

Sefton Public Engagement and Consultation Panel

Date: Friday 11th November 2022

Title: Feedback and Evaluation report – Southport Eastern Access scheme

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1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide feedback on the findings from the consultation regarding the Southport Eastern Access scheme; and to describe the next steps in relation to engagement and consultation for the scheme.
- 1.2 The scheme will provide a series of highway network improvements and active travel infrastructure on the eastern approach to Southport, including Bispham Road, Sussex Road, Kew roundabout, Castlemore junction and Foul Lane.
- 1.3 The scheme is part of the Council's approved Capital Development programme and is also a pipeline scheme for Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA). Approximately £13m of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) funding has been allocated by the LCRCA for the development and delivery of the scheme. The scheme has been developed to Outline Business Case (OBC) stage at which point a public consultation was undertaken. The scheme is now being developed to detailed design and is moving towards a Full Business Case (FBC) and therefore additional consultation and engagement is required.
- 1.4 The original public consultation was undertaken in Spring 2022, in accordance with the report presented to PECP in November 2020. The consultation was launched on Monday 21st February and ran for a total of six weeks until Monday 4th April 2022.
- 1.5 All findings from the consultation have now been assessed by an independent consultant WSP; and verified by the Council. Key themes for the overarching consultation and each element have been deduced and analysed. The full thematic analysis is contained within Appendix A. This has also been used to inform the design process.
- 1.6 In tandem, conversations have taken place with Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) and Active Travel England (ATE). These discussions were predominantly in relation to the active travel elements; and the need to comply with the LTN1/20 design guidance and the Government's Gear Change – Walking and Cycling Plan.

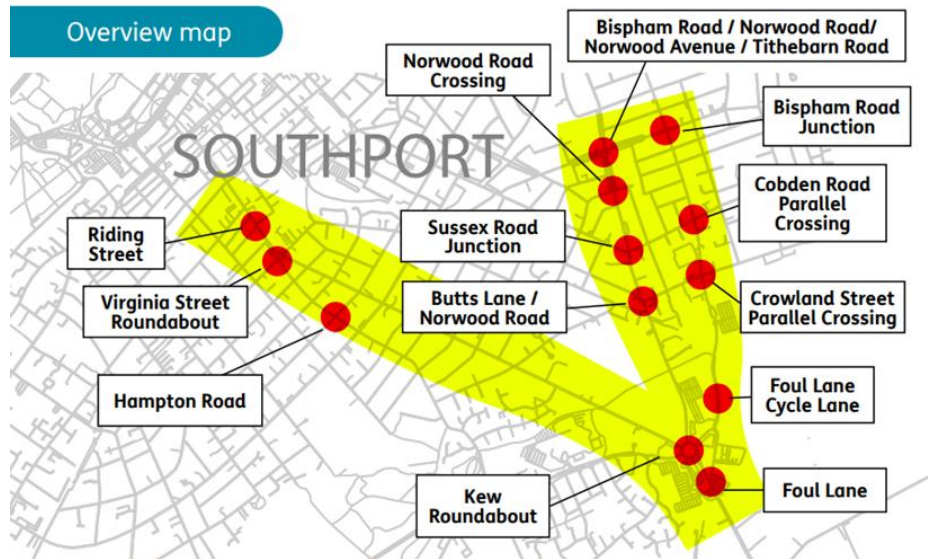
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- 1.7 Where appropriate, ATE's comments have been incorporated into the designs. It is recognised that there are potentially competing requirements for some junctions where highway space is confined and as such a judgement has had to be made on the scale of active travel improvement that has been appropriate. It is also highlighted that the scheme will be delivered with a phased approach with the key improvements being Phase One and previous elements having now been moved to later phases or phased out.
- 1.8 This report therefore provides the feedback from the original consultation and describes how the findings will now be report as part of the further engagement and consultation for this scheme.
- 1.9 The Panel have agreed to appraise the Feedback and Evaluation Reports in accordance with the standards of public engagement and consultation and will consider: -
- How the activity was carried out;
 - the opinions of the people taking part on how they found the process;
 - The number of people who took part and the costs of the different methods of getting them involved;
 - How successful different methods were at getting the views of people who are not normally heard, for example, children, young people, and people with disabilities;
 - How the results will be fed back to the public; and
 - How will the results influence policies and service plans.

2. **Name of Issue you were Consulting On**

- 2.1 Figure 1 shows the map used for the early stage consultation for the scheme. The consultation described each of these improvements and the overall objectives of the scheme. Noting the designs were conceptual at this stage in the process.

Figure 1 Consultation Map for Southern Eastern Access Scheme
Southport Eastern Access Improvements



3. The Consultation Process

- 3.1 A paper proposing the consultation activities was approved by the Public Consultation and Engagement Panel in November 2020. The consultation was then delayed by the design process as the Council needed to confirm the active travel elements and what was appropriate to be consulted upon at the early stages.
- 3.2 The plans for the scheme were consulted upon for a 6-week period from the Monday 24th February to Monday 4th April 2022. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, most of the consultation was online utilising the Your Sefton Your Say (YSYS) survey platform and on the 'Transport' related pages on the Council's website. Notwithstanding this a Council Officer did attend the Brighter Living Partnership Southport focus group on 16th March to discuss the scheme with members.
- 3.3 In addition, hard copy leaflets were produced and distributed around the surrounding area to residents and businesses likely to be affected by the improvements. A social media campaign was also launched on the Council's Facebook and Twitter accounts managed by the Council's internal Corporate Communications Team.
- 3.4 All groups identified as Protected Characteristics were invited to give specific feedback or to arrange a tailored Focus Group. The Contact Centre telephone number and the transport planning email were utilised

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for those unable to access the online survey; or whom had specific comments or requests for further information.

- 3.5 It is noted that a further consultation will now take place as part of the FBC process and due consideration will be made as to any findings from this moving forwards.

4. **Summary of the Consultation Results**

- 4.1 There were 179 responses to the YSYS online survey as well as various emails directly into the Transport Planning email account. Most emails just needed further information however approx. 7 needed a more detailed response.
- 4.2 Each element of the scheme had a separate page on the online survey giving respondents the opportunity to comment on specific aspects. The full analysis of the consultation is contained as Appendix A. Overall, there were concerns over the scheme. Some specific concerns were raised in terms of individual scheme elements such as the impact on local residents and businesses. Safety and congestion around Virginia Street roundabout and Foul Lane were also of particular concern.
- 4.3 In addition, there were some queries over the nature of the active travel elements, and it was highlighted that at the early consultation stage these were still very conceptual. Any design related comments have now been considered and the active travel elements are integral to the scheme as it moves towards FBC. With this in mind more information on these elements will be provided at the next stage of consultation. The findings from the focus group mirrored the overarching concerns and thoughts towards the scheme.
- 4.4 It was noted that there was no direct responses or requests for further information from the key businesses on Foul Lane which was expected. Therefore, a tailored letter to all businesses and residents directly adjoining the scheme is being prepared and will go out in late October/ early November.

5. **Feedback**

- 5.1 Following on from the consultation process, Cabinet Member and Ward Members have been updated. In addition the abovementioned further tailored letter to business and residents identified as key stakeholder will go out prior to the launch of further public engagement.
- 5.2 It is now proposed to include the feedback from the original consultation as part of the process of ongoing engagement and share the findings and updates as part of the forthcoming consultation. This allows the Council to

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show how feedback has been considered and has helped to inform the process of development of the scheme. Further engagement is based on the following indicative timescales:

- **11th November** - PECP Panel– Panel to agree approach to FBC consultation
- **18th November 2022 - 20th January 2023** - Launch new consultation

6. Future engagement

- 6.1 The new consultation is an important part of the FBC process. Post the Covid 19 restrictions different methods of engagement will be explored including the potential for face to face open sessions with key stakeholders or representative groups as required.
- 6.2 A Comms Plan is being developed with Corporate Comms to highlight resources and key message of the consultation.

Key methods of engagement will include:

- Detailed Web article and section on Your Sefton Your Say – outlining the previous feedback and process - linking to a short online survey showing latest designs and asking for comments (noting the survey is not a referendum as the scheme has approval).
- A tailored email to Protected Characteristic groups, emergency services and community groups, including those with an interest in active travel.
- Printed versions of the survey will be made available at key sites within the scheme area – to be identified with Corp Comms and business will be asked to display information.
- External advertising will be explored to raise survey awareness.
- Council Officers will attend focus groups in person or online as requested by stakeholders.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 The Public Engagement and Consultation Panel are recommended to
- a) Note the contents of the report and that the results of consultation have been used to amend and refine the proposals and feedback.
 - b) Approval the intention, timescales, and methods for future consultation.

Annexes

Appendix 1 – Initial Consultation for SEA– Feedback Report