


CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL
COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Community & Environment		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	23rd September 2021 7.00pm	LOCATION	Town Hall
REPORT FROM	J MacArthur Communities and Marketing Manager and Deputy Chief Officer		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	10 Support for Safe Pedestrian Access to Bath Vale		
Background	<p>The Committee has received a paper from resident Helen Taylor and the Borough Walking and Cycling Champion Councillor Suzie Akers Smith looking for practical, lobbying and financial support from the Town Council for making the pedestrian and cycle access out of the Bath Vale Estate safer.</p> <p>A paper is attached explaining the issue and Helen Taylor will give a short talk to the committee to explain the difficulties that residents face.</p>		
Financial Considerations	Need to establish the cost of road signs as usually Cheshire East has provided signs and any Road Traffic Orders that would be needed in association with the signs.		
Environmental considerations	Making safer routes for residents to feel safer to walk and cycle for local journeys is in line with the Town Council's Business Plan and Climate Emergency pledge.		
Equality considerations	These proposals would benefit all residents in the Bath Vale area – 126 houses plus visitors to the estate.		
Proposals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ask the Streetscape Manager to assess the area for inclusion in the maintenance programme if possible. 2. Write to Cheshire East Highways and Cheshire East Council supporting the concerns of residents in the area and asking for path agreed in the planning application to be installed. 3. Speak to Highways about the need for signs and how this is financed and if appropriate apply to finance and policy committee as the Town Council does not have a budget for Highway signs. 		

BATH VALE CONNECTING BRIDGE, CONGLETON
WALKING SAFARI REPORT
CLLR SUZIE AKERS SMITH, CYCLING AND WALKING CHAMPION

ITEM	BATH VALE CONNECTING BRIDGE		
DATE AND TIME	REPORT: 10TH SEPTEMBER 2021 Walking Safari: 9th September 2021	LOCATION AFFECTED: Bath Vale connecting, bridge to Bromley Farm, Schools and the town centre	IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL USERS IN ESPECIALLY FOR CHILDREN TO WALK TO SCHOOL AND NON-MOTORISED USERS TO ACCESS THE AREA
OVERVIEW	<p>PROTECTING THE RIGHT OF CHILDREN TO WALK TO SCHOOL IN A SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND FOR OTHER NON-MOTORISED USERS TRAVELLING INTO AND OUT OF THE BATH VALE ESTATE.</p> <p>In my role as cycling and walking champion for Cheshire East Council I have offered any group, town, village or individual a visit to cycle and walk around the local area to view their existing infrastructure for cycling and walking and understand the problems faced with the lack of accessibility and road safety for pedestrians, cyclists and other non-motorised users especially vulnerable people such as those using mobility aids, parents with pushchairs and young children. The proposals in this report, if implemented, support residents to encourage walking or cycling in that area by making it easier, safer and more enjoyable.</p>		
WARD COUNCILLORS	Cllr Rob Moreton - East Ward Councillor		
BACKGROUND AND CONCERNS	<p>I met with Helen Taylor a resident of Bath Vale having been in an email discussion from the 11th August 2021. Helen contacted me because of her concerns over pedestrian access to the Bath Vale Estate from Bromley Farm and to the local primary and secondary school.</p>  <p>Helen has concerns about how residents are to access the Bath Vale Estate if not using a vehicle. The access to Bath Vale is over the old railway bridge at the end of Bromley Road. There is no footpath over the bridge although approved plans show there were plans to build a footpath on the bridge. This was included on a revised layout and on the planning approval notice 7th July 2011 on planning application 10/1269C,</p> <p>Helen contacted the council to find out why the pavement has not been built and the response was: "The officer that dealt with this application is no longer employed at the</p>		

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Council and so unfortunately we are unable to determine why the footway was not included at the time"

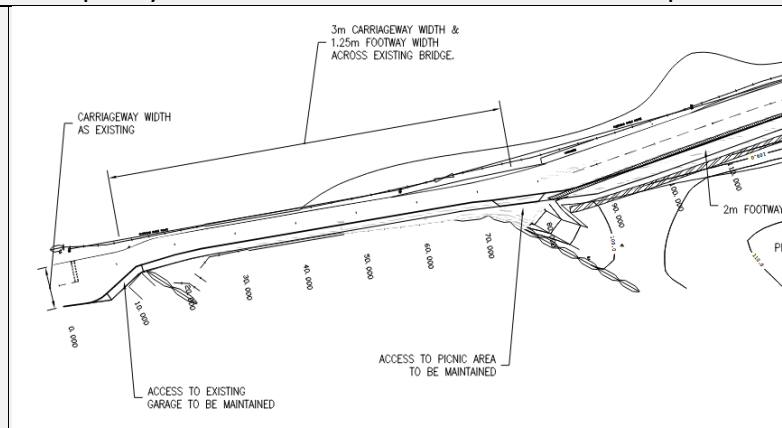
The development incorporates affordable housing attracting young families and those who don't drive. With at least 126 homes, families with young children as pavement is critical to enable residents to walk to and from the estate. Reducing speed limits will help people feel safer walking.

As this route is the only walking route to school the safety concerns of Mrs Taylor need addressing. The PROW of the Biddulph Valley Way is not an acceptable alternative for 6 months of the year with inclement weather and steep deep steps and you still have to cross the bridge to access the PROW.

The Equality Act 2010 mean councils have to make pedestrian routes accessible and safe.

PROPOSALS AND SOLUTION

1. Contact Bovis Homes and find out why they have not built the pavement as in the planning approval documents and why it wasn't enforced and find out if they will build it now.



10. The highway access shall be constructed in accordance with the recommendations of the Pedestrian Provision Road Safety Audit Stage 2 report submitted with the application.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to comply with Policy GR9 of the adopted Congleton Borough Local Plan First Review.



The location of the bridge and the importance of it as a pedestrian and safe cycle route that connects Bath Vale to Congleton cannot be underestimated.

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2. Ask Congleton Town Council for financial support for 20mph speed limits and priority pedestrian space signage. Add to the regular maintenance programme throughout the year.

We are looking for town council support from Streetscape, they state they **Maintain the verges and outdoor environment on new housing estates.** Could they visit the area once a year to cut back the overgrowth.

Pictures before and after the intervention of the two councillors:

BEFORE






AFTER



AFTER



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<p>3. Priority Pedestrian Space and signage</p>	<p>The only signage alerting drivers to any danger is a sign that says concealed access below a 'other danger' exclamation mark sign.</p>   <p>Other danger; plate indicates nature of danger</p> <p>Until the footpath is built at the very least a sign indicating there are pedestrians in the road ahead similar to the one below.</p>  <p>Pedestrians in road ahead</p>
<p>4. Initial enquiry states road safety is not the responsibility of highways. So who is responsible for road safety?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Reference: 3429053</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Current Status: Passed to CEC Department</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Last updated: 04/06/2021 - 09:38</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thank you for your enquiry regarding: BATH VALE, CONGLETON. The Road Safety issue is not the responsibility of the Highways Department, so it has been forwarded to our colleagues in another team to assess. They will be in touch with you shortly to provide you with an update on the status of your enquiry.</p>
<p>5. Priority over oncoming vehicles sign with a reduced road width to slow traffic down as well as 20mph signs.</p>	  <p>Traffic has priority over oncoming vehicles</p>

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<p>6. Reduce the road width for vehicles so a pavement can be built and add some low level solar lighting.</p>	<p>There is no doubt, with this highway route being the only in and out access to the development there needs to be a pavement. As it currently stands people drive too fast to feel safe walking. The overgrown hedges mean people walk into the road and there is not space on the pavement for parents with pushchairs and mobility scooter users. The pavement is to be a continuation of the pavement leading up to the bridge and to meet the pavement on the Bromley Road side.</p> <p>Drivers need to be made aware that one way has priority over oncoming vehicles and if the road has speed reduction measure put in place, gradually resident confidence will be renewed to walk and possibly cycle for shorter journeys.</p> <p>Low level solar lighting would enable residents to feel safe walking across the bridge at night time.</p>
<p>SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION</p>	<p>The recommendations are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact Bovis Homes and find out why they have not built the pavement as in the planning approval documents dated 7th July 2011, planning ref 10/1269C and why it wasn't enforced and find out if they will build it now. 2. Ask Congleton Town Council for financial support for 20mph speed limits and priority pedestrian space signage. Add to the regular maintenance programme throughout the year. 3. Priority Pedestrian Space and signage 4. Initial enquiry states road safety is not the responsibility of highways. So who is responsible for road safety? 5. Priority over oncoming vehicles sign with a reduced road width to slow traffic down as well as 20mph signs. 6. Reduce the road width for vehicles so a pavement can be built.
<p>Links</p>	<p>http://planning.cheshireeast.gov.uk/applicationdetails.aspx?pr=10/1269C https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code/traffic-signs https://www.congleton-tc.gov.uk/your-council/streetscape-services/ https://www.bovishomes.co.uk/</p>

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