

## Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 8 June 2023

## Report of the Director of Highways and Transport

### Part I

Electoral Division affected:  
Mid Rossendale;

**Corporate Priorities:**  
Protecting our environment;

### **Proposed Shared Use Cycleway and Waiting Restriction, Bacup Road, Waterfoot**

(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

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#### **Brief Summary**

This report outlines proposals to provide a section of 'shared-use' cycle track with right of way on foot, along a length of Bacup Road, Waterfoot. The proposals would provide a vital link between 2 sections of the 'Valley of Stone' cycleway. Proposed waiting restrictions required in conjunction with the cycle track are also described.

Consultation and formal advertising of the proposals have been undertaken. One objection to the scheme has been received.

#### **Recommendation**

Cabinet is asked to approve the proposed creation of a cycle track with right of way on foot, and the implementation of a No Waiting 8am – 6pm Monday - Saturday restriction, as shown on the general plan at Appendix 'A'.

#### **Detail**

The East Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan includes creation of an East Lancashire Strategic Cycleway Network. The 'Valley of Stone' route forms part of this network, providing a cycle route between Rawtenstall to the north and the Lancashire boundary near Whitworth, to the south.



The vast majority of the scheme consists of off-road and quiet back road sections, resulting overall in very low exposure to traffic and built-up areas. However, in some difficult locations such as this, many options have been investigated, but the only solution currently available to make cycle use safer is to create a short shared-use cycle track with right of way for pedestrians.

As such, a proposed 160 metre length between Holt Mill Road and Stansfield Road requires the following measures, as illustrated in Appendix 'A':

- (a) Cycle Track – An existing footway will be replaced by cycle track with right of way on foot. The minimum width of this cycle track will be 3.0m (3.5m where obstructions exist); this is considered wide enough to be safely shared by pedestrians and cyclists.
- (b) No Waiting – 8am - 6pm Monday - Saturday restrictions. These restrictions are required to prohibit parked motor vehicles from restricting use of the cycle track by its intended users. This will also improve forward visibility for cyclists and pedestrians as they share the facility.

## Consultations

Formal advertising of the proposed waiting restriction and shared use cycle track was undertaken during January and February 2023, resulting in objections from one single respondent and a letter of support from Rossendale Borough Council.

## Objections

The specific objections are listed below, however, the objector submitted a 9-page response in full, citing various observations and quoting national guidance (Appendix 'B' refers).

- *"We consider the proposals to be an attempt to squeeze a shared cycleway into an area that is unsuitable. We question whether the proposals fully conform with the recommendations of the Department for Transport Local Transport Note 1/20 (Cycle Infrastructure Design) dated July 2020 (LTN 1/20). See paragraphs 4.1 to 4.7 for more details.*
- *The detriment to residents, particularly of 601, 603, 605 and 607 Bacup Road, outweighs the benefit to the small number of cyclists who use this stretch of the Valley of Stone cycleway.*
- *We consider that the planners should accept that, despite their best efforts over a considerable length of time, there is currently no satisfactory solution to the "Buckhurst Plant Gap".*
- *We consider that it would be better to leave things as they are, until circumstances change, rather than spend money on an imperfect and ineffective plan".*



In response:

The proposals, whilst designed around challenging site constraints, aim to improve safety through widening the footway section and removing the risk of pavement parking. The effective section is short in length (160m) and sits within the recommended parameters of guidance document LTN 1/20 (Cycle Infrastructure Design).

The objection makes detailed assumptions based on a basic consultation plan, e.g. a lack of signage is mentioned, however signs are included in the detailed designs and would be installed.

A similar section has recently been implemented on Market Street in Whitworth, and it has worked well for both cyclists and pedestrians, providing a vital link between off-road and quiet road sections. Residents have generally been supportive of the scheme and no complaints have been received to date.

A road safety audit has been carried out on this scheme and any issues raised have been addressed.

Pedestrians and cyclists currently share this section, as observed by the objector. These proposals are designed to formalise cycle use and make this safer through increased space and forward visibility. Signs and markings would also be installed to warn and heighten awareness.

Several alternatives were explored and rejected due to them requiring changes to infrastructure that made them unworkable in the short term, it could be many years before one of them is feasible. The government's recently published Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS2) heralds an unprecedented £2billion in funding for active travel and sets ambitious aims of 50% of all journeys in towns and cities to be walked or cycled by 2030. This target will not be achieved by waiting and long, continuous routes like this require an adaptable approach to deal with challenging locations.

#### Supporting statement from Rossendale Borough Council

*"These proposed works to link a gap within the Valley of Stone network to create an option of safe, off-road travel for pedestrians, cyclists & horse riders are supported by both the Rossendale Local Plan 2019 to 2036 and Climate Change SPD" (Supplementary planning Document).*

#### **Appendices**

Appendices 'A' - 'B' are attached to this report. For clarification they are summarised below and referenced at relevant points within this report.

<b>Appendix</b>	<b>Title</b>
Appendix 'A'	General Plan
Appendix 'B'	Objections and Observations



## Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

### Risk management

Failure to implement these proposals would cause a break in the scheme, leaving cyclists to negotiate a very busy section of Bacup Road or use the current footway without the proposed improvements, both of which are considered more dangerous than the proposals set out in this report.

### Financial

The scheme is estimated at £30,000 in construction costs and is supported strategically by the East Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan (2014), which sits under the Local Transport Plan for Lancashire. The funding used to pay for these works is proposed to be from the agreed budget within the East Lancashire Strategic highways programme, which the Valley of Stone is a project within. This programme is funded by the Lancashire Growth Deal and Lancashire County Council. The additional works referred in this report can be met within the overall funding in the programme and do not represent additional costs to either the county council or the Lancashire Growth Deal.

### Legal

The legal procedure to convert a footway to a cycleway is under Section 66 of the Highways Act to remove the footway and under Section 65 to construct a cycleway, although this may involve little actual physical work.

Under Section 66 the Highway Authority is under a duty to provide proper and sufficient footways by the 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 desirable, as the proposed cycleway will include a right of way for pedestrians wide enough for cyclists and pedestrians to safely share.

### List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
None		
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
N/A		

