

Maidstone Cycle Campaign Forum

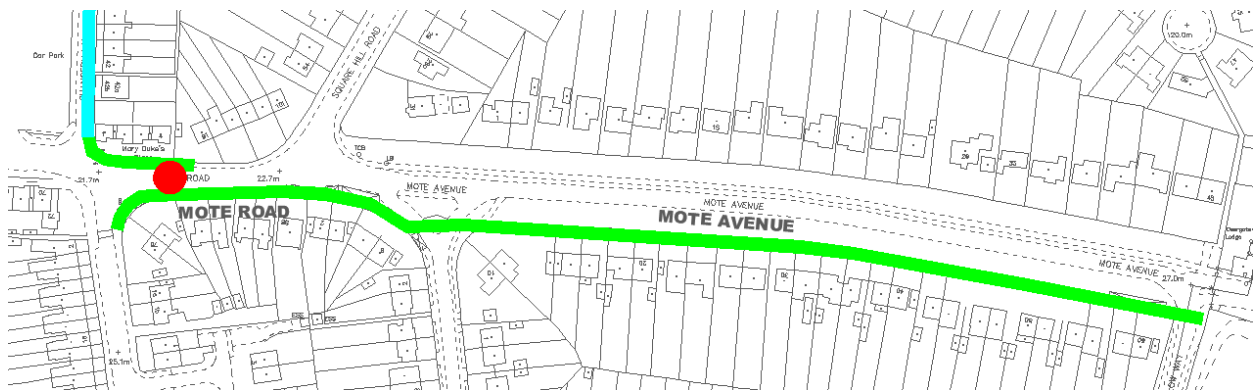
(Registered Charity Number 1172691)

www.maidstonecycling.uk



Mote Park towards Town Centre Consultation - Response

Maidstone Cycle Campaign Forum (MCCF) welcomes the proposals to make improvements to address some of the issues identified in the Sustrans Assessment of Walking and Cycling provision in the Borough. This short but important 1st phase will enable safer walking and cycling from the main entrance of Mote Park to Chancery Lane.



Representatives of MCCF have walked and examined the proposed route along the south side of Mote Avenue. MCCF confirm their support of this option. It is our view that the wider verge, more level surface and avoidance of crossing Square Hill make it the safer option. However, there are opportunities and concerns which need to be addressed.

We witnessed the general confusion of vehicles leaving Mote Park where there is a lack of clear road marking and signage to facilitate safe merging into the Willow Way – Mote Avenue traffic. Likewise, vehicles entering Mote Park from Willow Way have to do so on a busy corner with no road markings or other measures to calm the traffic. The need for these is specifically referred to in the Sustrans Assessment – Page 26 Interventions “1.5 Provide informal tabled crossing to access park”.

Pedestrians and cyclists crossing adjacent to the corner is currently hazardous. It is noted that drawing 1819-LTP-MA-003 indicates ‘Existing crossing point upgrade’. MCCF recognises an opportunity to address the needs of those with physical disabilities, walkers, cyclists and motorists. Whilst the wider benefits are referred to in the EqIA how these will be delivered is not detailed in the published proposals. An opportunity exists to enhance the entrance and access to Mote Park to take advantage of the substantial investments made and being made to improve its facilities. The ‘crossing point upgrade’ proposed needs to address these wider needs providing safer access to it for all.

MCCF favours segregation of walking and cycling through clear markings, similar to the Ashford Road (Huntsman Lane to New Cut Road) Cycle Way, to avoid unnecessary

confusion of users of the route. There is an opportunity to do this along the Mote Avenue stretch of the Cycle Way.

Controls need to be implemented to prohibit parking on the Cycle Way along Mote Avenue to avoid its use as an extension to existing hard standing for car parking.

The proposed widening of the existing crossing on the 'island' at the junction of Greenside and Mote Avenue to 3m is noted. However, MCCF recommends that this crossing is levelled out to make it accessible for all. The more substantial proposals in the Sustrans Assessment - Page 27 "Opportunity to redesign this space with local community" would adequately address this as well as avoiding crossing the highway twice.

MCCF welcomes the proposal to upgrade the existing Mote Road Pelican Crossing to a Toucan crossing.

The proposals correctly identify the need to widen the existing footpath by Mary Duke's Place.

Promotion of the Cycle Way to encourage its use as part of the Council's modal shift strategy would be welcomed. Adequate maintenance provision will be required to ensure its success into the future.

It is noted that the plans detail works substantially less than those recommended in the Sustrans Assessment. Sustrans recommend "Traffic Calming Measures" for each crossing of the highway and MCCF wish to see these implemented. However, it is accepted that the works proposed go some way to delivering the requirements and will contribute to encouraging walking and cycling as an alternative to driving.

In summary MCCF supports the proposed route and recognises this important first step in implementing improvements for walking and cycling in the Borough.

MCCF looks forward to the consultation on the next phases to extend the route to Maidstone East.

Russell Chidwick
On behalf of Maidstone Cycle Campaign Forum
info@maidstonecycling.uk