

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 8 March 2018

Report of the Head of Service Design & Construction

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
Skelmersdale West

Conversion of Footway to shared use Footway/Cycle Track and Adoption of Land - Westgate/Railway Road, Skelmersdale

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

A scheme to improve cycling provision in the Westgate /Railway Road area of Skelmersdale is included in the 2016-17 Road Safety Programme. The scheme will provide a safe, off-road route between the residential neighbourhoods of Skelmersdale, north of Railway Road, to the Gladden Place employment area.

South of Railway Road, the route involves widening an existing footway and converting it to a shared footway/cycle track, the remaining part of the route requires construction of new cycle track, north of Railway Road to Waldron.

To enable a cycle track of suitable width to be constructed, a small area of verge at the junction of Westgate and Waldron needs to be adopted by Lancashire County Council and agreement has been reached with the land owner, West Lancashire Borough Council to undertake this.

Recommendation

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) Approve the removal of a footway and construction of a cycle track over which the public have a right of way on foot, on the south side of Railway Road over a length of 85 metres eastwards from its crossing point of Railway Road to Gladden Place, shown as Section A on the plan at Appendix 'A'.
- (ii) Approve the construction of new cycle track over which the public have a right of way on foot, on the verge area of the highway from the crossing point of Railway Road northwards to Waldron, shown as Section B on the plan at Appendix 'A'.

(iii) Approve the adoption of land from West Lancashire Borough Council at the junction of Waldron and Westgate as shown on the plan at Appendix 'A' to enable construction of the cycle track.

Background and Advice

The proposal shown at Appendix 'A' is to improve cycling provision in the Westgate/Railway Road area, providing an off road link between the residential neighbourhoods of Skelmersdale north of Railway Road and the Gladden Place employment area. Currently cyclists must make the journey on-road, which involves the mixing of low-speed cyclists with all types of high-speed motorised traffic.

The proposed cycle track lengths A and B will be within the adopted highway.

Section A is on the line of existing adopted footway, it is proposed to convert this section to shared-use cycle track status.

No footways have previously existed at Section B, it is proposed to construct cycle track on the existing verge areas.

A short part of section B approximately 37.5 square metres in area, at the junction of Westgate and Waldron, is on land currently owned by West Lancashire Borough Council. A Heads of Terms Agreement document has been drawn up between Lancashire County Council and West Lancashire Borough Council which will enable Lancashire County Council to adopt this land.

At Section A there is insufficient width for both the proposed new cycle track and the existing footway. It is therefore recommended that the existing footway is removed and a cycle track of sufficient width and standard for use by both cyclists and pedestrians is constructed. Due consideration has been given to the safety of all users through the design process. Three metres is generally regarded as an appropriate width for an un-segregated cycle track shared by pedestrians and cyclists. All proposals in this report involve cycle track minimum widths of three metres

New crossing points will be created and existing ones updated, with dropped kerbs and tactile paving to latest design standards. Appropriate signing will be provided to direct users of the new cycle track.

Consultations

Consultations have been undertaken with the following:

1. The divisional County Councillor
2. Local Ward Councillors
3. West Lancashire Borough Council
4. Local Residents- consulted by individual mailing
5. Cyclists Touring Club (CTC)

6. Police

No objections to the proposals have been received.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Without implementation of the proposals detailed in this report, there will be less opportunity for safe and effective sustainable travel within the local area concerned. Any cycle traffic would continue to use the existing on-road route of Westgate and Railway Road, as no alternative would be available. This is a busy higher-speed road environment which carries a greater level of risk for cyclists.

Legal

In order to convert an existing footway to a cycle track, the legal procedure involves removal of the footway under Section 66 of the Highways Act 1980, and creation of a cycle track with a right of way on foot under Section 65 of the same Act.

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

In this case it is considered that a footway for pedestrians only is no longer necessary, as the proposed cycle track will include a right of way for pedestrians wide enough for cyclists and pedestrians to safely share.

Financial

The proposal would be funded from the approved 2016/17 Road Safety Programme Capital Budget, with an allocation of £63,654.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
File CHCRG4101 Westgate/Railway Road Skelmersdale	August 2016	Martin Sephton/(01772) 533717

Reason for inclusion on Part II, if appropriate

N/A