

31st January 2023

Dear Dame Sarah Storey,

We are now three months since your reply to our open letter regarding the current proposals for the Levenshulme and Burnage Active Neighbourhood (LBAN).

In your reply on October 31st, 2022 you said that you had requested a detailed response to our questions regarding the comments made by Ian Halton that Manchester City Council (MCC) had reached an agreement with TfGM about the final design of the scheme and his claim that TfGM had refused plans for further modal filters.

S4PLB are now asking to know what detailed responses have been provided to the Active Travel Commissioner's team from both parties.

Furthermore our group is now deeply concerned over the continued progress of the scheme by MCC, as construction has now started on the crossing infrastructure on Errwood Road listed in the phase 2 designs. We assume from this that MCC appears determined to fund the scheme from their own Highways expenditure, confident that whatever infrastructure they install will compel TfGM to approve the scheme and release money from the Mayors Challenge Fund (MCF).

MCC cannot be allowed to bully TfGM and the Design Review Panel into approving substandard designs in order to save face. Should a scheme not meet the criteria of an Active Neighbourhood laid out in the GM Streets for All Design Guide, then TfGM must exercise its prerogative and not release MCF money. To approve a substandard scheme would set a terrible precedent for future schemes. This would send a message to MCC that as the strongest borough in Greater Manchester Combined Authority they can implement the Bee Network in any way they choose.

As you know the phase 2 designs (available [here](#)) have been watered down from what was recently consulted on. For example two proposed cyclops junctions have been removed from the proposals.

In your reply on October 31st you said: "Please be reassured that this scheme currently proposed will be rigorously reviewed and required to fulfil the objectives laid out in Bee Network standards." However, a FOI response S4PLB received on October 19th shows that the majority of the Phase 2 designs were approved by the DRP in July 2022 (FOI 22/23/0095). Will there be another final review to make sure the Bee Network standards are adhered to?

The details of this FOI concern our campaign deeply as it appears that the DRP are no longer evaluating the scheme as a whole and instead are approving interventions on an individual level. Furthermore the vital interventions on Manor Road have now disappeared from all plans and with it the ability for residents to hold decision makers to account over this much needed part of the scheme.

What has emerged after years of mismanagement and disingenuous consultations by MCC can now no longer be considered an Active Neighbourhood. The issue now is that supporters of Active Neighbourhoods, including yourself, are in danger of defending a weaker scheme which is, due to the actions of MCC, a pale version of the original vision of a joined up Active Neighbourhood.

To further evidence this point, included with this letter is a timeline of the key developments of the scheme and a summary report of the scheme's progress to date, all produced by the efforts of our

campaign members. These documents show how MCC's actions have repeatedly diluted the scheme steering it towards traffic management rather than true modal-shift.

Our final question to you and the stakeholders involved in what remains of LBAN is: how is this scheme going to improve active travel in Levenshulme and Burnage? How are residents going to be able to use these interventions to make more journeys using active travel and reduce the miles they drive? We await your response to the questions asked in this letter and our initial correspondence.

To conclude S4PLB will continue to ask Manchester City Council and the Councillors representing the LBAN if they are genuinely trying to implement the scheme in a way that will achieve the goal of 'Active Travel'. Such a scheme has wider benefits, and simply implementing 'road safety' measures will not achieve the holistic aim of encouraging active travel, improving health, financial benefits to the community, AND improving road safety. Ad hoc implementation of filters and other measures will be detrimental to community cohesion if those benefits are not spread evenly across our community.

Yours Sincerely

The Organising Committee – S4PLB

Attached with this letter are:

FOI 22/23/0095

Scheme Timeline

Scheme Report