

## **Streets for People Levenshulme and Burnage Active Neighbourhood Consultation Response**

We support the trial of the Active Neighbourhood in Levenshulme and Burnage. This offers a genuine opportunity to redesign our neighbourhoods and to prioritise walking and cycling to create a focus on local neighbourhoods, instead of allowing every road to be dominated by motor vehicles. We welcome the work that has been put into the scheme by Manchester City Council and its partners and hope that we can work with them to deliver a successful trial which must lead to further improvements for all residents of Levenshulme and Burnage.

We firmly believe that the vast majority of residents in our area support the radical ambitions of the scheme, and wish for it to proceed without further delay, and we ask that Manchester City Council recognise that in whatever decisions they take next.

### **Streets For People Levenshulme and Burnage**

Streets for People Levenshulme and Burnage are a group of local residents who are campaigning for improved walking and cycling facilities in Levenshulme and Burnage wards. We formed following the announcement of delays to the (then titled) Levenshulme Bee Network project.

We are backed by a 'collective letter' to local and city political leaders (see [www.streetsforpeople.co.uk](http://www.streetsforpeople.co.uk)), which has been signed by over 500 individuals who live, work or have kids that attend schools in Levenshulme and Burnage and by community organisations and businesses located in Levenshulme and Burnage.

The letter states:

*We the undersigned are individuals who live, work or have children who go to school in Levenshulme and Burnage, or are organisations and businesses in those areas.*

- 1. We want to make our streets safer and more welcoming places for walking, cycling and other forms of non-motorised travel, through the creation of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods.*
- 2. We want to make our streets better places to play and socialise, including the creation of more green areas.*
- 3. We want to improve air quality and the health of our residents.*
- 4. We want to make travel easier for those of us who struggle to afford cars and public transport.*
- 5. We want to help play our part in Burnage and Levenshulme to face up to the climate emergency.*

*We want these positive changes for everyone who lives, works or goes to school in our neighbourhood, of every age, ability and background, whichever street they live on. We recognise that altering our streets to make this happen will mean a period of adjustment, while travel habits change for the better. We want the whole community to come together to make that positive change happen without delay, and to support and listen to each other in that process.*

It is these statements that guide our response to this consultation.

## **Summary and Recommendations**

Streets for People supports the scheme but asks that MCC work with local residents to identify where filters will be placed to help guarantee a successful trial and increase in pedestrian and cycle use for short journeys. Thought will need to be given to the wider areas around the Active Neighbourhood trial area, to reduce traffic and encourage car use throughout Greater Manchester to enable transition to more sustainable forms of travel.

We would recommend that the following points are considered as part of the trial to make it as successful as possible:

- There is a clear need for the trial and the trial should be kept as per the proposed plan or as close to the proposed plan to help create a truly Active Neighbourhood;
- If the trial is to be successful it requires full public support of Councillors and officers within MCC. MCC need to be firm in their public support for the scheme;
- The trial should be built on evidence and data to show how it has affected pedestrian, cycling, and vehicular movement within the trial area;
- The trial needs to be undertaken in consultation with the emergency services and other partners of MCC;
- Satellite navigation apps should be informed of changes to help reduce the risk of vehicles being misdirected;
- The North Burnage part of the trial should be progressed without unnecessary delay to help bring benefits of active travel to local residents as originally promised;
- School Streets should be considered as part of the trial or introduced as soon as possible to help compliment the Active Neighbourhood;
- All roads within the scheme area should be reduced to a 20mph limit;
- Raised crossings should be installed at junctions between main arterial roads and routes within the Active Neighbourhood (if they have been identified as routes with high or potential for high pedestrian footfall);

- If any streets are to be reduced to one-way traffic, two-way movement should be maintained for cyclists;
- Other measures to help walking and cycling need to be included to help promote the benefits of active travel, for instance pedestrian crossings, additional cycle parking etc;
- Pedestrian and cycling crossings, which help break severance points, are equally as important as modal filters and these should be introduced as part of the trial, or as soon as possible to aid pedestrian movement;
- The existing traffic using boundary and arterial roads needs to be considered, as well as the effect the trial has on it;
- Where filters are installed, any on-footway measures to prevent vehicular movement should not impede pedestrian movement on the footway, including people with mobility aids and parents with prams and pushchairs.

### **Introduction. The need for an Active neighbourhood scheme**

The original application for the bid was widely supported by members of the community from both Levenshulme and Burnage wards. Residents worked with local Councillors to help write and submit the bid to the Mayor's Challenge Fund in 2018. The bid was accepted for an initial stage and also potential funding for permanent infrastructure to follow once the initial stage had been trialled and tested. Many members of the community worked with local Councillors, the Levenshulme Bee Network and Manchester City Council to help drive the project forward. It was with great disappointment that we were informed in June that the scheme was to be paused. The reason we were given was due to a lack of consultation. This came as quite a shock and disappointment to many members of the local community, who had invested so much time and effort into the scheme with the expectation that their hard work would lead to trials and improvements within the community.

We welcome the fact that Manchester Council is committed to forging on with the trial at a time when bold, decisive action is needed. It has been just over a year since Manchester Council declared a climate emergency and Sir Richard Leese in July of this year reaffirmed his commitment to a green recovery and supporting action at a local level<sup>1</sup>. This year has been tumultuous, and we understand that Manchester Council has been stretched and tested due to the ongoing pandemic. Nevertheless, the UK is in the top three countries in Europe for deaths linked to pollution<sup>2</sup>, coupled with a high rate of heart disease that is linked to over 25% of all

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<sup>1</sup> <https://secure.manchester.gov.uk/news/article/8501/manchester-city-council-reaffirms-commitment-to-green-recovery>

<sup>2</sup> [www.clientearth.org/uk-top-three-air-pollution-deaths-europe/?gclid=CjwKCAjwz6\\_8BRBkEiwA3p02VZRsSXX0kclDzq4ynd0Xz3T69CbO\\_4\\_rg3kB0iHqKUxvOp4LKUjg-BoCNmsQAvD\\_BwE](http://www.clientearth.org/uk-top-three-air-pollution-deaths-europe/?gclid=CjwKCAjwz6_8BRBkEiwA3p02VZRsSXX0kclDzq4ynd0Xz3T69CbO_4_rg3kB0iHqKUxvOp4LKUjg-BoCNmsQAvD_BwE)

deaths each year<sup>3</sup>. This underlines why we need action by our leaders to promote active, healthy cities. During the first few weeks of the lockdown in April 2020 we saw a decrease in vehicle traffic by about 70% which reduced pollution levels to nearly acceptable levels<sup>4</sup>. The traffic levels and pollution rates have now increased to nearly 80% of pre-lockdown levels. Greater Manchester Combined Authority, the 10 Greater Manchester councils as well as Transport for Greater Manchester, have recently released a consultation on the Greater Manchester Clean Air Zone. While this is welcomed, it excludes private vehicles and so falls short of a full commitment to actively back tough measures to reduce pollution from road traffic at every level. Councillors within Manchester City Council have unfortunately failed to respond to central Governments' call to implement temporary walking and cycling measures, citing that they do not wish to install temporary measures in favour of more permanent solutions.<sup>5</sup> This goes against the advice of Chris Boardman, the Cycling and Walking commissioner to the Mayor of Greater Manchester, who recommends implementing trial schemes as a way to test their viability and as a stepping stone to more permanent solutions.

Manchester is a growing city with rapid changes happening across the city centre and the wider borough, which implies that we need a dynamic plan to help tackle congestion and keep the city moving. It is said 'In Manchester we do things differently', and with the Mayor's Challenge fund and the Emergency Active Travel fund from central government there has never been a better time to prioritise walking and cycling to help promote active, healthier neighbourhoods and cities. We can demonstrate how a city that prioritises people, by providing safe routes to walk and cycle while reducing the number of unnecessary car journeys, can be a vibrant and successful city which is loved by its residents.

Active Neighbourhoods or Low Traffic Neighbourhoods have been trialled in London, most notably with the Mini Holland scheme in Waltham Forest, established in 2014. With central government's Emergency Active Travel fund, more London councils have been trialling Active Neighbourhoods. There has been some opposition against these schemes, citing arguments such as increased traffic on arterial roads, emergency services struggling to reach destinations and increased pollution, all caused by filtering traffic from residential areas. Most of the arguments put forward in opposition of these schemes are circumstantial and do not represent the facts, but instead represent motorists' frustration at a scheme that forces them onto main roads, rather than using residential cut-throughs. In fact, there is quite a lot of evidence to show that the Mini Holland scheme in

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<sup>3</sup> [www.bhf.org.uk/-/media/files/research/heart-statistics/bhf-cvd-statistics-uk-factsheet.pdf?#:~:text=Heart%20and%20circulatory%20diseases%20cause,one%20death%20every%20three%20minutes.&text=Around%2044%2C000%20people%20under%20the,and%20circulatory%20diseases%20each%20year](http://www.bhf.org.uk/-/media/files/research/heart-statistics/bhf-cvd-statistics-uk-factsheet.pdf?#:~:text=Heart%20and%20circulatory%20diseases%20cause,one%20death%20every%20three%20minutes.&text=Around%2044%2C000%20people%20under%20the,and%20circulatory%20diseases%20each%20year).

<sup>4</sup> [https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/assets/documents/reports/cat09/2007010844\\_Estimation\\_of\\_Changes\\_in\\_Air\\_Pollution\\_During\\_COVID-19\\_outbreak\\_in\\_the\\_UK.pdf](https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/assets/documents/reports/cat09/2007010844_Estimation_of_Changes_in_Air_Pollution_During_COVID-19_outbreak_in_the_UK.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/pop-up-cycle-lanes-not-18482201](http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/pop-up-cycle-lanes-not-18482201)

Waltham Forest has been a quiet revolution, with increased walking and cycling trips within the Mini Holland area, with only marginal increases in traffic on some surrounding roads<sup>6</sup>. A King's College study in 2018 showed that pollution levels within the Mini Holland area dropped quite dramatically and did not have a negative impact on residents living on the busier arterial roads<sup>7</sup>.

One noticeable effect of the recent pandemic has been a reduction in crime across the UK<sup>8</sup>, however this does not mention traffic or motoring offences. These seem to be a daily occurrence, with vehicle crashes causing serious injuries or fatalities across Greater Manchester's roads. If we are to prioritise people, we need to provide safe routes for them to walk and cycle and make active travel the default mode of travel for short journeys. TfGM's Transport Strategy 2040 shows that 60% of all journeys that are under 2km (20-minute walk) are travelled by car or van, while 30% of all journeys under 1km (10-Minute walk) are travelled by car or van<sup>9</sup>. If we can reduce the number of local car journeys by half that would result in almost 200,000 less car journeys a year. An Active Neighbourhood does not mean that no cars will be used, but that car use should not be the quickest or default choice of travel for short journeys.

As a community group we have engaged with many of our fellow residents and are aware of their concerns and aspirations. At present many residents do not feel safe walking or cycling due to existing levels of traffic. A particular issue that many residents have raised is an inability to use the pavements, due to these being blocked by parked cars. Pedestrians should not be forced to walk in the carriageways with fast or heavy traffic and risk incidents. This is particularly problematic for residents with disabilities such as visual impairments, those who need to make use of wheelchairs or mobility scooters or with walking disabilities and those who need longer to cross the road, as well as those escorting young children or using pushchairs. We simply do not accept the status quo where some residents feel unable to travel around their own neighbourhood due to an excess of motorised traffic. Any scheme needs to prioritise pedestrian movement, to enable walking and cycling to be the easiest choice for journeys over short distances.

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<sup>6</sup> [www.lcc.org.uk/pages/number-wfminiholland-evidence?fbclid=IwAR3rj9AQamKiQZDLQWH3969YspQHmlb3HSzaCOVQYBgOLdTbnpwSPALPb6I](http://www.lcc.org.uk/pages/number-wfminiholland-evidence?fbclid=IwAR3rj9AQamKiQZDLQWH3969YspQHmlb3HSzaCOVQYBgOLdTbnpwSPALPb6I)

<sup>7</sup> [www.walthamforestmatters.org.uk/2020/04/09/lbwf-mini-holland-and-air-quality-the-kings-college-environmental-research-group-report-and-its-frailties/](http://www.walthamforestmatters.org.uk/2020/04/09/lbwf-mini-holland-and-air-quality-the-kings-college-environmental-research-group-report-and-its-frailties/)

<sup>8</sup> [www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/coronavirusandcrimeinenglandandwales/august2020](http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/coronavirusandcrimeinenglandandwales/august2020)

<sup>9</sup> <https://tfgm.com/2040>

## **The New Active Neighbourhood Trial Scheme**

While the reason for the scheme being halted cited as a lack of consultation, it is disappointing to note that since the announcement of the pause for the scheme in June, it has taken 3 months for the scheme to be relaunched and consulted upon. MCC need to be able to demonstrate clear aims and objectives for the scheme and how the scheme will help improve the lives of the residents within and around the proposed area.

Moreover, it appears that information provided has had several major errors in regard to local place names and has less information than the original consultation which was run quite professionally and had almost 1,000 comments on the initial announcement and a further 450 comments on the specific Active Neighbourhood proposal. In addition, there were many community meetings, meetings at cultural locations such as mosques and inspire, Sustrans did a lot of work with schools and school children, and scores of residents and community groups were involved in 'street clutter surveys'. We are very keen to make sure all this work is not wasted and that these comments should bear equal weight to comments on the new proposal, as the majority of the points made are still valid and will help shape the scheme for the benefit of local residents.

Another loss to the scheme is the delay in commencement. While we appreciate that following the decision new information and consultation material was seen as needed to be produced, this has delayed the start of the scheme when nationally active travel measures were being encouraged by central Government and local residents alike. While MCC repeatedly pointed to the lack of consultation, it was MCC that was always at the helm and were responsible for creating the scheme along with promoting the scheme. While several of the ward Councillors have shown enthusiasm for the scheme, if not all of the ward Councillors are firm in their vision for the scheme the Active Neighbourhood project risks being watered down to a scheme that does not fulfil its objectives. We ask that Councillors are vocal in their support of the scheme and the aims and objectives of the Active Neighbourhood, so that as many residents can benefit from the scheme as possible.

The scheme is to be trialled in 2 phases, with phase 1 launching in Levenshulme and phase 2 being launched at a future date, not specified on the consultation website. While this may have its benefits (even if those benefits have not been explained), it leads to an inconsistent approach and betrays those residents in the Burnage ward that have worked hard with the Levenshulme Bee Network team and MCC to bring about the trial. The consultation makes no mention of the crossing points on the arterial roads, which were part of the original bid. We consider that the pedestrian and cycle crossing points are equally important as the modal filters within the Active Neighbourhood.

We are also disappointed at the lack of clarity around the provision of school streets and are still unsure as to whether these will be included in the trial. Within the original proposed scheme there were a number of school streets, which seem to have been excluded from the new Active Neighbourhood. Children are among the most vulnerable in our community, with increased exposure to the risks of air pollution and road traffic accidents. They deserve the protection and benefits offered by school streets without delay. Schools are a large trip generator and due to the nature of most schools having a local catchment area, most pupils live within 2km or less of their school. School Streets would be a welcome addition to the trial area to help promote active travel and familiarise pupils with walking and cycling to establish active travel habits at a young age, especially vital at a time when 80% of children are failing to meet the daily recommendation for exercise.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, it is difficult to see how traffic problems will be avoided without the school streets aspect of the scheme allowing these short journeys to switch from car to walking and cycling. School streets must be part of the trial.

The scheme is about encouraging active travel and the focus of the scheme should be about promoting walking and cycling, and not merely 'calming traffic'. While the primary focus of the scheme is the residential neighbourhood, MCC Highways Authority and TfGM should consider not just the scheme area, but the neighbouring areas to see how traffic flows on arterials roads around the Active Neighbourhood will be affected and how measures to reduce unnecessary trips on these roads can also be implemented.

Importantly, we are aware that the scheme now does not have a Project Manager (PM), and the previous PM had left, presumably because of overwork. If it is to succeed, this project needs a dedicated, full-time PM with requisite high quality active travel scheme experience. It is likely that MCC will need to pay for that out of its own resources. It must do so in order to make the project a success. We reject the argument that such resourcing is impossible due to 'austerity', given MCC's ongoing and expensive commitments to increase motor vehicle road capacity across the city.

### **Phase 1: Levenshulme Active Neighbourhood.**

Levenshulme has a population of just over 15,000 people and is characterised by Stockport Road which runs north to south and splits the ward into 2 distinct areas. Albert Road and Cromwell Grove/Barlow Road, which run east to west also act as a severance point. Broom Lane is a road that runs north-east to south-west and can be a busy route for people travelling to Sandfold Lane and also onto Reddish. It is important that vehicle trips along these routes are taken into account as part

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<sup>10</sup>[www.who.int/news/item/22-11-2019-new-who-led-study-says-majority-of-adolescents-worldwide-are-not-sufficiently-physically-active-putting-their-current-and-future-health-at-risk](http://www.who.int/news/item/22-11-2019-new-who-led-study-says-majority-of-adolescents-worldwide-are-not-sufficiently-physically-active-putting-their-current-and-future-health-at-risk)

of the scheme as these are all within the Active Neighbourhood trial area and make up the majority of vehicle trips within the area. These roads should be looked at in terms of junction improvement, monitoring through traffic, additional pedestrian and cycle crossing points and, if possible, additional cycling infrastructure, such as cycle tracks.

We would recommend that the following key points be considered for the trial area:

- All roads within the scheme area be reduced to a 20mph limit;
- Raised crossings to be considered where junctions exist between main arterial roads and routes within the Active Neighbourhood and they have been identified as routes with high or potential for high pedestrian footfall;
- If any streets are to be reduced to one-way traffic, two-way movement is maintained for cyclists, with appropriate separating infrastructure (at a minimum, plastic 'wands');
- Where new crossings are to be introduced and on existing crossing points within the trial area, consideration should be given to upgrading crossings to crossings to enable cyclists to make use of them alongside pedestrians (ideally these would be parallel crossings, but toucan crossings can be considered where space is particularly limited).

It has been recommended by some residents that a system of one-way streets can help reduce through traffic. While this will reduce two-way movement on some roads, it will not necessarily help promote active travel, with motorists being redirected onto alternative routes through the scheme area, thus pushing congestion into new areas. We see one-way roads as having a potential role as an addition to rather than an alternative to a filtered neighbourhood.

#### Arterial Roads and Crossing points.

Stockport Road runs from the northern boundary to the southern boundary of the Levenshulme ward and has 8 Pelican Crossings and 1 implied crossing with dropped kerbs and a central island. While this may seem a lot, the crossings are typically a minimum 150m apart, while the furthest distance is over 230m between crossing points. To encourage active travel, severance points should be reduced by providing and upgrading crossings to make crossing the lines of severance as easy as possible for pedestrians and cyclists.

As part of the original scheme the implied crossing outside of Arcadia Library and Leisure Centre was due to be upgraded. It is important that this is upgraded to a formal crossing, ideally a parallel crossing with the island removed to enable swift crossing by pedestrians and cyclists.

One easy measure is to lengthen the time pedestrians have to cross and reduce the Red Standing Figure (wait) time. As per the DfT Local transport Note 2/95, this

gives a 60 second wait time for pedestrians and only a maximum of 9 seconds for pedestrians to cross the road. The Transport Research Laboratory has concluded in their research on timings of pedestrian crossing that the recommended 1.2m/s cannot be achieved by all of the population and pelican crossings should be upgraded to Puffin crossings, where pedestrian and traffic movement and the timings of the green man crossing period is controlled by on crossing detection to determine crossing times.<sup>11</sup>

Albert Road fares a lot worse for pedestrian crossing points only having 2 pelican crossings, 1 which is near the junction with Stockport Road (which is frequently ignored by westbound traffic), that can be considered part of the Stockport Road crossing arrangements, and a further one 157m opposite the former post office site. It is noted that the junction with Slade lane has no pedestrian crossing phase but has had 2 slight and 1 serious accident in the last 3 years. This is a busy junction for both pedestrians and is calling out for some sort of pedestrian crossing facility. Furthermore, there are no dropped kerbs or tactile paving to enable those with disabilities to be able to cross at this junction.

Cromwell Grove and Barlow Road run for approximately 1.3km and have only 1 pedestrian crossing situated at the junction of Barlow Road and Broom Lane. This is a pelican crossing, yet the pedestrian phase runs for only 5 seconds, this should be increased to a minimum of 7 seconds to enable safe crossing for pedestrians. The original scheme proposed a crossing at the junction of Barlow Road and Cromwell Grove. We would welcome a new zebra crossing at this point particularly in respect of its proximity to Chapel Street Primary School, Levenshulme Old Library and the former swimming baths which may be renovated into a public building increasing trip rate and footfall.

Broom Lane has had 7 slight, 2 serious and 1 fatal accident in the past 36 months<sup>12</sup>, yet there is only one pedestrian crossing on the entire length of the road. While opponents to the scheme have indicated that the road suffers from heavy congestion, this does not seem to be the case outside of peak hours. More crossing facilities for pedestrian and cyclists are a must on this road.

It is noted that some of the main arterial and through routes do not have any pedestrian crossing points. We note that Matthews Lane is a key route through the north of the Active Neighbourhood, being almost 1km in length, yet does not have any pedestrian or cycling crossing facilities. We would recommend that at least one zebra crossing is placed on the road to help pedestrians cross. Mount Road which runs north to south to the east of the scheme area has one zebra crossing slightly outside of the scheme area. It is recommended that a zebra crossing be placed on Mount Road to the north of Barlow Road, opposite Greenbank Park.

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<sup>11</sup> Transport Research Laboratory: A Review of Pedestrian Walking Speeds and Time Needed to Cross the Road

<sup>12</sup> [www.gmtu.gov.uk/gmaccidents/](http://www.gmtu.gov.uk/gmaccidents/)

## **Locations of the Modal Filters**

The revised consultation proposes 25 modal filters across the Levenshulme ward. The aim of the filters should be not only to prevent through traffic in residential areas, but to allow residents as much access as possible without being too much of a hindrance, so as to encourage short journeys to be undertaken by foot or by cycle.

### Albert Rd / Slade Road Quadrant

This area has 3 modal filters mainly with the aim of preventing rat-running via Buckhurst Road, Osborne Road and Windsor Road to avoid congestion on Albert Road. Looking at previous research performed by Sustrans on through traffic on key streets in the Levenshulme and Burnage area, Buckhurst Road, has less than 25% of traffic being local traffic with the rest being through traffic. Levenshulme railway station is a well-used station, which adds to the traffic on the surrounding roads and parking within the local area. We would suggest that this area has filters as indicated within the consultation plan.

### North of Matthews Lane

It is welcomed that the area north of Matthews Lane has been included in the trial as this area suffers from through traffic and rat-running just as much as other areas in Levenshulme. It should be noted that the paper consultation map does not include Northmoor Road, which is a major route for vehicles trying to bypass Stockport Road travelling in a north/south direction. Northmoor Road has an existing bus service (no 150), which has 4 buses every hour and is an important route for local residents. There is also Crowcroft Park Primary school on the southern end of the road, which will further benefit from the filter. It is recommended that a bus gate is created at the southern end of Northmoor Road to allow buses to continue running along this road. A further filter is to be placed at the southern end of Armitage Avenue. This is welcomed as it will prevent rat-running through a residential street to Longsight.

### Matthews Lane south to Cromwell Grove

This area is primarily residential and many streets suffer from on-street parking with a lack of sufficient footway for pedestrians to safely use.

A filter is to be placed at the end of Mayford Road at the junction of Stockport Road. Where filters are proposed at the junctions with main arterial roads, they should be placed so as not to encourage parking within any turning head of the junction. Permanent solutions could create a continuous footway across the previous junction. This would encourage pedestrian use of Stockport Road and encourage use of local amenities on this road.

Two filters are to be placed alongside Greenbank Park on Manor Road and Guildford Road. While the filter on Manor Road will prevent some through traffic, the proposed filter at the junction of Manor Road and Barlow Road should prevent most of the through traffic, but the other two filters should be retained to prevent rat running on new routes through this area.

It is noted that Barlow Road nearest to Stockport road is a two-way road but suffers from considerable levels of on-street parking as shown on the illustration below. This is currently used as a cut through via Manor Road to Mount Road, as stated above the filter at the junction with Manor Road should resolve this issue. We would recommend a solution to tackle the parking issue is investigated, such as a residents' parking scheme, or timed parking restriction to help reduce parking on this street and improve pedestrian use.



#### Cromwell Grove/ Barlow Grove to the Fallowfield Loop

Cromwell Grove is a major through route to Reddish, East Manchester and Sandfold Lane public refuse tip and industrial units on Sandfold Lane. While Levenshulme is proposed to be filtered, it is not anticipated that traffic levels associated with the Active Neighbourhood will increase the traffic on this road. MCC should work with businesses within Sandfold Lane to identify key routes which avoid the Active Neighbourhood and will still allow businesses to operate as existing.

This area is to have filters which prevent traffic from either directly accessing Stockport Road or from Broom Lane depending on their location.

Chapel Street is also to be made into a two-way street to allow access to Stockport Road. It should be noted that the area in front of Chapel Street junction has a yellow boxed junction, which will need to be repainted to reinforce its status.

We would recommend that consideration is given to a left turn only from this junction to prevent potential accidents on this stretch of road and maintain traffic flows.

#### South of the Fallowfield loop to Broom Lane Stockport Road Junction

This area already benefits from a modal filter at the junction of Cronshaw Street, which allows passage of cycles and pedestrians while preventing vehicle usage. The area has only 1 filter proposed on Marley Road, filtering traffic onto Barlow Road. Consideration should be given to whether traffic should be filtered onto Stockport Road, or creating a filter at the centre of the street to allow access at either end of the street.

#### Broom Lane and East of Broom Lane

The junction of Broom Lane and Stockport Road is also proposed to be upgraded to a right turn from Broom Lane, this will reduce junction capacity for vehicles travelling north on Stockport Road. With the change in signal priorities consideration should be given to providing a pedestrian phase at this junction.

Broom Lane is a busy through route and is often the alternative route for traffic when the M60 is blocked from junctions 25-27. A large proportion of this traffic is commercial and typically heavy goods vehicles use this route to access the Sandfold Lane industrial estate. Consideration should be given to reducing commercial traffic along Broom Lane which is typically 6m in width to Matthews Lane which is over 8m in width, with less residential properties along its length. This could be achieved through a width restriction along the Broom Lane carriageway to prevent commercial vehicles using this road. As previously stated there have been several accidents in the past few years including one fatality. We would recommend that the road is reduced to a 20mph limit to reduce future fatalities. The road only has one pedestrian crossing and at least 1 crossing should be implemented ideally at the end of Crayfield Road, or at the near to the junction with Chapel Street, to help pedestrian and cycle movement across this road. A crossing by Crayfield Road would enable better pedestrian access to St Andrew's Primary School and also to the Fallowfield Loop. A crossing at the junction of Dorset Road would provide pedestrian and cycle access to the Chapel Street cell from the filtered Dorset Road and Molyneux Road area,

It is further noted that house numbers 1 to 21 along the north side of Broom Lane have no footway to the front of them. It is recommended that a footway is installed to aid pedestrian movement and safety along this section with a minimum width of 1.2m. While this section of road is 8m wide there is on street parking bays taking 2m of road width. A pedestrian footway of 1.2m would leave 4.8m wide which would still allow for 2-way vehicle movement along this road, in accordance with Manual for Streets.

The area east of Broom Lane is largely self-filtered with only 2 filters being proposed to prevent travel onto Barlow Road from Molyneux Road and Fairbourne Road. Pedestrian and cycle crossings are required to link this area to the other filtered cells, thus creating an active travel network in the South end of Levenshulme.

It should be noted that the junction of Barlow Road and Mount Road leads to traffic backing up on Barlow Road. Consideration should be given to wider traffic through this area and how traffic can be redirected onto other arterial roads with greater junction capacities. The area east of Broom Lane is largely self-filtered with only 2 filters being proposed to prevent travel onto Barlow Road from Molyneux Road and Fairbourne Road. Pedestrian and cycle crossings are required to link this area to the other filtered cells, thus creating an active travel network in the South end of Levenshulme.

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### **Types of Filter**

Where filters have been proposed, there are largely due to be wooden planter types. While these can be an attractive, cost-efficient way to filter streets we would highlight the fact that in other schemes, there have been occasional examples of them being moved or damaged by vandals. We recommend that MCC monitor the filters and have a system in place to replace or reposition filters that have been damaged, so as to keep the Active Neighbourhood scheme running as proposed and to ensure a consistent trial. MCC should also work with members of the community to beautify the planters, a task Streets for People are happy to help with.

Filters must be placed in a way which allows sufficient space for a range of cycling modes including trikes and hand-cycles as well as cargo bikes or bikes with trailers, to ensure that disabled cyclists and mobility scooter users are able to use these filters. As per LTN 1/20 Cycle infrastructure design, a minimum width of 0.65 should be provided. However, we would recommend that a width of 1.2m is provided to enable cycle design vehicles to bypass the filters.

While the filters must have a 'Road Closed' signage, we would recommend that a positive 'Road Open' sign, as shown in the drawing below, be placed on the filters as well, to highlight the active travel that the filters are encouraging.



We would recommend that if MCC decided to make the filters permanent, more robust solutions are investigated which require less maintenance.

It has been noted that in other areas where modal filters have been introduced drivers have mounted footways either side of the filters to circumnavigate the filters. We recommend that MCC consider the filters and how they may be misused by drivers thereby endangering pedestrian users.

Dropdown bollards could be implemented for certain areas, if access is required by emergency services etc.

### **Monitoring and Progression to Permanent Implementation**

While MCC has agreed to the Active Neighbourhood trial it should be noted that it is only a trial and the local area could be reverted back to its current layout following the trial period. We recommend that MCC has clear measures to judge the success or failure of the trial and these are communicated to residents along with how the scheme can progress to further levels of (already agreed in principle) funding to make permanent improvements to the area. We would recommend that while a trial may not lead to sudden shifts to active travel, if the traffic within and around the Active Neighbourhood sees little to no increase this should be judged as a success.

The trial areas should be monitored for use, by way of traffic, pedestrian and cycle counts, as well as residential surveys, and pollution data, before and during the scheme to help build a picture and to demonstrate the issues and benefits within the trial area and how interventions have affected the local area.

### **Other complimentary features of the Active Neighbourhood**

While the filters are the main feature of the Active Neighbourhood, other measures to encourage walking and cycling should be investigated and implemented. For instance:

- Secure cycle parking at Levenshulme train station;
- Secure cycle on street parking for residents, such as 'bike hangers' (which have already been consulted on);
- Increased cycle parking on Stockport Road;
- Junction improvement to increase pedestrian use;
- Events within the trial area to encourage walking and cycling, in conjunction with local groups/organisations, such as 'walking buses' and 'park and stride' schemes to help compliment school active travel measures.

## **Phase 2**

While Burnage was originally to be part of the trial area, we are disappointed that no indication that the trial area extends to Burnage has been issued. This will require further cost to MCC to reconsult and could potentially lead to the watering down of the scheme. We would propose that the original designs or a similar scheme be trialled, and that the trials move ahead before the Spring.

We would propose that a filter be placed at the junction of Marshall/Alma Errwood/Preston Roads, to prevent motor vehicle access to Errwood Road, with the exception of buses. This area is notorious for school traffic and has seen 2 accidents in the last 3 years and would be a benefit to the pupils of Alma Park Primary School. This road has 3 bus services and the filter could be in the form of a bus gate. Marshall Road is a residential street and has high levels of on-street parking which prevents two-way movement along this road.

Slade Lane/Burnage Lane was proposed to have a bus gate, this should be retained with through traffic being directed onto Kingsway. It is noted that 3 traffic accidents have occurred in the last 3 years, although all 3 have been slight it shows that further work needs to be carried out on this section of road.

Bramley Avenue is split off from the adjoining Birdhall Grove by a 6ft wall. This could be opened up to pedestrian and cycle traffic increasing through connectivity at relatively low cost.

Both the A6 and Kingsway form higher capacity 'boundary roads' which allow for the filtering of North/South roads in the space in-between.

Bus gates also present a chance to speed up bus journeys through Burnage, thus making buses a more attractive alternative to car journeys, and improving the impacts of the scheme. We are disappointed that MCC have not consulted bus passengers on their potential desire to remove these bus improvement measures from the scheme.

## **Final Thoughts**

We are grateful for the opportunity to comment on this scheme and see this as an important scheme which must be given the resources and support by MCC and its councillors and officers.

We look forward to working with MCC to help promote and build a scheme which is fit for the residents within the area and will encourage active travel choices and help build a better area for all that live and work within Levenshulme and Burnage, making ours a healthier, greener, more equal, and happier place to live.