

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 2 September 2021

Report of the Head of Planning and Environment

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
Penwortham West;

Penwortham to Preston Cycle Superhighway

(Appendices 'A' - 'C' refer)

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Executive Summary

This report outlines proposals to provide a cycle track with a parallel crossing on a road-hump, across its junction with Kingsway, on Liverpool Road, Penwortham.

Consultation and formal advertising of the proposals has been undertaken with a number of objections received.

In view of the local response regarding the proposed introduction of a one-way traffic restriction on Kingsway, a revised scheme is proposed which retains the existing two-way traffic flow whilst also managing and reducing the risk to active travel users to support the delivery of a segregated cycle track.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve the provision of a cycle track with a parallel crossing on a road-hump, across its junction with Kingsway, on Liverpool Road, Penwortham as shown in Appendix 'A' and to abandon the proposal to introduce a one-way traffic restriction on Kingsway.

Background and Advice

Following the completion of a bidirectional cycle track between Broadgate junction and Penwortham Brow in 2019, in addition to recent works completed between Cop Lane junction and Penwortham Brow (Tesco's Penwortham S278), the county council has recently undertaken a consultation for proposals to introduce a bidirectional cycle track on Penwortham Brow, linking the aforementioned sections. The scheme is to be delivered through the Department for Transport Active Travel Fund (Tranche 2).

The proposal for the scheme in principal is supported by Lancashire's transport policy (Actively Moving Forward: A Ten-Year Strategy for Cycling and Walking, 2018) which aims to double the number of people cycling by 2028. This is further supported by Local Planning Guidance released by the Department for Transport in July 2020, 'Gear Change – a bold vision for walking and cycling'. Additionally, the county council has identified the route as having a high propensity to cycle using the Department for Transport's Propensity to Cycle Tool.

As part of the Active Travel Fund Tranche 1, the county council was awarded funding from the Emergency Active Travel Fund whereby pop-up cycle lanes were implemented on either side of Liverpool Road and count data was obtained (Appendix 'B' refers). The county council has subsequently been awarded funding from Tranche 2 of the fund for the permanent implementation of Active Travel schemes, a bid which was supported by the Council's emerging Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan for the central Lancashire area.

Funding has several conditions attached, one of which is to comply with new design guidance produced by the Department for Transport for new cycling provision (referred to by the Department as 'LTN 1/20').

To further support the aspiration for high-quality active travel provisions along this route, the Golden Way slip road at Penwortham Brow was closed in late 2019 upon the opening of the Penwortham Bypass, strengthening the ambition for a segregated bi-directional cycle track along the full length of Liverpool Road linking Penwortham town centre and the city centre.

The junction with Kingsway presents the only remaining major potential conflict point along the route between Cop Lane and Strand Road which has not been mitigated. Consequently, the side road at Kingsway is an obstacle to the completion of a high-quality dedicated cycling provision linking Penwortham to Preston and ultimately a barrier to increasing active travel in Lancashire.

A parallel crossing of Kingsway on a raised table was initially proposed along with the introduction of a one-way traffic regulation order to eliminate the risk of conflict between right turning vehicles and cyclists at the junction. This is in accordance with design guidance which outlines that road safety improvements for cycle tracks crossing side roads can be achieved through '*banning one or more motor traffic movements*' and '*reducing the volume...of motor traffic*'.

Additional journey lengths resulting from the introduction of a one-way would be no greater than 750m, however it is acknowledged that journey time increases are potentially disproportionate to journey length increases due to the need to navigate signalised junctions at Tesco Access and Cop Lane/Priory Lane. A disbenefit to drivers, such as increased journey time, is a typical consequence of active travel schemes where road space reallocation has taken place to "meaningfully alter the status quo". Driver disbenefit complements the introduction of active travel infrastructure by acting as a behavioural change mechanism to encourage alternative travel choices such as the switch to active modes. Equally, a reduction in motor traffic resulting from modal shift may have a positive impact on journey times across the wider network. The one-way arrangement under the initial proposal would support the

Department for Transport's longer-term objective to help deliver significant health, environmental and congestion benefits by reducing the number of vehicles on the road through the promotion of active travel. It's impact on modal shift is difficult to predict, as it is reliant upon behavioural change and this would have been actively monitored as part of the scheme's evaluation.

Consultation

A public consultation was undertaken for a period of 28 days between 2 and 30 July 2021 where letters were sent to over 1,000 properties, notices erected along the route, an advert in the local paper and a press release from the county council, including 3D visualisation and supporting documents listed on the county council's website.

The consultation invited the public and consultees to comment on the scheme in principal, in addition to proposals for a parallel crossing on a road hump, and a one-way restriction.

The results of this consultation resulted in various concerns being raised, mainly focused on the one-way restrictions and the impacts that this might have respectively on joining estate roads with regards to safety, pollution, and access arrangements for several local businesses and organisations. A total of 500 objections were received. The majority of consultation responses related to the proposed 1-way with 42 responses relating to the introduction of a cycle track or to a parallel crossing.

In view of the local response and having reviewed these concerns raised with consideration to Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act (1984), officers are no longer recommending to introduce a one-way restriction on Kingsway, however the implementation of a cycle track including the parallel hump on a road crossing remains part of the revised proposal.

With officers no longer recommending to introduce a one-way restriction on Kingway a summary of the remaining consultation responses relating to the introduction of a cycle track and parallel crossing is set out in Appendix 'C'.

Revised Proposal

With the retention of a two-way traffic arrangement at the Kingsway junction and the introduction of a parallel crossing (as shown in Appendix 'A') there is an increased risk to active mode users when compared to the initial proposal. The revised proposal however seeks to manage the risk and reduce the likelihood of occurrence in accordance design guidance by reducing the number of lane crossings in one movement.

Observed traffic flows on Kingsway at its junction with Liverpool Road were used to derive an approximate Annual Average Daily Traffic flow of 4,221 vehicles.

LTN 1/20 provides a guide for crossing design suitability based on the speed limit, total traffic flow and number of lanes crossed in one movement. Based on the observed traffic volume and existing 20mph speed limit, the provision of a parallel crossing is deemed suitable for most users by LTN 1/20.

The inclusion of a central refuge island will improve safety and the ease of use for both pedestrians and cyclists by introducing separate crossing movements for each direction of traffic.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Should the cycle track and parallel crossing on a road hump identified in this report not be implemented, cyclists traveling between Penwortham/Hutton/Longton and Preston will be required to negotiate a missing link in provision, with greater potential for conflict with vehicles along Liverpool Road, and significant risks at the junction of Kingsway.

Financial

The estimated cost of the proposals detailed in this report is £450,000. This would be fully funded as part of the Active Travel Fund (Tranche 2) programme. This grant funding has been secured from Department for Transport, with the understanding that we will deliver the scheme as described in our bid. If works are not delivered in accordance with funding conditions, the Department for Transport reserves the right to recall awarded funding which could also have reputational damage.

Legal

The Highways Act (1980) Section 65 states:

"(1) Without prejudice to section 24 above, a highway authority may, in or by the side of a highway maintainable at the public expense by them which consists of or comprises a made-up carriageway, construct a cycle track as part of the highway; and they may light any cycle track constructed by them under this section."

These proposals would see the re-allocation of road space to create a cycle track under S65(1) of the Highways Act without public right of way on foot (meaning pedestrians are to be segregated from the cycle track and vice versa). Footway provision will remain for pedestrian highway users.

Cabinet is advised that it could decide to abandon the proposed Traffic Regulation Order introducing the one way traffic restriction and to introduce the revised scheme in accordance with the recommendations contained within this report without the need for a further public consultation and that to do so would be consistent with the relevant Acts and Regulations.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A