

East Renfrewshire Council Response to Meanskirk Footway Widening Consultation

There were 224 responses to the consultation. The majority of the respondents (70.5%) lived within the Meanskirk Estate and nearly three quarters of respondents travel through the area on a daily basis.

The majority of respondents travelled on foot (84.4%) or/and by car (83.9%) to travel locally.

A large majority (86.2%) of users believed that the scheme was necessary and that the scheme would help people to walk for everyday journeys and to exercise.

Those who disagreed with the scheme (11.2%) stated a number of reasons for believing so. These included (in **bold**):

Investment should prioritise improvements to the roads / Investment should prioritise improvements to play areas / Investment should prioritise improvements to condition of footways

ERC response: The proposed Mearns Road footway widening will be funded from active travel funding which was applied for by ERC from the Scottish Government/Transport Scotland. This grant funding is ring fenced for active travel spending.

Existing footway is adequate

ERC response: The Council and the majority of respondents believe that the footway facility would benefit from being widened to 2m.

The scheme will negatively impact drivers

ERC response: The scheme should not have any impact on drivers since the footway is being widened to the west (into the vegetation) i.e. the existing road width will remain the same.

Footways in the area nearby are of low quality, scheme will not bring increase in usage

ERC response: As per the overwhelmingly positive response to the proposed scheme it is very likely that the scheme will increase usage of the footway. Furthermore, it will improve safety and comfort for existing users. This scheme is part of the ongoing commitment by ERC and Scottish Government to increase active travel participation and improve active travel infrastructure.

Respondents were given the opportunity to comment on anything which they would like to be considered for the proposed scheme. The most popular responses (over 10 occurrences) are summarised below with ERC responses:

Issues related to volume of road traffic and vehicle speeds.

ERC response: The council intends on surveying traffic volumes and vehicle speeds on Mearns Road this year and will give further consideration to what measures may be appropriate to address road safety issues.

Issues with safety for pedestrians between Mearnskirk and the new Co-Op store on 421 Mearns Road including issues of visibility around bends and lack of crossing facilities.

ERC response: The Council is considering options to resolve these issues.

Need to improve the fence immediately adjacent to the proposed scheme, including the condition and the aesthetics, as well as enhancements to the section of land between the fence and the properties behind.

ERC response: The railing immediately adjacent to the existing footway will be renewed on a like for like basis. The land between the fence and the properties is private land. However, the council has successfully sought a 'license to occupy' and the landowner is supportive of the footway widening scheme.

Overgrown vegetation, and how it can affect movement on the footway as well as visibility of road traffic

ERC response: Any overgrown vegetation adjacent to the footway to be widened will be addressed as part of this scheme. Any overgrown vegetation on public footways/footpaths or roads can be reported to the Council. However, it should be noted that it is commonly the responsibility of the adjacent landowner to maintain the growth emanating from their property.

Safety for pedestrians accessing educational facilities, including pupils travelling to and from the nursery or towards schools in the area. The need for suitable crossing facilities.

ERC response: The Council can assess the requirement for suitable crossing facilities on East Renfrewshire roads where issues are brought to our attention. Where funding is identified and successfully secured the council has installed new or improved existing crossing facilities. If there are any locations where residents feel there should be a new or an improved crossing facility this can be reported to the Roads Service.

Improve the footway network in the area nearby, to enhance the impact of the proposed scheme

ERC response: The Council can assess the requirement for pedestrian infrastructure on East Renfrewshire roads where issues are brought to our attention. Where funding is identified and successfully secured the council has installed new or improved existing pedestrian infrastructure. If there are any locations where residents feel there should be a new or an improved pedestrian infrastructure this can be reported to the Roads Service.

Traffic management after the scheme is delivered (included numerous comments on the undesired reduction of carriageway width)

ERC response: The scheme should not have any impact on drivers since the footway is being widened to the west (into the vegetation) i.e. the existing road width will remain the same.

Replace the existing iron railings with a suitable standard. (Comments included issues such as the poor condition of the existing elements, and the need to provide a replacement that suits the aesthetics of the historic elements.)

ERC response: The railing immediately adjacent to the existing footway will be renewed on a like for like basis.

Possibility of providing segregated cycling infrastructure.

ERC response: The Council actively seeks opportunities to provide improved cycling infrastructure including segregated cycle lanes. This is not planned on Mearns Road at this time due to the existing road width.

Condition of the road surface. This includes a preference for the Council to invest in improvements to roads, and references to the risk that this presents to cyclists.

ERC response: Mearns Road is on the road resurfacing programme.

Respondents were finally asked what should be the Council's top 3 priorities in their neighbourhood to make it easier to travel on foot or by bike. The most popular responses (over 10 occurrences) are summarised below with ERC responses:

Concerns about dangerous driving and suggested that traffic calming, or speed cameras were required. Locations mentioned included, between the Co-op and Mearnskirk Roundabout on Mearns Road, as well as on Waterfoot Road.

ERC response: The council intends on surveying traffic speeds on Mearns Road and Waterfoot Road this year. Road safety cameras (speed cameras) are installed by Safety Cameras Scotland, not the Council. For a safety camera to be considered there are specific criteria (e.g. traffic speed & volume, safety record, etc.) which need to be met.

Should be more segregated cycle lanes.

ERC response: The Council is in the early stages of developing a new Local Transport Strategy which will address all transport within East Renfrewshire and the Council's aims for the future including improving cycling infrastructure.

Safe pedestrian crossing at new Co-op was required.

ERC response: The Council is considering options in this vicinity.

Overgrown vegetation on footways/paths and stated that a priority should be to keep this vegetation cut back. Locations mentioned included around Mearns Castle and on Mearns Road.

ERC response: Any overgrown vegetation adjacent to the footway to be widened will be addressed as part of this scheme. Any overgrown vegetation on public footways/footpaths or roads can be reported to the Council. . However, it should be noted that it is commonly the responsibility of the adjacent landowner to maintain the growth emanating from their property.

Improve pedestrian crossings (e.g. more signalised crossings, quicker response times to pedestrians waiting to cross).

ERC response: The Council can assess the requirement for suitable crossing facilities on East Renfrewshire roads where issues are brought to our attention. Where funding is identified and successfully secured the council has installed new or improved existing crossing facilities. If there are any locations where residents feel there should be a new or an improved crossing facility this can be reported to the Roads Service.

An exercise to review waiting times for pedestrians at all pedestrian crossings has been undertaken by the Council and as a result pedestrian waiting times have been reduced.

Poor/lack of lighting on footpaths/ways

ERC response: Lighting in the Mearnskirk Estate has recently been replaced with improved lighting facilities. If there are any locations where residents feel there should be a new or improved lighting infrastructure this can be reported to the Roads department.

East Renfrewshire Council Statement

After reviewing the consultation responses the Council is satisfied that there is substantial public support for the footway widening scheme (over 86% of respondents supported the scheme) and therefore will progress with the scheme.

The Council will also:

- Survey traffic volumes and vehicle speeds on Mearns Road this year and will give further consideration to what measures may be appropriate to address road safety issues*
- Consider options for enhanced pedestrian facilities in the vicinity of the Co-op*
- Address any overgrown vegetation adjacent to the footway scheme*
- Renew the railing immediately adjacent to the existing footway on a like for like basis.*
- Resurface Mearns Road. (It is on the road resurfacing programme)*
- Continue to develop a new Local Transport Strategy which will address all transport within East Renfrewshire and the Council's aims for the future including improving pedestrian and cycling infrastructure*