

Subject:	Comments by the Manchester Bolton & Bury Canal Society (MBBCS) on the "Applicant Response to Consultee Comments" document from CBRE dated 16/05/2024. Planning reference: 23/82372/FUL
Version	FINAL
Date:	26/06/2024
From:	Manchester Bolton & Bury Canal Society (MBBCS)

1. These comments should be read in conjunction with our previous responses dated 14/12/2023 and 27/03/2024 which can be found on Salford Council's planning portal reference 23/82372/FUL..
2. We thank the applicant for the assurances that "The canal towpath will be retained" and "If any existing canal structures are encountered during the initial earthworks, they will be exposed and left in situ"
3. In response to our suggestion that the original access to the towpath be opened up the applicant has reported that "the canal bridge parapet does not fall within the Applicant's ownership". Subsequent email correspondence with the applicant has confirmed that the bridge parapet is in the ownership of Salford City Council (SCC) . If that is the case we request that the planning officer seek the views of SCC's Highways Department on our suggestion that the original access to the towpath be opened up to pedestrians. We anticipate that the opening would be a maximum of 1900mm wide and would be protected from vehicle access by a bollard.



Google streetview from 2008 showing original access to the towpath, now bricked up.

We note that the applicant's original landscaping proposal would have seen the demolition of the entire canal parapet wall. In revised plans the parapet is now retained.



6.8 Proposed View along Upper Wharf Street



Source: updated Design and Access Statement - Salford Planning Portal 29/02/2024

4. In response to SCC's request that the applicant provide an indicative approach to future canal restoration the applicant has stated that "Should the canal be restored in the future, the continued pedestrian access to the route would be maintained via the **canal towpath** connecting to further phases of the canal". In subsequent email correspondence they have confirmed that "The access would be provided from the linear park gateway, until such time that the restoration becomes viable and access via Oldfield Road could be explored, and negotiated with Network Rail/ SCC Highways Department." We advocate for those negotiations to be started immediately so as to facilitate the restoration of the heritage towpath.

5. The applicant has stated that "there would be no significant cost for the removal of the shared pathway should restoration works commence." Our specification for removing and replacing the path along the waterway is set out in Appendix A. We believe that there would be significant costs as we are not just talking about removing the pathway as it would also require the restoration of the heritage towpath or installation of a new

pathway along the route of the original towpath should the heritage towpath have been destroyed. Why waste money on a waterway pathway when that money would be better deployed restoring the heritage towpath at the outset?

We are also very concerned about the precedent a waterway pathway sets for the rest of the Crescent area canal corridor, a length of approximately 2km. The cost of removing 2km of redundant waterway pathway would be substantial.

6. There is to be a process of archaeological investigation undertaken as is standard practice on sites with such heritage credentials. This will confirm or otherwise the condition of the heritage towpath. If, as we expect, the towpath is found to be in good condition we would request that any decision to proceed with the waterway path would be reviewed. We request that a condition is added that the findings of the archaeological investigation are shared with the LPA and ourselves and that there is a review undertaken at this point that takes into account the cost effectiveness and social value of reinstating the heritage towpath as the pathway.

7. **Conclusion**

The most cost effective solution to the pathway issue is to seek to restore the heritage towpath from the outset as this is the desired end result that will be required when full restoration eventually proceeds. It also accords with the principles of sustainable development.

<https://mbbcs.org.uk/>

Appendix A

Construction elements:

Task	Quantity	Unit
Topsoil Strip up to 5m wide 150mm depth - move to stockpile	187.5	m3
Move topsoil from stockpile back to site	187.5	m3
Topsoil reinstatement from stockpile	187.5	m3
Grass seeding	1250	m2
Import and Place type 1 cycleway 150mm thick	625	m2
Binder - AC20 Dense Bin 100/150 depth 80mm	625	m2
Excavate Cycleway	287.5	m3
Dispose cycleway materials	287.5	m3
Allowance for access / entrance / widening	1	sum
Sub Total		
Prelims at 25%		
Sub Total		
Risk at 15%		

Assumptions

Existing material is not contaminated

Access is unrestricted to large scale plant

Area does not require any dewatering intervention

Area does not require any coping stone re-setting

There are no utilities requiring protection or diversion

There are no surfaces requiring protection to access the area

There is no requirement for out of hours working

Average construction risk applied - if significant site-based risks remain post development this would need re-visiting

Does not include any permit charges such as PROW closures, relocations etc.

Assumed there are no obstructions - from trees or play area etc - anticipated these would be built outside of a towpath zone

Note

Inflation would need adding for schemes after April 2025

The above takes some high-level assumptions in calculating the price and does not consider any design development costs, planning costs, permits, legal costs, TTRO / PROW costs.

The construction work alone very quickly swallows circa £90k which otherwise could have been put into restoring the canal. When you add the upfront monies needing spending, I would not be surprised to see this working out at a circa £150-250k burden on restoration at today's rates

and possibly more if contaminated land is not fully remediated ahead of the initial development as that burden would be the restorations to pick up then.

All in all the scheme appears ill thought out from a restoration perspective and will likely leave a significant burden to restoration.

Drawings used:

