



Dear Sir / Madam,

Objection to the Position of the Gershwin Boulevard Bridge

I just wanted to take this opportunity to raise my objection to the creation of the proposed Gershwin Boulevard footbridge which will span the A12 at Witham from the green space near Olivers Drive / Halfacres on the north side, to a field on the south side.

The proposed footbridge appears to have been situated to almost exactly reinstate a footpath which was, to all intents and purposes, blocked in the 1960's when the Witham bypass part of the A12 was built, and I have a number of problems with the proposal.

Firstly, do we need it or is this merely an exercise to place a tick in the "reinstate footpath" box? Are you really going to spend hundreds of thousands of pounds building a bridge to recreate a footpath that no one has used for 60 plus years or is there public appetite for that kind of spend? There is a well established legal process for removing or adjusting the route of public rights of way (which I understand this path has already been subject to some years ago) and I have no doubt that those options would run to considerably less than the cost of a brand new footbridge.

Secondly, to build a footbridge in the location proposed, you'd be ruining a beautiful green space enjoyed by people from all over Witham; it is regularly frequented by dog walkers and families with children alike who feel comfortable with it being shielded from the A12. To build the footbridge will require the removal of a considerable number of mature trees which separate the green space and the residential properties that adjoin it from direct exposure to the traffic on the A12. Not only will this provide direct line of sight and access to traffic, the "Environmental Scoping Report TR010060" produced by Highways England 21/10/20, already stipulates that part of this green space falls into a designated "Noise Important Area" (NIA) (figure 12.1 page 352 of 569.) Ripping out trees at the west end of the green space to accommodate the bridge will massively affect the NIA at the east end every bit as much, as the trees are the only things providing any sort of noise and pollution protection. Removing the trees to accommodate this structure is wholly unfair on the residents when attempts should be being made to decrease resident's exposure to noise and pollution levels, not wilfully removing what little protection they have.

Thirdly, due to the visual damage, the increased pollution, the increased noise, the loss of current amenity, there will no doubt be a negative impact to house prices. This, (and the plethora of "blight" claims that would no doubt ensue,) is wholly avoidable.

If it is found that there is actually justification for spending a huge amount of money on building a bridge to a field on the south side of the A12, moving the proposed location of the Gershwin Boulevard bridge 100 meters west so that it is in Gershwin Boulevard and not in a cul-de-sac in a quiet residential street would eliminate the need to interfere with a "Noise Important Area" and ruin a beautiful space currently enclosed on 3 sides. Furthermore, the bridge would then be placed on a

wide spine road which was purpose built to carry additional traffic and footfall prior to its residential development.

Best wishes,

Martin Woodgate.