



Information Governance Team

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Dear Sir/Madam

**Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR)
Request ID: FOI355027684**

Thank you for your request for information relating to Footpath in Spencer Park.

You have requested the following information:

1. Is it correct that alterations to the cycle and footpath in Spencer Park involves removal of the tactile markers laid down to assist blind pedestrians.

The proposals are to convert the existing segregated route around Spencer Park into shared use i.e. a route or surface which is available for use by both pedestrians and cyclists. Hence the existing small amount of tactile paving at the entrance to the park on Spencer Avenue side is to be removed. However, we will retain the existing tactile paving by the footbridge where the route will return to segregated.

The proposals have also included new corduroy paving either end of the route i.e. Spencer Avenue and Albany Road to warn of a hazard/change of space which is compliant with the national guidance on the use of tactile paving to assist visually impaired users.

Please refer to the weblink:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91

The proposals include adequate tactile paving to comply with British national guidance, as corduroys are used to highlight potential hazards and indicate which side is for cyclists and which is for pedestrians on a route with segregated use.

2. If so, what is the Council's justification for making this alteration?

The proposals are to improve the main sections of cycle routes to the railway station via the link between Albany Road across Spencer Park to the pedestrian rail bridge and the link south from the bridge towards Spencer Road.

This improvement will create a safer and more consistently wider route for pedestrians and cyclists in compliance with the updated national guidance made available by the Department for Transport (DfT) and Sustrans. The design is also in sympathy with the roots of the existing mature trees and the environmental conditions of Spencer Park. Please see attached

Our proposals are compliant with the following guidance:

1. DfT's Local Transport Note (LTN) dated July 2020.

“6.5.1. - The issues around separating pedestrians and cyclists on off-highway routes are discussed in Chapter 8, section 8.2. 6.5.2 The term 'shared use' has been used to describe both unsegregated and segregated routes, the latter typically being achieved with a white line marking to TSRGD diagram 1049B to separate pedestrians and cyclists. This form of separation is not well observed, and pedestrians walking on or crossing the cycle side can encounter greater conflict than with unsegregated facilities due to the increased cycling speeds that can result from the designation.”

“6.5.3. - White line segregation is not recommended and the term 'shared use' within this document refers only to facilities without any marked separation between pedestrians and cyclists.”

“8.2.1 The potential conflict between pedestrians and cyclists is often a concern when designing routes away from highways. Although there are few recorded collisions between pedestrians and cyclists on shared use paths, the fact that the two user groups travel at different speeds and sometimes in different directions, can affect the level of comfort of both groups.”

2. Sustrans' Traffic-free routes and greenways design guide focuses on routes situated away from the highway.

“4.2.1 - Key to the provision of effective separation is providing enough width for each element of a route. Where there is insufficient width to provide a separated path, an unseparated shared-use path is likely to function better.”

“4.2.2 - Separation can be created by distinguishing between two sides of a path with a painted white line. Research has shown that white-line separation is ineffective in ensuring a high degree of compliance. As such, this approach is not recommended.”

3. “West Midlands Cycle Design Guide”.

There are many areas such as parks and green routes where unsegregated shared-use is the 'best' design solution that can be achieved, but where high levels of pedestrian activity are anticipated. Additional signs such as those above can help to remind people to act with due consideration for others, where possible create a 2.5-3.0m space for unsegregated two-way use shared with pedestrians or 5.0m where segregated (3.8m minimum). In general, to minimise visual intrusion in parks and green spaces, an unsegregated shared route will be the preferred option, rather than separate or segregated pedestrian and cycle paths which will take up more width. There are also issues of compliance with segregation, particularly where user flows (mainly cyclists) do not 'saturate' their appropriate side, so resulting in transgression by other users.

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If you are unhappy with the outcome of our review, you can write to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or email icocasework@ico.org.uk.

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Yours faithfully

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