

Lovers Walk - Landscape Survey

The purpose of this document is to demonstrate the visual impact of proposed work along Lovers Walk. Southampton City Council consider that this work will not have a negative impact on Lovers Walk landscape but rather make improvements through appropriate design and use of materials.

Materials – Materials to be used are in keeping with the local environment and other paths across Southampton Common. These consist of tarmac path surface with aluminium edging, tactile paved surfacing, grassed bunds, and timber style bollards. There are a range of materials that have been used historically and they are in keeping with work locally by the University at Salisbury Road which installed timber bollards at the access to Lovers Walk. The product used for tactile areas will be Marshall Fairstone Cropped Granite Setts or a close equivalent. It will have no more than a 6mm upstand between setts to be appropriate for visually impaired users and meet DDA compliance.



Widening - The proposed widths are in keeping with other paths across Southampton Common with similar levels of use and follow design guidance on shared use paths to reduce conflict between different users. A narrower width in sections to that initially proposed is now part of the design following early consultation. Much of the widening follows observed and evidenced trodden verges.



◀ Path over run on either side of the path preventing vegetation growth.

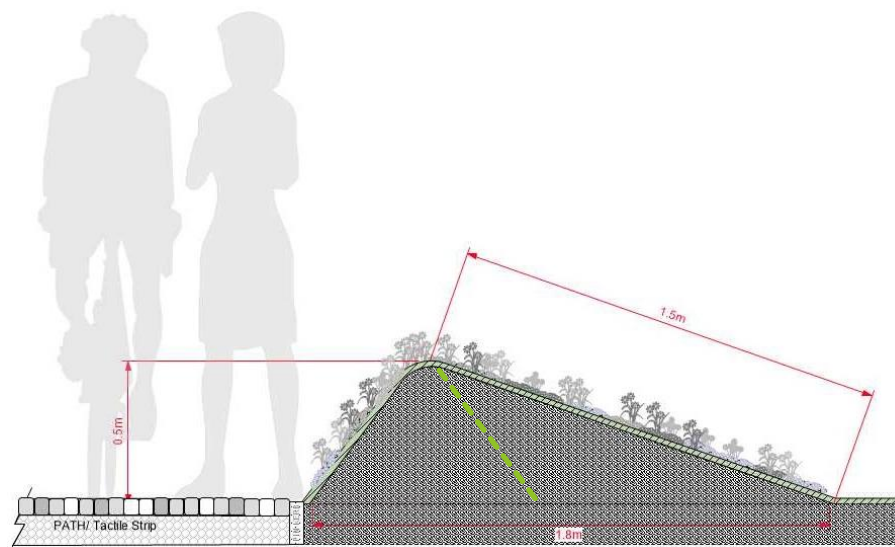
Path over run along one side of path for extended length. ▶



Typical cross section of widened path – The below image is a good representation of the proposed Lovers Walk path allowing for respectful use at the levels of use observed. Verges remain either side of the path and with reduced path step off will enable these verges to remain green. The verges currently graduate into scrub and woodland which differs along the length of the path and this character will be retained.

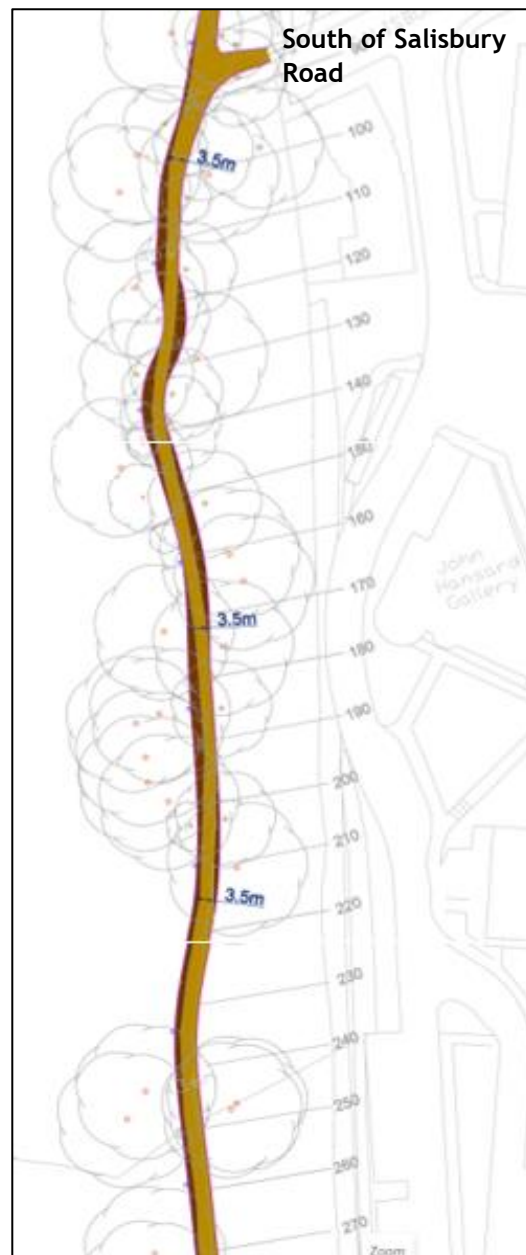
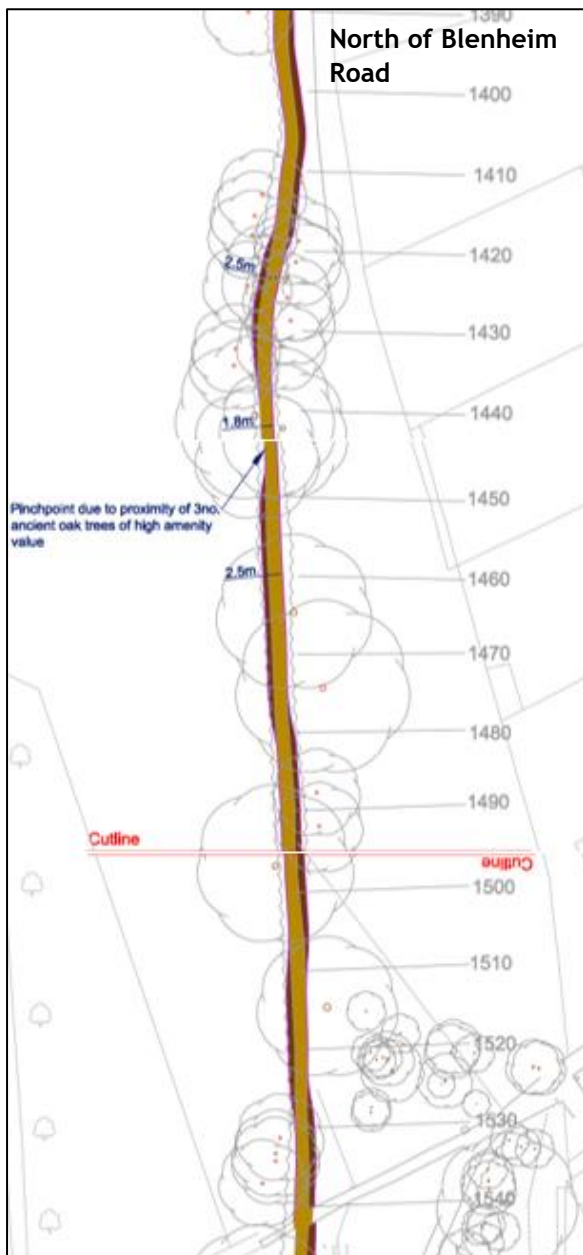


Cross Section of Grassed Bunds – The speed calming measures will be bordered by grassed bunds. These will start in advance of the calming feature to deter step off or ride off of the path and ensure compliance. Speed calming measures which include bunds have been located where desired step off to access parts of the Common away from paths is unlikely to occur and should therefore not impact negatively on people's access across the common. The width of the bund shown here as 1.8m will differ depending on proximity to trees and lighting columns. 1.8m the widest and 0.5m the narrowest is anticipated. The tops of the bunds will be shaped to discourage walking or cycling over them which would prevent good vegetation regrowth. If required a bollard can be located within the bund to further discourage this.



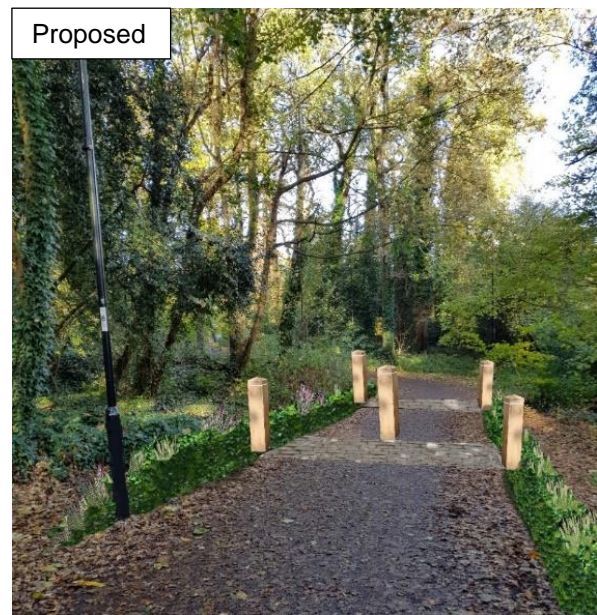
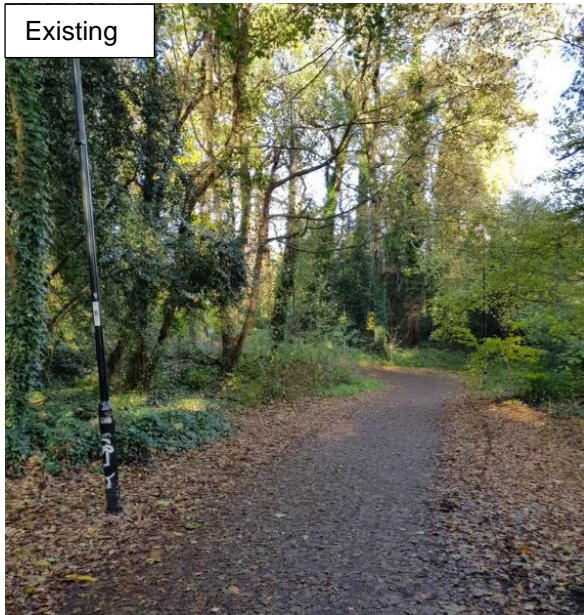
Path Alignment – A raised concern of widening Lovers Walk has been that it will change the meandering alignment of the path by having a straightening effect. The cited concern being that this would cause a change in appearance and potentially raise cyclists speeds. As can be seen from these images the widening takes place on alternating sides and in general on the outside edge of existing curved sections, therefore extenuating the curve in path as opposed to straightening out.

The current alignment of Lovers Walk has straight sections and curved sections. There is no known design behind the existing alignment other than routing a path through a treed area.



Example Images - The following images demonstrate the visual impact the proposed work will have on Lovers Walk. Measurements have been taken on site to best replicate, but it should be noted that these are indicative for the purpose of demonstrating a before and after image. These are sections where both widening and speed calming measures are proposed.

North of Salisbury Road



North of Highfield Avenue

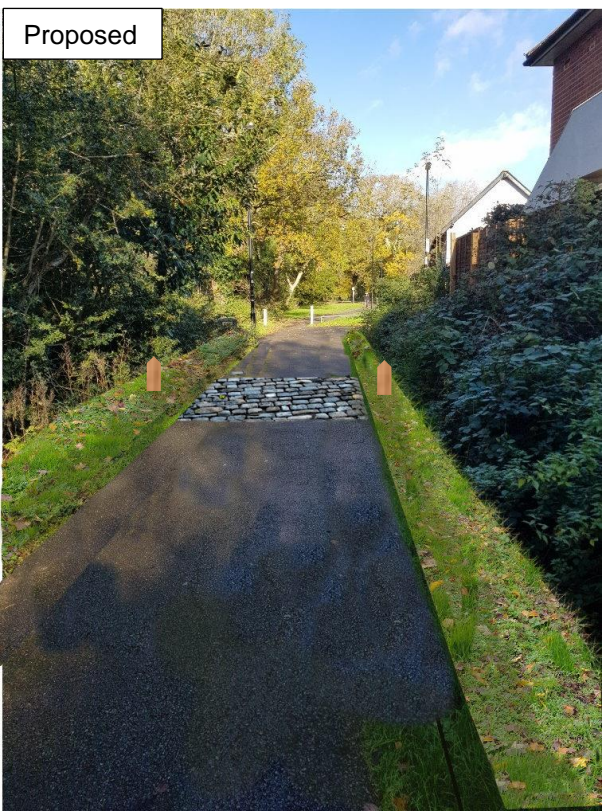


South of Oakmount Avenue

Existing



Proposed

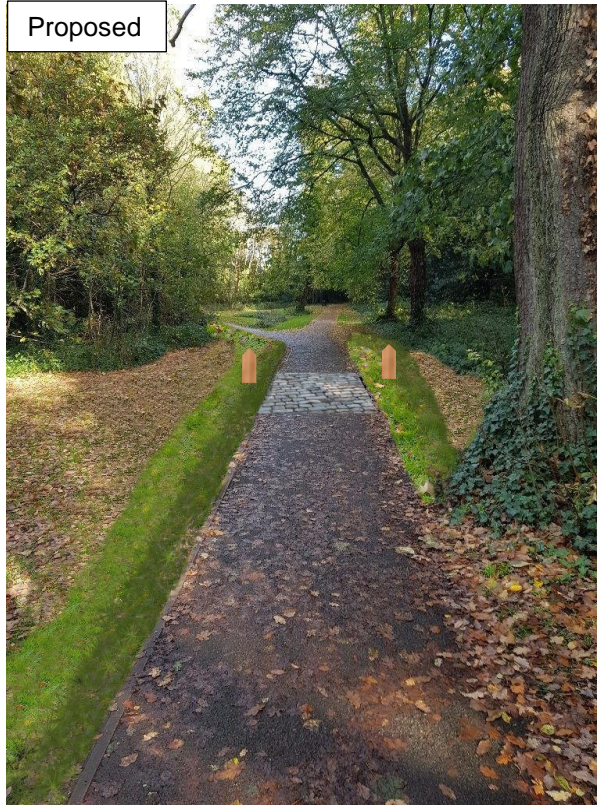


North of Blenheim Road

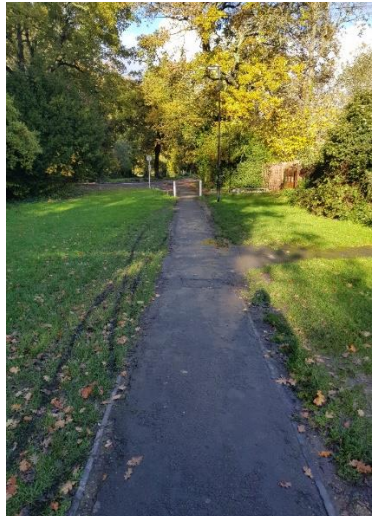
Existing



Proposed



Current Issues – Lovers Walk is showing signs of wear and tear including loss of top surface and cracks. The proposed works are primarily maintenance work which when undertaken will ensure the path meets ongoing existing levels of user demand. The following images show where existing path step off and run off by users impacts negatively on the landscape preventing grass to grow on verges, compacting them to mud and creating issues such as exposed path edges which create trip hazards. The following images show the kinds of issues that proposed work will resolve.



Winn Road to Westwood Road – Section 3 of the route is the footpath between Winn Road and Westwood Road. Historically the narrow tarmac path did not follow the desire line of users, as evidenced by a wide trodden dirt track running parallel to it. This dirt track has now be formalised using compacted gravel to a width of 3 metres. As part of proposed work the compact gravel path would then be tarmaced and the old tarmac path is removed and grassed.

In doing so this will this will consolidate the number of 'paths' to the evidenced desired route and reduce the size of area impacted by walking and cycling, allowing the surrounding verges to remain healthy.

The two paths between Winn Road and Westwood Road

