

North South Walking Route

Introduction

At the last meeting it was agreed to identify the committee's key priority interventions for the North South Walking Route which the KCC Active Travel Team are now working on at an initial design stage. During the development of the town wide 20mph scheme and the East West Route the Town Council played a significant role in ensuring KCC's scheme design and implementation was informed by community input and public feedback. There is a similar opportunity with the new scheme with KCC having set up a working group to input on progress to which the Committee Chair, Vice Chair and the County Council member have been invited and it will be helpful if they have a clear steer on councillors and the wider public's views.

The Project So Far

The initial project development work was carried out by the WSP Consultancy, who were funded by SBC via national Active Travel funding and also directly by the Town Council. They identified a set of around 20 interventions that could be made to make the walking route from the Abbey School and housing developments to the south of the A2 through to Davington and North Preston safer and easier. They worked up detailed designs for the Briton Road/Forbes Road junction, the Bramblehill Road/Church Road junction and the North Lane /Partridge Lane area. They also identified that a key priority was a surface level crossing of the A2 in the area of Abbey School.

Public Consultation

The Town Council held a public exhibition in October 2025 explaining the project and asking for public views. A report on the results of this feedback was noted by the Committee at its meeting in January 2026. The key elements of the feedback in relation to project interventions were as follows:

North South interventions

The main potential intervention areas identified by residents were similar to our consultants with a surface level crossing on the A2 and North Lane coming up most often. But a number of other intervention locations were also mentioned frequently – A2 near Brogdale Rd, Mall/Forbes Road, West St by Stonebridge Pond and Stone Street by Dorset Place.

Designed out interventions

Almost all residents who commented on the North Lane design wanted to see a zebra crossing rather than a controlled crossing. There were some comments about the location being nearer the creek bridge and the pavement being improved in this area. There were also some comments about making it easier to cross Bridge Road at its

junction with North Lane and by the creek bridge.

There was some positive support for the intervention designs for the Briton Road and Bramblehill junctions. The Briton Road design drew the most concerns. Some respondents were concerned that it would increase congestion, which was already a significant problem during busy times and others that having an informal crossing point across Forbes Road here would be a safety risk.

Recommendations

With work on the project developing, it is now proposed to write to the KCC Active Travel team sharing this information and highlighting to them that

- There is strong community support for a crossing of North Lane, particularly a zebra and that it is a priority for the Town Council even if the complete scheme for the area proposed by WSP can not be funded.
- There is also strong community support for a surface level crossing of the A2 near the Abbey School and that the committee continues to see this as a priority and would be keen to have input into any final decision on a location
- While the committee supports the plans for interventions at the Brambehill/Church Roads and Briton/Forbes Road junctions they will need to be responsively designed to ensure that they retain public support
- Interventions on the A2 near Brogdale Rd, Mall/Forbes Road, West St by Stonebridge Pond and Stone Street by Dorset Place will have public support if there is funding available to develop and implement them as part of the project.