

**Q.11 Describe the proposed works below, including the area (in square metres) that they will occupy. Please include details such as materials to be used and dimensions of all structures. Make clear which works are permanent, which are temporary, and which works, if any, have already been carried out.**

(A) Description of the Proposed Works

1. The Council is seeking consent under section 38 of the Commons Act 2006 for works on Southampton Common ("The Common") to upgrade and widen a path known as Lovers' Walk and associated mitigation works ("**the Proposed Works**"). The Proposed Works will take place on an approximate 4,498 square metre area of The Common in the areas shown edged red on Drawing Number 22ATM035-812 Rev B attached at Appendix 2 ("**the Application Land Plan**").
2. In summary, the Proposed Works comprise 7 elements:
  - (i) The resurfacing of existing tarmacadam hard surfacing over the existing width of two sections of Lovers' Walk with replacement tarmacadam hard surfacing;
  - (ii) The widening of the existing path along the same two sections with tarmacadam hard surfacing;
  - (iii) Replacing the existing compacted gravel path along a third section of the path with tarmacadam hard surfacing (with retrospective consent sought for earlier works to replace a previous hoggin and tarmacadam surface with the compacted gravel along this section);
  - (iv) The reinstatement and repair of the grassed verges alongside all three sections of Lovers' Walk and thereafter allowing them to re-establish;
  - (v) The installation of cycle speed calming measures comprising bollards, bunds and the installation of appropriate signage along Lovers' Walk;
  - (vi) The removal of redundant hardstanding areas from various locations in The Common and reinstatement to grass; and
  - (vii) The temporary erection of fencing for health and safety purposes to facilitate elements (i) to (vi) above.
3. The Proposed Works are indicatively shown in the 2 general arrangement drawings attached at Appendix 3 ("**the General Arrangement Drawings**"). Technically, only the works listed at sub-paragraphs 2(ii), (iii), (v) and (vii) above constitute restricted works under the definition contained in section 38(2) of the Commons Act 2006, but for the sake of completeness the Council is seeking consent for all works that together constitute the Proposed Works due to the cumulative extent of the works to be carried out.
4. A full detailed description of the materials, dimensions and equipment to be used for the Proposed Works and the phased approach is detailed in the Lovers' Walk Method Statement ("**the Method Statement**") attached at Appendix 4.

(B) Resurfacing, Path Widening and Repair of Grassed Verges

5. For the purposes of this application, the path referred to herein as Lovers' Walk is divided into three sections as shown on the plan attached at Appendix 5:
  - (a) Burgess Road to Highfield Avenue: 635 metres long with a varying width typically between 2 and 3 metres shown coloured orange ("**Section 1**");
  - (b) Highfield Road to Winn Road: 554 metres long with a varying width typically between 1.8 and 2 metres shown coloured purple ("**Section 2**"); and
  - (c) Winn Road to Westwood Road: 126 metres long with a width of 3 metres shown coloured red ("**Section 3**"). Technically, this section does not form part of Lovers' Walk but is an extension of it for those using Lovers' Walk and for ease of reference is being referred to as part of Lovers' Walk for the purposes of this application.
6. As noted above at sub-paragraphs 2(i), (ii), (iii) and (iv), the hard surfacing works consists of four elements:

- (a) Resurfacing the entire lengths of Section 1 and Section 2 across their entire existing width to replace the current existing permanent tarmacadam hard surfacing with replacement tarmacadam hard surfacing, totalling 2,503 square metres (shown shaded light brown on the General Arrangement Drawings in Appendix 3).
  - (b) Increase the width of the path in Section 1 and Section 2 to between 2.5 and 3.5 metres (with a short section near its junction with Burgess Road being widened to 4 metres) as shown shaded dark brown on the General Arrangement Drawings (Appendix 3). The total additional area of land to be changed from soft surface to hard surfacing (i.e., excluding the existing hard surfaced area of the current path width) will be 1,111 square metres.
  - (c) Replace the existing compacted gravel path along Section 3 with tarmacadam hard surfacing over its current width, totalling 364 square metres, of which 53 square metres had previously been tarmacadam (discussed further in paragraphs 7 to 10 below) leading to an overall increase of 311 square metres of tarmacadam hard surface along Section 3).
  - (d) The reinstatement and repair of the of the existing grassed verges alongside all three sections of Lovers' Walk which have been worn back to bare ground with the soil compacted and degraded due to the current narrow width of the path leading to overrun from existing users of the path. The area affected is subject to seasonal variations depending on the conditions, but on 25 October 2023 the area affected varied from 0.3 metres to 1.6 metres from the edges of the existing tarmacadam path along its entire length (i.e., Sections 1, 2 and 3). Due to this seasonal variation and given that the method of reinstatement will be to allow it to re-grow naturally, the size of this area has been excluded from the 4,498 square metre figure specified in paragraph 1 above.
7. Please note that in relation to Section 3 of the path, the Council has already undertaken preparatory work between October 2021 and May 2023 to replace the former hoggin surface with the current compacted gravel surface over a uniform 3 metre width for which the Council is applying for retrospective consent ("**the Retrospective Works**") as an interim measure to improve the surface of the path for users as the hoggin surface was often very wet and to accommodate the cycle facility along the southern end of The Avenue.
8. The Retrospective Works are shown on the Drawing in Appendix 6 ("**the Section 3 Retrospective and Prospective Works Drawing**"). The width of the hoggin surface along Section 3 prior to the Retrospective Works was approximately 3 metres wide, but this width was not uniform. The Retrospective Works involved removing 53 square metres of tarmacadam hard surfacing (shown shaded blue on the Section 3 Retrospective and Prospective Works Drawing) and replacing it with compacted gravel. A further 311 square metres of compacted gravel was laid over the hoggin surface with a uniform width of 3 metres (shown shaded yellow on the Section 3 Retrospective and Prospective Works Drawing) leading to a total of 364 square metres of compacted gravel being laid along the path in Section 3.
9. A further 143 square metre strip of tarmacadam hard surfacing was also removed as part of the Retrospective Works and allowed to reinstate to natural vegetation (shown shaded green on the Section 3 Retrospective and Prospective Works Drawing). This led to a total of 196 square metres of tarmacadam hard surfacing being removed as part of the Retrospective Works.
10. As noted above, the Council is seeking retrospective consent for the Retrospective Works in addition to consent for that part of the Proposed Works that will replace the compacted gravel with a tarmacadam hard surface. For the avoidance of doubt, of the 196 square metres of tarmacadam removed previously when the compacted gravel was laid, 53 square metres will return to a tarmacadam, hard surface as part of the remaining Proposed Works leaving a net total of 143 square metres in Section 3 having been removed and allowed to return to natural grass vegetation as part of the totality of the Proposed Works.
11. Overall, an area of 1,422 square metres of soft surfacing in The Common is required for additional tarmacadam hard surfacing as part of the Proposed Works. However, as discussed in section (D) below (paragraphs 18 to 24) 520 square metres of tarmacadam hard surfacing will be removed in the vicinity of Lovers' Walk and elsewhere on The Common and turned back to natural vegetation. This results in a net increase of 902 square metres of additional tarmacadam hard surfacing on The Common (though, as discussed in paragraphs 61 to 68 of the response to Questions 12 and 13, to

offset this increase an additional area of 1,083 square metres of non-common land is to be given protected status through the dedication and registration of it as town or village green).

12. It is possible, based on the Council's records, that two culverts cross under the existing route in Section 1 and Section 2 in order to drain the Common. However, there is currently no visible evidence of these. Should any such culverts be discovered during the construction of the Proposed Works then the Council seeks consent to carry out any repairs or replacement of these culverts as required with like for like materials including, if necessary, extending the length of these culverts to extend under the full width of the widened path. For the avoidance of doubt, no other watercourses will be altered by the Proposed Works.
13. In addition to the details shown in the Method Statement attached at Appendix 4, Drawing Number 15/AL/M/010/002 (attached at Appendix 7) shows the typical cross-section of the existing path and the indicative cross-section of the proposed path construction. There will inevitably need to be variance in terms of the width and depth according to what objects are in-situ along the length of the path which are discovered during construction.

### (C) Speed Calming Measures

14. Nine cycle speed calming measures (“**the Speed Calming Measures**”) will be installed as part of the Proposed Works with four on Section 1 and five on Section 2. Their proposed positions are marked indicatively on Drawing Numbers 22/AT/M/035/200, 22/AT/M/035/201, 22/AT/M/035/202 and 22/AT/M/035/203 attached at Appendix 8. For the avoidance of doubt there will be no Speed Calming Measures installed on Section 3.
15. Three of the four Speed Calming Measures to be installed on Section 1 will comprise:
  - (a) Two tactile strips, 7 metres apart, of alternative paving made of textured setts 1.5 metres long across the full width of the path consisting of Marshall Fairstone Cropped Granite Setts (or a close equivalent). There will be no more than a 6mm upstand between setts to ensure that it is appropriate for visually impaired users and is also compliant with the Equality Act 2010;
  - (b) Tarmacadam between the two tactile strips;
  - (c) Three timber (or other suitable material) bollards on one tactile strip measuring 0.2 metres by 0.2 metres and will be approximately 1.00 metre above ground and 0.5 metres below ground set no less than 1.5 metres apart;
  - (d) Two timber (or other suitable material) bollards on the other tactile strip measuring 0.2 metres by 0.2 metres and will be approximately 1.00 metre above ground and 0.5 metres below ground set no less than 3 metres apart;
  - (e) Grass bunds adjacent to both sides of the path approximately 0.5 metres high, 0.5-1.8 metres wide with approximately 16 metres long consisting of appropriately sourced soil. The purpose of these is to deter users from bypassing the Speed Calming Measures and over-running the verge; and
  - (f) ‘Share with Care’ surface logos made of thermoplastic material which when heated will stick to the ground.
16. One of the Speed Calming Measures to be installed on Section 1 and all five on Section 2 will, to reflect the narrower width of Section 2, comprise only of:
  - (a) One tactile strip of the alternative textured sett paving 3 metres long across the full width of the path;
  - (b) Grass bunds adjacent to both sides of the path approximately 0.5 metres high, 0.5-1.8 metres wide and approximately 9 metres in length consisting of appropriately sourced soil;
  - (c) Two timber (or other suitable material) bollards measuring 0.2 metres by 0.2 metres and will be approximately 1.00 metre above ground and 0.5 metres below ground set no less than 3 metres apart; and
  - (d) ‘Share with Care’ surface logos made of thermoplastic material which when heated will stick to the ground.
17. Further “Share with Care” signage will be placed along Section 1 attached to existing lighting columns. The signs will be made of laminated aluminium at A3 size and fastened to the lighting

columns at a height of six feet using aluminium brackets. An example of the information to be featured on the signs and examples of such signs erected elsewhere in the City are also attached at Appendix 8. It is anticipated that three signs erected on Section 1 should be sufficient to ensure users are aware of the behaviour code which is already signed at access points in other parts of The Common and they will therefore serve as repeater signage. Over time, the signs will be removed for maintenance and the use of Lovers' Walk will be assessed again to decide whether to re-erect them to avoid unnecessary signage clutter in The Common or to prevent users overlooking such static signs.

#### (D) Removal of Redundant Hard Surfaces

18. As part of the Proposed Works, a total of 520 square metres of hard surfacing will be removed from The Common and allowed to return to a natural state of vegetation.
19. 157 square metres of hard surface path adjacent to Lovers' Walk that will become redundant as part of the improvements to Lovers' Walk will also be (or has already been as part of the Retrospective Works) removed and left to return to grass. These areas are shown shaded green on both the General Arrangement Drawing Number 15/AL/M/010/001 Rev G Sheet 2 of 2 (Appendix 3b) and the Section 3 Retrospective and Prospective Works Drawing (Appendix 6). As noted in paragraph 9 above, the areas of hard surfacing adjacent to Section 3 measuring 143 square metres have already been removed and left to return to grass when the works to replace the hoggin path with compacted gravel took place between October 2021 and May 2023, for which retrospective consent is being sought as part of this application. For the avoidance of doubt, it is just the 14 square metre area of hard surfacing at the junction with Oakmount Avenue in Section 2 that still exists and will need to be removed as part of the remaining Proposed Works.
20. Three existing hard surfaced areas elsewhere on The Common whose hard surfacing is redundant shall be removed and returned to a natural, soft surface as part of the package of mitigation discussed in greater detail in the response to Questions 12 and 13.
21. These three areas are shown shaded green on Drawing Numbers 22/AT/M/035/810, 22/AT/M/035/813 and 22/AT/M/035/814 attached at Appendix 9.
22. The total area of hard surfacing to be removed from these three areas and returned to a natural state of vegetation measures 363 square metres comprising of the following:
  - (a) The foundations of former changing rooms (200 square metres);
  - (b) Two tarmacadam cricket strips (111 square metres); and
  - (c) A tarmacadam path to the site of a former toilet block (52 square metres).
23. The method for removing the redundant hard surfaces and reinstating the land to a natural state of vegetation are described in the Method Statement at Appendix 4 but in summary will involve excavating by hand to a 300mm depth and reinstating with appropriately sourced topsoil and allowed to re-establish naturally. Appropriate seeding will be used if required in the event that assistance is required to help the areas re-establish themselves.
24. Therefore, once the 520 square metres of hard surfacing is removed, the net increase of tarmacadam hard surfacing on The Common as a result of the Proposed Works will be 902 square metres (though this figure will be further off-set by dedicating and registering an area of non-common land measuring 1,083 square as town or village green as discussed in paragraphs 61 to 68 of the response to Questions 12 and 13).

#### (E) Temporary Fencing

25. The Proposed Works have the potential to cause temporary disruption to those wishing to access The Common during the works, as safety fencing will be used to protect the working areas (in accordance with the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015). Pedestrian diversions will be in place throughout the construction of the Proposed Works to allow for continued access to and across The Common.

26. Details of the temporary fencing around each area of the Proposed Works are set out in the response to Question 14 in section D.2 and the area of land to be fenced off during the Proposed Works are shown shaded orange on Drawing Numbers 11454, 11455, 11456, 11459, 11464, 11465, 11466 and 11467 attached at Appendix 10 (together “**the Fencing Plan**”), which also shows the proposed diversion routes. The type of fencing to be used is shown in the Method Statement in Appendix 4.
27. The Fencing Plan shows the totality of the area of land that will be enclosed by temporary fencing, which will be installed for health and safety purposes to facilitate the carrying out of the Proposed Works. Only small sections of this area of land will be fenced off at any one time to surround that particular area of the Proposed Works. Suitable, short and safe pedestrian diversions will be put in place to minimise the impact on access over, to and egress from The Common.

#### (F) Timetabling of Works

28. The Proposed Works are planned to start in 2024 or start from such time as consent is given and have an anticipated duration of approximately 16 weeks. While Sections 1 and 2 have restricted periods in the year where work should take place, Section 3 is more flexible. The Proposed Works will be broken down into phases so that the areas can be managed in smaller packages which will also minimise the amount of temporary fencing at any one time (and minimise the extent of the area of The Common being affected by the Proposed Works at any one time). The phases are described in the Method Statement attached at Appendix 4 and the phasing plans are attached at Appendix 11.