

EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT

A meeting of the Executive Member for Environment was held on Thursday, 31 October 2024.

PRESENT: Councillor P Gavigan

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors D Davison and J McConnell (Ward Councillors)

OFFICERS: D Leadbitter, J Lowery and C Lunn.

24/4 **WELCOME AND FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting and explained the fire evacuation procedures.

24/5 **BRACKEN GRANGE FOOTPATH CONNECTION**

The Director of Environment and Community Services submitted a report, the purpose of which was to detail the results of the public consultation exercise carried out for the proposed scheme, and to seek Executive Member approval for the scheme to proceed to the implementation stage.

As set out in the Middlesbrough Integrated Transport Strategy, Middlesbrough Council was committed to increasing the number of local journeys made on foot and by cycle. Reducing the current dependence on the private car for such journeys would reduce congestion, improve air quality, and contribute towards the social and economic regeneration of the Borough.

To achieve this objective, the Council was investing in new pedestrian and cycle infrastructure designed to provide safe and convenient routes between residential areas and local facilities such as shops and schools.

Details of the proposed scheme were contained in the submitted report; a copy of the site plan was shown at Appendix 1.

A public consultation exercise had been carried out between 12 January 2024 - 9 February 2024 to seek the views of key stakeholders. A total of 36 responses were received, with one in favour of the proposed scheme and 35 against. The report set out the main reasons for the objections, which predominantly related to concerns regarding Anti-social Behaviour, together with responses to those objections, from Council Officers. Details of changes to the proposed design, following resident and Councillor feedback, were provided in the submitted report.

The Ward Councillors were in attendance and were granted permission by the Chair to speak.

In response to a query from a Ward Councillor regarding the number of consultations undertaken, it was explained that due to the size of the scheme, the guideline was to consult only those properties that were directly affected by it, which was approximately 16 properties. However, feedback had been received by more than this because the initial consultation letter had been further circulated by those residents living in the directly affected properties. It was highlighted that all feedback received had been taken on board.

In response to a query from a Ward Councillor regarding the installation of a chicane or bollard suitable enough to deter cycles or motorcycles from accessing the footpath, it was explained that the revised design had taken this into account. There would be a chicane and knee rail installed that would, in effect, force riders to dismount.

The Chair and Ward Councillor referred to access to the footpath for other assistive devices, such as wheelchairs and prams, and queried the size of the chicane in relation to this. In response, it was explained that accessibility for wheelchairs and prams would not pose an issue. The intention was that the chicane and knee rail would, in effect, force riders to dismount.

OPTIONS

Other potential decision(s) and why these had not been recommended

Do nothing. This was not recommended, as it would not provide a safe and direct pedestrian and cycle route that allowed residents of the Bracken Grange estate to access the employment, education, retail and leisure opportunities in the local area by more sustainable alternatives to the private car.

The Democratic Services Officer referred to page 7 of the agenda pack and advised that, if approved, the decision was subject to scrutiny call in, and therefore the implementation deadline date noted in the report would need to be amended to 8 November 2024.

ORDERED

- 1. That objections to the proposed scheme were noted and considered with proposed mitigations.**
- 2. That the proposed scheme and progresses to implementation during the 2024/25 financial year were approved.**

REASONS

The decision was supported for the following reasons:

- 1. There were currently no direct pedestrian/cycle routes connecting the growing residential area of wider Brackenhoe housing estate with the adjacent amenities.**
- 2. The existing pedestrian route was circuitous and involved negotiating the footpath adjacent to the James Cook Hospital, which had numerous reports of anti-social behaviour from students and parents walking to and from school.**
- 3. The proposed footpath/cycleway would address both issues and, by doing so, allow the residents of Bracken Grange direct and safe access to local retail, leisure and educational facilities by more sustainable alternatives to the private car, in line with the policies set out in the adopted Middlesbrough Integrated Transport Strategy.**

The decision will come into force after five working days following the day the decision was published unless the decision becomes subject to the call in procedures.