

Sandringham Road Footpath Widening - ATF4 Ladybrook Valley

Report of the Director for Place Management

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Stockport Council have successfully bid for funding from Active Travel England to progress the design and implementation of providing and improving an existing pedestrian route which travels between Ladybridge Road, along Ladybrook Valley to meet with Bramhall Park Road and upgrade this for access by pedestrians and cyclists.
- 1.2 As part of the funding, it has also been identified the existing footpath between Sandringham Road and Twining Brook Road in Cheadle Hulme, which stretches across the playing fields, is substandard and requires widening to meet the needs of existing and new users.
- 1.3 A public consultation was held in September and October 2023 and this report details the results of this consultation and the associated recommendations.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The strategic context for the overall ATF4 Ladybrook Valley scheme comes from an ambition and need to reduce the number of people making car journeys and increase the number of people using active travel modes in this area. This is a clear policy aim of both Stockport Council and TfGM, as demonstrated through key policy documents such as TfGM's 2040 Transport Strategy, Made to Move, the Stockport Council Plan 20/21, Stockport's Walking and Cycling Plan.
- 2.2 Work such as the Propensity to Cycle Tool (PCT) for England and Wales has also demonstrated the potential for cycle demand to grow, and at different rates depending on how the future evolves. These futures will depend in part on the investment which is made on enabling infrastructure. Whilst there are several key impacts which are common threads across relevant policies and plans, the following are identified as the most important drivers for investment in walking and cycling interventions.

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 As part of the policies set out and to further enhance the existing walking and cycling connections throughout Cheadle Hulme, it is proposed to improve the footpath which links between Sandringham Road and Twining Brook Road.
- 3.2 The following measures have been proposed, and these are shown on Dwg No. F-274-004, described below:
 - Widening and resurfacing the existing shared use path to 3m.
 - Provision of additional LED lighting columns along the route.

- Dropped kerb access for cyclists at the entrance to the path from Sandringham Road.
- Provision of bollards spaced 1.5m apart to prevent access from unauthorised vehicles, whilst maintaining access for pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchair users and pushchairs at the entrance to the path.
- Provision of an access protection marking across the dropped kerb on Sandringham Road to prevent access to the path being blocked.

4. LEGAL POSITION/IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are none proposed.

5. CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

5.1 No alternative solutions have been considered.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 A public consultation exercise was undertaken within the vicinity of the proposals between Wednesday 20th September and Friday 6th October 2023. The consultation comprised a letter drop to properties on Sandringham Road, temporary signage erected on lighting columns along the path where the improvements are proposed directing users to the Stockport Council's 'haveyoursay' webpage. The scheme proposals, as consulted upon, are outlined in drawing F-0274-004 in Appendix A.

6.2 The Local Ward Councillors were previously consulted with positive feedback received.

6.3 The public consultation exercise invited members of the public to answer an online survey and provide comments on the proposed scheme. A summary of the responses to the consultation questions and more detailed comments are provided below.

6.4 The public were asked, 'To what extent do you agree with the proposals to widen the footpath across the playing fields between Sandringham Road and Twining Brook Road?' There was a total of X responses.

6.5 Out of 13 respondents, 11 (85%) strongly agreed, 1 (7.5%) agreed, 0 (0%) disagreed, 0 (0%) strongly disagreed and 1 (7.5%) neither agreed or disagreed.

6.6 A summary of comments received online that relate specifically to these measures is provided below:

- "It allows for multi user usage of the route and provides more off road traffic free safety for cyclists and other users."
- "As someone who uses this path on almost a daily basis, I think these proposed plans would be very beneficial."
- "It is a well-used path and the surface is in need of an upgrade. Additional lighting would also increase security for those using the footpath at night."
- "Excellent suggestion, will much improve the route for walkers and cyclists alike."

- “The path would be better if there was a white line down the middle to segregate walkers from cyclists.”
- “Future plans could consider putting in a footpath from the Crossefield Road/Meadway Road access point, across the field to the bridge/to join the proposed widened footpath. This is a popular cut through for children attending Oak Tree Primary / Laurus High Schools and for dog walkers wanting to access the river footpath, but the field is frequently waterlogged /muddy during the autumn/winter months.”
- “The path is bumpy in parts and could be smoother for bikes and buggies.”
- “This will give an opportunity to regrade the footpath at the approach to the bridge.”
- “What would be helpful in this area, is a footpath to the Meadway entrance which is across the field where the footpath in question is.”

6.7 There have been some comments regarding extending the footpath to the existing footpath connection at Meadway. However, due to budget limitations, it is recommended this route is looked into when additional funding becomes available.

6.8 Following the overall positive feedback from the consultation exercise, it is recommended the widening of Sandringham Road footpath should be progressed to detailed design for construction based on Drawing Ref F-0274-004 in Appendix A.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The scheme will be funded from the Active Travel Fund 4 budget.

8. TIMESCALES

8.1 Should the proposals be approved and subject to the resolution of any objections received, the scheme should be ready for implementation in Summer 2024.

9. EQUALITIES/COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 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".

9.2 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.

10. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 The Area Committee is asked to comment on this report and give approval to proposed scheme.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are none.

Anyone wishing to inspect the above background papers or requiring further information should contact Pam Hibbert on telephone number Tel: 0161 474 4840 or alternatively email pam.hibbert@stockport.gov.uk