

Bradwell Dingle Report

Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council

September 2025

Prepared for:
Landscape and Community Team
Neighbourhood Delivery
Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council
Staffordshire

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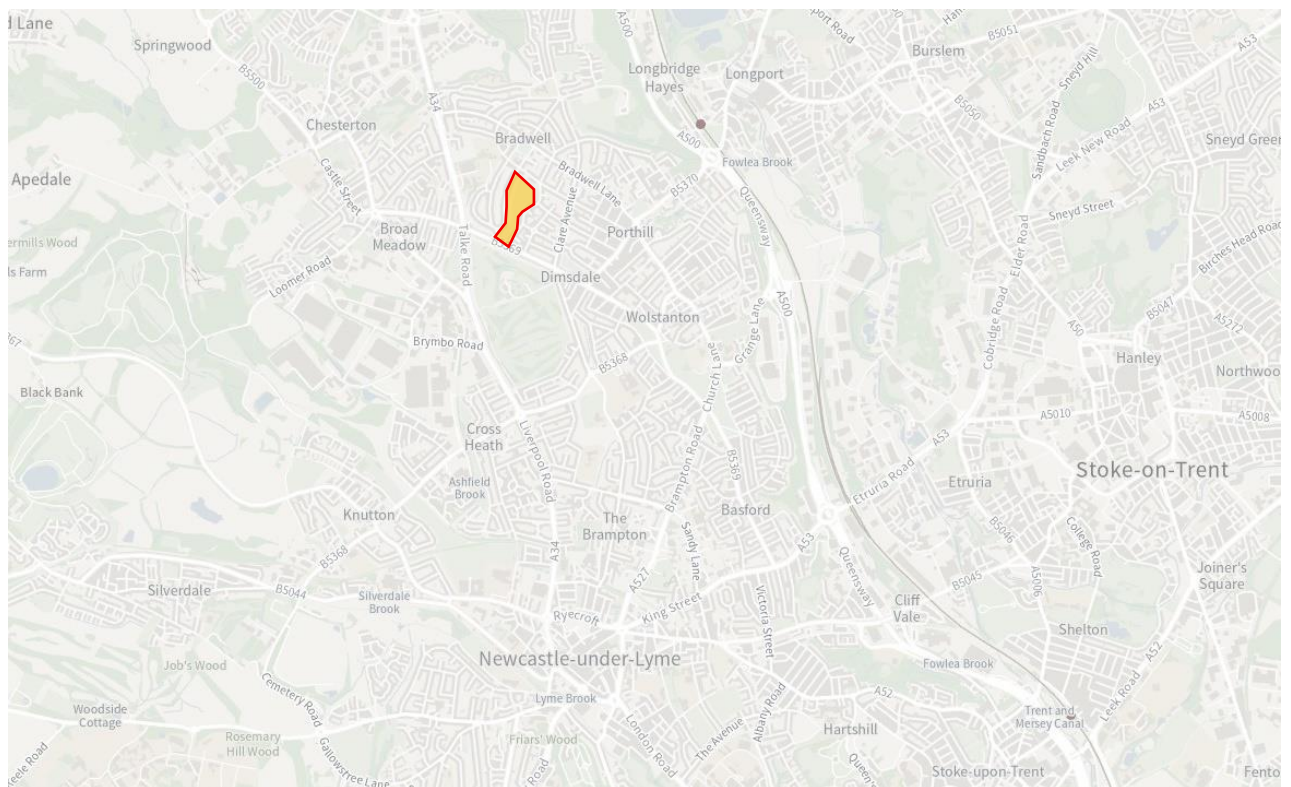
Introduction

Project Context

Awscape Ltd, were commissioned by Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council (NuLBC) to deliver a masterplan for Bradwell Dingle. From an existing draft masterplan produced by NuLBC, Awscape were asked to develop the draft masterplan through further consultation into a scheme that can be built and will suit the needs of the community. The project focuses on improvements to existing facilities as well as creation of new features. Elements that received support in the first consultation included: - Community Garden, Improvements to the entrances, Skate Park, MUGA improvements, New Play equipment, CCTV, Kickabout improvements, outdoor gym equipment and other play facilities.

The Site

The site is Bradwell Dingle, which is in the ward of Bradwell, within the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire.



Purpose of the Report

This report summarises the work undertaken to date to progress the design and enable construction. It also reflects on the feedback from the public consultation carried out by Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council between July and September 2025.

Project Background

Following the removal of the skate park, requests from ward members and the Friends of Bradwell Dingle lead to a draft masterplan being produced and a consultation being held. This identified the need to make improvements to the park. Since the consultation was held funding has been secured / received via S106 to enable the implementation of the project.

Project Aims

- To provide facilities within Bradwell Dingle that are suitable for all ages and abilities.
- To increase the usage of Bradwell Dingle, which in turn will increase footfall within the site and decrease anti-social behavior.
- To provide an open space that feels safe and welcoming.

Consultation

Consultation Overview

Between 16th July and 14th September 2025, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council asked people for their views on proposed improvements to Bradwell Dingle. This involved an on-site consultation carried out by Awscape Ltd followed by an online consultation. The finalised consultation report can be found in Appendix A.

General Feedback

In total 126 people gave feedback on the proposals.

- 89% of those who responded live in Bradwell. Others live local to the area.
- 43% of those who responded use the park on a daily basis with 27% on a weekly basis.
- 67% of those who responded used the park for walking the dog, with 50% saying they use it for walking and exercise and 49% saying they use the play area.
- On accessibility 81% of respondents said they found it easy to access. One in six (16 %) did not, stating gates are hard to open and access with pushchairs, gates not wheelchair friendly, paths and surfacing uneven.
- 72% would like to see a new wheeled area with 77% opting for a pump track.
- 84% of those who responded would like to see outdoor gym equipment.
- 81% of those who responded would like to see a community garden.
- 98% of those who responded would like to see new benches.
- 84% of those who responded said they would like to see the community more involved in the park through organized projects.

People felt most positive about:

- Changes to the park and facilities.
- People being involved in the park and respecting the park.
- A community space.

For people who felt negative, the reasons were:

- Anti-social behaviour and vandalism will continue.
- Motorbikes accessing the park.

Vision and Objectives

The vision is to create a space for all members of the community, a space to feel safe and welcoming. Although people use the park, some on a daily basis, the lack of quality facilities, anti-social behaviour and the general lack of things to do mean that some people are not visiting Bradwell Dingle. We have heard of people being intimidated, feeling unsafe and therefore not wanting to go to Bradwell Dingle. Motorbikes and electric bikes are a concern, and for some extremely worrying. We are firm believers that improvements to parks and open spaces will increase footfall and time spent in these spaces, which in turn increases surveillance and decreases vandalism and anti-social behaviour. We do not expect all problems to go away, and it may take time, but with better facilities, more people using the space and taking ownership of it, we believe that Bradwell Dingle could become a space for the community to be proud of.

The key drivers which will inform the proposals include:

- Replacement of the removed skatepark with a tarmac surfaced pumptrack that is suitable for all age groups and abilities, is robust in construction, low in maintenance and as far as possible, less likely to be subject to vandalism.
- Removal of the sheltered seating, replacing with layered open stone / concrete seating.
- Replacement of the play area, which is outdated, with a new and larger play area for all ages and abilities, to be inclusive, robust and a focal point of Bradwell Dingle.
- Creating easier access for those with pushchairs, wheelchairs, electric disability scooters by removing the gates, and replacing them with open access and large bollard / monoliths displaying the name of the park. This will prevent vehicular access but will not stop motorbikes. Through research it has become clear that other forms of barriers such as gates, chicanes, kissing gates, A Frame, or K Frame barriers do not prevent motorbikes but do create barriers for pedestrians, wheelchair users, the elderly, people with disabilities and cyclists. Wheels for Wellbeing guide to inaccessible barriers and

[\(Installing\) barriers to active travel – Cycle Sheffield](#) (See such reports in Appendix B).

The exception to this will be retaining and renovating the existing gate on Oakdene Avenue where access is straight onto the road.

- The development of a Community Garden. This will be subject to a committee being formed to oversee the group, safety guidelines, public liability insurance, lease agreements etc.
- Repairs and maintenance to improve surveillance and safety for users through lighting repairs (NuLBC to undertake), lifting of tree branches to create better sight lines through the park, clearing of scrub to remove intimidating areas especially at the entrance adjacent to Oakdene Avenue and Cauldon Avenue.
- Installation of new vandal resistant benches with backrests to replace the damaged and degraded existing benches. Installation of two concrete picnic benches.
- Installation of new outdoor exercise area with equipment for cardio and strength workouts.
- Introduction of concrete table tennis table.
- Area for nature play, wildflowers and biodiversity.

Proposals

General Arrangement

Plan of new elements to create new opportunities within Bradwell Dingle.



Play Area



Examples only



The play area will be a design and build tender based on the feedback from the consultation including the following information.

- Space for children to run around equipment
- Subtle/natural rubber safety surfaces and play equipment were favoured over brighter colours.
- Top four activity types in a toddler play space:
 - Sliding

- Swinging
 - Discovering
 - Climbing
- For junior play space, climbing and swinging was by far the most popular
 - For teen play areas, social interaction, climbing, and swinging are the most popular choices.

Pump Track



Examples only

The pump track will be a design and build tender, set within the area of the previous skate ramps. Pump Tracks can be used by all ages, with scooters, BMX bikes, skates and skateboards. Any design would be worked with local users in mind. Pump Track developers are specialists in their field and will design to budget and outcomes needed. An opening day with mini competitions are normally held by companies to encourage users to take pride in the new facilities.

Removal of Shelter Seating

The existing shelter seating has been a place for teens to hang out which has led to problems within the park. This should be replaced with concrete or boulder seating which is robust and fairly vandal proof. It would be a good place for teens, girls and those using the pump track to hang out. The consultation showed that girls like seating that allows them to face each other but also see around them, such as stone / boulders and platform type seating.





Examples only

Outdoor Fitness Equipment



Examples only



There was a good response to an outdoor exercise area. Development of an exercise area will be included within the play area tender as companies supply and install both types of equipment. All exercise equipment to be metal to ensure longevity. Bar and calisthenic type of equipment is easier to maintain than cross trainers and exercise bikes, though there was a high response for Cardio equipment.

Table Tennis Table



Examples only



Almost two-thirds (63 per cent) of respondents said they would like to see table tennis tables with 37 per cent saying they would not. Outdoor tables are concrete in construction.

Seating



Examples only

Seating is necessary for those with mobility issues, and those who just want to sit and rest. New seating will replace the existing seating and be located in areas that are open to views, and not under trees. The seating will sit on tarmac pads ensuring they are always free of vegetation and therefore easier to maintain. Seating would be powder-coated metal and ground fixed to prevent movement. Concrete picnic benches are more sustainable in areas where vandalism is an issue. They are robust and cost effective to maintain.

Natural Play and Biodiversity Enhancements



Examples only

There was a good response from the community for more flowers and natural spaces. There is a chance to increase biodiversity through planting and management. The creation of a natural play area for smaller children would allow them to explore and discover bugs and insects amongst the wildflowers and trees. It was also mentioned by teen girls as a place that they would enjoy.

Access

Although the majority of people have no problem accessing Bradwell Dingle, it was a question we wanted to ask as it's quite often overlooked. We understand that kissing style gates have been installed to prevent motorbikes entering the park, but these style gates hinder access for people in wheelchairs, with pushchairs or with mobility scooters. The Radar key gate is heavy and awkward to use, especially if you are in a wheelchair, and for this reason it is often unlocked and left open. Whether there are gates or not motorbikes are still able to access the park due to the low rail that acts as a boundary. With this in mind and with the research

previously mentioned (Appendix B), we propose to remove the gates (with the exception of the gate on Oakdene Avenue and the maintenance gates), and replace them with bollards that also provide welcome signs to Bradwell Dingle. We need to make the park part of the community, it needs ownership and be accessible to all able and non-able bodied residents.

Entrance ideas



Examples only. The posts would act as bollards and be to scale.

Next Stage

Following the feedback from the consultation Awscape will prepare for the execution of all the elements that are required to complete the project. A programme is included within the Appendix A. This may be subject to change.

Detailed Design and Tender Documentation

The production of detailed design drawings and specifications will be produced that include general arrangement plans, plant specifications, material specifications, and street furniture.

There will be three tenders as follows:

- Tender for the design and build of the pump track
- Tender for the design and build of the play area
- Tender for the remaining works such as seating, railings painting, and general landscape works.

The drawings and specifications will be combined to form part of the tender package to enable Newcastle - Under - Lyme Borough Council to procure the works.

The tender period is currently scheduled to run following the 4th November cabinet meeting, with works proposed to start early 2026.

Further Public Engagement

A 'you said, we did' exercise will be undertaken to show the finalised plans to the public and explain how the design team have incorporated feedback from the previous stage of consultation into the schemes to create their future spaces.

Procurement

Newcastle - Under - Lyme Borough Council will lead on the procurement of the contract and appoint the nominated contractor to undertake the construction works.

Appendix A

Bradwell Dingle Programme

	May-25					Jun-25					Jul-24		Aug-25			Sep-25			Oct-25			Nov-25			Dec-25			Jan-26			Feb-26			Mar-26			Apr-26			May-26																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
This programme is for guidelines only . Projects will depend on prioritising work and lead times. Due to May start project works will potentially run over to May 26.	BH				BH							Consult	SH	SH	SH	SH	SH	SH																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																							</

- Bank Holidays
- School summer Holidays

Appendix B

Wheels for Wellbeing Guide to Inaccessible Barriers

Access barriers prevent legitimate use:

- Many access barriers are impassable for many cycles, mobility scooters, wheelchairs and Disabled pedestrians.
- Many Disabled people are unable to open gates independently.
- Low path use due to barriers makes spaces too secluded and intimidating for many more legitimate users.

Access barriers don't prevent illegitimate use:

- West Midlands police confirmed to Sustrans in 2023 that there is "No evidence to show that the [motorcycle barriers] reduce ASB/ illegal bikes." See also: <https://youtu.be/tJmvtMaLDyo>
- Access barriers create focal points for antisocial behaviour including harassment and vandalism.
- Illegitimate users are attracted to places with low usage.

How to make barrier-free, inclusive, safer places:

Making a place feel welcoming to everyone will encourage regular use by a wide range of people. This will make it safer.

Quick, simple ways to do this include:

- Removing all access barriers, so everyone has easy access to the space;
- Providing amenities that encourage legitimate community use of the area, including well-designed seating;
- Improving natural or passive surveillance by:
 - o Removing unnecessary signs and fencing;
 - o Cutting vegetation back from paths;
 - o Encouraging building owners and developers to build homes and businesses which overlook and are open onto green spaces;
 - o Improving lighting, in some situations.
- Supporting positive use with community education campaigns e.g. signage made by local children.

It's best to have no access barriers at all. But if cars or vans often drive illegally on a traffic-free space and other measures like education, CCTV and in-person enforcement aren't working, then bollards spaced with 1.5m minimum air gaps between them can be used to prevent harm to people and the environment.

Barrier examples 1:



Motorcycle restriction A and K frames don't stop motorbikes- but they do stop legitimate users



All gates, including RADAR gates, are inaccessible.



Most pedestrian and cycle accesses don't need any barriers

Legal & guidance position on access barriers:

Equality Act (2010):

These duties are anticipatory: All reasonable adjustments to make a space equitably accessible for Disabled people legally must be taken without any Disabled person having to ask for them.

Section 20: Requires those responsible for a space to anticipate and make reasonable adjustments to enable Disabled people access with no substantial disadvantage compared to non-Disabled people. This explicitly includes altering and removing physical features which would otherwise exclude Disabled people.

It is not permitted to require a Disabled person to go a longer way around, ask for assistance or traverse a space much more slowly than a non-Disabled person would have to due to a physical barrier that could be removed.

Section 149 Public Sector Equality Duty: Requires public authorities to advance equality of opportunity for all people with protected characteristics, including Disabled people.

This goes beyond removing and minimising disadvantages, and additionally includes taking steps to promote equality by actively enabling Disabled people to participate in public life and activities, especially where Disabled participation is disproportionately low (e.g. active travel).

Cycle Infrastructure Design LTN 1/20:

Section 1.6 summary principle 16: "Access control measures... should not be used. They reduce the usability of a route for everyone, and may exclude people riding nonstandard cycles and cargo bikes. They reduce the capacity of a route as well as the directness and comfort. Schemes should not be designed in such a way that access controls, obstructions and barriers are even necessary".

Barrier examples 2:



Chicanes are impassable for many people. They also create focal points for antisocial behaviour and littering (photo credit Hardy Saleh).



Before: An inaccessible kissing gate



During access improvement works: Gate replaced with bollard

References/Further reading/Resources:

1. Equality Act (2010): <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
2. LTN 1/20 Cycle infrastructure design: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120>
3. Wheels for Wellbeing Guide to Inclusive Cycling (4th edition, 2020): <https://wheelsforwellbeing.org.uk/campaigning/guide/>

(Installing) barriers to active travel

4 January 2017



Sheffield Council install access barriers on some cycle paths. The intention is usually to prevent motorised vehicles accessing the path.

Older barriers tend to be 'chicane' style or 'A' frames, while newer ones are 'K' frame style (below).

The photo above shows how 'easy' it is, from the website of manufacturers of K-barriers (Sheffield City Council's preferred barrier supplier). Plenty of people and types of cycle can't do this maneuver.

What's the problem?

They're inconvenient for everyone

Even if you are physically *able* to get through them, any kind of barrier is a cause of inconvenience, making a walking or cycling journey less convenient and appealing. They are especially awkward and can be frustrating for people with pushchairs, shopping trolleys, crutches, walking sticks/frames, or holding children's hands. This discriminates against more vulnerable people and isn't what Sheffield needs when we are aiming to increase the amount of physical activity people do daily.

They're impassable for some people

Narrow barriers are obviously obstructive to people cycling who are less physically able to lift and squeeze their handlebars through the gap.

Both chicane-type and K-type barriers can [prevent use of paths](#) completely for users of larger and less nimble cycles like tandems, some recumbents, various trikes often used by disabled cyclists, and cargo bikes. They also create access issues for wheelchair users, mobility scooter users and people with prams and pushchairs.

barrier



Sheffield's university roundabout - can you avoid it when cycling?



They don't work

The barriers are [not effective](#) at preventing motorbikes and mopeds from accessing cycle paths. The new barriers on the Thoresby Road path (fitted in 2016) can be [easily bypassed](#) (also see photo at the top, showing the only way to get a cargo bike, which was funded by SCC, past the barrier) and so appear to have been a token gesture rather than a serious attempt to prevent motor vehicles from accessing the path.

They're a waste of money

New barriers [cost around £5000](#). Given the council's limited budget for cycling improvements we would much rather this money was spent on better provision to allow more people to cycle rather than making cycle paths less accessible.

They may be illegal

There hasn't yet been a test case to set a clear legal precedent, but it is possible barriers like these could be breaking the [Equality Act 2010](#).

Alternatives

A better design of barrier?

We know of no design in the world which could do the job. Since motorcycles and various types of pedal cycles have similar dimensions, motorcycles cannot be physically prevented without also preventing legitimate cycle users (and inconveniencing everyone).

The [London Cycle Design Standards](#) (see page 73), recognised as the highest quality standards in the UK, recommends against the use of all barriers, because of the accessibility issues they create.

The [latest cycle design guidance for Highways England](#) (who are responsible for trunk routes, and cycleways associated with them) goes further and requires that barriers, specifically K type barriers as favoured by Sheffield Council, shall not be used (paragraph 2.3.8):

2.3.8. Barriers to prevent motor traffic access to a cycle route

In most cases, a single bollard (reference Figure 2.3.8) is sufficient to prevent motor traffic from entering routes for cycle traffic. The gap between posts and other physical constraints shall be no less than 1.5m so as to prevent access by cars while retaining access by cycles. Bollards shall be aligned in such a way that enables a cycle design vehicle to approach them in a straight alignment.

A frame and K Frame type barriers, often used to prevent motorcycle access, shall not be used on cycle routes because they cannot be negotiated by the cycle design vehicle.

When designing the positioning of bollards, access for maintenance shall be agreed with the maintaining agent.

Bollards

Bollards with a 1.5m gap are the simplest way of preventing access by cars and other larger vehicles. They do not prevent motorbikes, mopeds etc from accessing the paths, however, it is clear that neither do barriers.

Enforcement

It is illegal to ride motorised bikes, scooters etc on cycle paths and if this is a regular problem then this should be addressed by South Yorkshire Police. There are powers available to seize vehicles, which are used in other areas.

You should report anti-social behaviour to the police on 101 or [online](#).



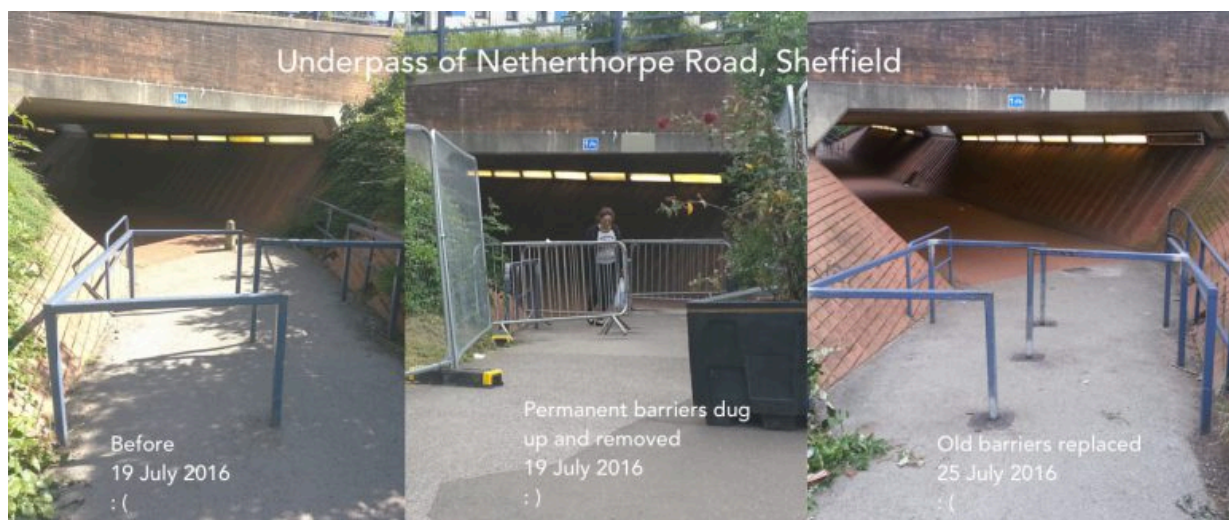
Greater Manchester Police using Section 59 powers to enforce against illegal vehicle use

Campaigning for the removal of barriers

We have raised the issue with council officers, and Sheffield Council's cycle champion Councillor [Steve Wilson](#).

The only suggestion from the council has been that they could consider replacing chicanes with K barriers, despite the accessibility problems which these still cause.

They get knocked down...



The chicane barriers at both the underpass by Netherthorpe tram stop, and on a bridge over Mosborough, were removed this year by Sheffield council contractors. This was to improve pedestrian flow for

the Tramlines festival for the former, and to allow resurfacing of the path for the latter. We asked the council not to replace them afterwards, but they did.

We have collected the locations of some known barriers on a [map](#). Sustrans volunteers for the Trans Peninne Trail have also made [a map showing the barriers](#) along this route.

Please get in touch if you know of others we've missed, and share your experiences.

Finally...

Sometimes they just don't make sense.



It appears that Sheffield City Council are so keen on the K barrier brand that they are encouraging developers to fit them to paths by default. This saves the council from paying for them later, but means they're placed without any existence of motorbike issues... or apparently much understanding of what the barrier is even meant to do!

featured

[Why isn't there secure cycle parking at Park Hill flats?](#)

[Sheffield Council approve Tram / Cycle Safety Action Plan](#)

23 thoughts on “(Installing) barriers to active travel”