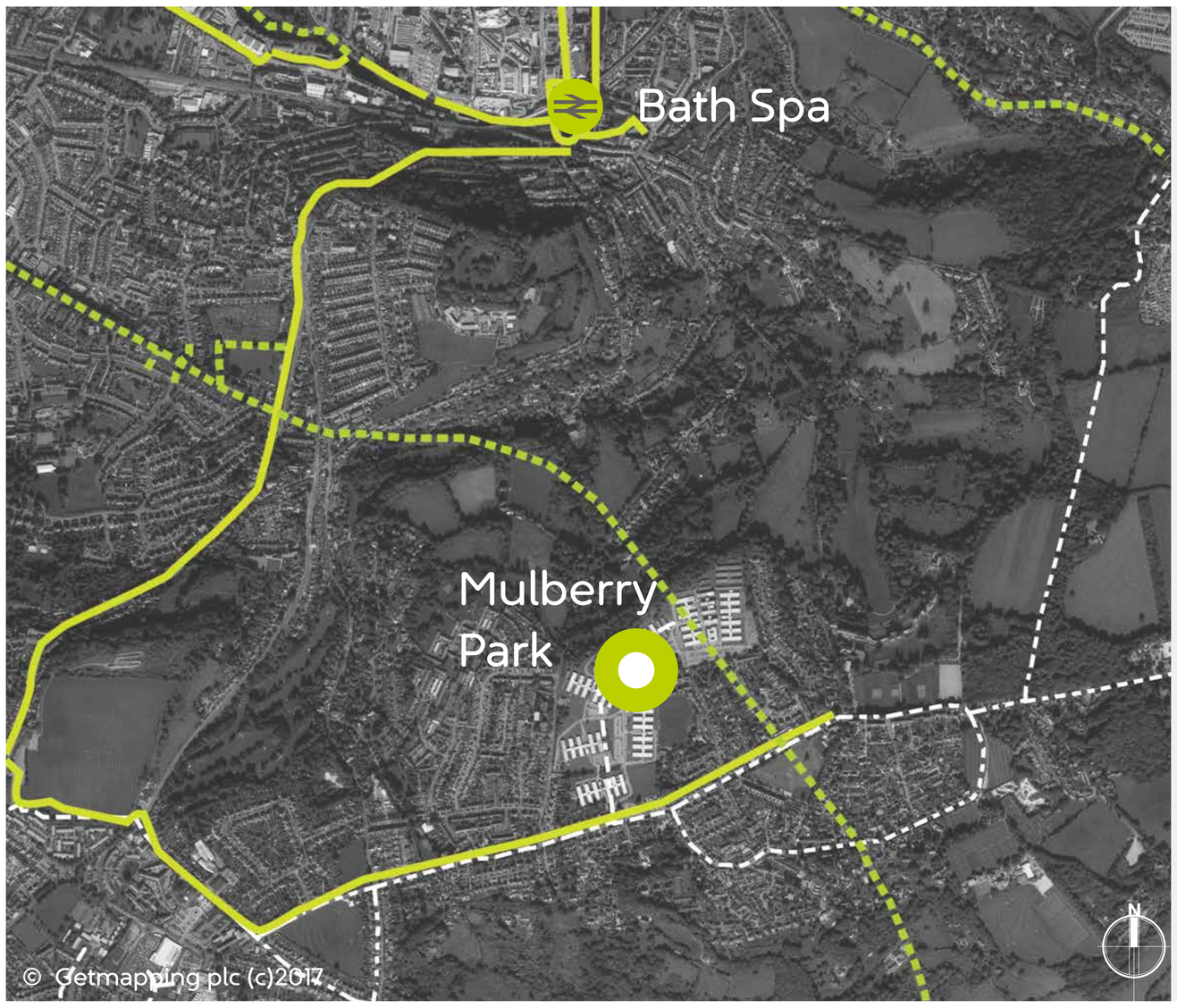
2. A design that is sympathetic to the immediate area and seeks to minimise negative impacts on local people.

3. Imaginative landing station designs that integrate with Bath's existing transport network and promote regeneration, bringing benefits to the local area.

TRANSPORT INTEGRATION

The cable car would act as an extension of Bath's Transport Hub and integrate into existing transport networks. It would provide cyclists, pedestrians and disabled users with an accessible and easy way of overcoming steep hills and expand the city's walking and cycling networks. Direct links to bus and train services would bring wider destinations within easier reach of south Bath. Bus services in the area could link in with the cable car therefore shortening journey times.

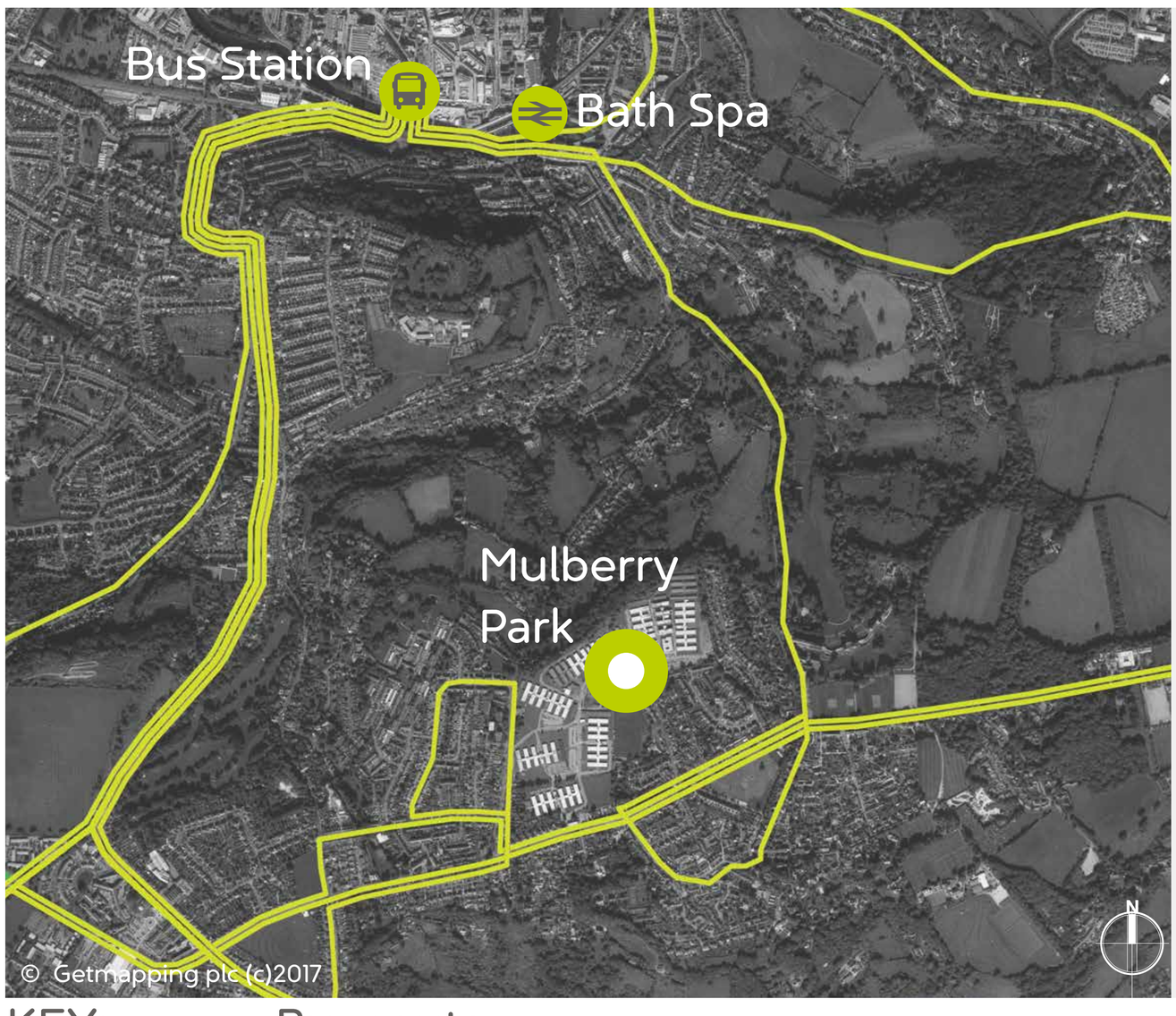
CYCLE / WALK



KEY: Existing routes Cycle Bath's proposed Scholar's Way Proposed routes

Source: B&NES Strategic Cycle Network Review

BUS / RAIL



KEY: Bus routes

Source: Routes taken from First 'Bath Network Map, 2016' & Wessex 'Bath Services' Route Maps

YOUR VIEWS AND NEXT STEPS

WE WANT YOUR VIEWS ON OUR PREFERRED TRANSPORT PROPOSAL

Thank you for attending today's exhibition on south Bath Transport Options. Your comments are important to us and we would appreciate you taking the time to complete a feedback form.

INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

APRIL 2017 → First consultation on transport options

SUMMER 2017 → Review consultation responses

AUTUMN 2017 → If there is a positive response, second consultation on detailed scheme

WINTER 2017/2018 → Review consultation responses

SPRING 2018 → Final consultation on the preferred scheme

AUTUMN 2018 → Apply for required consents

2019/2020 → If consented we would move forward to project construction

www.southbathtransportoptions.co.uk

Consultation closes: Friday 12th May 2017