



21st May 2023

Construction of Wilmslow Road Cycle Path - Frequently Asked Questions

We're aware that construction of the new cycle path has been a controversial subject for some residents locally, so we've put together some "Frequently asked questions" to explain why the scheme is going ahead.

What are the benefits of the scheme?

It provides a safer and more environmentally friendly way of travelling. The cycle path is particularly important for less confident cyclists. It will, in due course, link up with the wider cycling network. Where better infrastructure is built then cyclists will use it, the path along the nearby A555 is well used by cyclists.

Why is the cycle path being built?

When the Planning Inspector gave the go ahead for 325 homes to be built by Bloor Homes on the Seashell Trust land it was made a requirement of the permission that sustainable travel was built into the design. A number of conditions were imposed on the planning appeal decision, including those relating to site access arrangements and the provision of off-site sustainable travel infrastructure.

Any new development has to comply with local and national guidance and construction specifications. New developments of this type and size have to include sustainable travel options – we've included the technical explanation for this in the last paragraph below.

We don't want a cycle path, why haven't councillors stopped this?

The council and councillors have to comply with national legislation, we have no power to overrule this. If the council didn't implement the scheme, it could be subject to expensive legal processes such as judicial review because it hasn't complied with planning laws. The council has to implement the scheme.

What consultation has been carried out?

The council has written to homes near the development in May and December last year to advise of the proposed design.

How many trees are being felled and why are they being felled?

The most unfortunate element of the scheme is that a number of trees will be felled to build the cycle path. Which is not something anyone who lives locally would have chosen when the trees enhance the area so much and provide a habitat for wildlife. However, we are advised the scheme has to proceed.

The initial proposal was that 20 trees would need to be felled. Following substantial local concern about this we asked officers to look again at the design of the scheme. With slight changes to the design it was possible to reduce the number of trees being felled to 12, one of which has died already.

The design constraints of making the cycle path straight, to allow cyclists to build up speed and travel safely mean that unfortunately some trees will be lost.

For every tree lost three new ones will be replanted. This will likely be in the winter, as trees planted in the dormant season are more likely to succeed. They will be young trees, as again these are more likely to establish successfully.

The new trees will be planted along the length of the site, in locations advised by the Arboricultural Officer.

We're concerned about nesting birds and bats

Officers are going to carry out full checks of the trees to ensure that no nesting birds are present in the trees to be felled.

We have been advised that there are bats living in the area, this has been raised with officers too so they can respond appropriately.

How is the scheme funded?

The scheme is being implemented by Stockport Council as part of a legal agreement with Bloor Homes. A Section 278 Agreement is a legal mechanism for delivery of works within the

public highway, with the developer and the council entering into an agreement to enable delivery of the works at the expense of the developer.

Who designed the scheme and why is it designed this way?

The scheme was designed by Stockport Council as part of the Section 278 Agreement. The feasibility and detailed design of the works meet the planning obligation and conditions and enable delivery of a scheme that is design standard compliant.

The design of the segregated cycle track and footway at Wilmslow Road complies with the minimum width requirements for such facilities. Consideration was given to alternative alignments closer to the Wilmslow Road carriageway however this would have required the removal of significantly more trees. Consideration was also given to the provision of cycle facilities within the existing Wilmslow Road carriageway space however there is insufficient width to accommodate adequate separation from motorised and pedestrian traffic and enable two way cycle passage.

It has been designed in accordance with the latest guidance and standards set out by the Government and Transport for Greater Manchester which dictates that all road users (including pedestrians and cyclists) should be separate from each other wherever possible.

It is recognised that this is important in making walking and cycling easier, safer and more attractive, in particular for those who may not be confident in sharing footway or carriageway space with other road users.

Is the scheme design safe for pedestrians and cyclists?

The design has also been subjected to a Road Safety Audit. This is a formal procedure for assessing incident potential and safety performance in the provision of new or improved highway schemes, the main aim being to ensure that the scheme will operate as safely as possible and give awareness of good road safety principles throughout the planning, design, construction and maintenance process to prevent incidents occurring in the future.

What was decided at the Planning Inquiry and what are the Legal Requirements?

When the council initially considered the Bloor Homes planning application for the site in 2016, it did conclude that sustainable travel measures would be required as part of the scheme to meet the requirements of Local and National Planning Policy. However, the scheme was at that point refused permission for other reasons.

The Secretary of State/Planning Inspectorate in allowing the planning appeal, stated that the scheme would benefit from the provision of enhanced walking and cycling routes to be incorporated into the development and through off-site highways improvements along Wilmslow Road. In making his decision the planning inspector determined that no severe residual impacts would arise from the proposed development in terms of congestion, traffic generation, capacity or highway safety.

Numerous conditions were imposed on the planning appeal decision, including those relating to site access arrangements and the provision of off-site sustainable travel infrastructure.

The scheme design must have regard to Local and National Planning Policies. At the time of determination, the Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Documents March 2011 and the Communities and Local Government National Planning Policy Framework (subsequently revised) were the relevant and appropriate tests for compliance.

Core Strategy Development Plan Document 'Development Management Policy T-1' requires new development to be located in sustainably accessible locations to facilitate a reduction in the need to travel, which will ease congestion and minimise the impact of transport on the environment. New development generating significant numbers of trips should be required to be sustainably accessible by public transport, walking and cycling and where additional transport infrastructure and/or public transport services are required to make the site accessible, developers will be required to provide such infrastructure and/or services. Measures include improvements to the walking and cycling networks and physical improvements to the bus network. In particular, new development is required to maintain and enhance the connectivity, accessibility, convenience, safety and aesthetic attractiveness of the walking and cycling networks and where appropriate, create new routes to fill gaps in the existing network.

The National Planning Policy Framework stated that planning decisions for developments that generate significant amounts of movement should take account of whether the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up, ensure that safe and suitable access to the site is achieved for all people and improvements within the transport network cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development.

The application was assessed having regard to interventions proposed in support of the development that included a new entrance junction, provision of controlled and uncontrolled crossing facilities, provision of new infrastructure for cyclists on the Wilmslow Road corridor, bus stop upgrades and Public Right of Way improvements. The principles of these measures were identified in supporting documents submitted within the application.

Specifically, the provision of new infrastructure on Wilmslow Road will connect walking and cycling infrastructure within the new development with existing routes, facilities and amenities in the local area, it will also connect the community to planned walking and cycling routes.

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Scheme design maps:



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Rev	Drawn	Checked	Date	Revision	Details

SCG JOB No.

JOB TITLE
5199 - WILMSLOW ROAD

DRAWING TITLE
OUTWOOD RD - SOUTH OF QUEENSWAY TREE REPLACEMENT

STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

ROADWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION
STANDARD ADOPTED
STOCKPORT 2013 2022
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Drawn	Engineer	Checked	Approved
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5199 - WILMSLOW ROAD

DRAWING TITLE
QUEENSWAY - SYDDAL ROAD TREE REPLACEMENT



STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Drawn	DL	Engineer	CM	Checked	DJL	Approved	KF
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