

TRANSPORT AND WORKS ACT 1992

Transport and Works (Inquiries Procedure) Rules 2004

**The Cambridge South East Transport Order (“CSET”)
(Ref: TWA/25/APP/01)**

Statement Of Case for The British Horse Society



For horses. For people. For life.

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INTRODUCTION

This Statement of Case (SoC) is submitted on behalf of the British Horse Society (BHS). The BHS is the UK's largest equestrian charity with over 125,000 members and represents the country's 3 million regular horse riders. One of its charitable objectives is "to promote and secure the provision, protection and preservation of rights of way and of access for ridden and driven horses over public roads, highways, footpaths, bridleways, carriageways, public paths and other land."

The BHS is keen to see equestrians included within transport projects to ensure equestrians' needs are protected and enhanced along with other users. It has worked closely with the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership to try and achieve this and it recognises and appreciates the willingness of GCP to include equestrians in this and other projects. Nonetheless, there are some elements of the current proposals which the BHS remains concerned about and leads to its involvement in this process.

The SoC is structured in three parts. Section One: Equestrian Access – Impacts and Challenges sets out the background and context to the involvement of the BHS in this and similar cases across the region and the country. Section Two: Policy and Guidance Context summarises the key elements of national and local planning policy and guidance as it relates to this scheme and issues of equestrian access. The BHS' substantive SoC is set out in Section Three.

In addition, an appendix contains the following supporting documents:

- App1 – BHS Response to CSET TWA0 2025-02-23
- App2 – BHS Paper on Impact of Active Travel Plans and LTN1/20 on Equestrians
- App3 – BHS Response to Draft Cambridgeshire Walk, Wheel and Cycle Strategy
- App4 – BHS Response to GCLP CBC Consultation
- App5 – BHS Response to GCLP Worts Causeway Consultation
- App6 – BHS Response to GCLP Grange Farm Consultation
- App7 – BHS Response to the Draft Interim Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy
- App8 – Location Map of Sawston Riding School
- App9 – East West Rail Potential connectivity
- App10 – CBC Potential onward connectivity

SECTION ONE: Equestrian Access – Impacts and Challenges

Economic Contribution

According to equine passport figures, Defra (2024) and economic figures, BETA (2023) there are 18,019 passported equines registered in Cambridgeshire, contributing over £96 million p.a. to the economy. This contribution to the economy, with the majority of this expenditure spent locally on feed, bedding, farriers, vets, riding instructors and riding schools, livery diversification opportunities for landowners etc. shows the importance and contribution of equestrians to the local economy.

The racing industry is worth £4.1 billion p.a. to the economy nationally. It requires a huge workforce with a variety of skills and relies on large numbers of 'work riders' e.g. at Newmarket. The skills required rely on grass roots experience gained from learning to ride and hack out safely.

Social Contribution

In Cambridgeshire, there are amazing equestrian centres who, under the BHS scheme Changing Lives through Horses, work with children and young people who have disengaged from the education system. Using the transformative power of working with horses, combined with a focus on developing key skills they can use throughout their lives, leading to increased confidence and self-esteem, enabling them to re-engage with society.

There are also Riding for the Disabled Centres; the local riding school in Sawston is an RDA Centre. RDA is a charity which pioneers the therapeutic use of horses and are leaders in disability sport. Their innovative programmes improve mobility, boost physical health and mental wellbeing, build confidence, and teach new skills for those with life challenges.

Health and Wellbeing

Research undertaken by the University of Brighton and Plumpton College (<https://www.bhs.org.uk/media/ganngxh/health-benefits-of-riding-in-the-uk-full-report.pdf>) on behalf of The British Horse Society found that:

- More than two thirds (68%) of respondents participated in horse riding and associated activities for 30 minutes or more at least three times a week. Sport England estimates that such a level of sporting activity will help an individual achieve or exceed the government's recommended minimum level of physical activity.
- A range of evidence indicates the vast majority (90% plus) of horse riders are female and more than a third (37%) of the female riders of respondents were above 45 years of age. Horse riding is especially well placed to play a valuable role in initiatives to encourage increased physical activity amongst women of all ages.

- Amongst the horse riders who took part in the survey, 39% had taken no other form of physical activity in the last four weeks. This highlights the importance of riding to these people, who might otherwise be sedentary.
- Horse riders with a long-standing illness or disability who took part in the survey are able to undertake horse riding and associated activities at the same self-reported level of frequency and physical intensity as those without such an illness or disability.

Road Safety

The BHS actively campaigns to improve road safety by making motorists aware of what to do when they encounter horses on the road (see www.bhs.org.uk/go-riding/riding-out-hacking/riding-on-roads/advice-for-motorists/#dead-slow-vr-360-film) -we recommend taking a few moments to watch the film for an impression of how vulnerable equestrians can be in proximity to cars and lorries. Road Safety is a particular concern to equestrians, who are among the most vulnerable road users (VRUs).

The BHS collates statistics each year to understand the rate of incidents involving horses and riders on UK roads. The statistics shown below are from 1st January 2025 to 31st December 2025:

- 2,810 road incidents involving horses have been recorded with British Horse Society
 - 59 horses have died and 82 have been injured
 - 86 people have been injured because of road incidents
 - 83% of incidents occurred because a driver passed by too quickly
- (Research indicates however that only 1 in 10 incidents are being reported to the BHS.)

These figures demonstrate the importance of development, including transport projects, being designed to protect, improve and extend provision and will help to prevent these numbers from increasing in the future.

SECTION TWO: Policy and Guidance Context

National Planning Policy

NPPF TR1 – Vision-led approach to planning for transport

Sustainable transport should be considered from the earliest stages and form an integral part of creating sustainable, inclusive places. Transport planning should align with Local Transport Plans and Rights of Way Improvement Plans.

NPPF TR3 – Rural connectivity

In rural areas, opportunities to improve walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport and enhance connectivity should be taken where they exist and can be supported by the development proposed.

NPPF TR8 – Public rights of way

Development proposals should protect and enhance the PROW network and take opportunities to extend, link or improve existing routes, including creating new direct and circular connections between footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes, improving access to the countryside and providing safe and convenient links.

NPPF HC1 / HC4 – Healthy communities

National policy recognises the role of recreational provision, green space, physical activity and accessible environments in promoting health, preventing ill-health, reducing health inequalities and supporting social interaction.

National Guidance

National Design Guide

Supports protection, enhancement and wider integration of public rights of way and well-connected, usable green spaces, including consideration of access and long-term management and maintenance.

Highway Code Rule 215

Recognises horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles as road users requiring particular care and provides specific guidance on safe passing distances and speeds.

Active Travel England – Rural Design Guide for Active Travel (2026)

The Active Travel England Rural Design Guide, published in July 2026, provides current national technical guidance for planning and designing rural walking, wheeling and cycling routes. Although it is not a comprehensive manual for equestrian route design and is not legally mandatory, it expressly recognises the need to consider horse riders in rural route design, particularly where pre-existing equestrian routes exist. The guidance addresses issues including connectivity, crossings, route width, interaction with motor traffic, barriers, surfaces and maintenance.

The Guide is therefore relevant to CSET where the scheme interacts with existing bridleways, restricted byways and other routes used by equestrians. It supports the principle that the needs of horse riders should be considered as part of rural route planning and design, rather than treated as a matter to be addressed retrospectively. Its guidance on surfaces and maintenance is also relevant to the proposed natural-surface bridleway provision alongside the CSET EMAT.

DMRB GG142 – Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Assessment and Review (WCHAR)

Provides an established methodology for considering walking, cycling and horse-riding needs through the design process. While directly applicable to relevant National Highways schemes, it provides useful national guidance for assessing horse-riding needs and opportunities.

Highway Code Rule 215

Recognises horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles as road users requiring particular care and provides specific guidance on safe passing distances and speeds.

Cambridgeshire and Greater Cambridge Policy

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Local Transport and Connectivity Plan

The LTCP recognises that active travel infrastructure must give due consideration to the wider range of non-motorised users and states that **new or enhanced active travel infrastructure must protect and consider the needs of walking, cycling and horse riding as leisure, recreational or commercial activities from the outset of the project.**

Cambridgeshire Active Travel Strategy

Although its strategic focus is walking and cycling, the Strategy recognises its relationship with the wider PROW network and states that **early engagement with all non-motorised users, including the equestrian community, will be required.**

Cambridgeshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan

The statutory framework for improving the PROW network and countryside access in Cambridgeshire, operating alongside the LTCP and Active Travel Strategy.

Greater Cambridge Local Plan – emerging Policy I/ST: Sustainable transport and connectivity

The emerging policy supports high-quality new routes, including **equestrian routes where appropriate**, connecting to existing networks and the wider PROW network, and protection and improvement of the existing PROW network.

Cambridge Biomedical Campus SPD – paragraph 4d.2.3

Requires safe access through PROWs for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians to the surrounding countryside and amenities.

South Cambridgeshire Local Plan – Policies HQ/1 and TI/2

Provide relevant local policy support for permeability, access for all users and safe opportunities for walking, cycling and, where appropriate, horse riding.

Relevance to the CSET Scheme

Taken together, these policies and guidance establish that the CSET scheme should not be assessed solely in terms of its principal transport function. The scheme interacts with an existing and evolving network of public rights of way and countryside access routes and should therefore be designed and assessed having regard to the **protection, enhancement, safety, connectivity and long-term usability of that network**.

The current national policy framework is particularly clear. NPPF TR8 expressly requires public rights of way to be protected and enhanced and supports opportunities to extend, link and improve routes, including **bridleways**. The Cambridgeshire LTCP additionally requires new or enhanced active travel infrastructure to protect and consider the needs of horse riding from the outset, while the Cambridgeshire Active Travel Strategy requires early engagement with the equestrian community.

The BHS's Statement of Case therefore considers not only whether individual elements of CSET can physically accommodate equestrian use, but whether the scheme as a whole **protects existing equestrian access, provides safe and usable new provision, maintains connectivity with the wider PROW network, avoids creating new severance, and safeguards opportunities for future connectivity**.

The recently published ATE Rural Design Guide is particularly relevant to CSET because it confirms at national guidance level that rural route design should, wherever possible, accommodate horse riders, particularly where pre-existing equestrian routes exist, and should consider the safety, connectivity, surface and maintenance requirements of those routes.

These considerations apply to the design, construction, temporary diversions, crossings, soft-surface provision, legal status, maintenance and future connectivity of the CSET route.

SECTION THREE: BHS Statement of Case

1.0 Bridleway Connectivity

1.1 The BHS Position

- 1.1.1 The BHS supports the proposed statutory bridleway between High Street, Babraham and Granhams Road, Gt. Shelford. The Applicant confirms that this section is intended to be available for horse riders and that the cross-sectional elements and standards are the same along the route, with physical facilities capable of accommodating equestrian use.
- 1.1.2 The Applicant's current position is that the statutory bridleway has not been extended beyond either end of this section because there are currently no secure onward equestrian connections and because of safety considerations associated with interactions between equestrians, pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles.
- 1.1.2 The Applicant has committed in the Statement of Common Ground to consider bridleway use over "other areas of the route" where it is safe to accommodate equestrians and safe access and egress can be provided.
- 1.1.3 The BHS welcomes that commitment but considers that, wherever the infrastructure can safely accommodate horse riders, the objective should be to secure statutory bridleway rights through the TWAO rather than relying on future permissive access or a further discretionary decision.
- 1.1.4 The BHS accepts that there is presently no secure onward equestrian connection at either end of the proposed statutory bridleway. However, the absence of such an onward connection should not, in itself, prevent statutory bridleway provision along CSET infrastructure which can safely accommodate horse riders.
- 1.1.5 The BHS considers that the safety implications of terminating the bridleway at Granhams Road and High Street, Babraham, and discharging equestrians into the highway environment, should be assessed alongside the safety of allowing equestrians to continue along CSET sections which can otherwise safely accommodate them.
- 1.1.6 The BHS's principal concern is therefore that safely usable sections of CSET should not be excluded from statutory bridleway provision simply because an onward connection is not yet available. The BHS considers that statutory bridleway rights should be secured over those sections which can safely accommodate horse riders, even where they would initially operate without an onward equestrian connection.

- 1.1.7 The BHS is concerned that deferring statutory rights could itself create an obstacle to securing future onward connections, as explained below.
- 1.1.8 The BHS considers that securing the CSET statutory bridleway rights now would remove that uncertainty and provide a confirmed equestrian connection point to which future adjoining PROW routes could connect. This would avoid making future equestrian connectivity dependent upon a further discretionary decision by the CSET scheme.

1.2 CSET's physical capability for equestrian inclusion

- 1.2.1 The Applicant's application material and Statement of Case confirm that the EMAT is physically capable of accommodating horse riders over most of the route and that the cross-sectional elements and standards are consistent along the Busway.
- 1.2.2 The TWAO provides for statutory bridleway rights only between Granhams Road, Gt. Shelford and High Street, Babraham, as shown on the deposited Rights of Way and Traffic Regulation Plans. It does not create statutory bridleway rights over the entire CSET route.
- 1.2.3 **Physical capability and legal designation are therefore separate matters.** The BHS's concern is therefore twofold: whether the relevant CSET infrastructure can safely accommodate horse riders, and how statutory equestrian rights can be secured over that infrastructure so that future adjoining PROW connections have a confirmed route into which they can connect.
- 1.2.4 The Applicant has stated in the Statement of Common Ground that, as detailed design progresses, it will consider with CCC's PROW team whether permission for bridleway use can be given over **"other areas of the route"** and that, where it is safe to accommodate equestrians and safe equestrian access and egress can be provided, permission for bridleway use will be granted.
- 1.2.5 The BHS welcomes this commitment. However, **permission for bridleway use is not equivalent to a statutory bridleway right.**
- 1.2.6 The Applicant has identified interactions between equestrians, pedestrians, cyclists and motorised vehicles as safety considerations in determining the current extent of the statutory bridleway. The BHS does not suggest that these interactions can be disregarded. However, the assessment needs to consider where and how those interactions actually arise. If an equestrian reaches the point at which equestrian access ceases, turns around and returns along the CSET bridleway, there is no additional interaction with pedestrians, cyclists or motorised vehicles arising from the absence of an onward equestrian connection.
- 1.2.7 Conversely, where the proposed bridleway terminates at Granhams Road, Great Shelford or High Street, Babraham, equestrians are immediately discharged into the highway environment, where they will be exposed to interaction with pedestrians, cyclists and

motorised traffic. Neither road is an ideal onward equestrian connection because of the nature of the roads, including fast-moving traffic, bends and, at High Street, high verges. Riders are nevertheless able to turn around within the bridleway and return rather than being required to continue onto those roads.

- 1.2.8 The BHS therefore considers that this aspect of the Applicant's safety assessment should also be explained: how has the safety of those interactions at the proposed termini been assessed, and how has it been weighed against the potential safety of allowing equestrians to continue along a CSET section which is otherwise physically capable of accommodating them?
- 1.2.9 The issue is therefore not whether the presence of pedestrians, cyclists or motorised vehicles can be disregarded, but whether those interactions make a particular section unsafe for equestrian use. The BHS considers that the Applicant's safety concerns should be assessed on a section-by-section basis, taking account of the actual design and operation of each section. The absence of an onward equestrian connection should not, in itself, be treated as an additional reason to exclude equestrians from a section which can otherwise safely accommodate them.
- 1.2.10 The design of an equestrian crossing is also relevant to the assessment of safety at CSET's highway interfaces. Where an equestrian crossing is provided, the call point can be positioned behind away from the carriageway edge, allowing a mounted rider to operate the signal from the saddle without positioning the horse within the traffic flow while the signal is being activated. This provides a materially different safety arrangement from a conventional pedestrian call point located adjacent to the carriageway. The CSET scheme includes specific equestrian crossing provision at other highway interfaces, but no equivalent equestrian crossing provision has been identified at the proposed termini of the statutory bridleway at Granhams Road and High Street, Babraham. The BHS therefore considers that the safety implications of terminating equestrian access at these locations should be assessed having regard to the facilities actually provided for equestrians.
- 1.2.11 The BHS considers that the Applicant should explain how the safety of mounted riders using the proposed signalised crossings at Granhams Road and High Street, Babraham has been assessed, including the ability of riders to activate the crossing without positioning the horse within the traffic flow, and how that assessment informed the decision to terminate statutory equestrian access at those locations.
- 1.2.12 The BHS also notes that the design features of an equestrian crossing can provide wider accessibility benefits, including for users of cargo cycles, hand-propelled and recumbent cycles and other users who may have difficulty positioning themselves safely adjacent to a conventional kerbside call point. The provision of such facilities should therefore not be regarded as benefiting equestrians alone.

1.3 Futureproofing of CSET infrastructure for equestrian access

- 1.3.1 The Applicant's evidence confirms that the CSET infrastructure is physically capable of accommodating horse riders over much of the route. The BHS accepts that the wider network does not currently provide secure onward equestrian connections at either end. However, that should not prevent statutory bridleway rights being secured over CSET sections which can safely accommodate horse riders.
- 1.3.4 The BHS is seeking to secure the statutory bridleway rights now, so that the absence of an onward connection does not prevent the CSET section from forming part of the future equestrian network.
- 1.3.5 There is a practical risk that the absence of confirmed statutory equestrian rights over the relevant CSET sections could itself deter or prevent agreement to an onward connection.
- 1.3.6 This creates a potential chicken-and-egg problem. A landowner, developer or other scheme seeking to provide an adjoining PROW connection may be reluctant to agree to an equestrian connection into CSET if there is no confirmed statutory equestrian right on the CSET side. CSET could then continue to rely on the absence of a confirmed onward connection as a reason for not securing the CSET section for equestrians. The absence of the CSET bridleway right could consequently itself become an obstacle to establishing the onward connection.
- 1.3.7 This problem is equally relevant to the Applicant's commitment to consider bridleway use over "other areas of the route". If CSET infrastructure and its highway interfaces are designed on the basis that equestrian access terminates at Granhams Road and High Street, without provision or future-proofing for the safe movement of horse riders across those interfaces, the absence of such facilities could subsequently become a reason for withholding permission for equestrian use of other sections of the route. The BHS considers that this would risk creating the very circularity which the Applicant's commitment to future equestrian access should avoid.
- 1.3.8 Securing statutory bridleway rights over the relevant CSET sections now would remove that uncertainty. It would establish a confirmed and permanent equestrian connection to which future adjoining PROW provision could connect when it is brought forward, rather than requiring the future connection to depend upon a further discretionary decision about the status of the CSET route.

1.4 The Planning Context at CBC

- 1.4.1 An existing permissive bridleway, PPA/0123, lies in the CBC/White Hill Farm area but is outside the CSET Order limits. As a permissive rather than statutory route, it cannot be relied upon as a permanent onward connection. The existence of a permissive route also illustrates why future equestrian connectivity should not depend upon arrangements which are not

secured as permanent statutory rights. Securing the CSET sections as statutory bridleways would provide a clear and permanent basis for future adjoining connections.

- 1.4.2 The Cambridge Biomedical Campus Supplementary Planning Document provides relevant planning context. It expressly requires development to “provide safe access through Public Rights of Way for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians to surrounding adjoining countryside and amenities whilst allowing residents and workers easy access to and from the Campus.”
- 1.4.3 The BHS recognises that this provision does not itself require CSET to provide an equestrian route through the Biomedical Campus. It nevertheless demonstrates that safe equestrian access to the surrounding countryside is an established consideration in planning the Campus and is relevant to the interface between CSET and the wider PROW network.
- 1.4.4 Potential future opportunities include the Sawston Greenway, equestrian provision associated with the GB2/Worts Causeway development and the wider PROW network along the Roman Road.
- 1.4.5 The adopted Cambridge Local Plan retained the Worts Causeway bridleway and identified a green link providing space for pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists. The GB2 planning material identifies a bridleway along the western boundary of the development connecting Worts Causeway and Babraham Road.
- 1.4.6 The BHS is not asking CSET to deliver these separate schemes, but they demonstrate that the wider network may change.
- 1.4.7 An additional potential wider access connection is currently being considered through an EW Rail feasibility study for an NMU route along the railway maintenance track, including a bridge crossing to connect with the Sawston Greenway on the Cambridge Biomedical Campus, with equestrian use currently proposed.
- 1.4.8 The proposed Sawston Greenway is also relevant to the CSET interface. The BHS considers that the CSET scheme should not unnecessarily prevent or compromise future connectivity between the two networks.

1.5 Planning Context High Street Babraham / Grange Farm / A11 and onward connectivity

- 1.5.1 The potential for onward equestrian connectivity at High Street, Babraham is important. The BHS's Regulation 19 representation on the Greater Cambridge Local Plan identified the need for Grange Farm development to provide appropriate PROW connectivity and opportunities to connect the development with the wider countryside network, including the CSET/Travel Hub area.

- 1.5.2 The BHS does not seek to require CSET to deliver the Grange Farm development or its wider PROW network. However, CSET infrastructure and its connections should not unnecessarily prevent or constrain an appropriately designed future equestrian connection.
- 1.5.3 The CSET application identifies a future PROW bridge over the A11, linking the Travel Hub to a proposed new public right of way bridge structure, with onward PROW links to Newmarket Road and Granta Park. The application makes clear that the A11 bridge and associated onward links are to be provided as part of a separate project and are therefore outside the CSET Order.
- 1.5.4 The BHS considers that, if the separate project provides the identified PROW connection between the Travel Hub and Granta Park/Newmarket Road, its legal status should permit use by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. This is supported by current NPPF Planning Policy and other local transport and planning policies. This potential significance to the wider equestrian network should be recognised now, while the CSET and associated infrastructure are being planned.
- 1.5.5 There is a substantial existing equestrian presence on the eastern, Abington side of the A11, including more than 60 horses currently kept at livery along Newmarket Road. The proposed bridge therefore has the potential to provide an important safe off-road connection for these horses and riders, as well as connecting with equestrian interests and routes on the western side of the A11 and the wider CSET/Travel Hub network.
- 1.5.6 The future A11 bridge illustrates the importance of considering the evolving PROW network when assessing future equestrian connectivity. CSET infrastructure and its interfaces should therefore not unnecessarily prejudice that future connection.

1.6 The BHS requests that the following requirements are secured as part of the CSET scheme:

1.6.1 Statutory bridleway provision

The TWAO should secure statutory bridleway rights over CSET infrastructure wherever the infrastructure can safely accommodate horse riders, including sections beyond the currently proposed bridleway between Granhams Road, Great Shelford and High Street, Babraham. The absence of an onward equestrian connection should not, in itself, prevent such provision.

1.6.1 Section-by-section safety assessment

Where the Applicant relies on interaction between equestrians, pedestrians, cyclists or motorised vehicles as a reason for excluding a section from statutory bridleway provision, the relevant section should be subject to a specific safety assessment based on its actual design and operation. That assessment should also consider the safety implications of terminating equestrian access and discharging riders onto the adjoining highway.

1.6.2 Equestrian crossing provision and future-proofing

Where statutory bridleway rights are provided, the CSET scheme should provide appropriate equestrian crossing facilities at highway interfaces where required for safe equestrian use of the route. Where statutory bridleway rights are not secured over a section at the time the Order is made, the scheme should nevertheless provide or safeguard the infrastructure necessary to enable safe equestrian crossing at relevant highway interfaces, so that the absence of an appropriate crossing facility does not subsequently prevent or constrain the extension of statutory equestrian use of that section.

1.6.3 Permanent statutory rights rather than future discretion

The statutory equestrian rights should be secured through the TWAO rather than being dependent upon future permissive access or a subsequent discretionary decision by the Applicant or CCC.

1.6.4 Protection of future connectivity

The CSET scheme should be designed and secured so that future adjoining equestrian PROW connections can connect directly into the statutory CSET bridleway network without requiring further approval for equestrian use of the CSET section or the introduction of infrastructure which could reasonably have been provided or safeguarded as part of the CSET scheme.

1.6.5 Fallback mechanism if statutory provision is not secured now

If the Inspector does not consider it appropriate to secure statutory bridleway rights over a section which is capable of safely accommodating horse riders at the time the Order is made, the Order should nevertheless include a clear mechanism requiring that section to be reviewed and, where the relevant safety criteria are satisfied, secured as a statutory bridleway. The mechanism should provide for review when an adjoining equestrian connection is secured or brought forward and, in any event, at defined intervals following opening of the CSET route, so that the position cannot remain unresolved indefinitely. It should specify the relevant triggers, responsibility, timescale and legal process for securing the statutory right, so that future equestrian connectivity does not remain dependent upon an unspecified discretionary decision.

1.6.6 Protection of future equestrian connectivity

CSET must not prevent or constrain future equestrian connections **to the CSET bridleway network arising from future schemes**, including potential connections at the Cambridge Biomedical Campus/Granhams Road and High Street, Babraham/Travel Hub interfaces, or connections arising from the wider PROW network. This includes the potential future equestrian connection associated with the A11 bridge and the wider Grange Farm/Travel Hub/Granta Park/Newmarket Road PROW network.

2.0 Stapleford – Haverhill Road, Country Park and Wider Equestrian Connectivity

2.1 The BHS Position

- 2.1.1 The BHS's original objection raised concerns regarding the changes to Haverhill Road associated with the Rangeford Retirement Village and the consequent implications for safe non-motorised user and equestrian access. In particular, the BHS highlighted the importance of retaining the existing off-road route on the south-eastern side of Haverhill Road, which provides an established connection for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians towards Stapleford to the south and the 'Drift Track' to the north. The BHS also raised concerns that changes associated with the Rangeford development have affected the feasibility of access arrangements previously shown in the CSET application.
- 2.1.2 The BHS welcomes the Applicant's confirmation in the Statement of Common Ground that the existing off-road verge/equestrian route on the south-eastern side of Haverhill Road is proposed to be retained, as shown on CD1-12.05 page 8. The Drift Track is an established local amenity used by walkers, dog walkers and horse riders and is currently the subject of a **DMMO seeking determination of its status as a public bridleway based on historic evidence**. The BHS considers that the potential status of the Drift Track and its relationship with the retained Haverhill Road route and Country Park should be recognised when considering the longer-term connectivity of the CSET route and the wider network.
- 2.1.3 The BHS also **welcomes and appreciates the proposed signal-controlled Pegasus crossing for equestrians across Haverhill Road**. The crossing provides an important safety facility at a location where traffic conditions have changed as a consequence of the Rangeford development. The BHS considers that the Pegasus crossing should be retained as part of the detailed design and delivered as proposed.
- 2.1.4 The BHS recognises that the potential connection from the CSET route to the rear of the Rangeford Retirement Village is outside the CSET Order limits and is therefore not a matter for delivery through the CSET scheme. The BHS nevertheless welcomes the Applicant's confirmation that, from an engineering perspective, providing a connection to the active travel route at the rear of the retirement village is not considered to present a challenge, subject to future agreements with CCC and the retirement village. The BHS considers this a useful future opportunity which can be pursued separately by the relevant parties.

2.2 Country Park and onward equestrian connectivity

- 2.2.1 **Country Park:** The BHS welcomes the positive outcome that equestrian access to the new Country Park has been confirmed by the Country Park Management Team. The precise technical details and location of the equestrian access point are still being discussed with the

Park owners. The BHS recognises that the delivery of the Country Park and its access arrangements are outside the CSET Applicant's remit, but welcomes the confirmation of equestrian access and considers it important that the CSET scheme does not prevent or compromise this future connection.

- 2.2.2 The Country Park provides an opportunity to strengthen the wider off-road network and, together with the retained Haverhill Road route, the Drift Track and the CSET bridleway, to provide improved connectivity for equestrians and other users.
- 2.2.3 The BHS welcomes the fact that the current CSET proposals do not unnecessarily prevent these connections from being achieved. The BHS is not seeking to make delivery of infrastructure outside the CSET Order limits a requirement of the CSET scheme. Rather, the objective is to ensure that **CSET does not create a permanent barrier to the wider equestrian network as that network develops.**

3.0 Stapleford Bridleway 212/2

3.1 Crossing of the CSET Guided Busway

- 3.1.1 The BHS welcomes the Applicant's confirmation in the Statement of Common Ground that Stapleford Bridleway 212/2 will be retained and that the proposed crossing of the Guided Busway is shown on CD1-12.05 page 9. This represents a positive response to the concerns raised in the BHS's original objection.
- 3.1.2 The BHS's original objection noted that there was no information at that stage on how the crossing of Bridleway 212/2 would be undertaken, what surfacing was proposed or what safety measures would be provided. The Applicant has now responded to these concerns through the Statement of Common Ground, which provides further information about the current proposed crossing arrangement and the matters to be considered at detailed design.
- 3.1.3 Bridleway 212/2 is an established and heavily used rural bridleway and is an important public access route for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians. The BHS therefore considers it important that the bridleway and its crossing of the Guided Busway remain fully suitable for all lawful users.
- 3.1.4 The Applicant's Statement of Common Ground identifies the proposed crossing as an uncontrolled crossing, currently shown with gates on the southern side and hard surfacing, likely to be a paved or brushed concrete finish. The Applicant has confirmed that the gate arrangement, material specifications, surface materials and colours will be reviewed as part of detailed design in consultation with the BHS.
- 3.1.5 The BHS welcomes this confirmation and commitment. The detailed design should ensure that the crossing does not create an unnecessary physical or practical barrier for equestrian

users. In particular, the need for a gate should be properly assessed rather than assumed. If a gate is required, its design should be suitable for equestrian use and should take account of the practical difficulties that a rider may experience when opening, passing through and closing a gate, including where mounting or dismounting is difficult. Mounting blocks to BHS standard should be planned.

- 3.1.6 The crossing surface should also provide a safe and appropriate transition between the rural bridleway and the Guided Busway crossing. Particular attention should be given to surface grip, transitions and changes in appearance or texture which could cause horses to hesitate or become unsettled.
- 3.1.7 The description of the crossing as an “uncontrolled crossing” should also be clarified through the detailed design process. The BHS considers that the safety arrangements should address how horse riders will be made aware of approaching buses, what warning measures will be provided and, where necessary, whether a suitable waiting area is available. The frequency of bus movements should not, by itself, be treated as demonstrating that the crossing is safe and suitable for equestrian users.

3.2 The BHS Position

- 3.2.1 The BHS considers that the principal issue raised in its original objection has now been appropriately identified for resolution through detailed design. The BHS welcomes the Applicant's confirmation in the Statement of Common Ground that Bridleway 212/2 will be retained, together with the identification of the proposed crossing on CD1-12.05 page 9 and the Applicant's commitment to consult the BHS on the detailed arrangements.

3.3 The BHS therefore seeks confirmation that:

- 3.3.1 Bridleway 212/2 will remain available to equestrians without unnecessary physical barriers.
- 3.3.2 The need for a gate will be reviewed as part of detailed design, rather than treated as an inherent requirement of the crossing.
- 3.3.3 If a gate is required, its design will be specifically assessed for equestrian use, including the needs of riders who may have difficulty mounting, dismounting or manoeuvring a horse through the gate.
- 3.3.4 The crossing surface and transitions will be safe and suitable for horses, taking account of grip, changes in surface and other features which could affect equine behaviour.
- 3.3.5 The detailed arrangements for the “uncontrolled crossing” will be clarified, including warning arrangements for approaching buses and how equestrian users are expected to use the crossing safely.

- 3.3.6 The BHS will be consulted before the detailed crossing design is finalised, including the gate arrangement, surfacing, warning arrangements and associated safety measures.

4.0 River Grant Bridge Crossings

The proposed bridge-deck cross-section provides a 3.5m route and a 1.8m parapet, which are broadly consistent with current equestrian bridge guidance. The BHS therefore asks the Applicant to confirm that the detailed design of Structures 6 and 8 will incorporate appropriate lower parapet/infill and kickboard arrangements for equestrian use over the River Granta, having regard to BHS guidance for bridges over watercourses and applicable highway design standards.

The BHS would welcome the opportunity to review these details with the Applicant at detailed design stage. If this cannot be confirmed, the BHS asks that the matter be addressed before the relevant bridleway sections and structures are brought into use.

5.0 Babraham Restricted Byway 12/10

5.1 Crossing of the CSET Busway

- 5.1.1 The BHS's original objection raised concerns about the proposed crossing of Restricted Byway Babraham 12/10, particularly because the existing route approaches the crossing through an enclosed and relatively constrained section adjacent to the South Cambridge Business Park and the housing development. The BHS highlighted the potential for sudden noise from the adjacent industrial area, the narrow and enclosed character of the byway and the need for appropriate safety measures for all lawful users.
- 5.1.2 Restricted Byway 12/10 is an important route within the local public rights of way network. It is used by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders and is legally available to horse-drawn vehicles. Although the physical constraints and existing connectivity may make the route less likely to be used by carriage drivers, its legal status means that the crossing arrangements must accommodate the full range of lawful users and should not introduce unnecessary barriers to any of them.
- 5.1.3 The BHS originally sought consideration of warning signals or other measures to alert byway users to approaching buses. The BHS also sought a safety audit which specifically considered the interaction between users of the Restricted Byway and the CSET busway, and raised the possibility of access over the Proposed Access to North Farm Fields shown on CD1-12.06 *Proposed Site Plans – Volume 3*, if the safety review identified that this could reduce the number of busway crossings required at the existing constrained point.

- 5.1.4 The Applicant has now confirmed in the Statement of Common Ground that a Stage 1 Safety Audit has been undertaken and that this has informed the scheme design. The Applicant further confirms that a Stage 2 Road Safety Audit will be undertaken during detailed design, with signage and sightlines addressed through that process. The BHS welcomes this commitment. However, the Stage 2 assessment should expressly consider the needs and behaviour of all lawful users of Restricted Byway 12/10, including horse riders and carriage drivers, and should assess the complete approach and crossing arrangement rather than visibility of the busway alone.
- 5.1.5 The Applicant states that users approaching from the south along Byway 12/10 will join the active travel path before reaching the busway crossing, which it considers will provide a clearer view for walkers and riders from a safer position before crossing the busway. The Applicant further states that there are no buildings to the north of the busway at this location and that measures to enhance visibility will be provided as necessary.
- 5.1.6 The BHS considers that these points do not, in themselves, establish that the crossing will be safe and suitable for horse riders and carriage drivers. Visibility is only one element of the safety assessment. The physical space available to approach, wait, manoeuvre and cross is also critical.
- 5.1.7 Equestrians using Restricted Byway 12/10 will have to negotiate the EMAT, CSET busway and farm access route, with the constrained approach and exit arrangements forming part of the same movement. The BHS is concerned that the available space at the actual crossing point is particularly limited.
- 5.1.8 When approaching from the south, CD1-12.06 *Proposed Site Plans – Volume 3* shows that the Restricted Byway crossing does not benefit from the wider grassed verge or waiting area provided a short distance to the east. A mounted rider may need sufficient space to approach the crossing, stop, assess the situation and wait before proceeding. The absence of comparable waiting and manoeuvring space at the actual crossing therefore requires specific consideration.
- 5.1.9 Conversely, for equestrians approaching from the north, there appears to be very limited space in which to manoeuvre between the South Cambridge Business Park and the fencing associated with the housing development. The enclosed and urbanised nature of the approach may limit the ability of a horse and rider, or a horse-drawn vehicle, to react safely to an unexpected situation.
- 5.1.10 The BHS considers that the safety assessment should take account of potential interactions with buses, farm vehicles, maintenance vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, together with the possibility of sudden or unexpected noise from the adjacent business/industrial area. The available space for a horse and rider or horse-drawn vehicle to stop, wait or respond to an unexpected event is an important part of that assessment.

- 5.1.11 The crossing should therefore be assessed as part of a complete user movement, including the approach from the surrounding PROW network, available waiting and manoeuvring space, the EMAT, busway, farm access route and exit from the crossing, rather than solely as a question of whether an approaching bus can be seen.
- 5.1.12 The BHS considers that the detailed design should establish whether additional warning measures are required, including whether a suitable audible, visual or other warning arrangement can be provided for users approaching the crossing. The need for such measures should be determined through the safety assessment and detailed design, taking account of the enclosed approach, potential sudden noise, limited waiting and manoeuvring space, the characteristics of horses and horse-drawn vehicles and interaction with other users and vehicles.
- 5.1.13 The BHS also considers that the potential alternative access towards North Farm Fields should remain part of the safety assessment. If the detailed assessment demonstrates that providing this connection could materially reduce the number of crossings required at the constrained location, the Applicant should explain why that option is or is not feasible and appropriate.
- 5.1.14 There is a further consideration in assessing the safety and practicality of the proposed arrangements. Bridleway 196/24 provides an important equestrian connection from the Sawston area towards Restricted Byway 12/10 and the wider PROW network. The BHS understands that the local riding school liveries use the bridleway and surrounding network for riding out. The safety assessment should therefore consider how equestrians using Bridleway 196/24 would reach the Restricted Byway and the wider network north of the CSET busway.
- 5.1.15 There appear to be three potential routes requiring consideration:
- via the section of Restricted Byway 12/10 from Babraham Road and the proposed CSET busway crossing;
 - via the bridleway alongside the busway and then the proposed Restricted Byway crossing; or
 - via the highway crossing and, if the agricultural access to North Farm Fields is made available for equestrian use, continuing via that access towards the Restricted Byway.
- 5.1.16 The relative safety and practicality of these alternatives cannot properly be assessed without considering the complete journey between Bridleway 196/24 and the Restricted Byway and wider PROW network.
- 5.1.17 The BHS is particularly concerned about the implications of the constrained section at the proposed Restricted Byway crossing for groups of horses. A group approaching the crossing may need to slow, stop or wait for a safe opportunity to cross. The available space must

therefore be sufficient not only for an individual horse and rider, but also to allow a group of horses to wait safely without being forced into conflict with other users, the business park boundary, the housing development fencing, the EMAT, the busway or the farm access.

- 5.1.18 The detailed safety assessment should therefore consider realistic group equestrian use, rather than assessing the crossing solely on the basis of an individual horse and rider moving continuously through the crossing.

5.2 Access control and potential gate

- 5.2.1 The BHS welcomes the Applicant's commitment to review the access arrangements at detailed design, including any gates, in consultation with the BHS. The current TWA0 plans do not, on the information available to the BHS, clearly identify a gate at the Restricted Byway 12/10 crossing. The BHS understands from the Applicant's response that a gate remains a possible detailed-design feature, principally in response to the potential risk of unauthorised vehicular access.
- 5.2.2 The BHS recognises that protection against unauthorised vehicular access may need to be considered. However, Restricted Byway 12/10 carries rights for pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles. Any access-control measure must therefore accommodate the full range of lawful users.
- 5.2.3 A gate can create a significant practical barrier for some equestrian users, particularly riders who may have difficulty mounting or dismounting or operating a gate from horseback, and can create an additional obstruction for carriage drivers.
- 5.2.4 The BHS therefore considers that any proposed access-control measure should be justified by a clearly identified operational or safety need and assessed for its proportionality and impact on lawful users. If a gate is considered necessary, its design and location should minimise the impact on pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles, and should have particular regard to the limited manoeuvring space available at this location. The Applicant should also clarify the specific risk of vehicular incursion which the proposed measure is intended to address.

5.3 The BHS Position

- 5.3.1 The BHS welcomes the Applicant's confirmation that a Stage 1 Safety Audit has been undertaken and that a Stage 2 Road Safety Audit will be undertaken during detailed design, together with the commitment to address signage, sightlines and detailed access arrangements in consultation with the BHS.
- 5.3.2 However, the BHS remains concerned that the current information does not demonstrate that the physical constraints at Restricted Byway 12/10 can safely accommodate the full

range of lawful users. In particular, the limited space at the actual crossing, the different constraints on the southern and northern approaches, the need to negotiate the EMAT, busway and farm access route, and the potential for groups of horses to wait at the crossing require specific assessment.

- 5.3.3 The BHS therefore considers that the detailed design and Stage 2 Road Safety Audit should demonstrate how the crossing and its approaches will operate safely and practicably for pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles, including realistic group equestrian use and the comparative safety of the potential routes from Bridleway 196/24.

5.4 BHS Requirements

- 5.4.1 The BHS considers that the following matters should be addressed through the detailed design, Stage 2 Road Safety Audit and, where appropriate, secured through the Order or other appropriate mechanism:

5.4.2. **Full safety assessment of the crossing and approaches**

The detailed design and Stage 2 Road Safety Audit should specifically assess the safety and practicality of Restricted Byway 12/10 for **all lawful users**, including pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles. The assessment should consider the complete movement through the crossing, including the approaches, available waiting and manoeuvring space, the EMAT, CSET busway, farm access route and exits, rather than relying principally on bus visibility.

5.4.3 **Adequate space for equestrian use, including groups of horses**

The detailed design should demonstrate that sufficient space is available for horses and horse-drawn vehicles to approach, stop, wait, manoeuvre and cross safely. The assessment should specifically consider **realistic group equestrian use**, including the circumstances in which a group of horses is required to wait before crossing, and should demonstrate that waiting horses would not be forced into conflict with other users, vehicles, boundaries or fencing.

5.4.4 **Assessment of the three potential routes from Bridleway 196/24**

The Applicant should assess the comparative safety and practicality of the three potential routes between Bridleway 196/24 and the Restricted Byway and wider PROW network north of the CSET busway, namely:

- via the Restricted Byway from Babraham Road and the proposed busway crossing;
- via the bridleway alongside the busway and the proposed Restricted Byway crossing; and
- via the highway crossing and, if made available for equestrian use, the agricultural access towards North Farm Fields.

The assessment should identify the safest practicable arrangement for equestrian users and should not assume that the proposed Restricted Byway crossing is the appropriate route without comparative assessment.

5.4.5 Warning and crossing measures

The detailed design should determine whether additional warning or crossing measures are required for the safe use of the crossing by all lawful users, including horse riders and carriage drivers. Where the safety assessment identifies a need, appropriate audible, visual or other warning measures should be provided. The design should take account of the constrained and enclosed approaches, potential sudden noise from the adjacent business/industrial area, limited waiting and manoeuvring space and interaction with buses, farm and maintenance vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.

5.4.6 Access control and any gate

The Applicant should demonstrate the specific operational or safety need for any gate or other access-control measure proposed at Restricted Byway 12/10 and should assess the proportionality of the measure having regard to its impact on all lawful users.

If access control is required, the least restrictive appropriate solution should be considered. Any gate should be designed and located so that it can be safely and conveniently negotiated by pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles, having regard to the BHS guidance on gates on equestrian routes.

The assessment should specifically consider the consequences for horse riders who may not be able to operate a gate from horseback and may therefore be required to dismount. While not every rider would need to dismount, requiring a rider to do so can be particularly problematic at this location because the approach and crossing area are already constrained. Dismounting and remounting are periods when a rider's control of the horse is more limited, and the BHS considers that requiring a rider to dismount to operate a gate is not a reasonable solution.

The Applicant should therefore demonstrate that any proposed gate provides a proportionate response to the identified risk of unauthorised vehicular access and that its location, operation and available manoeuvring space do not create an unacceptable additional safety risk for lawful users. The specific risk of unauthorised vehicular access which the proposed measure is intended to address should also be identified.

5.4.7 Equestrian consultation during detailed design

The BHS should be consulted on the detailed design of the Restricted Byway 12/10 crossing and associated access arrangements, including any warning measures, waiting and manoeuvring areas, access-control measures and any proposed North Farm Fields connection, before those arrangements are finalised.

6.0 EMAT Bridleway Soft-surface provision - Delivery, establishment and maintenance

6.1 The BHS Position

- 6.1.1 The CSET scheme identifies a grassed verge section of the bridleway alongside the EMAT for use by equestrians and other users seeking a natural or soft surface. The BHS welcomes this provision. However, the soft surface should be treated as a functional component of the bridleway and wider countryside-access infrastructure, rather than as landscaping which can be addressed after the main route has been constructed.
- 6.1.2 The BHS considers that the method of creating, establishing, protecting, funding and maintaining the soft-surface provision should be identified and secured as an integral part of the scheme from the outset.
- 6.1.3 This is particularly important because the sealed element of the route can become usable shortly after construction, whereas a grass sward may require a substantially longer period to establish, depending on the timing of sowing and subsequent weather and growing conditions. If the grassed verge is not established until the end of construction, there is a risk that the bridleway could be opened with its principal natural-surface provision not yet capable of performing its intended function.
- 6.1.4 The BHS therefore considers that, where practicable, the grassed verge should be established progressively during the construction period, with sections prepared, created, seeded and protected as construction progresses. This would allow the sward and root system to develop while construction continues elsewhere and reduce the period between completion of the route and the availability of a usable natural surface.
- 6.1.5 The importance of securing these matters at scheme stage is demonstrated by the recent experience of Mere Way Byways 135/3 Impington and 143/3 Landbeach. The delivery of soft-surface provision there involved separate planning, S106 and S278 arrangements, and subsequent uncertainty over the scope of works, responsibility for delivery, establishment of the grass sward and funding. The intended soft-surface provision has consequently not been delivered in the form or condition anticipated. The BHS does not suggest that the circumstances of Mere Way are identical to CSET; rather, it provides a practical local example of the consequences of leaving the delivery mechanism, construction methodology, establishment, funding and subsequent maintenance of soft-surface infrastructure insufficiently defined.
- 6.1.6 CSET should avoid repeating that experience by securing the delivery methodology, funding, responsibility and long-term management of the soft-surface provision as an integral part of

the scheme, rather than leaving these matters to be resolved after the principal route has been constructed.

- 6.1.7 The BHS also considers that this provision has a significance beyond its function for individual user groups. The CSET scheme will have substantial construction and landscape impacts within a highly valued area of Cambridge's countryside and chalk grassland. The new natural-surface bridleway therefore represents an important opportunity to provide a lasting recreational and countryside-access benefit for local residents and users of the surrounding countryside. It is consequently important that this element is properly delivered as part of the project and not treated as a secondary landscaping feature.

6.2 BHS Requirements

- 6.2.1 The BHS considers that the following matters should be identified and secured as part of the CSET scheme:

1. Soft-surface creation and specification

The scheme should identify and secure the method of creating the grassed soft-surface provision, including appropriate ground and soil preparation, grading and seeding, so that the surface is capable of performing its intended function as a natural-surface route for the intended users.

2. Timing and progressive establishment

The soft-surface provision should be established as part of the construction programme, rather than being left until the principal route has been completed. Where practicable, sections should be prepared, seeded and protected progressively as construction advances, taking account of appropriate seasonal and weather conditions.

The construction programme should allow sufficient time for the grass sward and root system to establish before the relevant section is required to perform its intended function.

3. Protection during construction

Newly established soft-surface areas should be protected from construction traffic, material storage, damage and inappropriate use during the construction and establishment periods. The scheme should identify the measures that will be used to prevent newly established areas being damaged before they have reached an appropriate level of establishment.

4. Establishment, monitoring and remedial works

The scheme should include an establishment and monitoring regime for the soft surface, with defined arrangements for remedial works where the sward fails to establish adequately or is damaged.

The regime should identify the criteria by which satisfactory establishment will be determined and the responsibility and timescale for undertaking remedial works.

5. Long-term maintenance

The scheme should secure an appropriate long-term maintenance regime for the soft surface, having regard to its function as a natural-surface route for all intended users.

Maintenance arrangements should be established as part of the scheme rather than left to be determined after construction.

6. Responsibility

The scheme should clearly identify the body responsible for the soft-surface provision at each stage, from initial construction and establishment through to operation and long-term maintenance.

There should be no period during which responsibility for the condition or establishment of the soft surface is unclear.

7. Funding

The scheme should identify the funding arrangements for the creation, establishment, protection, maintenance and remedial works associated with the soft-surface provision.

The delivery and continued usability of the natural-surface route should not depend upon a subsequent unidentified funding, contractual or maintenance arrangement.

8. Securing the soft surface as part of the scheme

The delivery, establishment, protection, maintenance, responsibility and funding of the soft-surface provision should be secured as integral components of the CSET scheme, rather than being left to be resolved after the principal route has been constructed.

7.0 Temporary Diversions and Protection of Equestrian Access During Construction

7.1 The BHS Position

- 7.1.1 The construction of CSET has the potential to affect a number of Public Rights of Way used by equestrians. The BHS's original objection identified inconsistencies and omissions in the application material concerning temporary closures and alternative routes, including the incorrect identification of Restricted Byway 12/10, the omission of Bridleway 196/24 in Sawston, and inconsistent descriptions of temporary closures, including references to routes being closed for the “duration of construction” without defining what “construction” means.

- 7.1.2 The Applicant has subsequently addressed these matters in the Statement of Common Ground. The GCP acknowledges that temporary restrictions to Public Rights of Way will be required during construction and states that alternative routes will be determined and discussed with stakeholders. The SoCG states that alternative routes will be secured through the Code of Construction Practice, but that specific arrangements for bridleways and other PRow temporary closures will not be determined until detailed design. The Applicant has also committed to continued engagement with the BHS and to avoiding or limiting closures where possible.
- 7.1.3 The BHS welcomes these commitments and recognises that temporary restrictions may be necessary to enable CSET to be constructed safely. However, **the identification of an alternative route at detailed design does not in itself demonstrate that a safe, suitable and reasonably convenient equestrian alternative will be available when an existing equestrian route is closed.**

7.2 Importance of the existing equestrian network

- 7.2.1 This is particularly important because the bridleway connection between Stapleford/Babraham and Sawston provides the **only safe off-road equestrian connection** between the Babraham/Stapleford and Sawston/Stapleford areas and the wider Public Rights of Way network.
- 7.2.2 Equestrians are currently excluded from the Sawston Greenway, so it cannot provide an alternative off-road equestrian route. Closure of this connection without a suitable alternative could therefore leave horse riders with no equivalent safe off-road route and could require them to use the A1301, including the bridge identified by the BHS as presenting significant safety concerns.
- 7.2.3 The BHS therefore considers that closure of this route, or other routes forming part of the established equestrian network, cannot be treated as a minor effect simply because an alternative may subsequently be identified. The original objection identified established equestrian use of the local network, including by Sawston Riding School and privately owned horses.

7.3 Requirements for temporary equestrian diversions

- 7.3.1 The BHS recognises that temporary diversions may be necessary to enable construction works to proceed safely and efficiently. However, **a temporary legal or physical connection is not, in itself, sufficient mitigation for the loss of an established equestrian route.**
- 7.3.2 Where an existing route used by equestrians is temporarily closed or diverted, the alternative should provide a **safe, suitable and reasonably convenient means of maintaining access for the affected lawful users for the full duration of the closure.**

- 7.3.3 Assessment of any proposed temporary equestrian diversion should take account of:
- the lawful users of the affected PRow, including horse riders where the route is a bridleway;
 - the physical requirements of equestrian use, including sufficient width, appropriate surface, gradients, gates, barriers and crossings;
 - traffic speed, traffic volume and interaction with motor traffic;
 - safe crossing arrangements where roads or other hazards are encountered;
 - bridges and other physical features;
 - continuity, accessibility and connectivity with the wider equestrian and PRow network;
 - interaction between equestrians and other users; and
 - whether the route is reasonably convenient and practically usable for the established equestrian use being displaced.
- 7.3.4 Particular care should be taken where a proposed diversion introduces high-speed or high-volume traffic, or other hazards which were not present, or were materially different, on the original route.
- 7.3.5 The BHS considers that the suitability of the alternative must be established **before the existing route is closed**, rather than relying on problems being identified and resolved after construction has commenced.

7.4 Lessons from previous schemes

- 7.4.1 The BHS's experience of previous Cambridgeshire schemes, including Mere Way and Soham–Wicken, demonstrates the practical consequences that can arise where construction affects established equestrian routes without a safe alternative having been established for equestrian users before closure.
- 7.4.2 These examples do not predetermine the outcome for CSET. They demonstrate why CSET should identify, assess and secure a safe equestrian alternative **before** an existing route is closed, rather than relying on problems with the alternative to emerge during construction.

7.5 Consultation, timing and implementation

- 7.5.1 The BHS welcomes the Applicant's commitment to continued engagement with the BHS. Given the established equestrian use of the affected network, the BHS, relevant local bridleway representatives and Sawston Riding School should be consulted on the detailed arrangements for any temporary diversion affecting equestrian users.
- 7.5.2 Consultation should take place **before the diversion is implemented**, so that practical matters including surface, width, gates, road crossings, interaction with construction traffic, and the ability of the route to accommodate groups of horses and riders can be assessed.

- 7.5.3 Where no safe and suitable alternative can be provided, the existing route should not be closed until an alternative has been established, unless the construction works can be phased or otherwise arranged so that safe equestrian access is maintained.
- 7.5.4 The extensive land required for CSET construction also provides an opportunity to investigate peripheral temporary routes through or alongside the construction area. This should include, where appropriate, temporary use of suitable land by agreement with landowners and arrangements allowing affected routes to remain available outside construction working hours, including at weekends and summer evenings.

7.6 BHS Requirements

7.6.1 **No closure without a suitable alternative**

No existing Public Right of Way forming part of the established equestrian network should be closed for CSET construction unless a safe, suitable and reasonably convenient alternative equestrian route is available and usable before the closure takes effect.

7.6.2 **Protection of the Stapleford–Babraham–Sawston connection**

The Stapleford–Babraham–Sawston bridleway connection should be protected throughout construction, or a suitable temporary alternative should be provided before any closure. The assessment should expressly recognise that this route provides the only safe off-road equestrian connection between the Babraham/Stapleford and Sawston/Stapleford areas.

7.6.3 **Suitability of diversions**

Any temporary equestrian diversion should be assessed against the actual and reasonably anticipated characteristics of the established equestrian use, including riding school, livery and group use. The existence of a legal diversion should not, in itself, be treated as evidence that the diversion is suitable for equestrians.

7.6.4 **Advance assessment and consultation**

The BHS, relevant local equestrian representatives and Sawston Riding School should be consulted on any temporary diversion affecting equestrian users before it is implemented, and any identified safety or suitability issues should be resolved before the existing route is closed.

7.6.5 **Availability and maintenance**

Any temporary alternative should be available and usable before the existing route is closed, clearly signed and communicated, maintained in a safe and usable condition, monitored throughout the construction period, and remain available for the full period during which the existing equestrian route is unavailable. Any period during which an existing equestrian route is unavailable should be clearly defined, including any phased or intermittent closures, so

that the alternative route remains available for the entire period of actual loss of the existing route.

7.6.6 Alternative arrangements where necessary

Where a proposed alternative is unsafe or unsuitable, further mitigation or an alternative alignment should be identified before closure. Where appropriate, CSET should investigate temporary routes through or alongside the construction area, including arrangements with landowners and phased construction or out-of-hours access to maintain equestrian connectivity.

The British Horse Society
7 October 2026