

Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:
Preston City, Preston
Central South, and Preston
South East

Conversion of Footway to Cycle Track
A6 London Road between Frenchwood Avenue and North Road, Preston
(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

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Executive Summary

As part of the on-going Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) works, it is proposed to change a footway into a shared use cycle track for pedestrians and cyclists along A6 London Road between Frenchwood Avenue and North Road, Preston.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the provisions of Standing Order No. 25 have been complied with.

Recommendation

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport is asked to give approval to the:

- i. conversion from a footway to a shared use cycle track with a right of way for pedestrians, along London Road between Frenchwood Avenue and North Road, Preston. Works considered appropriate to construct the cycleway to enable cyclists to be safely accommodated, as set out in the report and shown on the plan attached at Appendix 'A', and
- ii. relocation of the existing bus shelter between the two Moore Street junctions a further 1.5m away from the existing kerb edge to make sufficient space to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists, as set out in the report and shown on the plan attached at Appendix 'B'.

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| <p>iii. the dedication of adjoining land in the ownership of the County Council and the taking of dedication from the City Council of adjoining land as a widening of the A6 highway should it be required for the cycletrack as set out in the report and shown on the plan attached at Appendix A</p> |
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Background and Advice

The County Council has developed proposals to improve cycle routes from the south of Preston into the city centre and Cardinal Newman College. At present these cycle routes are poor.

The proposed scheme links to the Puffin crossing upgrade schemes at Albyn Street East and James Street. The cycletrack will be constructed to a width of 3 metres by extending the existing footway into the verge as part of the scheme. The width of the existing carriageway will not be reduced.

The verge along the full length is owned by either the County Council or Preston City Council. Both the County Council and Preston City Council are in full support of the scheme and have indicated their willingness to dedicate the land. The City Council also maintain the bus shelter and are content with its relocation as detailed in the report.

The conversion would not jeopardise the safety of pedestrians as the shared space would be sufficiently wide to safely provide a route for both pedestrians and cyclists.

Should the scheme be approved it could ultimately link to other improvements for cyclists currently being considered.

At its meeting on 8th September 2014, the Preston Three Tier Forum acknowledged that much had been done to encourage recreational cycling in Preston. It was suggested that more work was required to establish safe, dedicated routes into the city and to provide suitable storage facilities. It was noted that a number of local employers actively encouraged cycling and provided facilities to cyclists and it would be important to research this to ensure a joined up approach. This scheme forms part of that approach.

Consultations

The following have been consulted regarding the proposals:

- The County Councillors for Preston City, Preston Central South and Preston South East,
- Local District Councillors representing the Town Centre Ward, St Matthews Ward, St Georges Ward and Fishwick Ward,
- Lancashire Constabulary,
- Local Residents and Businesses with properties fronting onto the shared use space,
- Local Residents with properties affected by the bus stop relocation between the two Moore Street Junctions,
- Local Cycle Representatives.
- Local Bus Operators

The following comments have been received:

Route in General

Local cycle representatives have carried out an audit of the proposed route. The proposed scheme scored 34/50. This high score was largely due to the fact it runs alongside the A6 arterial route into Preston and it is off-road, so scores well in both Safety and Directness.

Conversion of footway to Cycletrack

A local resident with a frontage onto the proposed shared space has stated that the shared use space is a wonderful idea to help promote the environmentally friendly mode of transport that is cycling. She supports the scheme and would like to see more in Preston.

Relocation of Bus Shelter

The Operations Manager at Preston Bus strongly objects to the shared use footway as he said that one of his staff members was off work for 9 months following a collision with a cyclist travelling at speed on a shared use footway. If the scheme must go ahead he would prefer a separate cycleway around the back of the bus shelter to reduce the potential for conflict with bus passengers, although he still feels any shared use space is potentially unsafe.

A local resident with property situated behind the bus shelter has stated that his preferred option is relocating the bus shelter back 1.5m with the shared use in front.

Another local resident with property situated behind the bus shelter has stated that she has no objection to either relocating the bus shelter or taking the cycle track around the back of the existing shelter. She did raise concerns that taking the cycle track around the back of the existing shelter would require the trees and vegetation to be removed and would like a fence or other screen put up in place to prevent easy access to the properties. She also said that some of the other residents had told her they would prefer the vegetation left as is.

Comments on the matters raised by consultees

In addition to the consultation carried out it should be noted that the bus shelter was originally sited at the front of the footway but was demolished by a road traffic collision in 2012 and a new bus shelter was installed at its current location.

Three main options have been considered in the location of the bus shelter.

1. Relocate the bus shelter a further 1.5m away from the road. Install a small retaining wall behind the shelter to support the toe of the embankment.
2. Relocate the bus shelter to the front of the footway and widen the footway behind the relocated shelter to 3.0m.
3. Leave the bus shelter in its current location and split the footway in two so that the area in front of the shelter is pedestrian only and the area behind the shelter cyclists only. In order to accommodate sufficient space behind the

shelter a large area of the grass embankment will have to be removed and a large retaining wall installed.

The preferred option following consultation and taking into account the cost differential between the options is Option 1

As no objections were received from the residents most affected by the change, it is proposed to relocate the bus shelter a further 1.5m away from the edge of the footway.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Currently cyclists are required to use the road which at peak travel times is busy and potentially hazardous to cyclists. The route is a principal means of access to and from the city centre and Cardinal Newman College.

Since the start of 2009 there have been two accidents involving vehicles clipping cyclists when overtaking them. The route is heavily used by buses so the shared use path would reduce the chance of an accident involving a bus pulling out from a bus stop and a cyclist trying to overtake the bus.

The safety of pedestrians may be jeopardised if cyclists use the footway without the proper remedial measures in place. These remedial measures include widening the footway to 3m, surface markings, removal or relocation of street furniture and appropriate signing as set out in Local Transport Note 1/12: Shared Use Routes for Pedestrians and Cyclists.

It is considered that a 3 metre shared use cycle track provides sufficient room for all users of the track in both directions.

A stage 2 safety audit has been undertaken and the recommendations from this have been incorporated in the final scheme.

As stated above, local cycle representatives have carried out an audit of the proposed route and the scheme scored well in terms of both safety and directness.

Financial

The overall scheme cost is estimated at £90,000 and would be met from the LSTF. The breakdown of costs is shown below:

Conversion of footway to Cycletrack

The footway will require widening to 3 metres. As a result there would be more room for cyclists and pedestrians to safely share the path. Signing and markings would be required if the conversion to a shared use cycle track is approved. The improvements to the footway required have an estimated cost of £75,000 which would be met from the LSTF.

Relocation of the Bus Shelter

Three main options have been considered in the location of the bus shelter.

- 1) Relocate the bus shelter a further 1.5m away from the road. Install a small retaining wall behind the shelter to support the toe of the embankment. Cost estimate £15,000.
- 2) Relocate the bus shelter to the front of the footway and widen the footway behind the relocated shelter to 3.0m. Cost estimate £15,000.
- 3) Leave the bus shelter in its current location and split the footway in two so that the area in front of the shelter is pedestrian only and the area behind the shelter cyclists only. In order to accommodate sufficient space behind the shelter a large area of the grass embankment will have to be removed and a large retaining wall installed. Cost estimate £75,000.

The preferred option following consultation and taking into account the cost differential between the options is Option 1 which has an estimated cost of £15,000 to be met from the LSTF.

Legal

The legal procedure to convert a footway to a shared use cycle track is under Section 66 of the Highways Act 1980, to remove the footway and under Section 65 to create a shared use cycle track, although this may involve little actual physical work. A width of 3metres is considered reasonable and is achievable in this matter with the new dedications proposed.

Under Section 66 the Highway Authority is under a duty to provide proper and sufficient footways for use on foot only by the made-up carriageways where it is considered necessary or desirable for the safety or accommodation of pedestrians.

Such footways can be removed under the Highways Act provisions and this may be appropriate where a discrete footway is no longer necessary and a cycle track will provide a safe shared use area for pedestrians.

In respects of bus shelters, under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1953 the County Council may provide and maintain in any highway which is comprised in the route of public service vehicles, or on any land abutting on such a highway, shelters or other accommodation at stopping places on the route for the use of persons intending to travel on such vehicles.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
Local Transport Note 1/12	Sep 2012	Department for Transport

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A.