

Route Feasibility Study
Chesterfield North South Link



**Cycle
Chesterfield**

Feasibility Study, Chesterfield & NE Derbyshire North South Active Travel Route



The Vision

To create a high quality, direct, safe and accessible multi user active travel corridor to link communities to the north and south of Chesterfield with town centre facilities, businesses and transport hubs with opportunities for both commuting and leisure. There may be sections of route where routes diverge for walkers and those on wheels. The routes should form a continuous corridor

The Proposal

This proposal would see existing sections of north south infrastructure being upgraded and improved to achieve the vision. Missing sections of the route would be built to current active travel standards. Signage would provide consistent and clear information to highlight and inform the available connections off the route. The route has the potential to become part of a National Cycle Network multi use corridor route linking new and existing developments to the town centre

The northern section would require new investment to bridge the Chesterfield Canal and the River Rother from the existing National Cycle Network route 67 (NCN 67). The NCN 67 connects Chesterfield to the north with Hollingwood, Barrow Hill, Staveley, Rother Valley, Sheffield and the Trans Pennine Trail. Just north of Chesterfield station and adjacent to the canal sits a residential development known as "Waterside". This evolving development has a long-standing Chesterfield Borough Council (the planning authority) Masterplan that envisages the continuation of the national cycle route alongside the canal, crossing the canal and river via a new bridge through the residential Waterside estate and to the railway station. There is an existing multi-user connection from this proposed route to the town centre / Chesterfield College. The existing connection to the railway station is from the canal via a busy road.

The central section of the route would pass Chesterfield railway station via a combination of roads and shared pavements which would require additional works to improve safety. This central section would continue south of the station via an existing segregated route ("the Station Link") as far as Storforth Lane. A number of improvements would benefit this section of the route (detailed below). This section of the route connects to the west with the Holme Brook Valley Trail, the Hipper Trail and Queens Park in the town centre with onward potential out into the Peak District.

The southern section of this multi user corridor from Storforth Lane south would see an initial re-routing away from a permissive gravel track (owned by Network Rail) which follows a rough uphill switchback to continue out of Chesterfield. The re-routing would provide a level direct route in its place. This would require a new crossing point over Storforth Lane, new signage and road markings through minor roads on an industrial estate and the agreement of a landowner and the council to continue beside a local fishing pond before entering the development site known as the "Avenue Washlands".

The Avenue Washlands comprises of a residential development which is still undergoing development and a nature reserve, created from a former industrial landscape. This development sits alongside the main north south primary vehicle route between Chesterfield, Clay Cross and Alfreton, the A61. This section of highway, just to the south of Chesterfield is subject to a continuous stretch of new residential developments which would benefit from safe, direct and accessible active travel routes into Chesterfield. From this development access is possible to the Five Pits Trail which leads to Tibshelf, Blackwell, Teversal and Pleasley and a network of routes in the Mansfield area. There is also a route leading to Tupton which currently finishes at the bottom of Hagg Hill.

Beyond the Avenue Washlands site, the route would continue via quiet lanes and tracks to Clay Cross. This section of the route is already designated on the Derbyshire County Council mapping portal as a proposed key cycle network

The north south bold orange and blue lines are identified as Key Cycle Network in Derbyshire



Scheme Benefits

- A high quality walking, wheeling and cycling route connecting communities north and south of Chesterfield with the town centre and its transport hubs and local facilities.
- New links from developments north and south of Chesterfield town centre to an active travel corridor, encouraging more sustainable journeys into Chesterfield and surrounding areas, and contributing to reducing congestion and road pollution, (in particular on the overcrowded southern A61 section).
- Providing travel choice for residents and visitors alike, with a high quality positive alternative safe journey experience
- Access to employment, education, shopping and facilities by a low cost, sustainable alternative transport choice. Supporting left behind communities along the route with both low cost transport options and access to leisure
- Providing connections to longer distance routes / places for leisure
- The improvement of this corridor into a high quality, safe and accessible multi user corridor would entail little or no disruption in both installation and use of existing highway infrastructure
- The proposed route is already recognised as part of Derbyshire's proposed key cycle network (DCC Mapping portal)

Key Stakeholders

CBC councillors

Whittington Moor

- Kate Caulfield
- Leslie Thompson

Spire

- Laura Bagley
- Sharon Blank
- Kate Sarvent

Rother

- Lisa Blakemore
- Jenny Flood
- Keith Miles

Hasland

- Mick Brady
- Stuart Brittain
- Amanda Serjeant

Chesterfield Borough Council

NE Derbyshire councillors

Tupton

- David Hancock
- Ross Shipman
- Pam Windley

NE Derbyshire Council

Derbyshire County Council councillors

Brimington

- Richard Smith

Spire

- Ed Fordham

Hasland & Rother

- Lewis Whitbread

Shirland & Wingerworth South

- Paul Parkin

Clay Cross & Tupton

- Stephen Reed

Derbyshire County Council Active Travel Team

MP Toby Perkins

Landowner for MacGregors Ponds

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust / Land Trust

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust

Active Derbyshire

The route in detail

1 - Tapton Lock area to Chesterfield Railway Station

The multi user canal side national cycle network path shares the western edge of the canal bank on it's journey south till just prior to Brimington Road, Chesterfield. Here, the walking route continues along the canal and river towpath finishing at Holbeck Close with the walking route either using a private road on Tapton Terrace or a shared path and footways on Brimington Road and Malkin St.

The cycle route initially uses the canal towpath but then climbs up to Brimington Road with cyclists having to exit onto a 40mph road with poor sight lines. Cyclists then use advisory painted cycle lanes along Brimington Road and Malkin St to get to the railway station.

The Waterside housing development on the west side of the River Rother has a tarmac surfaced shared path running alongside the river to the housing development southern end.

The path finishes where the shared pedestrian and cycle bridge crosses the A61 towards the town centre and the college

The towpath continues south from there to Holbeck Close currently as a footpath only. However there is vacant land adjacent which is owned by Chesterfield Borough Council and when developed should allow the towpath to be widened to continue the shared path.

Where Holbeck Close meets Brimington Road there is a recently completed shared path to the junction of Brimington Road/Brewery St & Malkin St.

There is a roundabout at the junction of Brimington Road/Brewery St/Malkin St, vehicle speeds and poor sight lines make this difficult for pedestrians wanting to cross from the railway station to the college and adjacent bus stops.

Improvements between Tapton Lock and Chesterfield railway station

A new bridge over the River Rother is needed to connect the towpath (Trans Pennine Trail and NCN67) to the path through the Waterside housing development. Once the shared path is extended to Holbeck Close this will provide a much safer and more pleasant cycle alternative to the 40mph Brimington Road.

We suggest that the roundabout is replaced by traffic lights allowing pedestrians to cross safely and if incorporating Toucan crossings cyclists will be able to access the railway station traffic free.

The Chesterfield station master plan has a very similar proposal but there is no timescale for the plan so we suggest this can be achieved as a stand alone project.

Summary map of the area between Tapton Lock and Chesterfield Railway Station.

Area around Waterside

Red line - potential new bridge & shared cycle path

Solid green line - traffic free Pedestrian & cycle path



Area around Chesterfield Railway station

Red line - potential new shared cycle path

Solid green line - traffic free Pedestrian & cycle path

Dotted blue line - current TPT pedestrian route



2 - Railway Station to Jawbones Hill Toucan crossing via station link route and Derby Road shared path

Proceeding south from the railway station the route is currently along the station car park access road with interaction with parked and manoeuvring vehicles. This section should have a separate walking and cycling path to the edge of the car park approach road.

The existing path becomes a shared pedestrian and cycle route continuing to the area of the skateboard park. This route is isolated and dark with tall fencing on both sides and would benefit from lighting. Just before the skateboard park multiple route options allow access to retail areas. A left turn continues the north south route along shared paths and Toucan crossings to Derby Road where there is a shared path on the west side leading to a Toucan crossing at Jawbones Hill. Along the route are several side road crossings which Derbyshire County Council made into their interpretation of 'Copenhagen Crossings', these and some of the surfacing need improvement.

Jawbones Hill Toucan crossing to Storforth Lane

After the Toucan crossing at Jawbones Hill the route is along a 5m wide tarmac path through the Rother Washlands to Storforth Lane.

Improvements needed Chesterfield station to Storforth Lane

Separate walking and cycling route between the station and beginning of 'station link' path.

Lighting on the isolated section of the station link.

Crossing improvement of side roads off Derby Road.

Solid green line - traffic free walking and cycling route

Dotted green line - current on road provision



3 - Storforth Lane to Avenue Site

There is an existing route that is poorly surfaced, disputed RoW and involves steep gradients. There is a potential new route which is flat and more direct.

Existing

After leaving the path through the Rother Washlands where it meets Storforth Lane the footway to the left is a shared pedestrian and cycle path which continues under the railway bridge via a narrow shared path to a Toucan crossing. This gives access to a short broken and pitted stretch of path before the route becomes 'on road' along Ingleton Road. This is a cul de sac giving access to houses and is considered a 'quiet road' suitable as a cycle route.

Where Ingleton Road ends it then becomes a stony track climbing up steeply from below the level of the railway to gain access to a bridge over the railway leading into the Avenue site. It is possible to access the village of Hasland at this point also.

Preferred new route

Opposite the end of the Rother Washlands shared path there is the entrance to an industrial estate with quiet roads that leads to a path around McGregors Pond. From that path it is a short distance to the existing path through the Avenue site. Although this route uses roads for a short distance the advantage is that it is much flatter and if continuing south avoids the large dogleg of the existing route through the site. This route is identified on the Derbyshire Key Cycle Network.

Avenue Site

The site was a large coking plant which left a legacy of polluted land. This was cleared by the governments 'Homes Agency'. Once reclaimed the site was transferred to the 'Land Agency' who now own it. The site is now managed by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. Parts of the site are new housing, a wetland area and a flood management area.

When the site was being reclaimed there were many plans for active travel routes but it became a convoluted route with a poor surface of stones unsuitable for a cycle / wheeling route. There are also unsuitable kissing gates installed at several points. The intention for this route was that it would form an extension of National Cycle Network route 67 filling in the gap between Chesterfield and the 5 Pits Trail. However, land ownership issues, poor surfacing and barriers meant Derbyshire County Council wouldn't take on responsibility and Sustrans (now Walk Wheel & Cycle Trust) wouldn't designate it as part of the NCN.

Derbyshire Wildlife Trust now manage the site. Cycle Chesterfield met with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust to discuss improvements to the trails but due to cost and the potential impact of illegal bike use, they were not able to progress matters but willing to have further discussions if stakeholders and funders got involved and viable alternatives were explored.

This site and the multi user trail through it connect into or are close to a number of new housing developments in the Wingerworth area and could form a key multi user spine trail to access both Chesterfield and Clay Cross and several new developments. The route would be level, safe, accessible and fairly direct

Improvements needed Storforth Lane to and including Avenue site

New walking and cycle route from Storforth Lane into Avenue site via a new Toucan crossing.

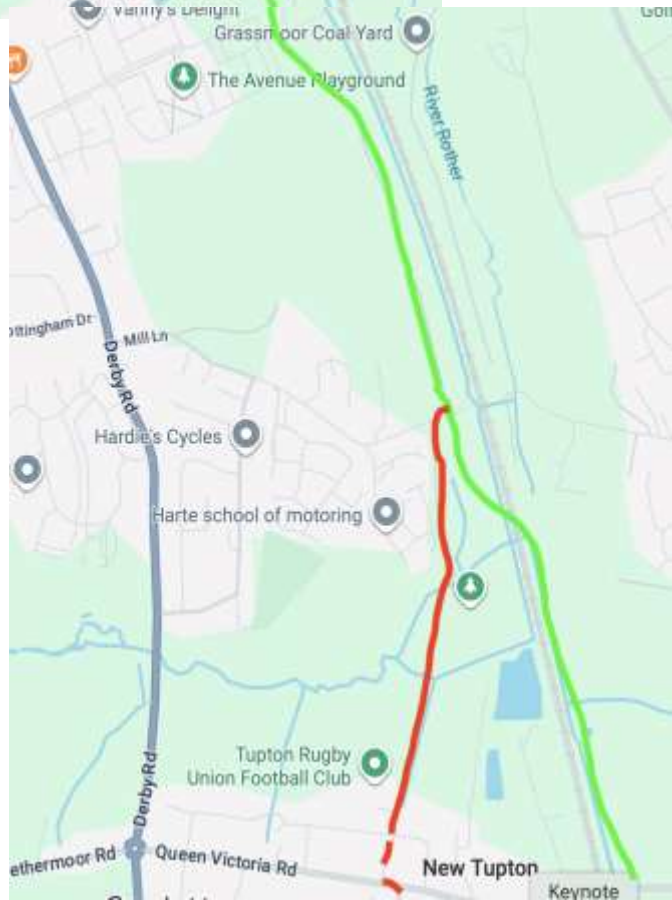
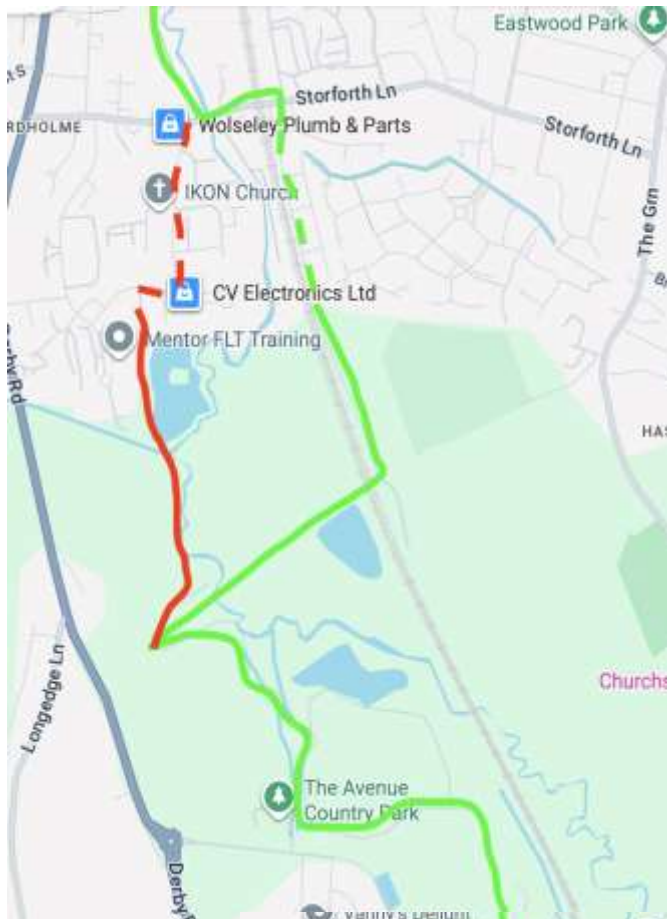
Resurfacing of path through the Avenue.

Removal of 'kissing' gates.

Storforth Lane and Avenue site

Red lines - preferred route of new walking and cycle path
Dotted - on road
Solid - traffic free

Green lines - walking & cycle path
Dotted - on road
Solid - traffic free

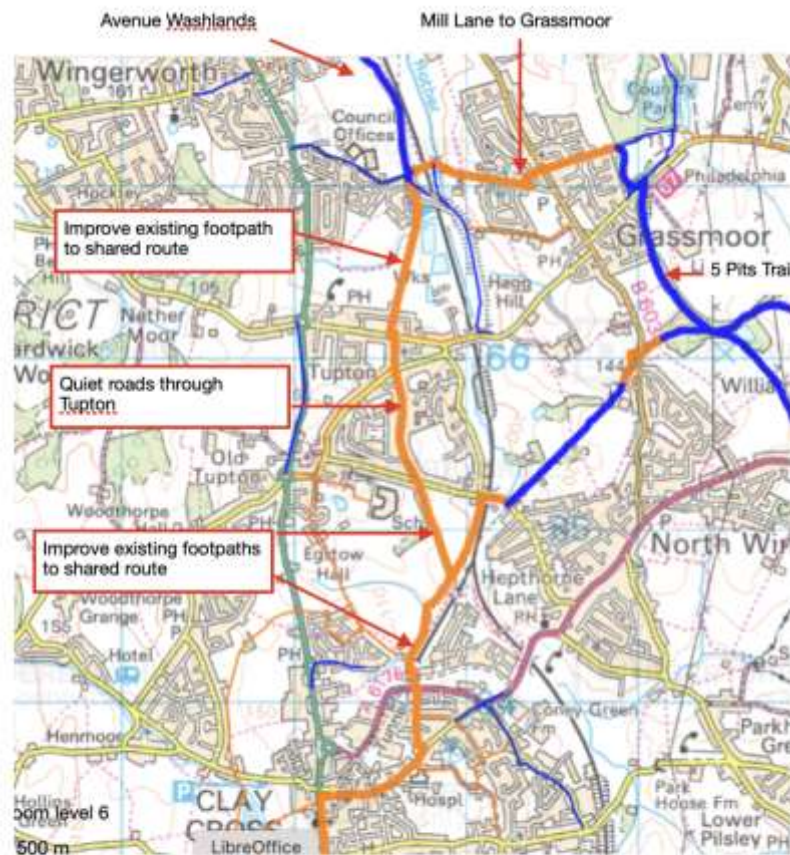


Avenue site to Clay Cross

From the southern end of the Avenue site a link route steeply up Mill Lane to Grassmoor allows access to the 5 Pits Trail on quiet roads. This should be the continuous route of National Cycle Network route 67.

There is also a continuation route along the valley base on an old railway track ending at the bottom of Hagg Hill. For pedestrians that allows a short walk into Tupton alongside a road. For cyclists the route is less useful because the road is busy and fast.

However, the proposed north south route would stay in the bottom of the valley on a combination of footpaths and quiet roads through Tupton giving access to Clay Cross. This is identified as Derbyshire Key Cycle Network. This route runs along the boundary of Tupton Hall secondary school which has the potential to increase active travel to the school with the associated reduction in car traffic. There is the potential to improve links from this route to new and existing residential developments alongside the A61



Blue is existing walking and cycling infrastructure

Recommendation

With the improvements outlined in the red boxes on the previous pages this route could become a complete active travel route connecting into Chesterfield from north and south along a high quality mostly level corridor. This route would encourage walking, wheeling & cycling, passing several major housing developments, schools and businesses as well as Chesterfield railway station and interconnecting with extensive further routes to the north and south as well as the east west route in Chesterfield.

Comprehensive signage, well drained paths and lighting where appropriate would make this route attractive, accessible and popular for both utility and leisure journeys