

# Cherwell Street, Banbury: Bus Service Improvement Scheme (including Bridge Street & George Street junctions)



## Introduction

The A4260 Cherwell Street in central Banbury carries about 12,000 vehicles in each direction each day. It is a primary traffic and freight route through the town and provides access for many of the town's bus routes to the main bus hub in Banbury town centre.

As part of the Oxfordshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), £2.3m of funding has been awarded by the Department for Transport (DfT) to deliver a bus priority scheme along Cherwell Street, with additional developer contributions also secured towards the scheme.

The proposed scheme aims to reduce journey times for buses and improve their reliability whilst also bringing improvements for pedestrians and other corridor users.

This consultation presents findings from a study carried out to identify the optimal proposed scheme upon which we now need your views.

## Why is this consultation taking place?

This consultation represents early engagement for the proposed scheme for Cherwell Street. The information presented has been informed by options' assessment, transport modelling and concept design work undertaken by independent consultants, combined with input from Oxfordshire County Council and other stakeholders.

**This consultation will run from Monday 4 March to Monday 1 April 2024.**



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# Why does Cherwell Street need a new bus priority scheme?

- The signalised junction of Cherwell Street and Bridge Street in Banbury, is important for the local bus network, being the gateway to the bus terminal area within Banbury town centre.
- During peak periods, the junction is over-capacity for vehicles, and this causes delays to buses into and out of the town centre.
- The aim of the proposed scheme is to reduce bus journey times and deliver more reliable and consistent journeys between George Street and Banbury bus station and the Bridge Street on-street bus hub.
- The Bridge Street junction was identified as a location that would benefit from improvements, with complementary measures on Cherwell Street also considered.



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# The proposed scheme

The proposed scheme includes the following areas and key scheme elements:

- **Cherwell Street between George Street and Bridge Street**

Including changes to line marking and the reinforcement of the 'keep clear' markings at the Morrisons Daily petrol station entry and exit junctions.

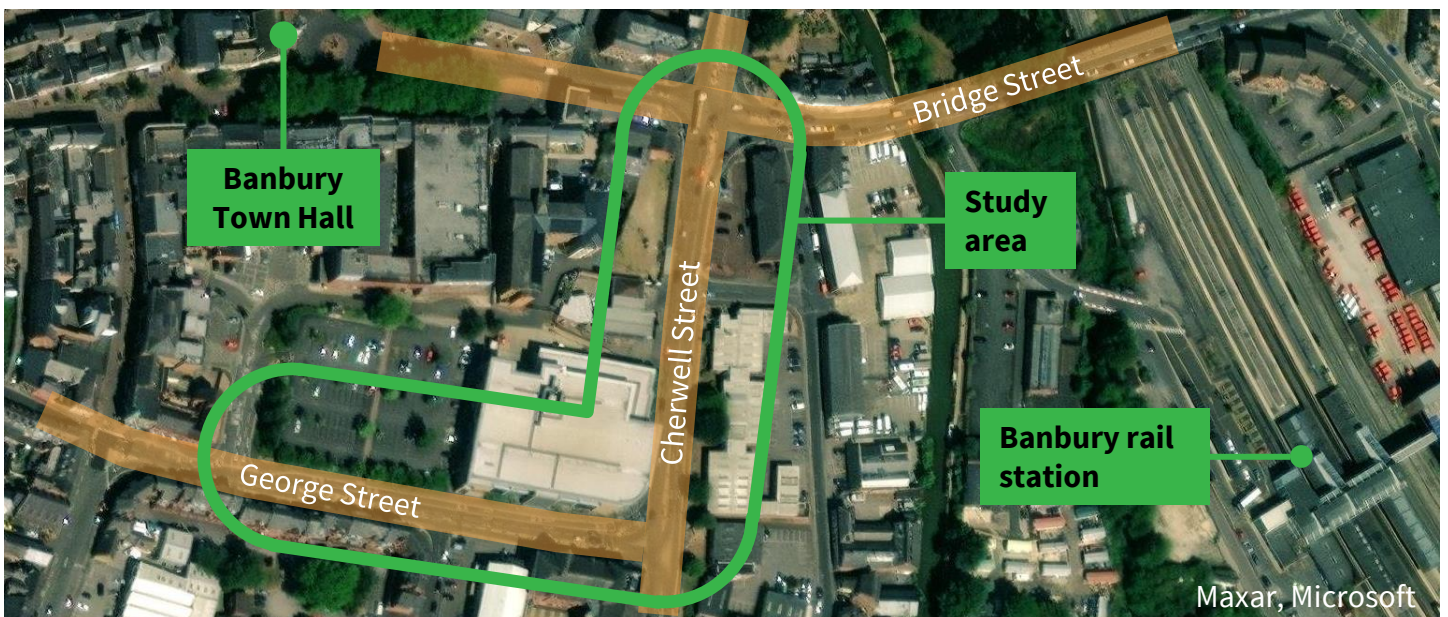
- **The junction of Cherwell Street and George Street**

Including widening of the bus lane on George Street and formalisation of the priority/give way arrangement for buses onto Cherwell Street; removal of the pedestrian island and widening of the traffic lanes for vehicles approaching the junction on the Bodicote side of the

junction; repainting of the yellow box junction; introduction of a pedestrian crossing on the Banbury town centre side of the junction; and reduction of the number of lanes for general traffic on George Street from two lanes to one lane.

- **The junction of Cherwell Street and Bridge Street**

Including adjustment and optimisation of traffic signal times; reconstruction of the pedestrian islands on Cherwell Street; improved pedestrian crossings on Bridge Street; reduction in the number of lanes for traffic approaching the junction on Concord Avenue from three lanes to two lanes; formalising an existing modal filter for bicycles at the Bridge Street end of Lower Cherwell Street; and changes to line markings for westbound traffic on the eastern arm of the junction.



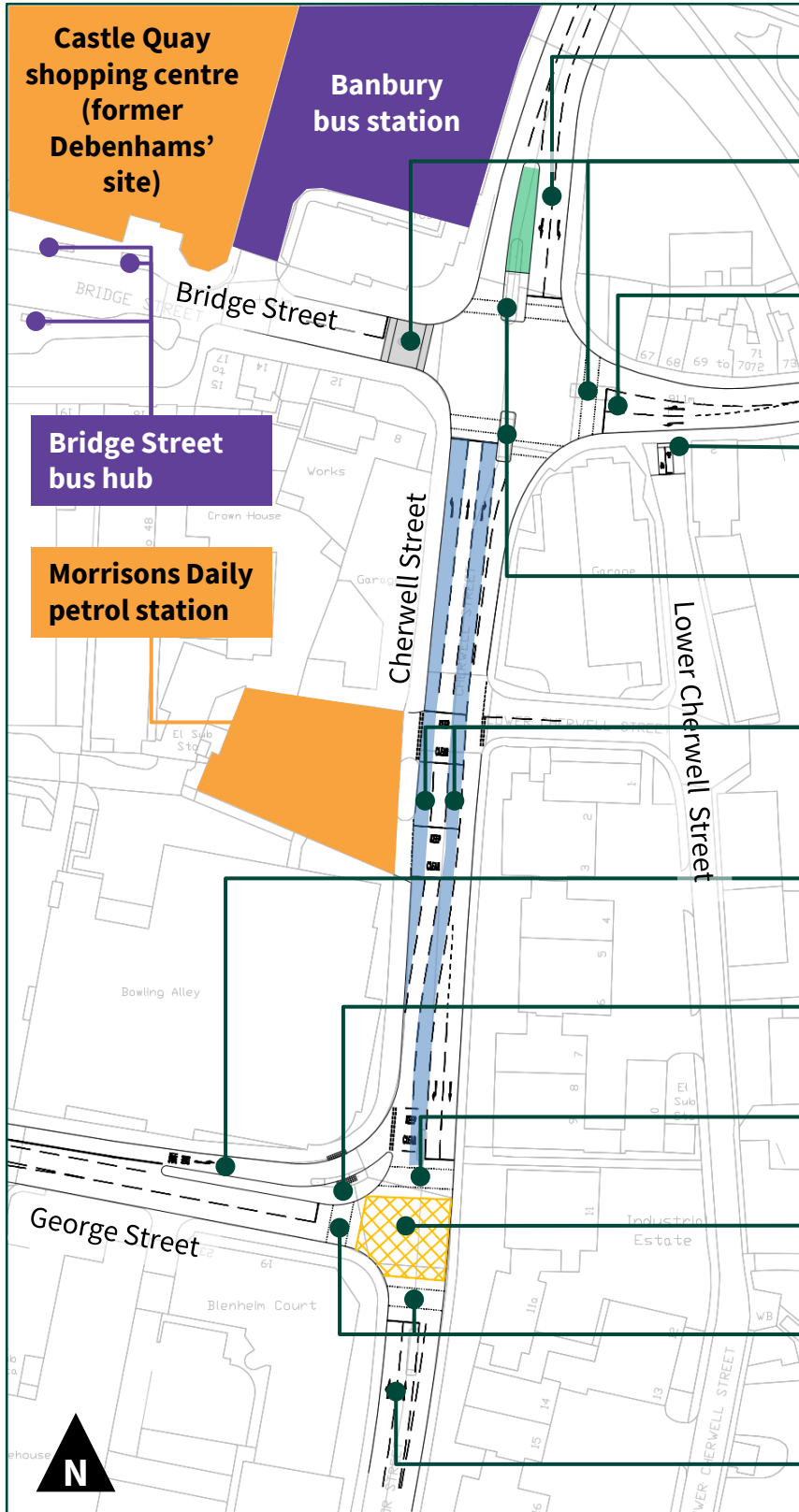
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# Features of the proposed scheme

The proposed scheme falls entirely within the highway boundary.



Lanes widened and junction approach reduced to two lanes

Improved pedestrian crossings

Turning flare switched for through and right-turning traffic

Existing cycle modal filter formalised

Pedestrian islands reconstructed

Longer turning lanes for northbound traffic

Bus lane widened and general traffic reduced to one lane

Reconstruction and expansion of pedestrian island

New pedestrian crossing

Repainted yellow box junction

Improved pedestrian crossings

Retained as two lanes with lanes widened

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# What are the benefits of the proposed scheme?



The main improvement will be to the bus journey times and service reliability on Cherwell Street during peak periods.

Other benefits of the scheme include:

- Longer turning lanes for both left-turning and right-turning traffic on Cherwell Street between George Street and Bridge Street, reducing blocking back.
- Pedestrian crossing improvements at the Cherwell Street/ Bridge Street junction, bringing benefits to public transport users and other people accessing the town centre bus stops and train station.
- Safety improvements for pedestrians along Bridge Street (east), where cars currently mount the footway to access the left-turning lane for westbound traffic.
- Safety improvements at the Cherwell Street/ George Street junction, with an additional crossing of the northern arm of this junction and a larger pedestrian island.
- Other improvements at the junctions of Cherwell Street/ Bridge Street and Cherwell Street/ George Street with changes to pedestrian islands, new line marking, and wider traffic lanes. Road markings in the centre of the Bridge Street junction will clarify vehicle positioning for conflicting turns, reducing delays caused by this.
- Space for additional planting and greenery along Cherwell Street.
- Supports a place-based renewal of Cherwell Street and improvements for walking and cycling to support the Canalside redevelopment scheme.



# What other options were considered?

The scheme proposed in this consultation has been identified following a staged analysis of a wide range of options.

The process involved initial consideration of a **long list** of design interventions that could be implemented to improve journey times and travelling experience for bus users, whilst also improving conditions for walking, wheeling and cycling and at the same time minimising impact on general traffic.

These options were then sifted and prioritised based on how well they met a range of objectives that align with the views of local stakeholders and relevant transport plans and strategies such as the Oxfordshire BSIP, the Cherwell Local Plan, and the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan.

The **short list** of options identified were then used to create five potential schemes that were developed into design concepts.

These five options were assessed against their cost, feasibility for delivery, impact on journey times (for buses and general traffic), and ability to meet the project objectives. Transport modelling supported this work and the option selected achieved the best balance of improving journey times and minimising cost.

Some of the features of these other options are shown on the next page.

These options included a new bus lane on Cherwell Street, banning certain turning movements at junctions, and providing substantially more space for pedestrians at junctions.

Modelling indicated that these options had an unacceptable negative impact on general traffic or that they did not provide enough benefit given their cost to implement.

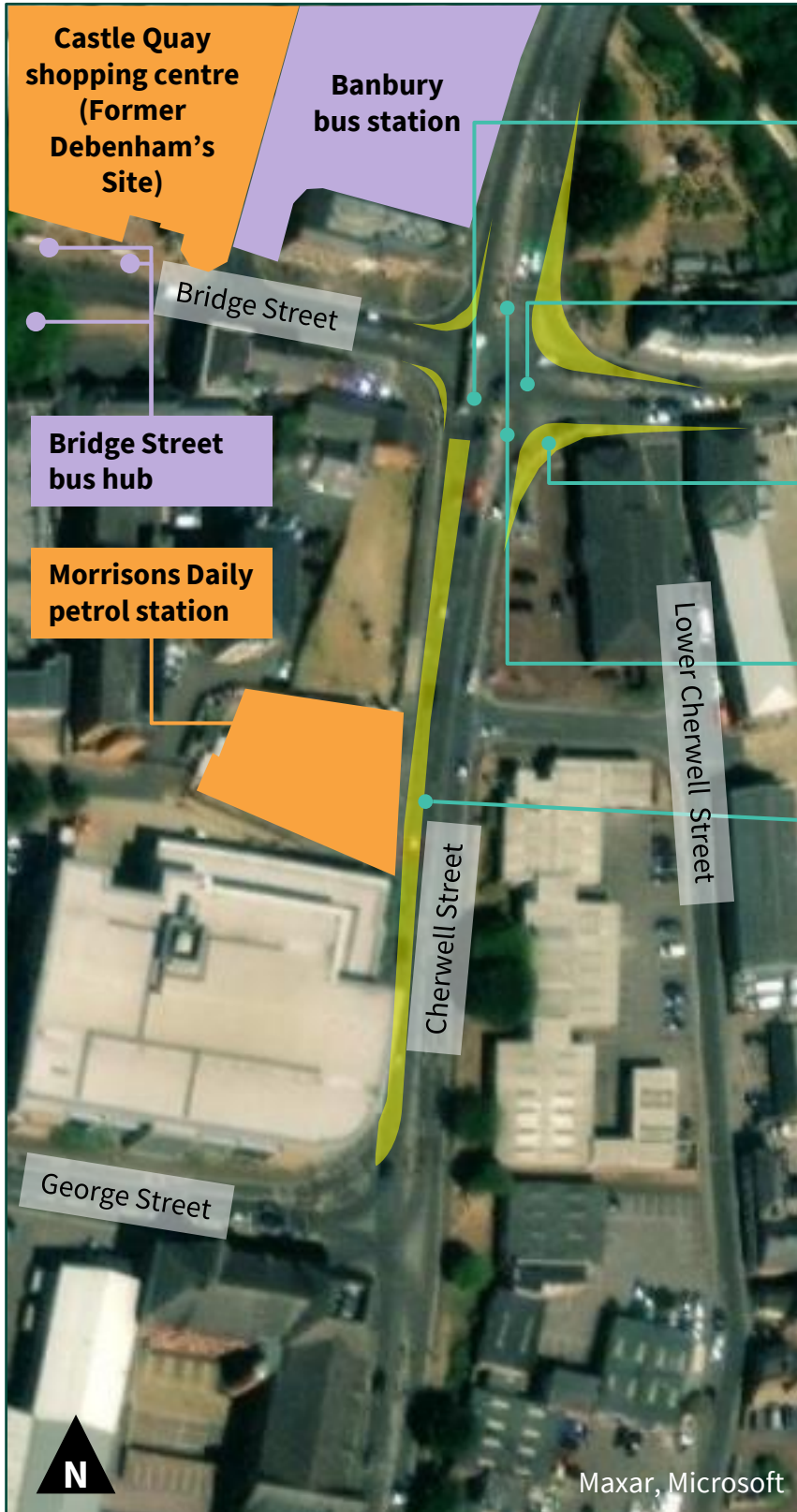
## The long list of options

Other options were also considered but eliminated prior to development of concept scheme design as they were considered to have negative effects on bus passengers, for example, not supporting faster and more reliable bus journey times or making it more difficult for bus passengers to travel to their destination once in Banbury; or they were unfeasible to implement.

These options included replacing the junction at Cherwell Street and Bridge Street with a roundabout and installing a bus lane on Bridge Street.



# Other options considered



Banning right turn movements from Cherwell Street to Bridge Street

Providing new roundabout at the junction of Cherwell Street and Bridge Street

Expanding footways to reduce crossing distances and provide more space for pedestrians

Simplifying and improving pedestrian crossings on Cherwell Street

Providing bus lane on Cherwell Street



# Where are we now - and what happens next?

**Late 2023 – Early 2024**  
Concept development and options analysis

**March 2024**  
Initial consultation

**April 2024**  
Concept design

**Summer 2024**  
Detailed design, further consultation and scheme refinement

**Autumn 2024 – Summer 2025**  
Scheme approval, construction and commissioning

The proposed scheme is a first step in the wider place-making and public realm improvements for Banbury which will be identified within the 2050 Vision work for the town. The Cherwell Street bus priority scheme aims to deliver improvements in the shorter term (2025).

We are keen to engage with you now to hear your thoughts. Your feedback will be reviewed and used to inform the next stage of scheme design and costings. There will then be a further consultation on the next stage of design in summer 2024.



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