

STOCKPORT COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE REPORT – SUMMARY SHEET

Subject: MCF Edgeley to Stockport Cycle Link

Report to: (a) Central Stockport Area Committee **Date:** 16th September 2021
(b) Cabinet Member (Economy & Regeneration) **Date:**

Report of: (b) Corporate Director for Place Management & Regeneration

Key Decision: (c) **NO / YES** (Please circle)

Forward Plan General Exception Special Urgency (Tick box)

Summary:

This report gives results of a consultation on the Mayoral Challenge Fund (MCF) proposals for an improved walking and cycling route between Stockport and Edgeley and links to the new Interchange and seeks a recommendation that the Cabinet Member (Economy and Regeneration) approves the schemes with the exception of the Thomson Street to Railway Road ramp and A6/ Railway Road junction, for which approval to submit planning applications is requested.

Recommendation(s):

The Area Committee is asked to comment on this report and recommend that the Cabinet Member (Economy & Regeneration) approves the:

- submission of planning applications for the A6/ Railway Road junction and Thomson Street to Railway Road ramp;
- designs for the crossings and associated pedestrian and cycle links on King Street West, Greek Street/ Royal George Street, Station Road, A6/ Hooper Street, Lord Street and Duke Street;
- advertising of the Traffic Regulation Orders required to implement the above proposals;
- submission of the business case to seek funding approval for the Stockport to Edgeley and Interchange MCF schemes.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee (if decision called in): (d)
Communities & Housing Scrutiny Committee

Background Papers (if report for publication): (e)

There are none.

Contact person for accessing
background papers and discussing the report

Officer: Nick Whelan
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‘Urgent Business’: (f) **YES / NO** (please circle)

Certification (if applicable)

This report should be considered as 'urgent business' and the decision exempted from 'call-in' for the following reason(s):

The written consent of Councillor _____ and the Chief Executive/Monitoring Officer/Borough Treasurer for the decision to be treated as 'urgent business' was obtained on _____ /will be obtained before the decision is implemented.

Mayor's Cycling and Walking Challenge Fund – Edgeley to Stockport Cycle Link

Report of the Corporate Director for Place Management & Regeneration

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report gives results of a consultation on the Mayoral Challenge Fund (MCF) proposals for an improved walking and cycling route between Stockport and Edgeley and links to the new Interchange and seeks a recommendation that the Cabinet Member (Economy and Regeneration) approves the schemes with the exception of the Thomson Street to Railway Road ramp and A6/ Railway Road junction, for which approval to submit planning applications is requested.

A key part of the scheme will be the replacement of the former pedestrian bridge between King Street West and Thomson Street over the railway line with a 5 metre-wide, segregated pedestrian and cycle bridge. This is being delivered by Network Rail in partnership with Stockport Council and Transport for Greater Manchester. The MCF funding contribution to the bridge has already been confirmed, with the bridge planned to be completed in summer 2022.

2. BACKGROUND

Stockport Council is working hard with Transport for Greater Manchester to reduce air pollution and tackle climate change whilst also encouraging people to become more active. Part of this approach is making it easier for residents to increase the amount of walking and cycling they do on a daily basis.

Work has started on a Greater Manchester-wide programme to make journeys on foot or by bike much easier and more attractive. The Mayor of Greater Manchester has allocated £160m to the Mayor's Cycling and Walking Challenge Fund (MCF), made possible by the Government's Transforming Cities Fund.

A consultation on proposals to provide an improved pedestrian and cycle route between Edgeley and Stockport town centre was undertaken between 7th June and 2nd July 2021.

This report presents the consultation methodology applied by the Council and the response to the updated proposals.

The purpose of the consultation was specifically to inform the public, local residents, businesses and interest groups of the proposals and capture their comments. A full and inclusive consultation has been undertaken which has involved stakeholders including the public, local businesses and interest groups.

3. PROPOSALS

The package of proposals presented for consultation in June / July 2021 was divided into distinct schemes comprising:

Greek Street

- A segregated off-carriageway pedestrian and cycle route linking Royal George Street to Blackshaw Street via an improved toucan pedestrian/cycle crossing facility across Greek Street and a widened shared use footway/cycleway on the northern side of Greek Street. This connects via Blackshaw Street and Thomson Street to connect to the proposed routes through to King Street West and Railway Road; and
- An extension of the No Waiting at Any Time restrictions to cover the extent of the widened toucan crossing.

Edgeley and King Street West

- Upgrading the current toucan crossing on King Street West to a signal controlled sparrow type segregated pedestrian and cycle crossing;
- An off-road cycle track with improved pedestrian footways connecting Castle Street with Bengal Street including linkage to Our Lady's Catholic Primary School on Old Chapel Street;
- A north/south off-road cycle track with adjacent footway running along the western side of King Street West, connecting Bengal Street to the upgraded sparrow crossing on King Street West;
- An extension to the No Waiting at Any Time order to cover the extent of the proposed sparrow crossing.

Thomson Street

- A revised layout of the Armoury Car Park (to include 56 parking bays, a loss of 5 spaces) in order to provide better pedestrian and cycle routes to the new foot/cycle bridge;
- The ramp will have segregated foot and cycle routes marked on it separated by a raised line which will be able to be detected by the blind and partially sighted. Where the route passes between the existing and proposed car park, due to the available width, the path will become shared use, with appropriate signage and tactile paving provided.
- A proposed pedestrian/cycle ramp linking the car park with Railway Road. The ramp would be lit, covered by CCTV and located on land between the NCP multi-storey car park and Thomson Street. The proposals will include landscaping and appropriate fencing at the boundaries of properties on Thomson Street.
- It is proposed to install LED lighting along the length of the whole route, including the pedestrian/cycle ramp. This type of lighting provides a controllable light source that will be concentrated onto the new infrastructure

thereby minimising light intrusion into nearby homes and gardens, 'sky glow' and glare.

- Any trees lost will be replaced on a 2 for 1 basis.
- The consultation proposals for the Thomson Street ramp are based on a preliminary design. The proposals will be subject to a planning application, with the design to be developed ahead of the submission of the planning application.

Railway Road & the A6 Wellington Road South

- A shared use pedestrian cycle route next to the NCP car park with a parallel zebra crossing for pedestrians and cyclists travelling towards Sainsbury's and linking to the existing shared use areas around Stockport Exchange and the Rail Station;
- A segregated two-way cycle track and footway along the southern side of Railway Road to the A6 junction;
- Widening of Railway Road to provide an extended two-lane approach to the A6 traffic lights along with new servicing facilities for development at Stockport Exchange;
- Complete reconfiguration of the Railway Road/A6 junction including segregated cycle crossings, full pedestrian facilities and improved traffic operation. The junction will include a large left turn island to allow left turns out of Railway Road to operate at the same time as right turns in, which will improve operational efficiency. The two lane approach to the signals will also be extended so that if congestion on the A6 is preventing one movement the other can still flow, improving egress from Railway Road. Pedestrians will have controlled facilities on all arms of the junction, including across the A6 on the North side which facility is currently absent. Cyclists will have segregated, controlled facilities across the A6 south of the junction to link the new cycle track on Railway Road to John Street next to the Town Hall. This will require a small area of grass outside the Town Hall to be converted to cycle track. The proposals may require the loss of one tree, which will be confirmed during the detailed design process. The proposals will include landscaping that will replace any lost trees on a 2 for 1 basis. An existing shared footway / cycleway outside the Town Hall leading up to Edward Street will be retained. A second segregated cycle crossing will be provided over Railway Road to link into the Stockport Exchange development. All works will be constructed using materials that accord with the 'A6 Masterplan' including concrete silver grey kerbs and paving and granite tactiles.
- The relocation of the on-street parking on John Street; and
- No Waiting at Any Time order in the vicinity of the proposed parallel zebra crossing on Railway Road.

- 20mph speed limit order on Railway Road.
- The scheme requires third party land, negotiations for the acquisition of which are ongoing.

Lord Street

- The installation of a bollard at the northern end of Loonies Court that will prevent access to Loonies Court from Norbury Street;
- Prohibition of access for motor vehicles into Lord Street at its junction with Wellington Street with the footway on Wellington Street extended across the junction. Turning facilities are provided at the access to the Textillis House car park which is adopted Highway. A 'Tiger' type parallel pedestrian and cycle crossing is provided across Wellington Street at this point.
- No Waiting at Any Time order in the vicinity of the proposed parallel Tiger crossing on Wellington Street;
- Prohibition of access for motor vehicles into Lord Street at its junction with Duke Street including removal of parking and creation of an extended pedestrian and cycle only area. This will connect to St Peters Square via a new Tiger type crossing over Duke Street; and
- No Waiting at Any Time order in the vicinity of the proposed parallel zebra crossing on Duke Street.

Stockport Interchange Connections

- A6 Toucan Crossing – a new shared crossing for pedestrians and cyclists adjacent to the Hat Works. This will be linked to St Peter's Square and the proposed Podium Park on the roof of the new Interchange by shared footway/cycleways. Installation of the crossing will require the re-location of the existing northbound bus stop to a position outside the Garrick Theatre. This will require a bus stop clearway marking on this frontage. The new crossing will be linked in operation to the adjacent A6 / Exchange St / Petersgate signals to avoid creation of congestion on the A6 which forms part of the GM Key Route Network.
- Station Road cycle route – a new route for cycling is to be created between the station and the interchange. It will include a new parallel 'Tiger' type segregated crossing for pedestrians and cyclists next to Grand Central Leisure Centre. This will be linked to the station and the new ramp to the Podium Park by new footway/cycleways. Details of the bridgescape can be found via planning application reference DC/078431. To make space for the new cycle route the taxi rank will be re-modelled by removal of the double rank on the east side of the rank and extension of the rank in the location of the current bus stop. Facilities for wheelchairs to enter taxis will be provided at the rank and a shelter for those waiting retained. The proposals have been developed to minimise the loss of taxi spaces and will result in a net loss of three spaces. The bus stop currently located on Station Road is now only used for rail replacement buses. As part of the scheme, the bus stop will be relocated to the existing layby on Station Road, with use shared with

coaches accessing the swimming pool. This proposals have been discussed and agreed with TfGM. To improve safety the speed limit on Station Road will be reduced to 20mph.

Consultation Methodology

In developing the proposals subject to public consultation, the Stockport Council Highways liaised with key stakeholders including local councillors, TfGM, Council officers, SODA, Muse, Network Rail and Avanti, with a view to presenting draft proposals for consultation that addressed key design requirements. The proposals subject to public consultation were issued to a wide range of stakeholders, as detailed in the Consultation Report, provided at Appendix B. A variety of methods were used to advertise the consultation and capture the views consultees including the Council's website, social media, email, leaflet, letter and road signage. Further details of the consultation methodology are provided in the Consultation Report at Appendix B.

4. LEGAL POSITION/IMPLICATIONS

The Traffic Management Orders would be made under Section 1 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The Council is required by the Local Authorities Traffic Order (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 to give notice of its intention to make a Traffic Order (by publishing a draft traffic order). These regulations also require the Council to consider any representations received as a result of publishing the draft Order.

5. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK AND DESGNER'S RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

A total of 90 online response forms were completed, and eight emails were received.

The response to each distinct scheme and the designer's response to the feedback received is presented in the following sections.

The latest drawings of the proposals can be found at Appendix A. The consultation drawings can be found appended to the consultation report, provided at Appendix B.

Greek Street

Consultation Feedback

Based on the response forms, the majority of respondents agreed with the proposals to provide an improve connection from Stockport College at Royal George Street to Thomson Street. Of the 89 respondents to answer this question 25% disagreed and 66% agreed, 9% neither agreed nor disagreed or didn't know.

There were 47 comments which specifically related to the Greek Street proposals. Recurring comments included:

- Negativity towards the shared footway / cycleway, particularly on Blackshaw Street (16 comments);

- Negativity towards the short section of segregated cycle track which is described as 'pointless' and unsafe because it gives way to on-street parking (8 comments);
- A preference for an on-road cycleway along Greek Street which could be achieved through narrowing the carriageway / removing the right-turn lane at the junction of Royal George Street (16 comments);
- Concerns that the proposals will worsen existing traffic problems on Greek Street (8 comments);
- Requests for more cycling infrastructure / facilities on the roads surrounding Greek Street (3 comments);
- A feeling that the proposals are unnecessary or won't be used because cyclists will ride on the road rather than wait to use the toucan crossing (7 comments);
- The manoeuvre to access the segregated cycle track from Royal George Street is described as 'dangerous' (4 comments);
- A need for more space to be allocated for pedestrians along Greek Street (2 comments);
- Alternative suggestions include installing a modal filter at the Blackshaw Street / Greek Street junction and making both Blackshaw Street and Armoury Street one way (2 comments);
- A recommendation to add traffic signals to the staggered junction of Greek Street / Blackshaw Street / Royal George Street with crossings for cyclists (1 comment);
- A general feeling of positivity towards the upgrading of the existing crossing but there is a query as to whether the location is appropriate (8 comments).

One respondent described the accompanying drawing as misleading, claiming that it shows Thomson Street ending in line with the terraced housing rather than continuing with good cycle infrastructure to the A6 and Greek Street via Frances Street.

Designer's Response to Feedback

Various options for the crossing to allow segregation of pedestrians and cyclists have been explored. However, due to the available highway space and the need to accommodate access to adjacent properties and streets it has not been possible to segregate pedestrians and cyclists.

The proposals seek to provide improvements for cyclists whilst balancing the needs of the various road users in this location. Some of the comments received would improve provision for cyclists but would be to the detriment to other road users in the area.

The purpose of the crossing is to provide an improved cycling connection from existing residential areas and new developments with Stockport Station and the

wider town centre. The provision of a cycling route along Greek Street does not form part of the scheme.

In response to feedback, the footway has been widened on the western side of Blackshaw Street to provide facility in accordance with LTN 1/20. A transition point via dropped kerbs and associated shared use paving and signing will be provided.

Previous designs looked to include a refuge island on Royal George Street at the Greek Street junction to provide protection for cycles, however, the geometry would not work with the required vehicles entering Royal George Street from Greek Street. The MCF/TfGM design review agreed that the proposed raised table along with the good forward visibility would mitigate the potential issue.

The proposal for modal filters on the Greek Street/ Blackshaw Street junction would potentially isolate this residential area with existing modal filters on St James Leech and Frances Street. All traffic would be required to access the area via a residential street including that accessing the adjacent office buildings.

The addition of traffic signals at the Greek Street/ Royal George St/ Blackshaw Street junctions would have a detrimental effect on the operation of Greek Street without providing additional benefit to pedestrians and cycles in comparison to the proposed design.

Edgeley and King Street West

Consultation Feedback

Based on the response forms, the majority of respondents agreed with the proposals to provide an improved connection from the Thomson Street bridge to Edgeley. Of the 89 respondents to answer this question 25% disagreed and 65% agreed, 10% neither agreed nor disagreed or didn't know.

There were 44 comments which specifically related to the Edgeley and King Street West proposals. Recurring comments included:

- Queries as to whether members of the public will know how to use the proposed new infrastructure with concerns raised around the potential for confusion (7 comments);
- Recommendations with regards to landscaping and ecology with a desire for trees to be retained/protected and/or planted (3 comments);
- Concerns relating to the proposals for Bengal Street due to the prominence of on-street parking, particularly its junction with King Street West (8 comments);
- A feeling that the route is indirect (8 comments);
- A preference for on-road cycle provision on King Street West / Shaw Heath (5 comments);
- Opposition towards shared-use paths due to the potential for conflict between pedestrians and cyclists (7 comments);

- General concerns relating to safety which cite Bengal Street, the proposed sparrow crossing and the A6 (12 comments);
- Suggestions of alternative routes via the B5465 Mercian Way & Edgeley Road, the A6, Moseley Street, Castle Street through the Greek Street roundabout etc. (6 comments);
- A belief that the proposals will worsen existing traffic problems (3 comments);
- Overall support for the development of a sparrow crossing (7 comments) with one respondent stating that it will provide an improved route to the new Thomson Street bridge;
- A query relating to the impact of the proposals on parking and apprehension regarding possible conflict between users due to contraventions of Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) on Castle Street, resident parking on Bengal Street and school parking around Our Lady's Catholic Primary (5 comments);
- A feeling that the sections of segregated cycleway are too short, people won't know when to join / leave them and a belief that they will create conflict because they give way to side roads or shared-use paths (2 comments).

One respondent suggested that the proposals seem to prioritise cyclists over pedestrians and recommended that space was created for wheelchair users in the cycleway. A second respondent recommended that traffic calming measures should be installed on Bengal Street while a third stated that the works should be planned in conjunction with the extension to Metrolink and forthcoming works on Shaw Heath roundabout.

Designer's Response to Feedback

The scheme has been developed to provide improved access from the proposed new bridge over the West Coast Main Line to Edgeley as a whole, not just to Castle Street. Other than the Sparrow crossing and the connection to Bengal St King Street West does not form part of the route from Stockport to Edgeley that the proposals seek to improve. It is possible that such a route could be developed in the future as part of the Town Centre West proposals.

The scheme has been developed in the knowledge that in the next 5 years Network Rail will need to replace the Greek Street bridge over the mainline railway. Whilst there are no details of this yet agreed it is likely to include a re-modelling of the junction to improve pedestrian and cycle facilities. The scheme therefore routes cyclists away from that junction both to provide a route that will be available during works and in order to avoid abortive works in the vicinity of the Greek Street scheme.

In response to consultation feedback, the proposals have been amended to include:

- reducing the radii of the entry at the junction with Shaw Heath and a raised table at the junction which are design to reduce traffic entry speeds and improve intervisibility.
- Stopping up of Moseley Street to the western end of Bengal Street to prevent through traffic will reduce traffic flow.
- The introduction of a raised table at the Bengal Street/ Moseley Street junction.
- The segregated walking and cycling route will include the relevant tactile paving / signing in accordance with design standards.

Thomson Street

Consultation Feedback

Based on the response forms, the majority of respondents agreed with the proposals to provide an improved connection from the Thomson Street bridge to Railway Road. Of the 88 respondents to answer this question 16% disagreed and 67% agreed, 13% neither agreed nor disagreed.

There were 37 comments which specifically related to the Thomson Street proposals. Recurring comments included:

- Suggestions of alternative routes i.e. via James Leech Street / Frances Street to the A6 etc. (7 comments);
- A desire for trees to be retained and vegetation to be maintained (4 comments);
- Concerns regarding the potential for conflict between users (7 comments);
- Recommendations for Armoury Street car park including replacing it with greenery, providing a segregated cycleway or a route to the north which avoids the vehicle access/egress etc. (7 comments);
- Opposition towards shared-use paths (5 comments) with a preference for segregation (7 comments);
- Scepticism as to the whether the proposals will be used (3 comments);
- Concerns relating to safety (11 comments) with respondents mentioning CCTV, a possible feeling of isolation / seclusion / being enclosed due to a lack of passive surveillance and a perceived risk of antisocial behaviour;
- General support for the new cycle / pedestrian rail bridge to improve links between Edgeley and the town centre and prevent people from using the underpass at Stockport Station (4 comments);
- A feeling of positivity towards increasing accessibility but respondents emphasise the need to consider usability (7 comments);

- A belief that the route could be more direct with one respondent describing it as “twisted and convoluted” (4 comments);
- A preference for investment to be focused on creating a route for cyclists along the A6 (5 comments);
- Negativity towards the proposed ramp due to steepness, usability and safety (6 comments).
- One respondent requested that the shared footway / cycleway be marked in a unique colour to aid understanding. Another respondent described the associated plan as misleading, claiming that it shows Thomson Street ending in line with the terraced housing rather than continuing with good cycle infrastructure to the A6 via James Leech Street.

Designer’s Response to Feedback

In response to the suggestion that a route along the A6 be provided rather than the ramp, it should be noted that a route via Thomson Street, James Leech Street and the A6 was explored, however, it was not considered to be feasible or desirable due to the following:

- There is insufficient highway space available to provide a segregated walking and cycling route along the A6 from James Leech Street to Railway Road. It is not feasible to widen the footway into the frontage of the old infirmary due to the impact this would have on a listed building.
- The ramp provides a more direct link from the Thomson Street bridge to Stockport Exchange, Stockport Station and Stockport interchange.

The ramp is being developed in accordance with applicable standards and that any departures will be discussed and agreed through the regular reviews with TfGM before as part of seeking the funding. In this case, the ramp will have an 8% gradient as an absolute maximum.

The short section of shared space between the proposed ramp and Railway Road is as a result of the available land. This short section approximately 4 metres wide and is in accordance with LTN 1/20. Interaction between pedestrians and cycle is anticipated to be minimal with segregated facilities at each end.

The ramp will be subject to CCTV coverage.

The Armoury car park is well used and its closure is not required to deliver the walking and cycling proposals in this area.

Railway Road & the A6 Wellington Road South

Consultation Feedback

Based on the response forms, the majority of respondents agreed with the proposals to provide improved connections from Railway Road to Stockport Rail Station and the town centre. Of the 89 respondents to answer this question 18% disagreed and 67% agreed, 14% neither agreed nor disagreed or didn’t know.

There were 45 comments which specifically related to the Railway Road and A6 Wellington Road South proposals. Recurring comments included:

- Recommendations for Norbury Street including blocking vehicular access to the A6, adding a crossing and a raised table to access Lord Street (2 comments);
- A desire for segregated cycleways on the A6 (18 comments);
- Concerns relating to potential conflict between users (5 comments) with specific references to the shared footway / cycleway adjacent to the Town Hall, the section of segregated cycleway which swaps with the footway on Railway Road and the route next to Loonies Court;
- A belief that the proposals will not be used or will not offer a suitable alternative to cycle infrastructure along the A6 (6 comments);
- References to safety (14 comments) with a focus on the McDonalds junction and enabling cyclists to use the A6;
- General concerns about traffic, driver behaviour and congestion on the A6 (6 comments);
- Requests for signage to advise of the shared footway / cycleway in front of the Town Hall (2 comments);
- Hesitation as to whether the proposals will prioritise pedestrians and cyclists over drivers (5 comments); and
- Issues relating to John Street, particularly the cobbles (3 comments).

Other comments included a request for a link through Stockport Station; confusion as to why funding meant for active travel is being used to add an additional traffic lane on Railway Road and criticism relating to the drawings.

Designer's Response to Feedback

Alternative options proposed: A cycle lane along the A6 does not form part of the Stockport to Edgeley proposals. The works to the A6 are intended to provide an improved east-west walking and cycling connection across the A6. The potential to provide segregated cycle facilities on the A6 has been considered, however, this is not considered to be feasible due to the need to accommodate the needs of buses, emergency vehicle access to Stepping Hill Hospital and general traffic on this key route. In addition to the crossing, cycle lifts are to be installed as part of the Interchange to provide a connection from the Podium Park to the Riverside and town centre beyond.

There is insufficient highway space available to provide segregated cycle crossing facilities at the A6/ Station Road crossing. This route would also be less direct than the route via Railway Road.

John Street: Cobbles over the short section of John Street was considered acceptable at the TfGM design review. It was determined that vehicles having priority over cyclist on John Street would be safer as when vehicles enter they

would expect to be giving way to a cyclist on John Street in addition to this left turning vehicles into John Street have poor visibility. John Street is lightly trafficked so it is unlikely that cyclists would have to wait to cross John Street for any significant duration.

Following the consultation, it is proposed that the speed limit on Railway Road is reduced from 30mph to 20mph, such that it is the same as the proposed 20mph speed limit on Station Road.

Lord Street/ Wellington Street/ Duke Street

Consultation Feedback

Lord Street

Based on the response forms, the majority of respondents agreed with the proposals to prohibit vehicle access into Lord Street. Of the 88 respondents to answer this question 6% disagreed and 76% agreed, 14% neither agreed nor disagreed or didn't know.

Wellington Street

Based on the response forms, the majority of respondents agreed with the proposals to add a parallel zebra pedestrian/cycle crossing to Wellington Street. Of the 85 respondents to answer this question 8% disagreed and 76% agreed, 9% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Duke Street

Based on the response forms, the majority of respondents agreed with the proposals to add a parallel zebra pedestrian/cycle crossing to Duke Street. Of the 87 respondents to answer this question 8% disagreed and 75% agreed, 12% neither agreed nor disagreed.

There were 27 comments which specifically related to the Lord Street, Wellington Street and Duke Street proposals. Recurring comments included:

- General support for prioritising active travel over the private vehicle (6 comments);
- A desire for more greenery, including a suggestion of tree planting on Lord Street (2 comments);
- A belief that the proposals won't be used or are unnecessary / "pointless" (4 comments);
- Concerns relating to accessibility (3 comments) with one respondent querying how they will access their workplace;
- References to Lord Street (4 comments) with one respondent indicating a preference for an extended segregated route, another providing support for the modal filter and a third querying the terminology on the drawing;
- A need to prevent user conflict (4 comments);

- Requests for parking to be removed from Lord Street and Piccadilly (2 comments);
- Negativity related to the scheme cost (2 comments) with a reference to council tax;
- Issues relating to the proposals potentially causing traffic congestion (2 comments);
- References to safety (7 comments) with two respondents acknowledging that the proposals will improve conditions for users;
- A preference for segregated cycleways, especially on the A6 (5 comments);
- Mixed views on the provision of crossings and road closures (6 comments);
- Specific references to Duke Street (2 comments) with one respondent expressing support for the proposed crossing and another querying whether it will still be possible to access the A6; and
- Specific references to Wellington Street (3 comments) with one respondent stating that it has already been “greatly improved in terms of safe crossing points” and another agreeing with the provision of the proposed crossing.

Designer’s Response to Feedback

The proposals seek to provide improved walking and cycling connectivity in Stockport town centre whilst still maintaining access to properties and minimising the loss of on street parking needed for residents and businesses. A total of six on street parking bay on Lord Street s will be lost as a result of the proposals.

Segregated pedestrian and cycle routes are provided as far as possible where the available highway space allows.

As part of the detailed design process, opportunities to introduce additional landscaping will be sought.

Stockport Interchange Connections

Consultation Feedback

Based on the response forms, the majority of respondents agreed with the proposals to provide a toucan crossing on the A6 to link Stockport Interchange Podium Park with Hooper Street. Of the 86 respondents to answer this question 25% disagreed and 59% agreed, 12% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Based on the response forms, the majority of respondents agreed with the proposals to provide a route for cyclists between Stockport Station and the Interchange with a parallel zebra crossing next to the Grand Central Leisure Centre. Of the 86 respondents to answer this question 14% disagreed and 66% agreed, 16% neither agreed nor disagreed.

There were 37 comments which specifically related to the proposals to provide improved connections to the new Stockport Interchange. Recurring comments included:

Station Road Crossing:

- Recommendations relating to the taxi rank (3 comments);
- Apprehension around the steepness of the gradient between Station Road and the proposed interchange (3 comments);
- A belief that the proposals do not offer cyclists the most direct route (4 comments) with one respondent highlighting the need to undertake a 180 degree turn on the north side of Station Road; and
- One respondent suggests that the crossing on Station Road should be positioned on top of a raised table. Another respondent states that the emergency exit by the corner of the leisure centre will need to be re-orientated or relocated to make space for the segregated route.

A6:

- References to the A6 (11 comments);
- Negativity relating to the potential for the proposals to worsen traffic problems on the A6 (2 comments);
- General support for the toucan crossing on the A6 but a couple of respondents express a desire for cyclists and pedestrians to be separated and one respondent states that it should be aligned with Hooper Street (6 comments);
- References to safety (9 comments) with three respondents mentioning the proposed toucan crossing; and
- A desire for aesthetic enhancements with respondents focusing on Hooper Street, the area surrounding transport hubs and the river (3 comments).

Both crossings:

- Suggestions of alternative proposals i.e. a route from King Street West to Daw Bank via Shield Street (7 comments);
- Concerns relating to user conflict (14 comments) with opposition towards shared-use paths (13 comments) and an overall preference for segregation between pedestrians and cyclists (17 comments);

- Ideas regarding space reallocation (8 comments);
- Overall support for improved accessibility (5 comments) with a couple of respondents seeking clarification that the proposals will consider wheelchair users and those with disabilities.

Designer's Response to Feedback

Station Road Crossing

The Station Road crossing is located in a constrained location with numerous demands on the available highway space including pedestrians, cyclists, buses and taxis as well as servicing and access. The proposals seek to provide enhanced walking and cycling provision whilst still accommodating the other required uses and minimise any loss of taxi bays.

Given the various users that need to be accommodated and constrained space available, the use of shared use footway/ cycleways has been unavoidable. Appropriate tactile paving and signage will be used to clearly identify areas of shared use footway/ cycleway.

The Radius of the turn where the proposed bridge meets Station Road is 4.0m and in accordance with LTN 1/20.

A route on King Street West connecting to the town centre would not serve Stockport Exchange or provide connections to the Civic Quarter or Markets area. It may however have merit to it and can be examined as part of transport proposals for the Town Centre West redevelopment.

General Comments

General comments relating to the scheme as a whole rather than specific sections included:

- An overall preference for segregated cycleways, particularly on the A6, rather than shared-use paths due to the potential for conflict between users and to comply with LTN 1/20;
- A desire for routes to be safe, coherent & direct to form an appealing holistic / integrated scheme as opposed to diverting cyclists with extra distance through more junctions;
- Concerns relating to dangerous driving, congestion, speeding vehicles and air quality / pollution with apprehension as to whether the proposals will exacerbate or improve traffic-related problems;
- Support for improving accessibility with a particular focus on people with mobility issues, less confident / experienced cyclists, children, the elderly and those pushing prams;

- Queries regarding the cost of the proposals, the source of the funding, the potential disruption that may be caused by the construction process and the plan for ongoing maintenance;
- Recommendations for design alterations with some suggestions of alternative routes;
- An overall belief that walking and cycling should be prioritised over vehicles with a preference for active travel infrastructure to be allocated from existing carriageway space rather than footways or greenspace; and
- A need to protect wildlife, trees and other vegetation with requests for landscaping, additional planting and more greenery.

In response to the above comments, the proposals seek to connect Edgeley and Stockport Interchange with key locations in Stockport town centre via routes that are direct and suitable for all users, whilst still ensuring that necessary vehicular access requirements are maintained.

The designs have been developed to segregate pedestrians and cyclists wherever the available space allows. Where shared use is required, appropriate tactile paving and signage will be provided to make pedestrians and cyclists aware that they are sharing the same space.

As part of the detailed design process, opportunities to provide additional landscaping will be sought.

Stakeholder Comments

A representative from Natural England responded to the consultation stating that the proposals likely do not pose any risk or opportunity in relation to their statutory purpose and as such no comments were provided.

Two emails were received from the Trans Pennine Trail (TPT) Partnership. The first included a document. The summary on the first page states that there are “*no direct impacts on the TPT from the proposed improvements but the TPT welcomes the opportunity to further increase the safe walking and cycling offer in Stockport*”. The second email included queries regarding the dimensions of the proposed ramp connecting Armoury Street car park with Stockport Station, Stockport Exchange and routes along Railway Road.

A member of Stockport’s Walking and Cycling Forum provided overarching comments on the scheme as a whole. The first point referred to a lack of ambition with reluctance to reclaim road space from motorists. The second suggested that the proposals are based on cyclists behaving like pedestrians rather than traffic as LTN 1/20 recommends. The third point related to the routes being indirect and non-obvious while the closing paragraphs focused on user conflict, usability and the constructive use of feedback. In response to these comments, as noted above, the proposals have sought to segregate the pedestrians and cyclists as much as possible within the constrained available highway space of Stockport town centre.

It is considered that the proposals provide direct connections to the locations that the proposals are intended to serve.

The Information Officer from Walthew House made contact via email to ask for the consultation materials to be provided in other formats to enable service users to participate.

This was provided and a meeting held with a representative of Walthew House. No issues were raised regarding the proposals at the meeting, with the key priority of Walthew House being to be kept informed about traffic management and changes to pedestrian movement during the works and timescales for the completion of the works. It was agreed that nearer to the time of the completion of the works, Council officers would walk the routes with representatives of Walthew House to explain the changes.

A representative from WalkRide SK3 responded to the consultation by email and attached a document. The group expressed overall disappointment for the scheme citing indirect and complex routes and a belief that minimum standards set out in LTN 1/20 or funding criteria won't be met. In summary, they agreed with the proposals for Royal George Street, Railway Road and the A6 Wellington Road South and Lord Street but disagreed with the Stockport Interchange connections and strongly disagreed with the plans for Edgeley and King Street West and Thomson Street. The detailed comments made by WalkRide SK3 are captured in the discussion of the specific elements above. Responses were received from three people stating agreement with the Walk Ride SK3 response.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The scheme is being funded (subject to the approval of the business case by Transport for Greater Manchester) from the MCF Capital fund.

7. TIMESCALES

If approved the scheme will be subject to further development and costing and is expected to be subject to a revised business case submission to the Mayor's Challenge Fund in Autumn 2021. Subject to funding being approved it is anticipated that the works would be carried out in 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years. Additional funding has come from the TCAP and Stockport Exchange projects in respect of capacity improvements at the Railway Rd / A6 junction and provision of servicing facilities for that development.

8. EQUALITIES/COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Equal Opportunities

- To provide a suitable and safer environment for pedestrians and other road users. The scheme contributes to the Council's vision statement "Promote equal life outcomes for all by tackling known inequalities across the borough of Stockport".

Sustainable Environment

- To develop and sustain a healthy, safe and attractive local environment which contributes to Stockport. Stockport Council understands the responsibility it has to lead by example and help the broader community make a positive contribution to the local environment.

9. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Area Committee is asked to comment on this report and recommend that the Cabinet Member (Economy & Regeneration) approves the:

- submission planning applications for the A6/ Railway Road junction and Thomson Street to Railway Road ramp;
- designs for the crossings and associated pedestrian and cycle links on King Street West, Greek Street/ Royal George Street, Station Road, A6/ Hooper Street, Lord Street and Duke Street;
- advertising of the Traffic Regulation Orders required to implement the above proposals;
- submission of the business case to seek funding approval for the Stockport to Edgeley and Interchange MCF schemes.

Background Papers

Anyone wishing further information please contact Nick Whelan on telephone number 0161 474 4907 or by email on nick.whelan@stockport.gov.uk

Appendix A – Drawings

Appendix B – Consultation Report