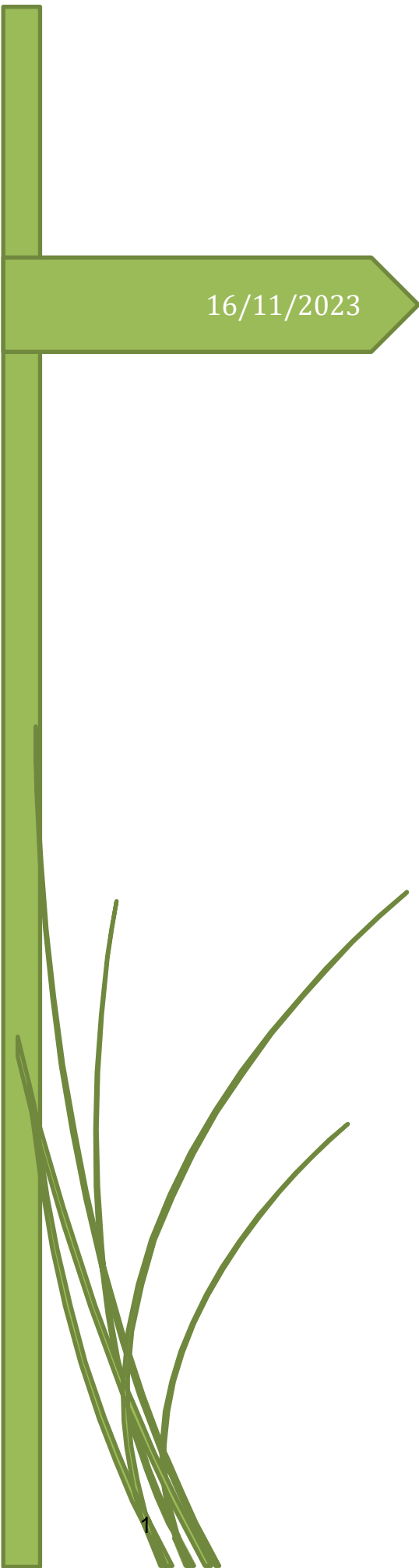


16/11/2023

NCN 196 Consultation Report



NCN 196 CONSULTATION REPORT

Contents

Proposal Overview	1
Proposed resurfacing of Core Path/NCN 196 between Rosewell and Auchendinny	2
1: What is your postcode district?.....	3
2: To what extent do you support walking and cycling improvements between settlements in Midlothian?	4
3: Can you explain your view?.....	4
4: Do you currently use the path NCN196 between Auchendinny and Rosewell?	9
5: How do you use the path? Please select all that apply:	9
9: For which types of journeys do you use the NCN196 path? Please select all that apply:	11
6: Do you currently experience any difficulties in using the path?	12
7: Are there journeys that you would like to make along this path, but are unable to due to the current surface?	14
8: What sort of changes would you support to the pathway surface? Select all that apply:	15
10: The pathway will likely be closed for a period of around six weeks should surfacing be approved. The Council is keen to hear how you might be affected by the pathway closure. If you have concerns around the temporary closure, please describe them below	17

Proposal Overview

In response to initial public feedback to proposed surfacing works of Core Path NCN 196 between Rosewell and Auchendinny, the Council is conducting a public consultation to collect views on the proposal.

[National Cycle Network](#) (NCN) route 196 runs between Penicuik and Haddington, with direct connections to NCN 1 (the UK's core north-south active travel corridor) via Musselburgh and Edinburgh. The development of long-distance active travel networks is a key priority of Transport Scotland under the [Strategic Transport Projects Review \(STPR2\)](#). At the local level, the route forms part of [Midlothian's Core Path network](#), which aims to improve public access to key rights of way across the Council area.

As communities in Midlothian grow, there is an increasing need for safe, high-quality active travel routes linking local communities. Surrounding roads in the area have high levels of vehicular traffic, or very steep gradients through Roslin Glen. The NCN 196 is therefore a key link for active travel between Penicuik, Rosewell, and the rest of Midlothian, providing a safe link for those who travel without a car.

Sections of the NCN 196 path between Rosewell and Bonnyrigg and between Auchendinny and Penicuik already have a durable bound surface in place (tarmac). The Council is proposing to install a bound surface to the remaining section of path NCN 196 between Rosewell and Auchendinny to make this linking section accessible for a broad range of users. A bound surface will reduce difficulties currently encountered by wheeled users, and users with mobility difficulties, particularly in poor weather conditions.

The Council is proposing to surface the path to a width of 3 metres. As well as the option of a 3m wide tarmac path we are also asking for your views on a split width 3m path suitable for all users, consisting of 2m width of tarmac and 1m of alternative bound surface. This option would provide a 1m width strip offering a more flexible surface. Funding availability, procurement processes, and warm temperature requirements for laying mean that provision of the flexible surface cannot happen immediately. Should this option be chosen, 2m width of the current surface will be upgraded to tarmac, with the 1m flexible surface installed at a later date.

No new sections of pathway are proposed and works are not anticipated to take place outwith the current width of the pathway corridor. Resurfacing this section of pathway will ensure continuity across the full length of the path. Key drainage issues have been identified on the path, and localised drainage improvements are to be included as part of the proposed works, if approved.

Any approved pathway works are likely to involve a closure of the section between Rosewell and Auchendinny for a period of approximately six weeks, although this may be longer depending on the type of surface implemented. Where possible, the Council will minimise closure periods, and will aim to see phased reopenings to minimise disruption.

Midlothian Council

Proposed resurfacing of Core Path/NCN 196 between Rosewell and Auchendinny

<https://midlothiancouncil.citizenspace.com/communications/ncn196>

This report was created on Thursday 16 November 2023 at 12:45

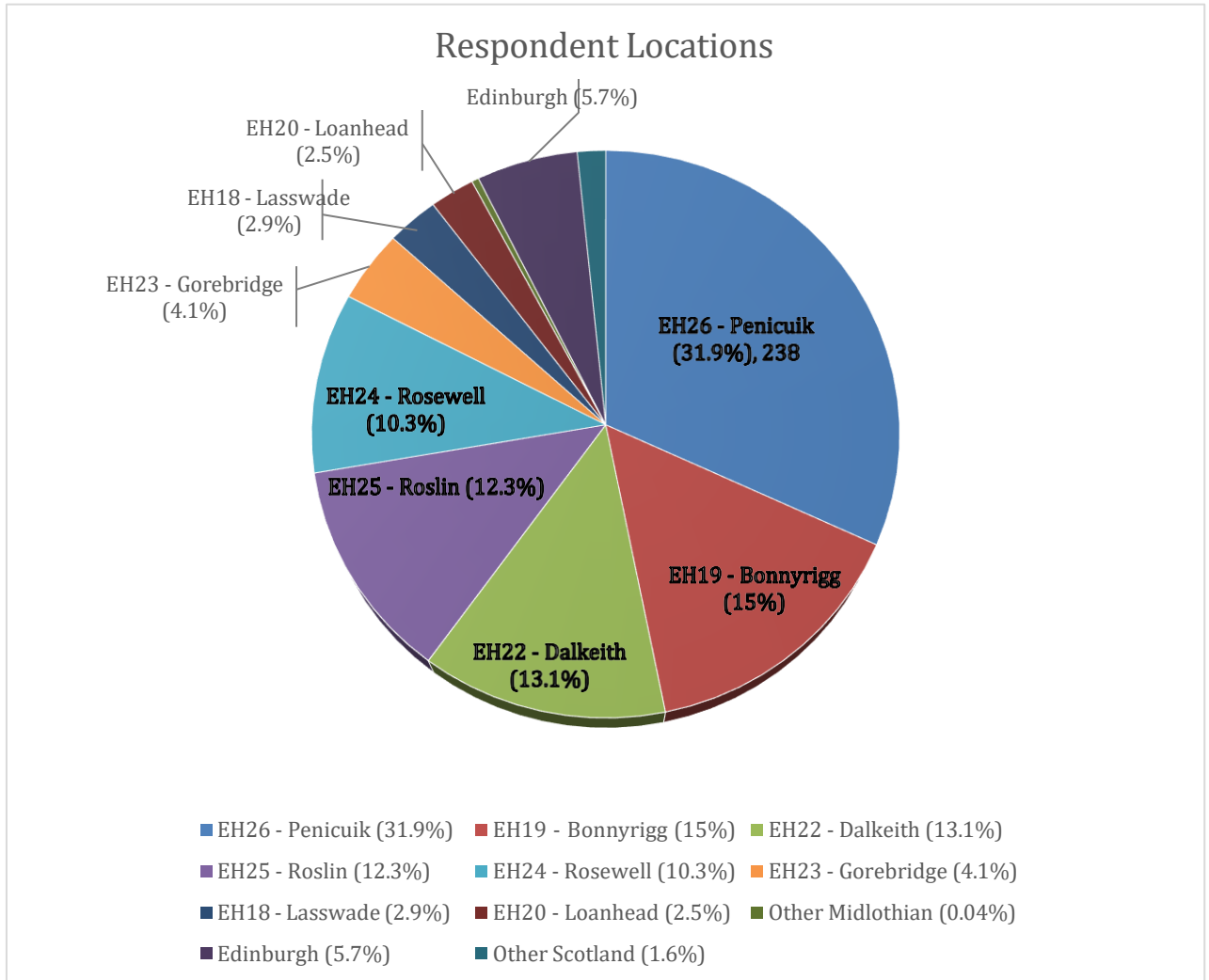
The activity ran from 08/08/2023 to 05/09/2023

Responses to this survey: **746**

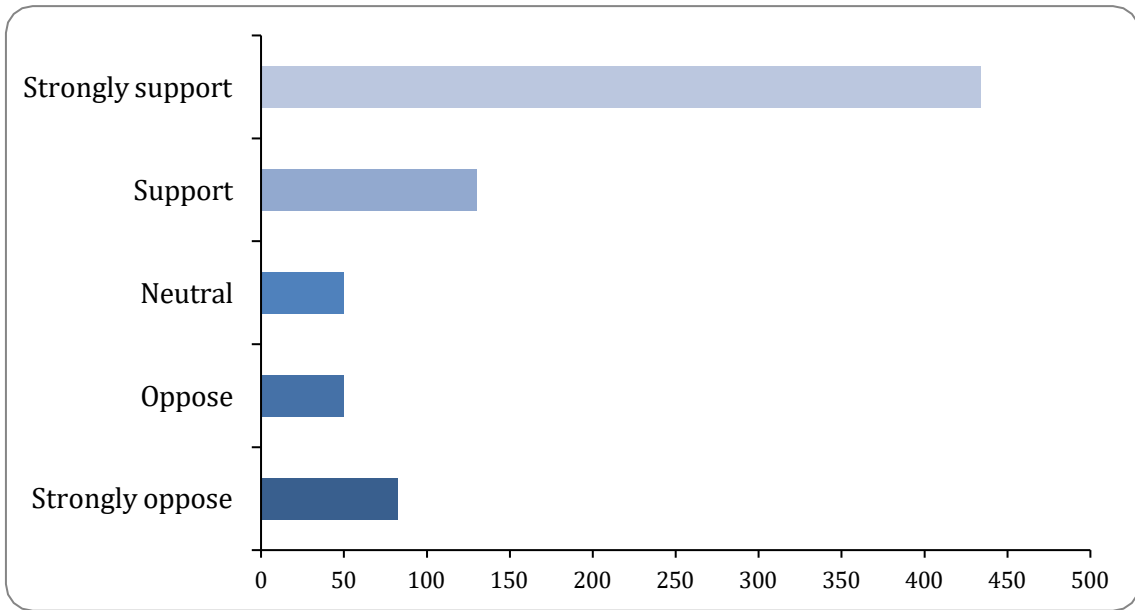
Questions have been preserved in this report in the form of the chapter headings.

1: What is your postcode district?

There were 746 responses to this part of the question. Most respondents were from within Midlothian, with a fairly broad spread across the Council area. A small number of respondents replied from elsewhere in the Edinburgh city region, with a smaller number of responses coming from elsewhere in Scotland. The number of responses demonstrates significant local interest in the future of the pathway, and the importance of the amenity to local communities across Midlothian.



2: To what extent do you support walking and cycling improvements between settlements in Midlothian?



Option	Total	Percent
Strongly support	434	58.18%
Support	130	17.43%
Neutral	50	6.70%
Oppose	50	6.70%
Strongly oppose	82	10.99%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

3: Can you explain your view?

Space to elaborate on the response to question 2

Many respondents provided answers to this question that applied directly to the section of NCN 196 rather than active travel in Midlothian as a whole. Some of the key themes commonly touched on by respondents can be found below. These are broad summaries of topics discussed sorted roughly by their prevalence in consultation responses. This is followed by a selection of public comments that are broadly representative of the views expressed.

Active travel generally:

- Need to improve cycling
- Improvements to active travel would reduce the need for driving
- Need to separate motorized and non-motorised users

- General support for active travel
- Need for routes that connect communities
- Walkers need safe and pleasant routes
- Health benefits of active travel
- Need to improve safe travel

Specific to NCN196:

- Frequent users of the pathway for a variety of purposes
- Need to improve cycling access
- Tarmac is not a suitable material for winter conditions
- Good amenity for exercise
- Pathway allows for hobbies and activities
- All vulnerable users need to be catered for
- Pathway is an important link for communities
- Needs of walkers and joggers need to be considered
- Poor surface quality on the section in question
- Current surface is good for a variety of users
- Pathway is good for accessing the countryside and natural amenities
- Pathway serves as an access point to key routes
- Money should be used elsewhere

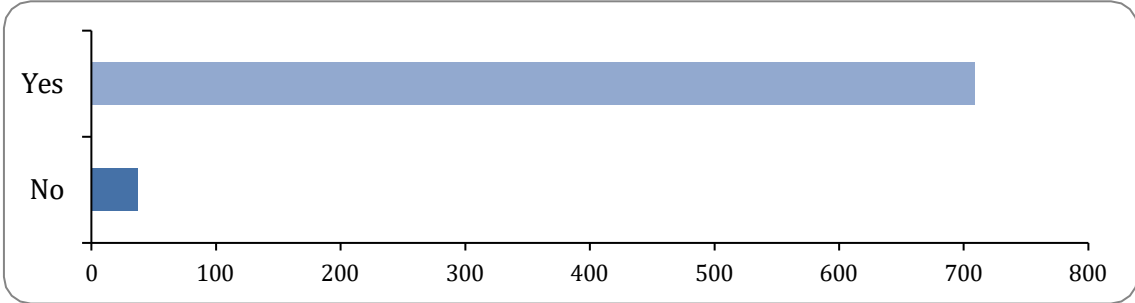
<p>There should be safe access to the path network between towns for ALL vulnerable users. Keeping motorised and non motorised travelers apart should be the priority. Not discriminating between user groups. Vehicles can kill us all equally.</p>
<p>Active travel is great for wellbeing and also a great way to reduce our carbon footprint. Usable paths are also critical for a range of hobbies and activities in the area. However the nature of the infrastructure should be suited to all users and keep safety of all users in all Seasons paramount.</p>
<p>Midlothian has very poor infrastructure away from main roads. The former railway paths are a vital and fantastic resource - direct routes, away from traffic that are much safer and more usable for walking and cycling.</p>
<p>It's well used and would be a massive benefit to commuters, wheel chair users and buggies. Let's finish off the route.</p>
<p>I use the path regularly to walk & dog walk, currently the path is accessible to me all year and there is no issues with icy weather making the path unwalkable. If the path was to tarmac and not gritted then the path would become unusable in the winter, it would just be an ice rink like the streets are. Any transport money should be used to find the current state of the roads, I can't drive more than a few yards and there is more potholes.</p>
<p>The surface on the existing railway path is of a standard that is very acceptable to all users at present. To tarmac the remaining pathway is a complete hazard when it comes to winter for all current users. The tarmac freezes and as already admitted in this consultation it is not gritted in cold weather. To actually contemplate tarmacking even more is an absolute disgrace.</p>

<p>As more houses are built it is impossible to keep up with the number of car journeys being made, therefore people must be given other options to travel between towns, and into/out of Edinburgh. More roads will just induce more traffic</p>
<p>Midlothian is a fast growing area which is not massive. It should be straightforward to make sustainable, environmentally friendly and socially responsible travel choices that are appropriate for any given journey. For many of the shorter car journeys undertaken, cycling or walking would be appropriate but for a safe, direct route to use. As more houses are built congestion and environmental damage will worsen unless active travel is promoted and made an easy choice.</p>
<p>As a horse rider/owner tarmac would increase the speed cyclists pass horses and increases the likelihood of an accident. Tarmac will hinder natural drainage and in the winter will become dangerous for all users. Tarmac increases concussion injuries for horses and runners.</p>
<p>I am a keen cyclist. The Rosewell to Penicuik cycle way resurfacing will be god send for me as I commute through that route to work and in winter I get very muddy (and my bike too chain etc) to the point that sometimes I don't have any other choice that go through the steep and dangerous Roslin glen road. Also it will improve stability on the bike (puddles and potholes that make you wobble around) plus increase accessibility for all the users (wheelchair, pushchair etc) in winter. The perfect scenario will be to add lights (the winter months are dark! But this is for another day....</p>
<p>Since Covid, more people are walking, running& cycling & i think maintaining/ upgrading paths can only encourage people to continue.</p>
<p>I work in Midlothian and commuting across Roslin Glen by bike is really difficult, with steep and very twisty roads and impatient drivers making it feel rather dangerous. The old railway path is lovely and traffic free and has good gradients, but the bad surfaces - resulting in puddles, mud etc - make for a very bumpy and uncomfortable ride, and muddy clothes and shoes.</p>
<p>While I enjoy some of the more rugged aspects of the Auchendinny path, negotiating them with a pushchair, bike or wheelchair can be very tricky, especially in wet weather. Changes would make the route accessible to more individuals</p>
<p>Cycling and walking between different towns and villages can be tricky. A lot of the country roads don't have pavements and the surface quality can make it difficult to cycling. The roads have national speed limit and sharp corners, which results in cars frequently leaving their lane when cornering. Given the low surface quality requiring bikes to move around within their lane to pick a smooth route, there are frequent near misses between bikes and cars.</p>
<p>A lot of the pavements frequently have overgrown bushes covering them, requiring walkers to move into the road to get past them. I come across this frequently around the A701, Pomathorn Road and the B7026. Given the speed of the cars, it can make walking along these roads dangerous."</p>
<p>The walkway is fine as it is. By putting down Tar or any other surface means it's difficult to use in winter weather</p>
<p>The path should not be classed as a cycle way but more a shared path way. It should have signs along the path to say cyclists must be mindful of their speed and pedestrians and animals have the right of way. Like the cyclists do on roads with vehicles. As we pedestrians and animals are more vulnerable to cyclists who come at such fast speeds. Changing the path type will only allow them to go faster making it a much more unsafe environment.</p>

<p>Need to reduce private car use to combat the climate emergency. Safe walking and cycling routes can help encourage some people to choose to walk/wheel/cycle journeys between settlements instead of driving.</p>
<p>I do support them but not at the expense of equestrian access. This funded proposal will benefit cycling commuters who will use the old railway path at speed which is off-putting and dangerous for dog walkers, children, walkers, leisure cyclists & equestrians. It's the countryside - it doesn't need to be a pavement.</p>
<p>As a family of 4 (2 adults and kids 12 and 7) we often make use of the path network on bikes or on foot. Well maintained paths are essential</p>
<p>As a relatively new mum I have found having good walking spaces imperative for getting out of the house with a baby, fresh air for us both. I am not a cyclist.</p>
<p>Myself and family use this part of the old railway regularly for walking, cycling and running and would be great not to be covered in mud after returning from our activities. It would also make a lot more accessible for wheelchair's and mobility vehicles.</p>
<p>My daughter is a wheelchair user and this would help her walk her dog.</p>
<p>Many cyclists that currently use this route are discourteous and disrespectful of others, resurfacing is likely to increase their speed and hence dangers to pedestrians and dogs.</p>
<p>I understand the need to provide pathways for purpose. For people like me who use the path for running and fitness walking, the impact of a hard surface on the body is significant so I appreciate there being a small soft surface area being provided. However, vegetation around the edge of the pathway needs to be maintained or that softer surface will disappear as it has on other parts of the route. I hope that is planned for in future budgets</p>
<p>I already use a bicycle in preference to car whenever practical. However there are still considerable number of times when a safe, direct route is unavailable and a car journey becomes a necessity.</p>
<p>Support but dubious of wording of improvements. Improving access yes, considering tarmacking an improvement no Strongly support access improvements Strongly oppose any form of tarmac. It's dangerous for cyclists in winter and dangerous for horse riders full time</p>
<p>These areas have been fine for many many years. Why contaminate the area with more building materials, it imposes on the wildlife and plants. Also spending money unnecessarily on things that aren't required.</p>
<p>Although the money would come from other than the local transport budget, with other competing priorities, I would recommend that we limit our spending on upgrading the cycle paths, other than making the existing paths safer and fully accessible. I feel with the growing communities along the line the council should be looking to reinstate the railway to connect with the Waverley line. Too many cyclists use the road through Roslin Glen which caused road hazards for other road users as the road is too narrow and blind bends in parts to overtake cyclists climbing the hill.</p>
<p>Support development but needs to be safe in winter and for current users such as horses</p>
<p>I am opposed to the 3m wide tarmac path as this makes it difficult when icy during winter months which would be a danger to all users. I am a frequent walker on this path between Rosewell and Penicuik</p>
<p>"This route is not unlike a rural park in that is it busy with all types of user, accessing the countryside. The verges and boundary bankings forming the green corridor is biodiverse, with</p>

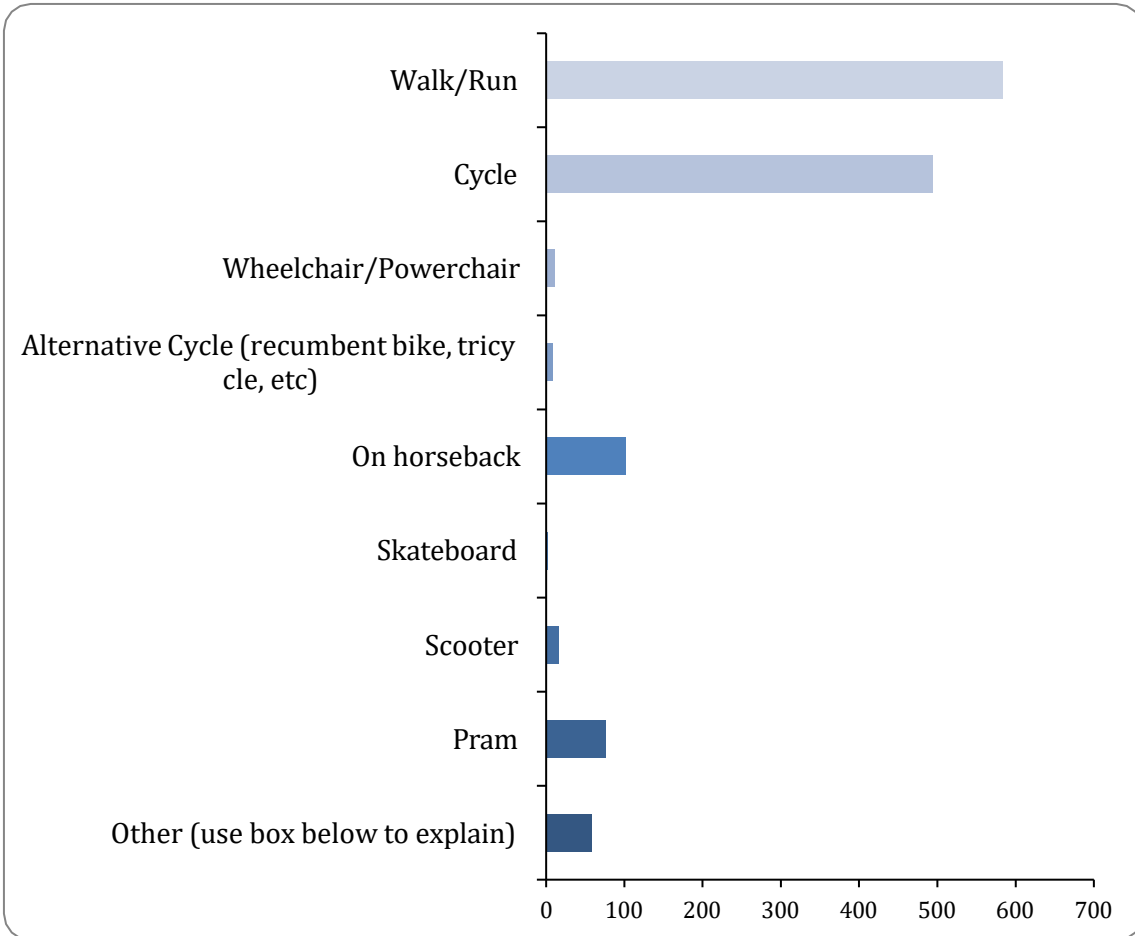
<p>native species. Consideration needs to be given as such, to the green network, biodiversity and how the route is used and why.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to the potential urbanisation of the route, should it be tarred and the difficulties of maintenance of a bound surface. This is not clear in the proposal.</p> <p>Will the Active travel team adopt the solum and attend to repairs / maintenance?</p> <p>Maintenance issues common to a bound surfaced route should be addressed before they arise:</p> <p>Leaf and mud build up - when, how and who will ensure it is swept?</p> <p>Root heave - will the inevitable root heave be addressed?</p> <p>Slippery surfacing due to ice, frost and surface water - the route should not be gritted in a countryside setting as this will impair verge biodiversity, with toxic salts."</p>
<p>I think it is critical that people should be able to feel safe when choosing to walk and cycle between villages in Midlothian. This will be beneficial for both environmental and help elevate transport poverty in certain areas.</p>
<p>I am a cyclist and use the cycle path almost everyday of the year. I am in favour of something smoother / tarmac not so much a split path</p>
<p>I would cycle more if there were more 'commuter' routes for bikes</p>
<p>Continuation of similar surface at other section will make it accessible to all disabilities.</p>
<p>I find the hard core difficult to walk on in parts, it hurts my feet and joints. A friend fell on the rough surface and it left her face, hands, knees and clothing in a mess.</p>
<p>I accept that the section of path between Auchendinny and Rosewell can be muddy but this is the last section of that path and I cherish using that section because of its unfinished state. Across the country many other paths which used to be railway lines are similarly unfinished and I believe that these are (a) nicer to use and (b) have less of a physical impact upon the body as the surface is more flexible.</p>
<p>I've ruined tyres on the path in the past. Paving would mean the ability to use road bikes and hybrids on it.</p>
<p>We need a decent multi user surface for walkers, dogs, cyclists, wheelchair users, buggies and horses. The Pencaitland railway line is a perfect example.</p>
<p>Local villages require to be accessible for all, via walking, cycles, buggies, wheel chair/mobility aids.</p>

4: Do you currently use the path NCN196 between Auchendinny and Rosewell?



Option	Total	Percent
Yes	709	95.04%
No	37	4.96%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

5: How do you use the path? Please select all that apply:



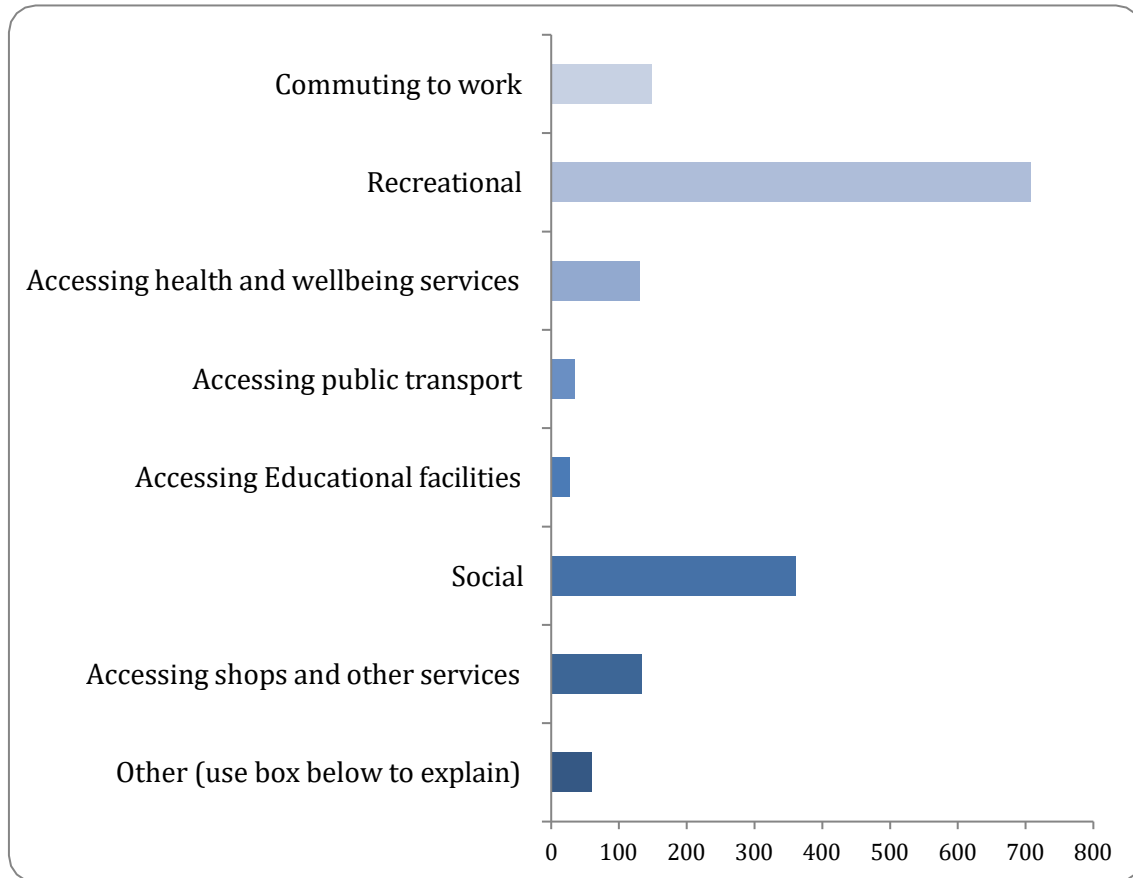
Option	Total	Percent
Walk/Run	583	78.15%
Cycle	494	66.22%
Wheelchair/Powerchair	11	1.47%
Alternative Cycle (recumbent bike, tricycle, etc)	8	1.07%
On horseback	101	13.54%
Skateboard	2	0.27%
Scooter	16	2.14%
Pram	76	10.19%
Other (use box below to explain)	58	7.77%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

I chose 'Other' because

Those who answered others most commonly responded that they are dog walkers. Approximately 15 users indicated that they do not use the pathway as they are unable to use the current surface, while approximately 20 users indicated in this field that they do not use the path.

I also use this path to walk my elderly dogs because tarmac is an issue for their joints and the surface of the path as it is makes it much easier and more enjoyable for them because it is much gentler for their joints.
Alternative cycle = cargo bike with a kid that will definitely benefit from resurfacing.
As for question 3 I don't use it anymore because it is too bumpy and I worry about punctures. I would cycle on it if it was tarmacked though.
"I walk but with a dog... I think it should be noted that there could be differences in views between dog walker/runners and non dog...
I prefer non tarmacked walks due to my dog... Tarmac paths over distance are worse than dirt paths for my usage"
I don't use it as often because I need to park in the spaces at Rosewell and there isn't many spaces. I'm not physically able enough to walk the path from my home to that part of the network and then enjoy the lovely stretch between Rosewell and the tunnel which is so much more pleasant than the paths through Bonyrigg which are now flanked on both sides by congested housing developments.
I roller blade between Bonnyrigg & Roswell, can't go any further than that as the surface is too rough.
Can't use if I cannot guarantee surface conducive to my mobility scooter
It is a nice route where I can walk my dog safely off lead (under control!!)

9: For which types of journeys do you use the NCN196 path? Please select all that apply:



Option	Total	Percent
Commuting to work	148	19.84%
Recreational	707	94.77%
Accessing health and wellbeing services	131	17.56%
Accessing public transport	34	4.56%
Accessing Educational facilities	27	3.62%
Social	361	48.39%
Accessing shops and other services	134	17.96%
Other (use box below to explain)	60	8.04%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

6: Do you currently experience any difficulties in using the path?

Many users have highlighted general difficulties in using the pathway. These difficulties are exacerbated in periods of wet weather, as the pathway surface often becomes muddy. Similar difficulties were expressed in winter conditions, although many respondents have commented that the surface of the unpaved section was preferable to the tarmac surface in winter due to the reduced slip risk. In general, the unpaved section of the pathway was often criticized as being bumpy or uneven, causing difficulties for access with prams or wheelchairs, or for children by bike or scooter.

Poor etiquette was often cited as a difficulty along the pathway in general. Cyclist speeds and lack of courtesy towards other pathway users was the most frequent issue raised.

Some respondents also listed a lack of amenities as a barrier to use. A general lack of lighting along this stretch was mentioned, as were the limited number of resting places, and a lack of public toilet facilities.

Below is a summary of the key issues identified during the consultation, organized by prevalence. This is followed by a selection of quotes from respondents that broadly summarise the views expressed.

The difficulties I have are:

- I do not experience any difficulties
- The pathway surface is muddy in poor weather
- The pathway surface is uneven, bumpy, or rocky
- I experience difficulties cycling
- I experience difficulty in winter conditions
- There is poor etiquette from cyclists.
- Poor drainage
- Tyre punctures while cycling
- I do not use pathway
- Branches and vegetation cause difficulties
- Children experience difficulties cycling
- Avoid the unpaved section
- Poor lighting
- Difficult for prams
- Difficult for those with mobility issues
- Prefer softer surface, and would not like to see a hard surface implemented
- Roslin Glen is a poor alternative route

<p>"No issues on either horse , walking or cycling in all seasons.</p> <p>Only issues I encounter are dominant / Poor etiquette from cyclists going too fast / not using bells whilst I am walking or on the horse - mainly On the tarmac section past Rosewell or past Auchendinny - these tarmacked sections are also slippy in icy conditions as a cyclist , walker and horse rider. The currently untarmacked section feels much safer during winter and to share with other users."</p>
<p>Can be muddy and slippery where the path has not been properly surfaced. Horse riders destroy the path and really damage the verge when the path is muddy. This may encourage them to remain in the path.</p>
<p>As noted previously the bumpy stones make it hard for me when cycling pregnant or with babies/kids on the back of the bike. And is too bumpy for a pram.</p>
<p>The Rosewell - Auchendinny section surface is very poor for walking and cycling. It's uneven and prone to water ponding and flooding when rain falls. It is not great for anyone with mobility issues. The surface can be very difficult to use during winter</p>
<p>No, but the tarmac sections further down become very slippery in the winter with a build up of mud and leaves and/or ice. I have fallen off of my bike hitting a patch of black ice, and my husband came off his bike after slipping on some leaves with our two year old son in a baby seat on the back! The section from Auchendinny to Rosewell doesn't have this problem so I'm very concerned about any further tarmac being put down without proper provision from the council to clean and grit the surface in the winter.</p>
<p>In winter in particular, it is very wet and muddy. Almost impossible to cycle on which is pretty useless for w National cycle network route - particularly the section from above Roslin Glen to Auchendinny.</p>
<p>Very difficult with a wheelchair due to the terrain between Rosewell and Auchindinny. I support a number of adults who use wheelchairs</p>
<p>After heavy rain the surface gets washed out. It gets very muddy which is an issue especially when cycling and using a pram. If it's too muddy I avoid going that way altogether.</p>
<p>I have struggled to use our rather robust pushchair on the path in wet weather. We are fortunate to be able to afford a sturdy buggy but it should be even harder for those without. It has also proved difficult in the past to use the path for cycling with children</p>
<p>"The lights in the tunnel at Auchendinny (under the B7026) are often off early morning, despite it being dark. This often means that the tunnel is almost pitch black. The lights in the other tunnel (just where the unpaved section starts) don't seem to have this problem.</p> <p>The path is frequently covered in horse manure, sometimes in ways that make it unavoidable without picking up the bike and jumping.</p> <p>Tree routes are lifting the path near Eskbridge and Auchendinny.</p> <p>The paved section from Harpers Brae to the Scottish Water facility has a large number of potholes at the tunnel.</p> <p>The unpaved section from Auchendinny to Rosewell is prone to large muddy puddles.</p> <p>The unpaved section near Roslin has large deep holes that make it difficult to navigate on certain bike types."</p>
<p>No. It is a hardcore path which is in the main robust and relatively steady going under foot and wheel. It isn't greatly affected by the weather and it does it's job. It seems to me to be a waste to tarmac that pathway at considerable expense. I assume it will affect drainage and/or require considerable drainage works to be installed to the sewer. Furthermore, I assume it will not be a priority gritted route in the winter. Experience tells me that it will be as treacherous as the</p>

Rosewell to Dalkeith section, it can be a good 4-7 days before that is passable and safe. The hardcore paths are generally far safer far quicker.
Mixing cycling, walkers (including dogs) and horses on the same path leads to accidents and at least a stressful journey.
Yes. Can be muddy at times and surface not suitable for many cycles. I have had numerous punctures some requiring the replacement of a tyre which is expensive.
"Rosewell end ices badly in winter and also floods. Poor lighting in easternmost tunnel at Auchendinny. Beyond that, it's a great asset! Could do with a better connection to Newtongrange."
"I experience difficulties in using this path and similar paths, including but not limited to: - Overgrown foliage - Uneven surfaces leading to slippage - Water pooling and freezing in the winter, causing the path to be dangerous"
"I have no difficulties in using the path in it's current form. The current surface is less concussive on my joints and causes me less joint pain than walking on tarmac pavements do. This is why I use the pathway in the first instance."

7: Are there journeys that you would like to make along this path, but are unable to due to the current surface?

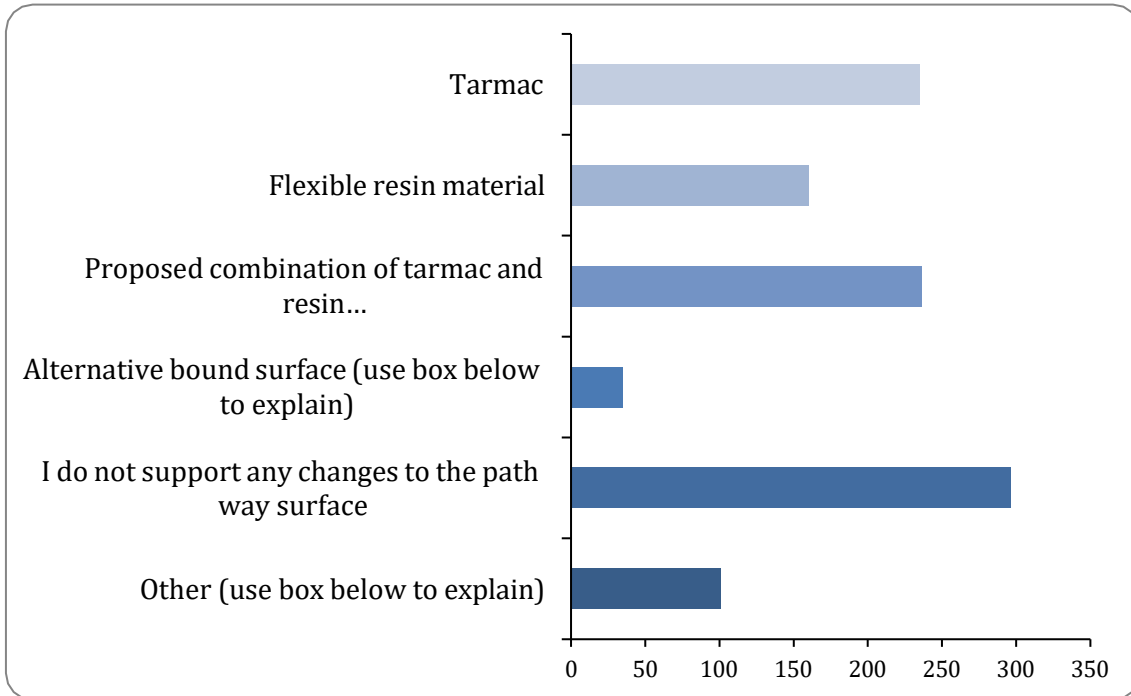
Journeys unable to make

Most respondents indicated that they would not make additional journeys should the route be resurfaced, but there were a number of responses that indicated that a resurfaced pathway would allow them to more reliably make journeys in poorer weather conditions, and in all seasons. Some respondents have indicated that they are unable to use the current unpaved section (difficulties with wheelchairs and prams were the most common reason cited), and that a bound surface would allow them to make use of the path. Others have indicated that they would like to use the path for commuting journeys, but that muddy conditions, or unsuitable surfaces have made this impractical.

Autumn/Winter and early Spring make this section largely unusable for walking and cycling. Yet it is a fantastic route connecting Midlothian communities that avoids main roads and should be useable all year round.
Yes, we would like to go to Bonnyrigg but the poor condition of the unpaved path means we would prefer to take the car instead.
Would like to be able to make better use during inclement weather. The path from Roslin to Shawfair is a good surface through its whole length. The same cannot be said if the track from Rosewell to Penicuik
I do sometimes choose the car over the bike on a journey to Rosewell if it's been very wet, as it is pretty muddy and the bike just gets filthy. If I was riding for adventure, that would be fine, but I'm sometimes riding to commute, so it's not ideal to get too muddy, regularly.
Cycling or walking with friends with a pram is something I tend to avoid.

<p>It's also unsuitable for wheelchair and mobility scooter users. Even it's difficult for children to use on their scooters."</p>
<p>No, my daughter is a wheelchair user and we have no problem at all to use it.</p>
<p>I am unable to guarantee surface will allow my mobility scooter to progress along all of trail</p>
<p>Nope, I suffer from chronic pain in my legs and although it can be uncomfortable at the section I've previously mentioned it the rest is ok.</p>
<p>I work with community groups and have noted that the path is not idea for people with walking difficulties or in wheelchairs. Improving access for these groups would be a good thing.</p>
<p>I commute daily to from the Penicuik to he the School Campus in Dalkeith. I would love to use the path but as it is unsealed then the maintenance, wear, punctures, cost of replacement parts are prohibitive. Along with the time spent on fixing the bike. I would commute by bike every day along this path if it was sealed. I currently use the rest of the sealed path from Dalkeith to Rosewell and Harper's Brae to Penicuik.</p>
<p>YES. My 5 year old cannot scoot on the current surface, and even my 8 year old does not have the strength to cycle on gravel, mud, stones. There is a woodland classroom with music instruments along the walkway and we've no way of getting to it because my kids wouldn't walk that far, I can't carry them and I can't tow them with my mountain bike. With a better surface I expect we would make it to the outdoor classroom and probably all the way to the pond and park in Penicuik. The current surface is also impossible to cycle on with a road (racing bicycle) bike. Road bikes have narrow tyres which cannot ride the current surface. I'm in a cycling group of friends and a Facebook cycling group and we would not manage to organise a ride at present as there are people who only have a road bike. My daughter has roller blades and wouldn't manage on the current path.</p>

8: What sort of changes would you support to the pathway surface? Select all that apply:



Option	Total	Percent
Tarmac	235	31.50%
Flexible resin material	160	21.45%
Proposed combination of tarmac and resin-bound strips	236	31.64%
Alternative bound surface (use box below to explain)	35	4.69%
I do not support any changes to the pathway surface	296	39.68%
Other (use box below to explain)	101	13.54%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

The alternative bound surface I would choose is:

For the surface itself, the most common comments

I chose 'Other' because:

<p>Would like to allow access for horse riders to something other than tarmac as there is not many areas left without tarmac. Unsure if the resin-bound strips are meant for them or not, but I think it is very important to cater for all users including the horse riders.</p>
<p>So long as the surface is good and even across the width it should be fine for cyclists. Drainage improvements would be essential to ensure durability.</p>
<p>"My preference is to leave unchanged and resolve the drainage issues. I think the surface works well for cycling and doesn't suffer from tree root related cracking problems that happen on the Rosewell to Bonnyrigg section. This cracking actually makes the path rougher to cycle on than the current surface on the Roslin to Auchendinny section. If it must be resurfaced I'd prefer a mixed use option."</p>
<p>Tarmac is hard on the feet and knees and treacherous in winter when iced over. It would be very naive to think that it would be gritted given the state of main streets and pavements over winter.</p>
<p>"I agree that improvements for wheelchair access should be made where requested. Conversely it seems excessive (cost and proportionality) to provide soft surfacing for niche recreational user groups, and would fear it will be unusable by runners etc as it will become covered in horse poo. Horses are not ideal path sharers; dogs and bikes may startle horses, horses often intimidate cyclists and other path users due to their size. Encouraging dual/multi path use may result in increased friction and/or liability issues. Drainage and maintenance of the existing surface/s are expected to maintain the best outcome. Money should be redirected to linking the network, such as that included in Midlothian Sustainable Transport Plan for linking Auchendinny to Roslin."</p>
<p>Flexipave provides a porous surface so reduces risk of ice in the winter. It is also moderately 'springy' so is pleasant to run and walk on.</p>
<p>Yes a tarmac surface would be better for cycling using a road bike (but as I use a hybrid a rough surface doesn't cause me a problem) - tarmac is harder on feet for walking.</p>

10: The pathway will likely be closed for a period of around six weeks should surfacing be approved. The Council is keen to hear how you might be affected by the pathway closure. If you have concerns around the temporary closure, please describe them below:

Additional comments - comment box

Many respondents have indicated that they would be affected by a closure. Although a number of these respondents would be happy for to accept closures if it resulted in a better surface, there are significant concerns over the lack of alternative pathways that could serve as a diversion for users.

Respondents frequently commented that the pathway is integral to their usual routine, and that it is a key amenity for socialising and exercise.

Concerns were raised about closure times longer than the anticipated 6 week period, and that there was a risk of these closures carrying on for a much longer period.

Options should be explored to reduce the overall closure time of the pathway, and to see if additional work crews can be mobilised to reduce the impact of closure times on communities. It was also requested that works be carried out outwith the summertime peak periods. Exploring the possibilities of phased closures to ensure that as much of the pathway remains open as works are being carried out would be