

APPENDIX 2

FUTURE HIGH STREET & ACTIVE TRAVEL FUND: CONWAY STREET AND EUROPA BOULEVARD – PROPOSED ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME

PHASE 2 CONSULTATION - SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

		Support	Object
1	Do you support or object to the proposed introduction of a one-way road system on Conway Street?	50% 11 no.	50% 11 no.
2	Do you support or object to the proposed introduction of on-street parking restrictions on Conway Street?	45.5% 10 no.	54.5% 12 no.
3	Do you support or object to the proposed introduction of a bus lane on Conway Street?	58.3% 14 no.	41.7% 10 no.
4	Do you support or object to the proposed introduction of cycle facilities on Conway Street?	50% 12 no.	50% 12 no.
5	Do you support or object to the proposed introduction of on-street parking restrictions on Europa Boulevard?	52.2% 12 no.	47.8% 11 no.
6	Do you support or object to the proposed introduction of cycle facilities on Europa Boulevard?	62.5% 15 no.	37.5% 9 no.

Question 1:

Do you support or object to the proposed introduction of a one-way road system on Conway Street?

OBJECTIONS (11 NO. INDIVIDUAL OBJECTIONS)

Objections are detailed below:

Some objectors raised concerns the proposals will:

- Create congestion along a major arterial road causing increased air pollution and buses to be late. Coupled with 20mph speed limits this will add time to travelling. Fender Lane cycle Link is an example of such.
- Make access to and from Birkenhead Town Centre more difficult thereby pushing drivers away from Birkenhead and toward shopping centres causing Birkenhead to deteriorate.
- Cause traffic queues once the flyover is removed.
- Make access to and from Birkenhead Town Centre more difficult causing people to shop elsewhere.

In response; The Traffic Management Act 2004 and Traffic Regulation Act 1984 lists pedestrians and cyclists as ‘traffic’. The Highway Code’s ‘Hierarchy of Road Users’ places pedestrians, cyclists, horse-riders, and motorcyclists as the road users most likely to be injured in the event of a collision. Wirral Council therefore has a duty to manage its highway in a way that ensures and facilitates safe movement for all traffic. Wirral Council also understands that not everyone is able nor wishes to cycle or walk (whether for leisure purposes or as part of a commute).

Operational junction modelling was carried out to assess the impact of the proposed active travel measures on the operation of the Conway Street Corridor. Whilst minor deterioration in network performance was identified, it predicted that the network would continue to operate within theoretical capacity bringing relatively minor increases to queueing and delays. The assessment stated that, “the increase to delays is considered minimal when spread across 3 junctions and would be unlikely to be perceivable in reality.”

Case-study evidence shows that public realm and active travel improvements can positively impact footfall, retail spend, perceptions of an area and social inclusion. Research suggests those who walk and cycle more within their daily routines, spend more in their local areas. The provision of adequate facilities for all road users (vehicle drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists) allows residents to make a choice on their mode of transport, whilst enabling those that do wish to walk or cycle, to be able to do so safely. Any increase in the number of people choosing to travel by walking, cycling or public transport, could be expected to reduce the number of people choosing to travel by other, less sustainable means of transport, thereby helping to reduce emissions, congestion, and parking issues.

Sustainable Travel is at the heart of the Birkenhead Regeneration Framework. The Council will work with partners to ensure that public transport is accessible and inclusive to all residents and users as part of our strategy to increase patronage and reduce the need for reliance on private vehicle journeys into the town centre.

The removal of the flyovers will be subject to appropriate traffic modelling and approvals.

With regards to Fender Lane, analysis was recently undertaken by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. It compared use of Fender Lane before and after the introduction of active travel facilities. Comparing counts between April - May 2021 - before installation - and April - May 2023 - post installation - reveals a 42.43% percent increase in cyclist activity and a 8.13% decrease in the total sum of cars on Fender Lane.

Some objectors raised concerns that the proposals will be very expensive and that the funding would be better spent on other parts of Wirral that are deteriorating such as smaller villages where free parking should be provided.

In response; Wirral Council has received £8.9million from the Government's Future High Streets Fund, Active Travel Fund, the Wirral Growth Company This funding can be used to help local councils make their high streets and town centres fit for the future and to support increased levels of active travel. The improvements will provide a more attractive place for people to shop, live, visit, or work and will support the regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre, providing an improved, better connected and more sustainable experience for all who use this area.

The funding for this scheme is ringfenced solely for the delivery of this project and could not be used for the delivery of anything else as that would not be in accordance with the condition of the grant award.

An objector stated that the proposals are unbelievably poorly researched.

In response; Wirral Council has received £8.9million from the Government's Future High Streets Fund, Active Travel Fund, and the Wirral Growth Company. This funding can be used to help local councils make their high streets and town centres fit for the future and to support increased levels of active travel. The improvements will provide a more attractive place for people to shop, live, visit, or work and will support the regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre, providing an improved, better connected and more sustainable experience for all who use this area.

The proposals have been reviewed by Active Travel England who on behalf of the Department for Transport are the inspectorate and funding body for active travel and enforce design standards for new schemes.

There is significant evidence which shows that improving public realm and active travel improvements can positively impact footfall, retail spend, perceptions of an area and social inclusion. Other places have shown that a higher degree of pedestrian priority increases business activity and sales revenue. As an example, in Altrincham, Cheshire, pedestrian improvements led to more than a 20% reduction in shop vacancy rates and increases in footfall. The Traffic Management Act 2004 and Traffic Regulation Act 1984 lists pedestrians and cyclists as ‘traffic’. The Highway Code’s ‘Hierarchy of Road Users’ places pedestrians, cyclists, horse-riders, and motorcyclists as the road users most likely to be injured in the event of a collision. Wirral Council therefore has a duty to manage its highway in a way that ensures and facilitates safe movement for all traffic. Wirral Council also understands that not everyone is able nor wishes to cycle or walk (whether for leisure purposes or as part of a commute). The provision of adequate facilities for all road users (vehicle drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists) allows residents to make a choice on their mode of transport, whilst enabling those that do wish to walk or cycle, to be able to do so safely. Any increase in the number of people choosing to travel by walking, cycling or public transport, could be expected to reduce the number of people choosing to travel by other, less sustainable means of transport, thereby helping to reduce emissions, congestion, and parking issues.

An objector stated that Wirral Council is creating a 15-minute city prison.

In response; Wirral Council has received £7.2 million from the Government’s Future High Streets Fund, Active Travel Fund, and private funding. This funding can be used to help local councils make their high streets and town centres fit for the future and to support increased levels of active travel. The improvements will provide a more attractive place for people to shop, live, visit, or work and will support the regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre, providing an improved, better connected and more sustainable experience for all who use this area.

It is understood that a “15-minute city” is where a person’s daily needs are accessible within a 15-minute walk, bike, or public transport ride from their home. Car ownership in Birkenhead is low and therefore active travel improvements to enable people to travel around without a car improves their ability to access employment, retail, leisure and education opportunities and reduces their social exclusion.

The proposals include for significant public realm improvements, over one hundred new trees, new grass verges and planting, much of which is currently carriageway, thereby making the area much more attractive and very much unlike a prison.

The Traffic Management Act 2004 and Traffic Regulation Act 1984 lists pedestrians and cyclists as ‘traffic’. The Highway Code’s ‘Hierarchy of Road Users’ places pedestrians, cyclists, horse-riders, and motorcyclists as the

road users most likely to be injured in the event of a collision. Wirral Council therefore has a duty to manage its highway in a way that ensures and facilitates safe movement for all traffic. Wirral Council also understands that not everyone is able nor wishes to cycle or walk (whether for leisure purposes or as part of a commute). The provision of adequate facilities for all road users (vehicle drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists) allows residents to make a choice on their mode of transport, whilst enabling those that do wish to walk or cycle, to be able to do so safely. Any increase in the number of people choosing to travel by walking, cycling or public transport, could be expected to reduce the number of people choosing to travel by other, less sustainable means of transport, thereby helping to reduce emissions, congestion, and parking issues.

An objector stated that I see no logic in making any part of Conway Street into a one-way road for the foreseeable future. A one-way road will force car drivers who park in the 5 100+ car spaces, and the two companies based on Adelphi Street to use Dacre Street causing congestion at the T junction onto Argyle Street. In proposal illustrations an area of land at the junction of Dacre and Argyle will be turned into an access point for Dock Branch Park. Using Dacre Street in such a way will seriously diminish the potential success one of Wirral Council's catalyst projects for Birkenhead.

In response; Conway Street will be open to vehicular traffic in both directions. The existing dual carriageway, one-way in each direction, will be re-purposed to allow for a bus lane, for bus use only, and a single lane in each direction for general vehicular traffic. Vehicle access into Adelphi Street, via Conway Street, will be maintained.

SUPPORT (11 NO INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS)

Expressions of support are detailed below:

Supporters stated they supported the proposal for the following reasons:

- It will be better and safer for cycling and wheeling, helping users feel more confident.
- It would be better and safer for pedestrians and other road users. With crossing the main road made much easier, whereas the current layout splits the area in to two halves.
- It will be better for local business and people – especially young and old with lung problems.
- Improved public realm.
- The proposal fits with The Wirral Plan.
- The proposal will cause a reduction in traffic and movements overall, making the area more pleasant, safe, and attract more people.
- It will reduce carbon.

In response; Noted.

Question 2:

Do you support or object to the proposed introduction of on-street parking restrictions on Conway Street?

OBJECTIONS (12 NO. INDIVIDUAL OBJECTIONS)

Objections are detailed below:

Several objectors raised concerns that:

- Many people still need cars and that if access is difficult, people will not bother coming to Birkenhead.
- A reduction in available vehicle parking space will leave people with nowhere to park. Where will people park?
- That a reduction in available vehicle parking space will have an impact on local businesses and residents, such as the nightclubs on Conway Street who hold evening events for young people with disabilities.
- That the proposals will marginalise those with disabilities – blue badge parking should be retained.

In response; There are already parking restrictions in place within the limits of the proposals along Conway Street. The proposal will rationalise these restrictions to suit the functionality of the route. 2 no bays for taxi use pick up & drop off will be provided whilst Wirral Council on-street parking facilities and car parks, along with car parks are available in the surrounding area.

Some objectors stated that Wirral Council is creating a system so people can't travel freely and are creating another reason to stop people from driving in addition to everything else.

In response; Conway Street will still be open to car users and public transport, with several vehicle parking facilities located within the immediate area of the proposals.

The Traffic Management Act 2004 and Traffic Regulation Act 1984 lists pedestrians and cyclists as 'traffic'. The Highway Code's 'Hierarchy of Road Users' places pedestrians, cyclists, horse-riders, and motorcyclists as the road users most likely to be injured in the event of a collision. Wirral Council therefore has a duty to manage its highway in a way that ensures and facilitates safe movement for all traffic. Wirral Council also understands that not everyone is able nor wishes to cycle or walk (whether for leisure purposes or as part of a commute). The provision of adequate facilities for all road users (vehicle drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists) allows residents to make a choice on their mode of transport, whilst enabling those that do wish to walk or cycle, to be able to do so safely. Any increase in the number of people choosing to travel by walking, cycling or public transport, could be expected to reduce the number of people choosing to travel by other, less sustainable means of

transport, thereby helping to reduce emissions, congestion, and parking issues.

An objector stated that there are no issues with the current restrictions, there's already more than enough spaces.

In response; Although this point is listed as an objection it appears to agree that the proposals will have little impact on requirements for vehicle parking in the area.

An objector stated that constantly putting money into Birkenhead (and seeing no difference) and ignoring the rest of the Wirral where other places are deteriorating. How about spend some money in smaller villages in the area. Allow parking to encourage shopping with local businesses, let's get local villages buzzing again!

In response; This objection does not appear to relate specifically to the proposal to introduce new parking restrictions along Conway Street and has been submitted as a response to each question in the public consultation.

Wirral Council has received £8.9million from the Government's Future High Streets Fund, Active Travel Fund, and the Wirral Growth Company. This funding can be used to help local councils make their high streets and town centres fit for the future and to support increased levels of active travel. The improvements will provide a more attractive place for people to shop, live, visit, or work and will support the regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre, providing an improved, better connected and more sustainable experience for all who use this area.

The funding for this scheme is ringfenced solely for the delivery of this project and could not be used for the delivery of anything else as that would not be in accordance with the condition of the grant award.

An objector stated that they were unsure about the proposals as they are not sure it is necessary. Wouldn't the street look better without cars parked and the flow would be better?

In response; Taxi only bays will be provided as part of the proposals, but general vehicle parking will not be permitted along this section of Conway Street. There will be no parking available on "live" carriageway, only within bays off-carriageway, as per existing.

An objector stated that the proposal is unnecessary as the system works as it is. I used to be able to park for half an hour for free on Europa Boulevard but since that stopped I don't use Birkenhead anymore. I wonder what impact this has had on the area.

In response; This objection does not appear to relate to the introduction of parking restrictions along Conway Street. There are already parking restrictions in place along Conway Street. The proposal will rationalise these restrictions to suit the functionality of the route. Two no bays for taxi use pick up & drop off will be provided whilst Wirral Council on-street parking facilities and car parks, along with private multi-story car parks are available in the surrounding area.

The proposals are part of the wider regeneration plans for Birkenhead as set out in the 2040 framework. Case-study evidence shows that public realm and active travel improvements can positively impact footfall, retail spend, perceptions of an area and social inclusion.

On and off-street parking facilities are available at various locations in the vicinity of Conway Street. Off-street parking facilities located within the immediate area of the proposals.

SUPPORT (10 NO. INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS)

Expressions of support are detailed below:

Supporters stated they supported the proposal for the following reasons:

- There are already parking restrictions on this road.
- It fits with the emerging parking strategy.
- There is plenty of parking space nearby.
- Conway street shouldn't have any cars except taxis in the evenings for drinking venues.
- It is essential to deliver the wider benefits of the scheme.
- This restriction is needed to safely introduce a bus lane.
- Restricting on street parking gives us space to do other things.
- It will be better for local businesses and people - especially young and old and with lung problems.
- It will encourage other forms of transport.
- Hopefully improve traffic and road safety.

In response; Noted.

Question 3:

Do you support or object to the proposed introduction of a bus lane on Conway Street?

OBJECTIONS (10 NO. INDIVIDUAL OBJECTIONS)

Objections are detailed below:

Several objectors raised concerns that:

- Bus Lanes do not work and are ineffective (see Borough Road for example).
- Bus Lanes cause/increase congestion and have negative consequences.
- Traffic is hardly ever an issue at this location, it flows well, so why are Bus Lanes needed?

In response; Bus Lanes are designed to deliver reliable and fast journeys safely and efficiently, thereby helping to prevent congestion, improve bus journey time reliability and increase the appeal of sustainable transport. In addition to buses, vehicles designed to carry more than eight passengers, emergency vehicles, taxis and cycles are also be permitted to travel within this bus lane. The provision of bus lanes is supported by Merseytravel to help to ensure efficient bus operations in the area.

An objector stated that constantly putting money into Birkenhead (and seeing no difference) and ignoring the rest of the Wirral where other places are deteriorating. How about spend some money in smaller villages in the area. Allow parking to encourage shopping with local businesses, let's get local villages buzzing again!

In response; This objection does not appear to relate specifically to the proposal to introduce a Bus Lane along Conway Street and has been submitted as a response to each question in the public consultation.

Wirral Council has received £8.9million from the Government's Future High Streets Fund, Active Travel Fund, and the Wirral Growth Company. This funding can be used to help local councils make their high streets and town centres fit for the future and to support increased levels of active travel. The improvements will provide a more attractive place for people to shop, live, visit, or work and will support the regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre, providing an improved, better connected and more sustainable experience for all who use this area.

The funding for this scheme is ringfenced solely for the delivery of this project and could not be used for the delivery of anything else as that would not be in accordance with the condition of the grant award.

An objector stated that the proposed design of the bus lane would make the road extremely unsafe for vulnerable road users, especially users of Class 3 invalid carriages who are being excluded from part of the existing footway by the

introduction of segregated cycleways. Also, not all cyclists will wish to use the segregated cycleway and will choose to use the road instead. This is because the length of segregated cycleway is very short and poorly connected with existing cycle infrastructure. So, many cyclists will simply stay on the road rather than use the short section of cycleway being provided.

In response; The proposed design does not exclude Class 3 invalid carriages from using any section of footway. The Highway Code states that all mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs can legally travel at a maximum speed of 4mph on footpaths or in pedestrian areas. Rule 38 of The Highway Code states that pavements are safer than roads and should be used when available. As part of the proposals the footways will be improved along Conway Street to assist footway users. Such improvements include wider controlled pedestrian crossing points and continuous footways with pedestrian priority at side streets.

If a cyclist wishes to cycle on the carriageway, then they are free to do so, however a segregated cycle link will be provided, and cycling will also be permitted within the bus lane.

This proposal forms part of a wider regeneration programme for Birkenhead, with well-connected active travel routes forming a key part of this programme.

SUPPORT (14 NO INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS)

Expressions of support are detailed below:

Supporters stated they supported the proposal for the following reasons:

- Bus services and public transport should be a priority, making it easier to get into town.
- It will improve public transport, bus movements and connectivity.
- It will make the bus service more reliable thereby encouraging usage.
- Not everyone can walk far or cycle. Good public transport will help reduce car use and car dependency.
- Allows for safer cycling facilities.
- Improved bus movement
- It should be implemented if required but should not replace an option for people driving their own vehicles.
- A bus lane will increase overall capacity on the street.
- It will be better for local businesses and people - especially young and old and with lung problems.

In response; Noted.

Question 4:

Do you support or object to the proposed introduction of cycle facilities on Conway Street?

OBJECTIONS (12 NO. INDIVIDUAL OBJECTIONS)

Objections are detailed below:

Several objectors raised concerns that:

- The existing footways are sufficiently wide for cycling on.
- Cycling should be restricted to the quieter streets, like Price Street.
- That Wirral is hilly, and the weather here makes cycling unsuitable for all but a few months.
- That such investment is expensive and does not represent a good return on taxpayers' money to cater for such a small minority (cyclists).
- That the money should instead be spent on pedestrian facilities.

In response; Rule 64 of The Highway Code states that, "you MUST NOT cycle on a pavement".

Whilst there are areas of Wirral that could certainly be considered "hilly" and unsuitable for cycling facilities, Conway Street and this area of Birkenhead could not be considered as such as they are relatively flat with minimal incline, and therefore suitable for the introduction of cycling and walking facilities.

Wirral Council also understands that not everyone is able nor wishes to cycle or walk (whether for leisure purposes or as part of a commute). However, it also recognises that not everyone has access to a car. Therefore, the provision of adequate facilities for all road users (vehicle drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists, public transport) allows residents to make a choice on their mode of transport, whilst enabling those that do wish to walk or cycle, to be able to do so safely along important commuter routes to places of employment and residency. Any increase in the number of people choosing to travel by walking, cycling or public transport, could be expected to reduce the number of people choosing to travel by other, less sustainable means of transport, thereby helping to reduce emissions, congestion, and parking issues.

The Birkenhead 2040 Framework strategy aims to ensure the area is accessible and inclusive to all residents. Providing for trips on foot, by bike and by public transport is more important here than in most places due to the number of households that do not have access to a car. Helping people and goods to move around efficiently, cleanly, safely, and healthily by the most appropriate mode is an integral element of the vision for Birkenhead.

The proposals also include significant upgrades to footways and pedestrian facilities.

Some objectors stated that the cycle lanes will cause congestion and pollution and will be hardly ever used – see Fender Lane as an example. The proposals are waste of taxpayers' money.

In response; Not all taxpayers own a car. The provision of adequate facilities for all road users (vehicle drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists, public transport) allows residents & visitors to make a choice on their mode of transport, whilst enabling those that do wish to walk or cycle, to be able to do so safely along important commuter routes to places of employment and residency. Any increase in the number of people choosing to travel by walking, cycling or public transport, could be expected to reduce the number of people choosing to travel by other, less sustainable means of transport, thereby helping to reduce emissions, congestion, and parking issues.

With regards to Fender Lane, analysis was recently undertaken by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. It compared use of Fender Lane before and after the introduction of active travel facilities. Comparing counts between April - May 2021 - before installation - and April - May 2023 - post installation - reveals a 42.43% percent increase in cyclist activity and an 8.13% decrease in the total sum of cars on Fender Lane.

An objector asked, what about our children, young families, disabled, elderly? Are they going to be cycling to the shops or to the GP? I suppose they will be isolated in their planned 15-minute neighbourhood.

In response; Our children, young families, disabled, and elderly are free to determine their most appropriate mode of transport. It is not unusual for many people, who do not have access to a car, to cycle to a shop, their GP, or place of work.

Improvements to the public realm, pedestrian facilities, and footways mean the area will make the area feel far from isolated and much more inviting than at present.

An objector states that constantly putting money into Birkenhead (and seeing no difference) and ignoring the rest of the Wirral where other places are deteriorating. How about spend some money in smaller villages in the area. Allow parking to encourage shopping with local businesses, let's get local villages buzzing again!

In response; This objection does not appear to relate specifically to the proposal to introduce cycling facilities along Conway Street and has been submitted as a response to each question in the public consultation.

Wirral Council has received £8.9million from the Government's Future High Streets Fund, Active Travel Fund, and the Wirral Growth Company. This funding can be used to help local councils make their high streets and town centres fit for the future and to support increased levels of active travel. The improvements will provide a more attractive place for people to shop, live,

visit, or work and will support the regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre, providing an improved, better connected and more sustainable experience for all who use this area.

The funding for this scheme is ringfenced solely for the delivery of this project and could not be used for the delivery of anything else as that would not be in accordance with the condition of the grant award.

An objector stated that the proposals will reduce road space.

In response; At present there are four lanes for general vehicular traffic along this section of Conway Street (2 in each direction). As a result of the introduction of the cycle lane, there will still be four lanes. However, one lane in each direction will be re-purposed as a bus lane in each direction. The space required for the provision of a cycle lane will be achieved by removing the existing central reservation, not by taking road space from the carriageway.

An objector states that they were reassured by a Wirral Council Officer that no Traffic Regulation Orders would be needed to implement the cycleway proposals. I strongly object to the proposed segregated cycleways, which design out and criminalise wheelchair users and pedestrians. I am 35 in favour of shared space schemes which, instead of pitting one group of highway users against another and encouraging conflict, force all highway users to respect one another and change their behaviour accordingly. I would support the introduction of a multi-user route or a shared space scheme.

In response; There are no specific traffic regulation orders attached to the proposed cycle lanes. The proposed traffic regulation orders relate to the rationalisation of existing double yellow lines and vehicle parking.

The proposals do not design out nor criminalise wheelchair users. The Highway Code states that all mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs can legally travel at a maximum speed of 4mph on footpaths or in pedestrian areas. Rule 38 of The Highway Code states that pavements are safer than roads and should be used when available. As part of the proposals the footways will be improved along Conway Street to assist footway users. Such improvements include wider controlled pedestrian crossing points and continuous footways with pedestrian priority at side streets.

Local Transport Note 1/20 advises that, "In urban areas, the conversion of a footway to a shared use should be regarded as a last resort. Shared use facilities are generally not favoured by either pedestrians or cyclists, particularly when flows are high. It can create particular difficulties for visually impaired people."

An objector stated, what would be the advantage of having a segregated cycle track going in front of night clubs and ending as it does away from the Conway Street, Argyle Street roundabout. If there is going to be access to / from Dock Branch Park along Dacre Street, logically cycle facilities would be placed on that street. This would allow people to use Dock Branch Park to get into Birkenhead fulfilling the Future High Streets Fund and Active Travel Fund aims.

In response; The nightclubs do not open until late evening and therefore do not impact on cycle lane usage for the large majority of a day (unlike many cycle lanes throughout the UK that are located outside of daytime businesses and still operate effectively). The proposed cycle lanes will be separate from the footways, at carriageway level, and sign posted accordingly.

The provision of adequate facilities for all road users (vehicle drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists, public transport) allows residents & visitors to make a choice on their mode of transport, whilst enabling those that do wish to walk or cycle, to be able to do so safely along important commuter routes to places of employment and residency.

The Birkenhead 2040 Framework and town centre masterplan work (all of which has been or will be consulted upon in due course) include for active travel provision that would connect into this proposal. There is insufficient funding currently to extend the proposed link into Argyle Street as part of this proposal, however initial consultation has already been undertaken as part of the wider waterfront programme which does include proposals for Argyle Street and links to Dock Branch and Woodside with funding for that secured via Levelling Up programme.

An objector stated that they object on the grounds that it will be at the expense of car drivers. Not everyone has a cushy non-job that allows them to cycle to work. Most people need the convenience of their car.

In response; Car drivers will still be able to use both Conway Street and Europa Boulevard.

Any increase in the number of people choosing to travel by walking, cycling or public transport, could be expected to reduce the number of people choosing to travel by car, thereby freeing up road space.

SUPPORT (12 NO INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS)

Expressions of support are detailed below:

Supporters stated they supported the proposal for the following reasons:

- The need to make cycle routes better and easier to use.
- Health and well-being and economic benefits.
- Safer cycling facilities will encourage more sustainable travel.

- The proposal will get the cyclists off the footway.
- Existing road layout is unsafe and intimidating for cycling.
- This will link to other planned schemes helping to create a comprehensive network.
- Cycle lanes should form part of all new road layouts.
- Very important for Wirral's climate commitments.
- Trips by cycle are good for air quality and public health.
- It will be better for local businesses.
- It will be better for people - especially young and old and with lung problems.
- Cycles facilities should get priority over cars.

In response; Noted.

Question 5: Do you support or object to the proposed introduction of on-street parking restrictions on Europa Boulevard?

OBJECTIONS (11 NO. INDIVIDUAL OBJECTIONS)

Objections are detailed below:

Several objectors raised concerns that:

- They will no longer use Europa Boulevard if they have to pay to park.
- Wirral Council is restricting parking and placing restrictions on cars – what is this ideology based on? People have had enough of restrictions from lockdown, and I feel that the council isn't considering the impact on families who rely on their vehicles to work, shop, and get their children to school. Who has the time to walk or cycle everywhere?
- There is no benefit to restricting parking.
- Some on-street parking should be provided as disabled, elderly, and vulnerable people will need to park near Conway Park Train Station and buses at the stop used by National Express. Drop-off/Pick-up provision for rail and coach users required.
- The car is extremely important to parents of disabled children/adults and such proposals only isolate people.
- Where are we going to park?

In response; Vehicle parking at the kerbside will no longer be available at Europa Boulevard a result of the proposals, however, at present, there is already no free kerb-side parking available along Europa Boulevard between the hours of 08:00 and 18:30.

Large capacity car parks can be located in the immediate vicinity of the proposals at Price Street Car Park, Europa Pools Car Park, The Vue Cinema Car Park, Europa Square Car Park, Conway Street Car Park, and Oliver Street Car Park. On-street kerb-side parking can also be found in many of the neighbouring roads.

Blue Badge holders can use designated parking spaces and park in paid for parking zones in council car parks free of charge. Anyone can park for free before 08:00 and after 18:30hrs.

Wirral Council has received £8.9million from the Government's Future High Streets Fund, Active Travel Fund, and the Wirral Growth Company. This funding can be used to help local councils make their high streets and town centres fit for the future and to support increased levels of active travel. The improvements will provide a more attractive place for people to shop, live, visit, or work and will support the regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre, providing an improved, better connected and more sustainable experience for all who use this area.

The proposals are far from a form of COVID-19 lockdown type “restrictions” and Wirral Council understands that not all those who wish to shop, work, or take their children to school are able to do so by walking or cycling. The

proposals will not remove any resident's ability to do so by their most appropriate mode of transport. However, the proposals will provide residents and visitors with a greater choice and freedom on both their mode of transport and their movement within the area (wider pavements, benches, pedestrian priority crossing points, controlled pedestrian crossings etc.) – whether that be by car, public transport, walking or cycling.

An objector stated that there are already pay and display restrictions in this area?

In response; This is correct – there is no free parking along Europa Boulevard between the hours of 08:00 -18:30. However, the proposed TROs along Europa Boulevard will prohibit all parking at all hours, to provide better functionality to the new 2-way system.

An objector stated that constantly putting money into Birkenhead (and seeing no difference) and ignoring the rest of the Wirral where other places are deteriorating. How about spend some money in smaller villages in the area. Allow parking to encourage shopping with local businesses, let's get local villages buzzing again!

In response; This objection does not appear to relate specifically to the proposal to introduce parking restrictions along Europa Boulevard and has been submitted as a response to each question in the public consultation. However, free kerb-side parking is already available at the large majority of smaller villages throughout Wirral.

Wirral Council has received £8.9million from the Government's Future High Streets Fund, Active Travel Fund, and the Wirral Growth Company. This funding can be used to help local councils make their high streets and town centres fit for the future and to support increased levels of active travel. The improvements will provide a more attractive place for people to shop, live, visit, or work and will support the regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre, providing an improved, better connected and more sustainable experience for all who use this area.

The funding for this scheme is ringfenced solely for the delivery of this project and could not be used for the delivery of anything else as that would not be in accordance with the condition of the grant award.

An objector stated that there are still going to be very many motor vehicles and this will make access to the town centre and local businesses more difficult to access, especially for disabled and vulnerable people. People just won't bother coming to the town centre.

In response; Vehicle access along Europa Boulevard will be maintained. There is currently one carriageway lane in either direction for vehicles, and there will be one lane in either direction for vehicles as a result of the proposal.

In terms of parking for local businesses, the businesses located along the easterly side of Europa Boulevard all have off-street parking facilities to the rear of their premises, accessed via Adelphi Street. On the westerly side of Europa Boulevard, Price Street Car Park is available along with several other parking facilities in the surrounding area.

As part of the proposals the footways will be improved throughout to assist footway users. Such improvements include wider controlled pedestrian crossing points and continuous footways with pedestrian priority at side streets.

Blue Badge holders can park free of charge and for an unlimited time in all council pay and display areas, both on and off-street. Anyone can park for free before 08:00 and after 18:30hrs.

SUPPORT (12 NO INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS)

Expressions of support are detailed below:

Supporters stated they supported the proposal for the following reasons:

- It fits with the emerging parking strategy.
- There is plenty of parking space nearby.
- It is essential to deliver the wider benefits of the scheme.
- So that drivers do not park there all day.
- There are already restrictions in place.
- It will be better for local businesses and people - especially young and old and with lung problems.
- It will encourage other forms of transport.
- It might encourage people to cycle/take bus train if parking is harder.

In response; Noted.

Question 6: Do you support or object to the proposed introduction of cycle facilities on Europa Boulevard?

OBJECTIONS (9 NO. INDIVIDUAL OBJECTIONS)

Objections are detailed below:

Several objectors stated that existing cycle lanes are not sufficiently used throughout Wirral. They are used by a minority of people, and therefore not needed, so why spend such a large amount of money.

In response; The proposals include more than just new cycle facilities and will result in improved footways with new paving, better pedestrian connectivity with accessibility improvements (new controlled crossings and pedestrian priority at uncontrolled side streets), thereby creating a more inviting public realm, new trees and landscaping, benches, and newly resurfaced carriageways.

The funding can be used to help local councils make their high streets and town centres fit for the future and to support increased levels of active travel. The improvements will provide a more attractive place for people to shop, live, visit, or work and will support the regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre, providing an improved, better connected and more sustainable experience for all who use this area.

Several objectors stated that:

- The funding would be better spent on pedestrian improvements with wider mixed use shared footway/cycleway. Shared space schemes which, instead of pitting one group of highway users against another and encouraging conflict, force all highway users to respect one another and change their behaviour accordingly.
- People will walk along the cycle lane.

In response; Local Transport Note 1/20 advises that, “In urban areas, the conversion of a footway to a shared use should be regarded as a last resort. Shared use facilities are generally not favoured by either pedestrians or cyclists, particularly when flows are high. It can create particular difficulties for visually impaired people.”

An objector stated that the proposals will cause pedestrians and cyclists to mix unnecessarily where they never have been previously.

In response; The proposals provide separate facilities for cyclists and pedestrians, with pedestrians and cyclists only merging at controlled crossing points.

An objector stated that the proposals represent an unbelievable excessive amount of redevelopment.

In response; Wirral Council has received £8.9million from the Government's Future High Streets Fund, Active Travel Fund, and private funding. This funding can be used to help local councils make their high streets and town centres fit for the future and to support increased levels of active travel. The improvements will provide a more attractive place for people to shop, live, visit, or work and will support the regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre, providing an improved, better connected and more sustainable experience for all who use this area.

The proposals support the wider regeneration plans for Birkenhead as set out in the Birkenhead 2040 Framework.

An objector stated that we live in Wirral, where we get a few months if lucky to enjoy cycle weather and everywhere is hilly. What about our children, young families, disabled, elderly? Are they going to be cycling to the shops or to the GP? I suppose they will be isolated in their planned 15-minute neighbourhood.

In response; Whilst there are areas of Wirral that could certainly be considered “hilly” and unsuitable for cycling facilities, Conway Street and this area of Birkenhead could not be considered as such as they are relatively flat with minimal incline, and therefore suitable for the introduction of cycling and walking facilities.

Our children, young families, disabled, and elderly are free to determine their most appropriate mode of transport. It is not unusual for many people, who do not have access to a car, to cycle to a shop, their GP, or place of work.

Improvements to the public realm, pedestrian facilities, and footways mean the area will make the area feel far from isolated and much more inviting than at present.

An objector stated that constantly putting money into Birkenhead (and seeing no difference) and ignoring the rest of the Wirral where other places are deteriorating. How about spend some money in smaller villages in the area. Allow parking to encourage shopping with local businesses, let's get local villages buzzing again!

In response; This objection does not appear to relate specifically to the proposal to introduce parking restrictions along Europa Boulevard and has been submitted as a response to each question in the public consultation.

Wirral Council has received £8.9million from the Government's Future High Streets Fund, Active Travel Fund, and the Wirral Growth Company. This funding can be used to help local councils make their high streets and town centres fit for the future and to support increased levels of active travel. The improvements will provide a more attractive place for people to shop, live, visit

or work and will support the regeneration of Birkenhead Town Centre, providing an improved, better connected and more sustainable experience for all who use this area.

The funding for this scheme is ringfenced solely for the delivery of this project and could not be used for the delivery of anything else as that would not be in accordance with the condition of the grant award.

An objector stated that they were reassured by a Wirral Council Officer that no Traffic Regulation Orders would be needed to implement the cycleway proposals. I strongly object to the proposed segregated cycleways, which design out and criminalise wheelchair users and pedestrians.

In response; There are no specific traffic regulation orders attached to the proposed cycle lanes. The proposed traffic regulation orders relate to the rationalisation of existing double yellow lines and vehicle parking.

The proposals do not design out nor criminalise wheelchair users. The Highway Code states that all mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs can legally travel at a maximum speed of 4mph on footpaths or in pedestrian areas. Rule 38 of The Highway Code states that pavements are safer than roads and should be used when available. As part of the proposals the footways will be improved along Conway Street to assist footway users. Such improvements include wider controlled pedestrian crossing points and continuous footways with pedestrian priority at side streets.

An objector stated the proposals imply that the existing Lime trees will be removed.

In response; There are a total of 18 trees proposed for removal, with 112 new trees proposed for planting as part of the scheme.

An objector stated that the proposal will increase traffic congestion, just like the Fender Lane Cycle Link.

In response; Vehicle access along Europa Boulevard will be maintained. There is currently one carriageway lane in either direction for vehicles, and there will be one lane in either direction for vehicles as a result of the proposal.

With regards to Fender Lane, analysis was recently undertaken by Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. It compared use of Fender Lane before and after the introduction of active travel facilities. Comparing counts between April - May 2021 - before installation - and April - May 2023 - post installation - reveals a 42.43% percent increase in cyclist activity and an 8.13% decrease in the total sum of cars on Fender Lane.

SUPPORT (15 NO INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS)

Expressions of support are detailed below:

Supporters stated they supported the proposal for the following reasons:

- Health and well-being benefits.
- Economic benefits.
- Active Travel needs.
- Safe, segregated, integrated cycle lanes are needed to encourage more active travel as most people do not feel safe on our roads.
- Because it will keep the cyclists off the footways.
- Because cyclists should be kept off roads unless helmets are worn.
- Because there is plenty of space for a cycle lane.
- The more cycle facilities there are the better so long as they do not impinge on pedestrians.
- It will be better for local businesses and people - especially young and old and with lung problems.
- As the cycle lane will keep cyclists off the road thereby not inconveniencing the greater number of car users.
- Active Travel should get priority over cars.

In response; Noted.

RESPONSES RECEIVED VIA CASE VIEWER OR LETTER:

1 x "Objections to the changes to Europa Boulevard" Letter detailed below:

Dear Sirs,

Thank you for your recent Phase 2 Consultation notice dated 28th June 2023.

I wish to object to the changes to Europa Boulevard. The boulevard is absolutely beautiful. In the summer setting, on one of the benches, at the top end of the boulevard, opposite the probation office, transports you to any place in Europe. The trees and green grass are fabulous. It is a pleasure to sit there and reflect. It takes you away from the industrialness of the area. Sitting there you can reflect on the hustle and bustle of ordinary life. The view is stunning. Don't take my word for it, go yourselves and sit. Then reflect on the damage you are doing to this beautiful green space, but go with an open mind, not with your consultation head on.

You're away from the empty DWP car park, that's just been left abandoned. You're away from that awful 5G mast that has been allowed to be placed on Price Street, no doubt another good decision by the Council. But of course, many of the council members do not live in this area, so it's just another bad decision for the locals. And the decision to change that lovely boulevard will be another.

In the consultation letter, it is written, "share the available space more evenly." If you are closing one side of the boulevard, that space is not more evenly distributed, more pressure will be put on the East side of the boulevard, while cyclists will have a

free run. Also, how will drivers/taxis pick up and drop off travellers/commuters using Conway Park station? If that road is used for two-way traffic. That will reduce the available space for that, hence Conway Park station will be disadvantaged. Moreover, with traffic being squashed to just one side of the boulevard, potholes and wear and tear on that side of the road, will forever need mending, putting more pressure on Wirral Council taxpayers. And wasted money that could be avoided. Please think, how many times has the road on the boulevard been repaired since it was created. You have the records. Not many times in all the years of being made. It really is a lovely place and a brilliant decision by the council architects of the boulevard to create a wonderful place for the people of Birkenhead. These planned changes will spoil that equilibrium. One slight criticism, do something to the roundabout. Make it more appealing when you come out of Conway Park station, after all, it is the first thing you see, when you exit the station.

Also where will people park if they have business in the offices along that boulevard? I know the idea is to reduce traffic, but if the Council is serious about trying to attract people into Birkenhead, where will these people park. We have to make it easier for these businesses. Birkenhead has lost so many good businesses, we cannot afford to lose any more. Has any consultation been undertaken with these companies? Jacobs, Wirral Metropolitan College, the Probation office or any of the other satellite businesses in the area about these changes. This scheme will not only reduce the parking in this area, but in the consultation letter, you write you will be reducing the number of parking spaces in Europa Car Park., so where will the struggling existing shops, market and business customers park? How can that be classed as an improvement? A good re-think is required, even though, the Council have secured the funding, so decisions have already been made and submitted to have gained this funding. So why waste money on consultations? This money could be better spent on supporting foodbanks etc. and reducing poverty in our great town.

In response; The proposal aims to significantly improve and build upon the existing public realm offer at Europa Boulevard. Such improvements will include, new benches, new lighting, new paving, planting and 112 new trees and landscaping. The removal of the northbound carriageway will help provide the space to do this and create a much more pedestrian and cycle friendly area, with separate facilities for each provided.

There is currently one carriageway lane in either direction for vehicles (the existing inside lane in either direction is taken up by parking bays/parked vehicles) and there will be one lane in either direction for vehicles as a result of the proposal. A new 2-way system will be created using the southbound carriageway space with the northbound carriageway space being converted into a footway and cycle lane facility. Therefore, the existing available space is shared more evenly for all modes of transport – cars, pedestrians, and cyclists, with no impact on the available space to drive a car in.

This proposal would not create new pressure on the carriageway, it will only reposition the existing pressure and therefore there is no evidence to suggest that this will lead to greater carriageway maintenance.

Vehicle bays with appropriate restrictions (taxis, coaches etc.) will be provided in the vicinity of Conway Park Train Station.

The existing roundabout will be removed as part of the proposals and the area fronting Conway Park Train Station will undergo significant public realm improvements.

All local businesses with frontages to the proposals were consulted on the proposals. All objections received are detailed in this document. The businesses located on the easterly side of Europa Boulevard have their own private off-street parking facilities to the rear of their premises, accessed via Adelphi Street. Beyond this there is a considerable number of other parking facilities available within the vicinity of Conway Street.

The funding for this scheme is ringfenced solely for the delivery of this project and could not be used for the delivery of anything else, as that would not be in accordance with the condition of the grant award.