



Transition Chesterfield
Response to the Chesterfield East West Cycling and Walking Route
consultation

<https://chesterfieldcycleroute.commonplace.is/>

March 2021

Transition Chesterfield is a local community group aiming to make Chesterfield more resilient and sustainable. We want to create positive local solutions to the twin challenges of 'peak oil' and climate change and make our town a better place to live.

The proposed Chesterfield East West Cycling and Walking Route is a real opportunity to improve walking and cycling access to the Hospital, numerous schools, workplaces and Chesterfield College. It will make walking and cycling safer and more attractive which will encourage more people to choose to travel this way, cutting traffic (and carbon emissions and air pollution) in the town and with enormous benefits to public health.

The consultation indicates that there has been a 200% increase in people cycling along existing routes near the town centre compared to 2019, which indicates the potential in the town for more cycling. Indeed the Propensity to Cycle tool <https://www.pct.bike/> suggests there is even more potential in Chesterfield for cycling. It shows that with better infrastructure and ebikes over a quarter of people could potentially commute to work by bike instead of car, saving hundreds of tonnes of carbon dioxide every year, compared with the current 1% of people cycling to work (based on the last census). This report by Sustrans 'Cycling for Everyone' shows that a third of women and disabled people currently don't cycle but would like to start, which increases to over 55% of people from BAME backgrounds who would like to cycle.

<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/research/all-themes/all/inclusive-cycling-in-cities-and-towns/>

As the hospital is one of the biggest employers in the town, this will provide for the first time a safe route for people cycling to the hospital from one end of town to the other.

There are also large benefits for pedestrians through widening and resurfacing existing sections, allowing more space for better social distancing, and additional road crossing points. This includes the proposed toucan crossing on Park Road which will allow pedestrians and cyclists, including many families, to cross this road safely.

With a total of 15 schools, one nursery, Chesterfield College and the University of Derby Chesterfield campus, this route will benefit hundreds of children and young people – making it safer and more pleasant and encouraging more of them to walk and cycle with massive benefits for their physical and mental health. We have gone in one generation from 'free range children' to 'battery children' as children are no longer allowed to roam freely due to parents' concern about road traffic. Children thus spend less time outdoors, roaming independently, with detrimental effects on their cognitive development and mental health. Getting more children walking and cycling to school should be a key aim and benefit of this scheme.

Finally there are also benefits for drivers, as the route will take cars off the road, providing more space for those who have no choice but to drive.

Although we strongly support this proposal we would like to press for additional measures as follows:

Section 1: Baslow Rd, Chatsworth Rd and Linden Avenue

Although we welcome the reduction from 40mph to 30mph along part of this section we would like the whole road where there are residential properties to be 20mph. This will cause limited (if any) delays (as traffic is held up by vehicles turning or by traffic lights) but will provide a much safer, quieter environment for residents and people walking and cycling. By providing a steady flow of traffic it will also reduce air pollution as well as carbon emissions.

20mph speed limits will help address many concerns about the safety of this road and the large number of HGVs using it. Note that enforcement of speed limits will be improved from next year with the introduction of speed limiters in new cars which will force cars to reduce speeds automatically (which will in turn force any cars behind them to also obey the speed limits).

Crossing times for pedestrians, particularly at Storrs Rd, need to be increased as it is currently too difficult for elderly people to cross before the lights change, and generally the waiting times for pedestrians at crossing points needs to be minimal.

Section 2: Hipper Valley Trail

Agree with not tarmac the sections through the woods but good to provide some alternative to make it accessible in all seasons and weathers.

Also good to have lighting that is sensitive to wildlife (eg motion activated)

Vegetation needs to be cut back regularly to ensure there is sufficient access space for people walking and cycling.

Section 3: Walton Rd to Boythorpe Rd

Support the 20mph speed limit along Dock Walk which should be extended along Goytside Rd which is likely to get much busier as the brownfield sites adjoining it get developed in future.

Section 4: Queen's Park to Chesterfield Train Station

The Toucan crossing at Park Rd should be set for minimal (max 7 sec) waiting time once someone has pushed the button. This is to give priority to people crossing the road and avoid too many people waiting and blocking the pavements as there is little room either side.

The path should be regularly swept for glass and vegetation cut back.

Access should be provided to the carpark next to The Range – steps plus a cycle ramp. We note that additional access to Hady Hill at Spital is already being provided as part of the planning conditions for Phase 1 of the Hollis Lane Link.

Lighting should be provided on the station link section past the Range – possibly motion activated

Section 5: Crow Lane and Wetlands Lane

Lighting should be provided on Crow Lane – possibly motion-activated or something sensitive to the wildlife.

In general there also needs to be proper enforcement to prevent parking in the cycle lanes.