

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 12th February 2026

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director Environment and Regeneration

PORTFOLIO: Environment and Urban Renewal

SUBJECT: Albert Road (North) Pedestrianisation Scheme

WARD(S) Appleton

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 Approval is sought to commence the pedestrianisation scheme along a section of Albert Road (north) between Deacon Road / Bradley Way and Robert Street in Widnes.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Board

- 1. approves the Albert Road (north) pedestrianisation scheme for delivery, as set out in this report and shown on the plan in Appendix A; and**
- 2. delegates the requisite powers to the Director Planning and Transport, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Environment and Urban Renewal, to deal with any matters relating to the delivery of this scheme**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Scheme

By providing more space through environmental improvements, and excluding traffic through pedestrianisation, this scheme will improve safety and amenity and encourage pedestrian movements along Albert Road between Deacon Road / Bradley Way and Robert Street.

- 3.2 All traffic, including buses, is to be diverted by using Robert Street instead of this section of Albert Road.

3.3 Approvals

Initial discussion of this scheme was undertaken with Members in early 2023 as local ward councillors were keen to see the area pedestrianised, having spoken to the local businesses affected.

- 3.4 This scheme was then highlighted (under ATF4 which stands for Active Travel Fund 4) in an update on transport projects (within

Appendix 2 of that report under 'sustainable travel schemes' considered by both the EUR PPB in June 2023, and at Executive Board in July 2023.

3.5 The Council has recently received additional funding (ATF5) which will allow the full pedestrianisation of this section of Albert Road to be achieved. ATF5 funding was reported to the last Executive Board (15 January 2026).

3.6 Now this scheme is fully worked up and has funding allocated, it is presented to Executive Board to approve the delivery phase.

3.7 **Consultations**

Site meetings have been held with local ward councillors to determine the appropriate options for this section of Albert Road between Deacon Rd / Bradley Way and Robert Street. The preferred option is to create a pedestrian only space by filling in the carriageway to make a level surface across the width of the street with no kerbs.

3.8 Local Councillors canvassed early views from businesses and residents and there was positive public support for the scheme. A further round of consultation was done via letter to the affected properties in September 2025. No negative feedback was received.

3.9 Consultation was undertaken with bus and taxi operators, and all the early objections to the scheme have been overcome by adapting the scheme. Specifically, these scheme refinements ensure that buses can utilise Robert Street to access a new bus stop, and the taxi rank outside Wetherspoons will be made permanent to provide a 24hr location for the taxis.

3.10 A Pedestrianisation Order has also come to the end of its advertising period in December 2025 with no objections received.

3.11 There is now a high level of support for the scheme from Members, businesses, residents, and transport providers.

3.12 **Scheme Advantages**

The scheme will generate synergy with the wider town centre by drawing shoppers up Albert Road. Food and drink establishments will be enabled to provide outside on-street seating (via a table & chair licence) for customers in the new space created. Pedestrianisation will make the local environment safer for shoppers and those with mobility issues, together with young people. It will also reduce noise and enhance local air quality in this section of Albert Road.

3.13 **Scheme Disadvantages**

The disadvantages of the scheme include the removal of parking

options immediately outside the businesses on this section of Albert Road. The existing bus stop on Albert Road will require relocation to just beyond the junction. The scheme will also require a short diversion of traffic along Robert Street.

- 3.14 It is considered that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This scheme conforms with the policy directions given in the Corporate Plan, Local Plan, and Local Transport Plan 3.

- 4.2 These policies encourage:

- Improving the vitality and vibrancy of town centres.
- Providing active travel routes for health and well-being benefits.
- Enabling modal shift to lower carbon modes of transport.
- Reducing congestion and improving local air quality.

- 4.3 The wider context and funding for this scheme relates to the funding provided to local authorities from Active Travel England and the Department for Transport. The ATF (Active Travel Fund) supports local transport authorities with developing and constructing walking and cycling facilities. This funding has been allocated in five tranches over the years since Covid. ATF1 was for temporary measures as lock down ended to combat the lack of public transport capacity. Halton has sought to spend its allocations to extend the sustainable travel network that permeates the borough and connects into the wider network, such as the Trans-Pennine Trail. The extent of Halton network is set out in Halton's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). This LCWIP conforms with the wider LCR LCWIP.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This scheme is to be funded through capital funding arrangements via the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA).

- 5.2 North Albert Road pedestrian improvements are funded through a grant from Active Travel Fund 5, and a roll-forward of Active Travel Fund 4.

- 5.3 A condition of this funding is that it must be spent by March 2027, so time is of the essence as the build phase is likely to take six months.

- 5.4 These capital grant funding allocations have no requirement for HBC match funding, which is a considerable benefit.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence

A well maintained highway network ensures that the public can travel quickly and easily around the Borough and beyond. The construction of active travel links enables a healthy choice for the public when determining travel options, not only for commuting to work and school, but also for leisure.

6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy

Access to opportunity is an important factor. Active travel provides low cost transport options to link the workforce to jobs and amenities, and this in turn supports the local economy.

6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families

Active travel encourages children to take part in exercise. Traffic free streets in the town centre are safer for children and young people to use.

6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need

Well maintained highways ensure that the public can travel quickly and easily on the highway network. Cycle routes give those on low incomes viable safe and commodious options to travel for work.

6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future

Active travel in all its forms supports a greener future by reducing mechanised transport miles and their carbon footprint.

6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community

None identified.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The key risk is loss of grant. Funding must be spent by March 2027.

7.2 The scheme will take approximately six months to deliver. Failure to approve this scheme expediently will mean the grant expenditure will be lost, and this in turn puts the scheme at risk, as there is no funding for this scheme besides the grant funding on offer.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The scheme will provide equality and diversity enhancements through providing a safer and more navigable environment for those using mobility aids or who are partially sighted. This is achieved by providing more space for movement, the removal of dropped kerbs, and the exclusion of motorised traffic.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 This scheme aims to improve low carbon and low cost travel choices, together with connectivity into the wider active travel network.

9.2 Where possible, the Council and its contractors aim to use lower carbon content materials (an example is the use of warm mix asphalt rather than hot mix, which reduces carbon emissions). Similarly proprietary materials can be specified that have been independently evaluated as low carbon or carbon neutral.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Funding letter for Active Travel Fund Grant Award 5

PPB Report - [Transport Infrastructure Update.pdf](#)

Exec Board Report - [Transport Infrastructure Update.pdf](#)