Santander Cycles
Brunel University London

Planning, Design and Access Statement

In support of a planning application for the expansion of the current 10 dock station at **Isambard Complex** on Brunel University London campus

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Santander Cycles Brunel University London

1. Overview

1.1 Santander Cycles University Challenge

In December 2017 Brunel University London (BUL) won a Santander funded university competition to win the capital costs (approx £100,000) to introduce a cycle hire scheme onto its campus and the local area.

In phase one of the competition (Sept '17), BUL was shortlisted into the final five from 17 other competitors across the United Kingdom. This decision was based on Brunel's successful completion of a feasibility study designed by Santander and Nextbike (the cycle scheme provider). The study demonstrated that the University was prepared and committed to raise funds, had the necessary resources to implement a cycle hire scheme and included docking station locations which would benefit the wider community.

In phase two, Brunel successfully came in the top two to beat the remaining competitors by raising the most money via a crowdfunding campaign. The successful crowdfunding campaign included 468 pledges from local business partners, staff and students from the university and local London Borough of Hillingdon residents. The campaign raised over £85,000, which was to be used for future running costs of the cycle hire scheme.

Crowdfunding Statistic

£85,448
raised

468 individual pledges
from local business, students, staff & local residents

£10K
from Uxbridge BID

Local Business Partner Sponsors

The lightweight kids' bike
www.frogbikes.com

BURGERS • STEAKS • SMOKEHOUSE

1.2 Full Scheme Overview

Local Service Provider

The full scheme includes:

- 50 Bicycles
- 6 Docking Station Locations
  1. Uxbridge High Street
  2. Isambard Residences (BUL)
  3. Bannerman Centre (BUL)
  4. Eastern Gateway (BUL)
  5. Sports Pavilion (BUL)
  6. Hillingdon Hospital
- Totalling 70 Docking Station Points
- Annual Membership
- Business Membership
- ‘Pay As You Go’ Membership
- Recycle-A-Bike as Local Service Provider

“Santander Cycles Brunel University London is such a great idea, it will hopefully get more students, staff and local people more physically active and improve all of our health and fitness”

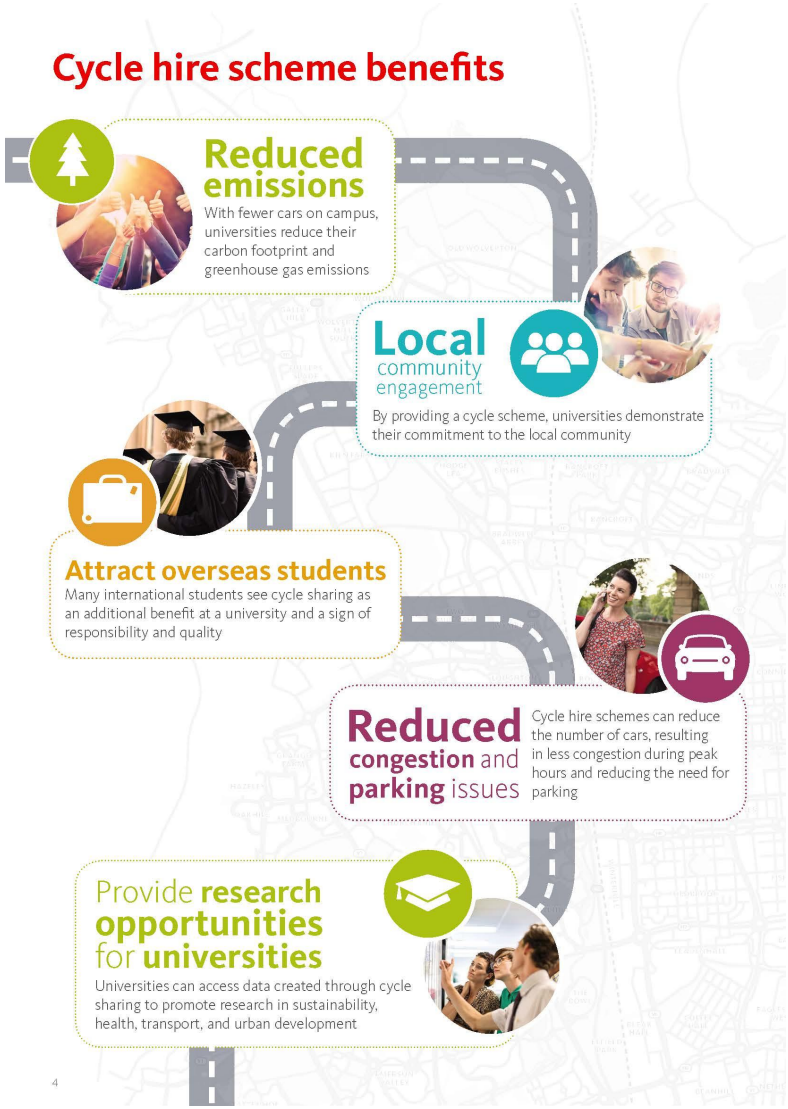
Crowdfunder Santander Cycles Comment Page

1.3 University Staff and Student Benefits

Bike share is a handy way for staff and students to travel, making inter-site trips around campuses, accommodation and the local surrounds easier. As universities have a high number of people making multiple trips every day they are key partners for successful schemes. Many on-street schemes have originated or grown from a campus scheme, e.g. Oxford, Warwick and Sheffield. The 18-25 age group are also an effective demographic to target to establish positive sustainable travel habits, as they are making their first steps towards independent travel and can more easily integrate new behaviours.

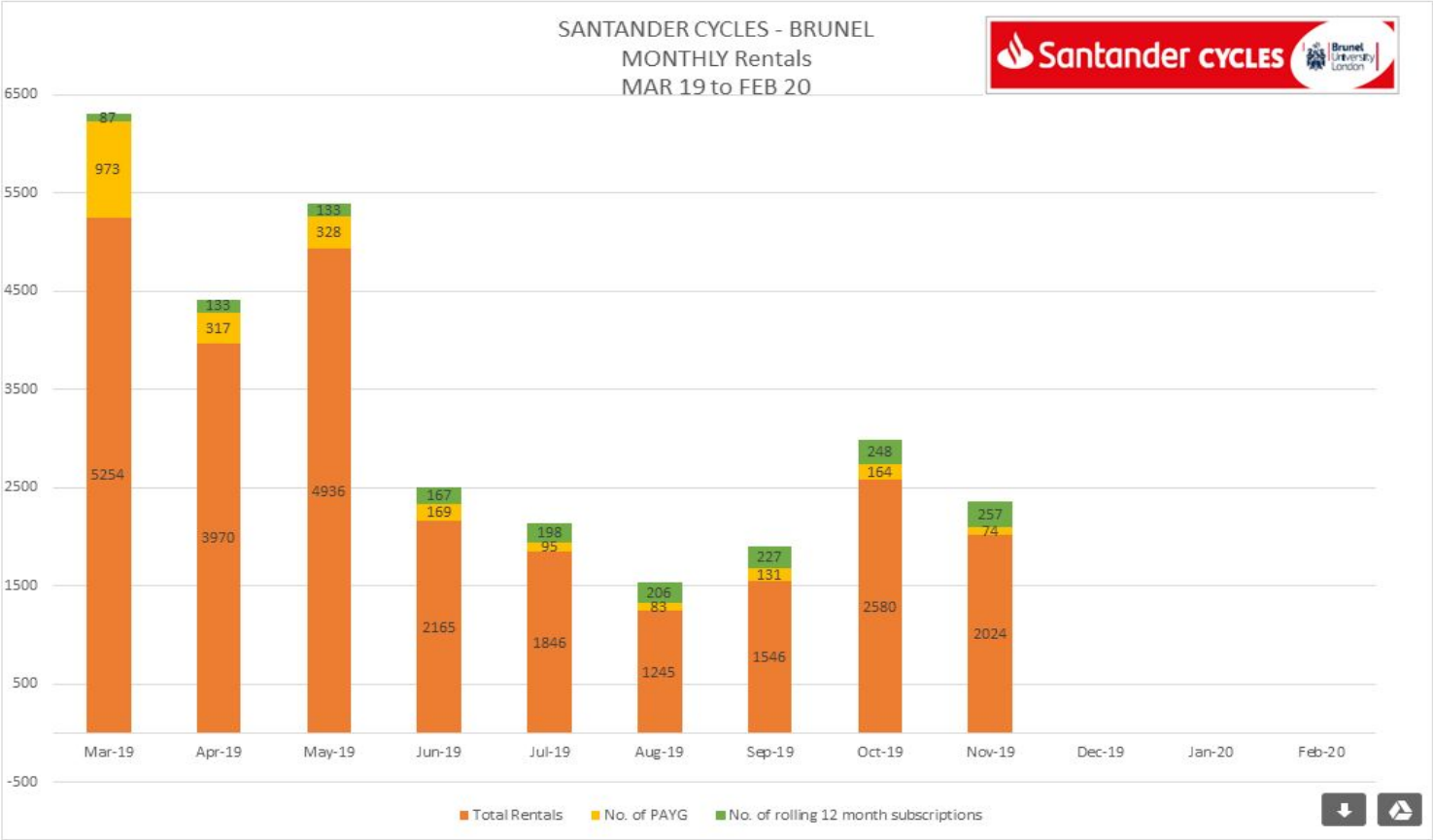
Brunel University London is a large self contained campus (approx 1km²) with a safe cycle route (89) to Uxbridge train and bus station running through its centre. The proposed bike share scheme would enable staff/students who currently travel from Uxbridge station to incorporate cycling as part of their regular commute, alongside staff and students looking to travel around the large campus to attend classes.

Bike share can be complementary to public transport, it is often used as the first and last mile to add flexibility and convenience to journeys. This multi-modal package then becomes a more viable alternative to the car, supporting sustainable, healthy travel.



1.4 How has the scheme performed so far?

The graph below shows the rental performance in 2019 as well as they number of registrations, both PAYG and subscribers. The drop over the summer matches the University terms but the usage is still high.

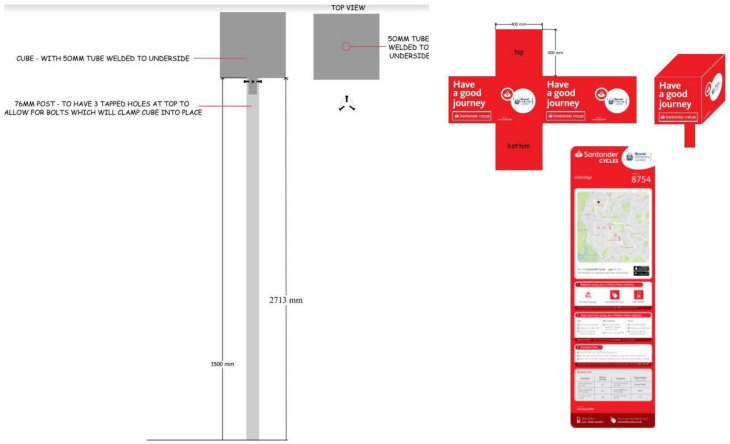


2. Design Statement

Docking Stations

2.1 Docking Station Design

Each docking station comprises a terminal and docking points. The layout of each docking station and number of docking points is tailored to each site, depending on the available space, the proximity to buildings, the presence of street furniture and other relevant criteria listed 1.4. Docking stations are located on footways, carriageways and other hard-standing areas.



Terminal

The terminal consists of a metal post with an information board and a GPS cube mounted on the top. The terminal emits a GPS signal (approx 20m) that identifies when bicycles have been returned to the designated drop off locations. If all the docking points are full, the user is still able to lock the bike to itself with the cable lock and leave it locked next to the station. The GPS will detect the bike has been returned and allow the user to click ‘returned’ via the mobile app.

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Docking Points

The docking points for the docking of scheme cycles, will be contained within a defined area (or areas) adjacent to the terminal. The dimensions of the docking point area(s) will vary between docking stations depending on the number of cycle docking points, the way in which they are laid out and the site constraints and characteristics.

The docking points each secure one cycle and are laid out to provide a minimum of 0.75 metres between the centre point of the cycles once docked. The docking points area will be designed so that the cycles will be angled at either 45 or 90 degrees within the site. Whether a docking point is positioned straight or angled has been determined by the criteria outline in 1.4 Site Selection Criteria.

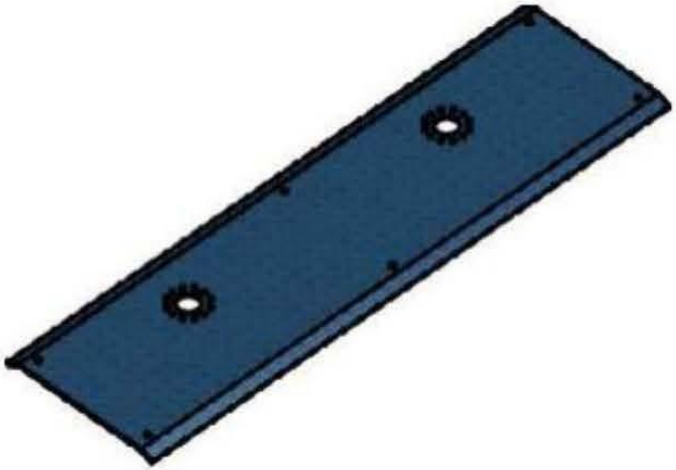
The cycle can be locked by the user following these simple steps:

- The cycle is returned to any Santander Cycle docking station within the scheme.
- The user pushes the lock cable through the docking station rack and fork to secure
- The user pushes the lock and pulls to check the lock is secure
- The user presses OK (userpad on the bike) to end the hire and waits for the ‘Returned’ confirmation message

2.2 Foundations

The foundation for the docking stations require a flat even surface for a rectangular metal plate to be fixed. The individual docking points are then fixed to this to make up the docking station. All sites have been chosen to minimise preparatory works and make installation as smooth as possible.

A scan of all the proposed docking station location sites has been conducted to make sure there are no underground utilities/pipes below the area of the docking station and sign post.



2.3 Signage Options

The signage on the docking station (reference in 2.1 Docking Station Design) is mounted on a high pole. This had been checked by the Hillingdon High Street redevelopment team and meets their criteria.

There is opportunities to add further signage in the local area notifying the public of their nearest docking station location. There are existing monoliths throughout Uxbridge that could also provide further information about the location of docking stations.

2.4 Operation

Operating Hours

The docking station will be available for use 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with the main periods of use during weekday mornings and early evenings. The majority of patrons using the docking station are members who do not need to be at the station for long periods as they simply use their membership card to unlock the bike or type in their registered mobile number and 6 digit code. Casual users will register via the app and receive a cycle release code which they will enter using the numbered pad located above rear wheel mudguard.

Noise Levels

The noise level associated with using the docking station is comparable to bus patrons using a ticket machine located at a bus stop, or to people viewing legible London wayfinding maps.

Light Levels

The docking stations do not emit any further light with each station being chosen in a location with existing suitable lighting for users to access the cycles.

Locking Mechanism

The locking mechanism consists of a cable lock that can be housed in the basket when the cycle is being used and can be used to lock the bicycle if the user wanted to lock the bike in a non terminal location during their loan period. This provides an extra level of convenience for the scheme for those wanting to use th bikes for longer periods. The design has been carefully optimised to ensure that the risk of cycles being stolen is minimised.

All docking points have been designed to guide the user to wheel the cycle into the correct position to easily engage the locking mechanism and to be able to remove the bicycle with minimal disruption to nearby footfall. A key objective has been to minimise the physical depreciation of the street furniture through design by, for instance, the use of curved edges on equipment and the selection of robust materials and finishes that are easy to maintain.

2.5 Maintenance and Distribution

Contractual arrangements between nextbike and the Local Service Provider (Bikewise, Ickenham) regarding maintenance, repair and replacement ensure the appearance of the docking station meets appropriate standards. Each docking station is inspected by maintenance staff during rebalancing to ensure all equipment is fully functional and a high standard of station cleanliness is maintained. Any damage identified during this visit is repaired on site where possible or reported for follow-up action if necessary. Docking stations are also visited when faults or damage are reported by users.

Bikewise is a long established, well respected bike shop in the area. They took over the Local Service Provider role from Recycle a Bike in September and are keen to take on the extra work that comes with the scheme expanding. This will most likley lead to them employing more people contributing to the local economy.

As the Local Service Provider (LSP), Bikewise will be responsible for:

- Regularly servicing the bikes to keep the fleet in good working order
- Regularly cleaning the bikes to maintain the bikes appearance, including the removal of any graffiti
- Repairing bikes reported as faulty and returning the bikes back into the fleet promptly
- Redistributing the bikes every morning to their ‘starting positions’
- Monitoring the fleet via the online portal and rebalancing the fleet when necessary to ensure the bikes are available in popular docking locations throughout the day. We would expect to see a higher demand for bikes at Uxbridge station in the morning and early evenings with staff and students commuting

3. Access Statement

3.1 Pedestrian Circulation

As discussed in Section 1.4 Site Selection Criteria the docking station sites have been selected where there is sufficient footway or carriageway width not to cause an obstruction to pedestrians or vehicles. Docking stations on carriageway sites are usually located against the kerb. Sufficient space has been provided to enable users to circulate around the terminal and docking points without having to step out into traffic paths.

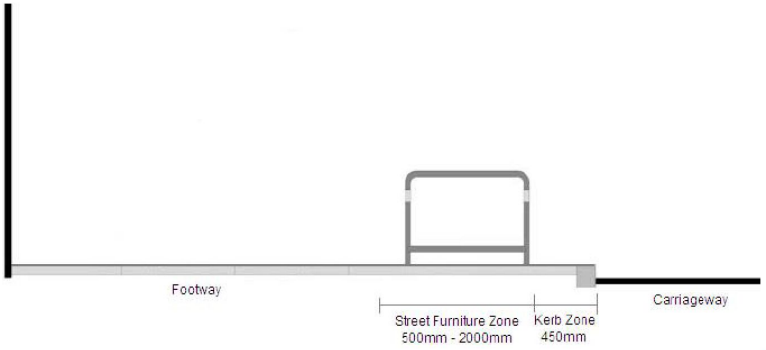
Docking stations on the footway are usually located within the street furniture zone, or at the back of the footway. In most cases, a minimum of 2.0 metres of clear footway is retained to ensure that the docking station does not impede pedestrian movements.

The docking station is designed to maximise pedestrian circulation within and around the docking points and terminal. There is a gap between individual docking points to allow ease of cycle docking and undocking, and pedestrian movement between the docking points when they do not contain docked cycles.

3.2 Inclusive Design

The views of key access groups, including the Royal National Institute for Blind People, the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association and the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee were taken into account in the initial development of a design of the street furniture. The resulting docking station design is accessible to all anticipated user groups.

The wayfinding mapping and information on the terminal, including that likely to be of relevance to non-cyclists, is of an appropriate height for most users, including wheelchair users. The mapping has been designed to be clear and easy to read and complies with accessibility standards. The text on the information panels also meets the appropriate standards with respect to font size and type, as well as colour contrast to background.



4. Planning, Policy and Guidance

4.1 Introduction

In making a decision on whether to grant planning permission, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the 2004 Act) requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with policies of the statutory Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

This section first provides an assessment of the extent to which the proposal supports relevant policies within The London Plan (2004), followed by the London Borough of Hillingdon Strategy and the Brunel University London Active Travel Plan (2010), which together form the Local Plan. An assessment of the proposal against other relevant planning policy including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and guidance is provided thereafter.
At the national level the assessment focuses on sustainability, transport and design policies. At the local level the proposal is assessed against relevant policies within the Local Plan.

4.2 London Plan

The **London Plan** is the overall strategic plan for London, and sets out a fully integrated economic, environmental, transport and social framework for the development of the capital over the next 20-25 years. Strategic principles are fundamental to the overall London Plan. Policy 1.1 (Delivering the strategic vision and objectives for London) states that growth and change in London will be managed in order to achieve the Mayor's vision for London's sustainable development, ensuring all Londoners enjoy a good, and improving, quality of life sustainable into the future.

The cycle hire scheme is recognised as an initiative which supports London's visitor economy in a more sustainable approach (**Policy 4.5**). **Policy 5.1** (Climate Change Mitigation) seeks a reduction in London's carbon dioxide emissions of 60% by 2025.

4.2 London Plan (Continued)

Delivery of an efficient and effective transport system is a key component of the London Plan. **Policy 6.1** (Integrating Transport and Development) seeks to encourage integration of transport within new schemes and supports a shift to more sustainable modes of transport. It promotes a greater use of low carbon technology in order to reduce carbon dioxide and other contributors to global warming ensuring a minimal impact on the local environment. It requires Boroughs to support sustainable means of transport and reduce the need for travel by car (by imposing maximum car parking standards and minimum cycle parking standards). Table **6.1** 'Indicative List of Transport Schemes' notes that the Central London Cycle Hire Scheme is to be expanded in area and/or additional bikes within central London to be completed between 2013-2020.

The Mayor will encourage a significant increase in cycling. **Policy 6.9** (Cycling) states that the Mayor will identify, promote and implement a network of cycle routes across London, continue operate and improve the cycle hire scheme, and fund the transformation of outer London town centres into cycle friendly 'mini-Hollands'. This means that planning decisions should facilitate the Mayor's cycle hire scheme through provision of land and/or planning obligations where relevant, to ensure the provision of sufficient capacity.

It also outlines that cycling facilities are to be integrated within new developments and that Local Development Frameworks should identify, promote, facilitate the Cycle Super Highways and identify and safeguard sites for new or expanded cycle docking stations to increase capacity of the Mayor's cycle hire scheme.

Policy 6.11 (Smoothing Traffic Flow and Tackling Congestion) outlines that a coordinated approach needs to be taken in order to smooth traffic flow and tackle congestion. It states that Development Plan Documents should improve the extent and quality of pedestrian and cycling routes, improve management of the road network and support a shift to walking and cycling to improve traffic congestion and reduce air pollution.

Policy 7.5 states that development should make the public realm comprehensible at a human scale. This means that public and private open spaces should contribute to the highest standards of comfort, security and ease of movement possible.

The London Plan seeks to encourage healthy lifestyles in order to reduce health inequalities within London. It outlines that transport (along with other developments) should incorporate health benefits.

4.3 Brunel University London Travel Policy

Brunel University London has pledged to reduce the sites carbon footprint and increase cycling by 2020. BUL received a 'Gold Standard' award from WestTrans to recognise that BUL had been meeting their yearly active travel plan targets. BUL would like to increase its cycling target from 6% to 9%. The cycle hire scheme will greatly increase and enable a number of people to choose to cycle.

In 2017 Brunel benefitted from a WestTrans funded project and received a Student Cycling Champion to improve cycling on campus and get more staff and students cycling. This resulted in:

- 200 extra cycle parking spaces installed on campus via TfL workplace credits scheme
- Piloted cycle loan scheme from Jan - June with 35 completers, showing the the demand for cycling is high on campus
- Organised Hillingdon Dr Bike monthly session that fixed approximately 20 cycles per session

For the Santander Cycles project the University pledged a significant amount of money to support the project coming to campus and has kept the membership cost at £30/year for staff and students to ensure uptake is high. BUL has also pledged to further improve cycling provision on campus with a dedicated cycle route on campus, providing improved links to Uxbridge and West Drayton stations.

4.4 London Borough of Hillingdon Strategy

The TfL propensity to cycle tool shows that nearly 40% of current trips could be undertaken by bicycle in the London Borough of Hillingdon.

The London Mayor's cycling vision for London calls on all boroughs to increase cycling provision. Hillingdon Council runs various activities (led rides, Dr Bikes) that promote cycling throughout the borough. The recent Bikspiration event further demonstrates that the borough priorities and encourages cycling.

In July 2013 London Borough of Hillingdon applied for TfL's **Mini Holland** funding that would enable them to improve cycling provision across the Borough. The application included:

- **University Cycle Line** - Uxbridge Underground and Bus station to Brunel University London and West Drayton Railway station
- **Hillingdon Hospital Cycle Line** - Uxbridge town centre to Hillingdon Hospital

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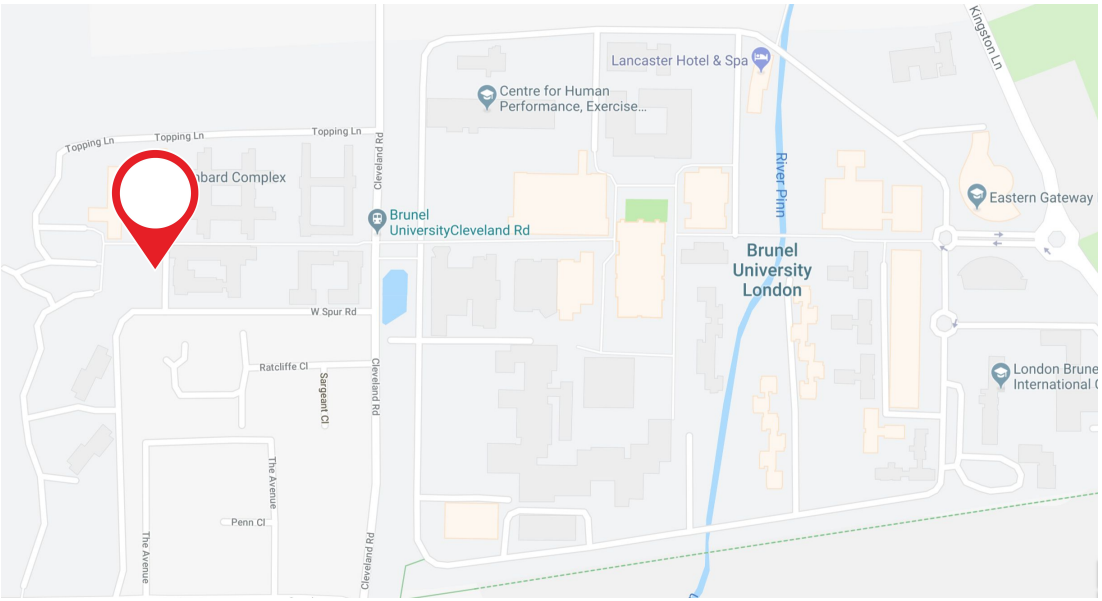
5. Application

Proposed Docking Station Sites

5.1 Site Characteristics

5.1.1 Location

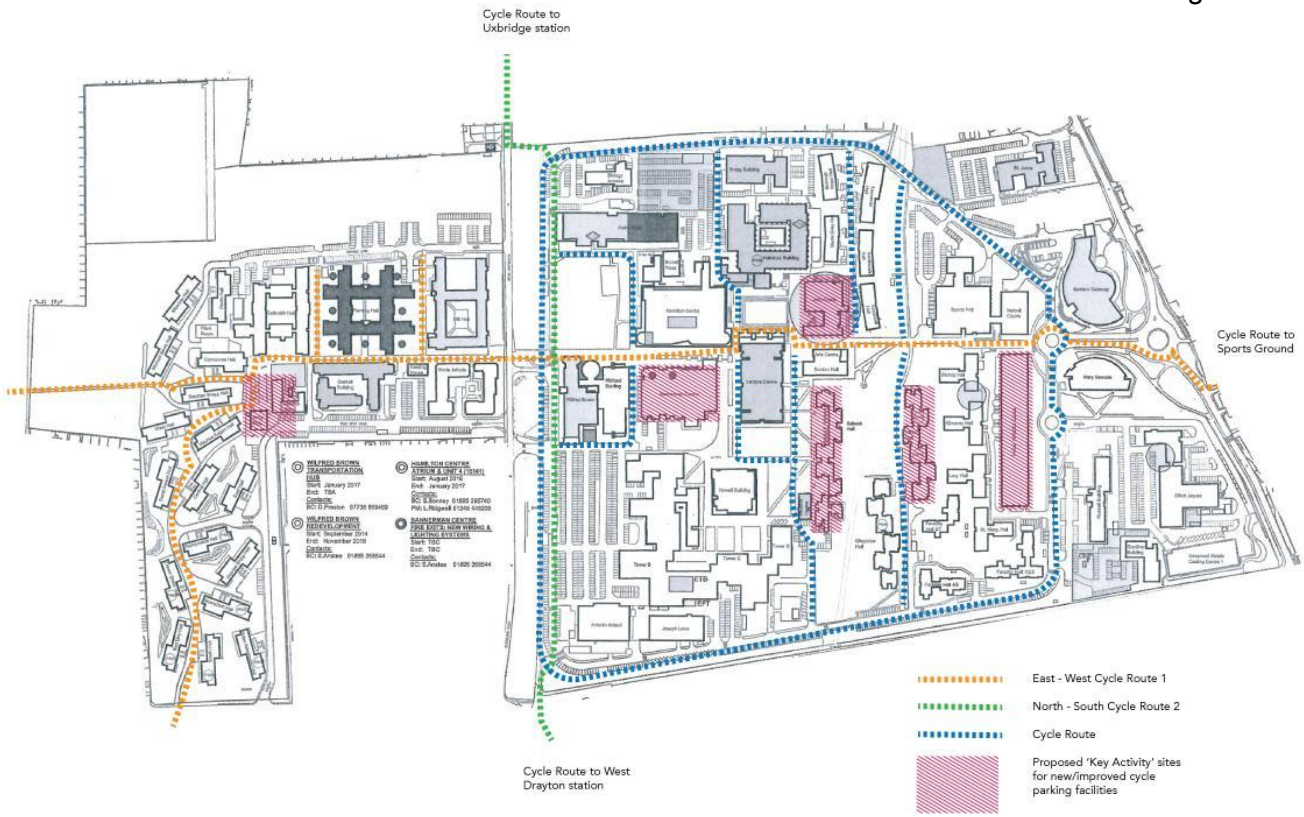
The proposed site is located outside the Isambard complex near the Isambard student residences. The proposed site is predominantly residential and is located in close proximity to an outdoor social space for students including the campus shop.



5.1.2 Transport Links

The site is located in a western location on Brunel University London's new cycle route around campus. In preparation for the bike scheme arriving on campus BUL is promoting the pictured cycle routes through campus. This will encourage users to use the ring road around campus which allows users to feed into different parts of the campus via a variety of artery roads.

The cycle routes will be signposted and in the future a cycle path will be painted onto the road. This will try to minimise the numbers of users using the main spine that is very narrow near the quad, hopefully reducing conflict between pedestrians and cyclists. The cycle route also allows users to join up with Cycle Route 89 and either continue to Uxbridge or go for leisure rides along the canal etc. The cycle path also makes it easy for users to travel to the other docking stations within the scheme.

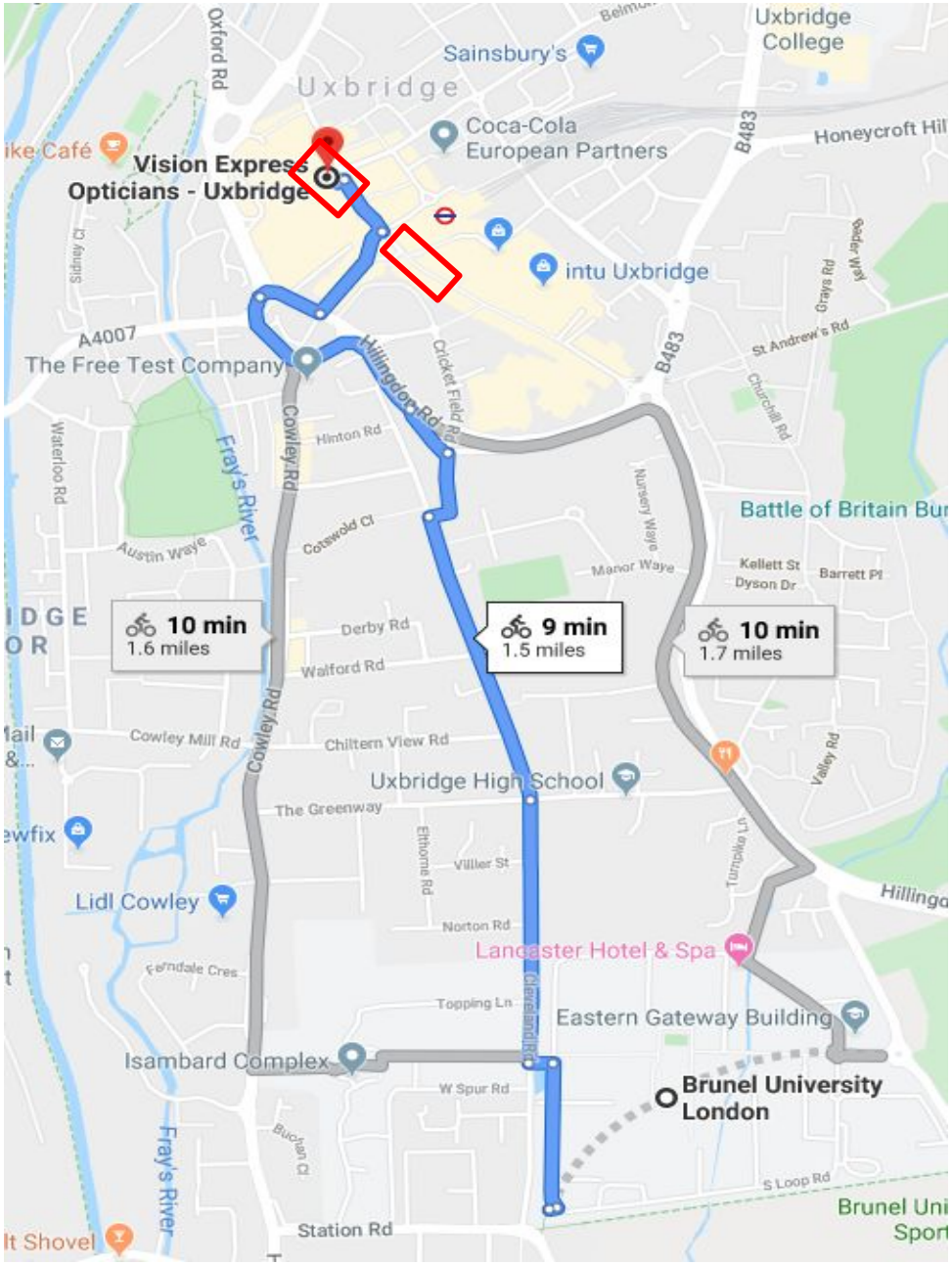


5.1.2 Transport Links

The site is located approximately 175m from Uxbridge Underground Station which is served by the Metropolitan and Piccadilly Lines, and approximately 150m from Uxbridge bus station which serves various routes across the surrounding area. Bike share can be complementary to public transport, it is often used as the first and last mile to add flexibility and convenience to journeys.

The site is located on a safe cycle route (Cycle Route 89) to Brunel University London and West Drayton station. Currently the London Borough of Hillingdon (LBH) have imposed 'no cycling between 10am to 5pm' on the highlighted portion of the safe cycle route. This means users will either need to walk their bicycles for the first 100m until they're outside the non cycling zone, or take the alternative route down Windsor Street which feeds cyclists onto busier roads. To overcome this potential barrier to users, a few alternatives could be:

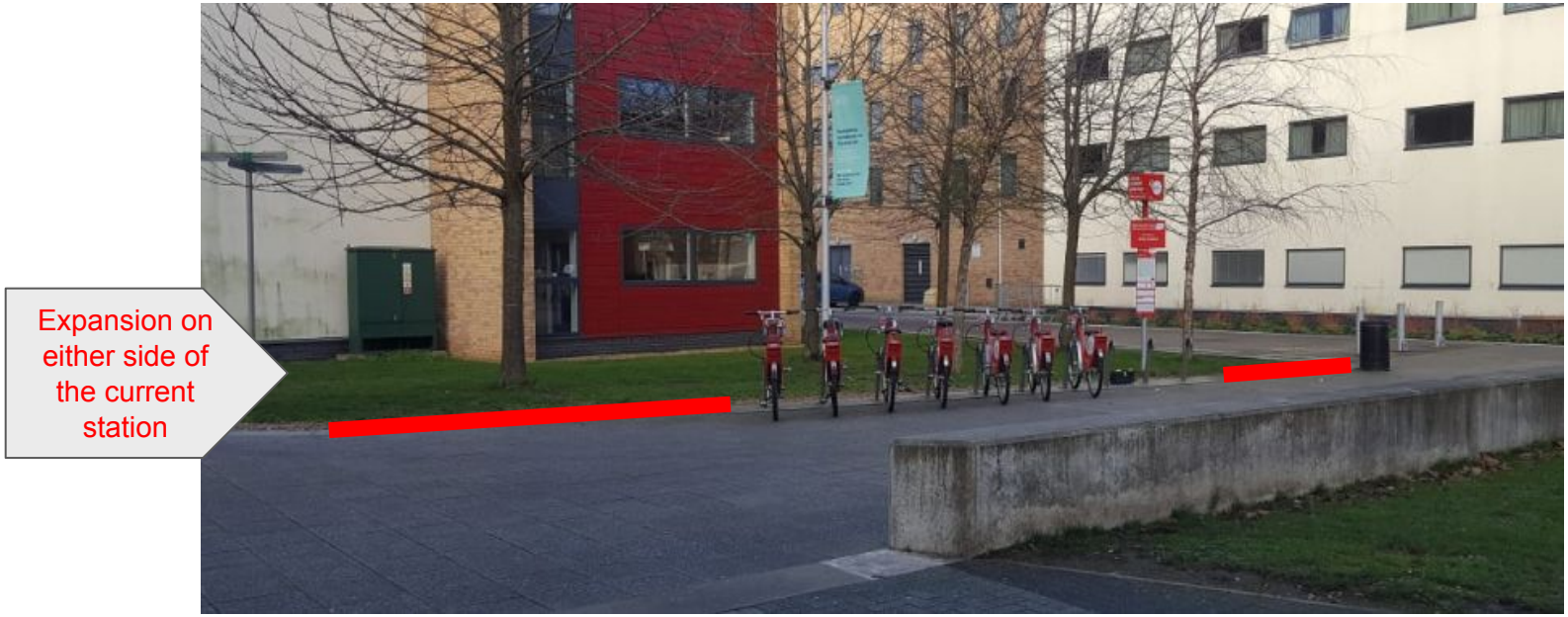
1. Retract the non cycling ban and signpost the section as 'Shared Space' for both pedestrians and cyclists to use
2. Reduce the non cycling hours to accommodate users to cycle during expected peak hours
3. Reroute cyclists by signposting to Windsor Street to use the cut through behind Charter Place rear entrance. This would bring cyclists out by Cricket Field roundabout, which feeds back into Cycle Route 89



5.1.3 Site Description

The proposed site is located on a walkaway in close proximity to the Isambard Residences. It is adjacent to a communal seating area which is used by students during break periods, and includes an outdoor seating area and table tennis facilities. The site is also in close proximity to a student shop and Isambard main reception.

The proposal is expanding the current docking station by another 8.6m.



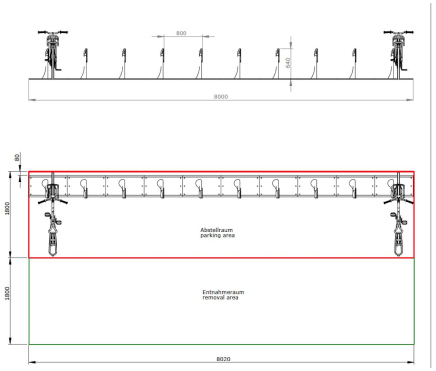
5.2 Proposal

Extension of current single row, 10 Bike docking station to create a 20 Bike docking station at Isambard Complex

The proposal is to install another 10 dock rack docking station onto the current station. This station is well used at the University due to

The proposed location provides easy cycle access to the rest of the campus for the large student population in Isambard residences. The docking station will accommodate a maximum of 20 docking points with the docking points laid out in a single linear row.

The station dimensions will therefore be 16.6m



5.3 Key Issues

5.3.1 Traffic, Access and Parking

The proposed site is located by the main west access point for campus, which many students regularly use when visiting the local Lidl superstore on Cowley Road. The site is located 1.3km from the Sports Pavilion on the eastern end of the campus, so allows students to cycle this frequent journey for sports clubs and sports recreation.

The location is approx. 10m away from a temporary parking bay adjacent to the Isambard Residences Main Reception. This can be accessed via Topping Lane, off Cleveland Road. The LSP could park here for collection/drop off for this location.

The additional length of the docking station will not inhibit any vehicles needing access to site.

6. Membership and Accessibility

How Will Membership Work?

6. 1 Membership Types

In order to access the Santander Cycle Hire Scheme users can choose to either ‘pay as you go’ or buy ‘full membership:’

Tariffs

Pay as you go:

- First 30 mins = £1
- Each subsequent 30 mins = £1
- 5-24 hours = £10

Membership

- £30 for Brunel Staff/Students
- £60 for all other users

  - ➔ First 30 mins (as of March 2020) = free
  - ➔ Each subsequent 30 mins = 50p
  - ➔ 5-24 hours = £5

6. 2 Accessing Membership

Only those with a ***@brunel.ac.uk*** email address can buy the £30 membership level. This rate is subsidised by the University.

All users have to register using a credit/debit card and this can be done on the phone, computer, bike computer or mobile app.

Any Business or organisation can approach Brunel directly to negotiate lower rates for its users. This is done through Nextbike.

7. Future Expansion

Potential Locations

7.1 Stockley Park

During the crowdfunding phase of the competition Stockley Park were very supportive and promoted the competition to their tenants. Due to their funding restrictions they were not able to make a donation directly. Nextbike and the Council are now in talks with them to provide 2 stations on their site as long as the West Drayton station is installed.

7.2 Hillingdon Residential Areas

The simplest expansion would be to introduce some docking stations into the housing estates around BUL. These contain many Brunel students but would also encourage local residents to use the scheme too.

7.3 The Old Vinyl Factory

The Old Vinyl Factory have integrated a nextbike station into their developments plans and will cover the cost of a 10 dock station.

7.4 Hillingdon Leisure Centre

Hillingdon Council has given the permission and funding to place a 10 bike docking station at the Leisure Centre. This is a short cycle from the high street. Many students use the Leisure Centre and this will hopefully increase the public access to the bike scheme

7.5 West Drayton Station

Hillingdon Council is actively working with nextbike to find a location for a station at West Drayton. While Crossrail is still under construction there is a possibility the station will be found a temporary site and an integrated into the new plans when the station is expanded.

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