

Pedal Peak Project II - Moving up a Gear

Hope Valley Cycle Improvements Study

Phase One/Two Hathersage to Hope

Results of Public Consultation held during November 2014

Produced by Sustrans on behalf of Derbyshire County Council January 2015

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Executive summary

A public consultation exercise was carried out in November 2014 by Sustrans on behalf of Derbyshire County Council to determine views on the completed Phase 1 of the Hope Valley Cycle Route and the proposed Phase 2 route as part of the Pedal Peak II Project.

The consultation attracted 150 visitors with more than double that number of comments provided. The majority of respondents (88%) wanted to see improved cycle facilities for the Hope Valley along the lines of the Phase 2 proposals but with some alterations (notably a decrease in the number of crossing points). Those opposed to the scheme (10%) were predominantly horse riders who did not consider the proposed shared use facilities to be suitable for horses. The remaining comments, mainly from local residents, concerned general Highway matters (maintenance and traffic speed).

The consultation exercise results also indicated that there is support in the Hope Valley for improvements to be made to cycle facilities that will reach to Hope Valley College and also for improvements to the existing facilities via improved links into Hathersage and Bamford. Wider cycle and pedestrian links to Bradwell and Grindleford are also supported.

1 Introduction and Background

Phase I - Hathersage to Bamford Garden Centre cycle route was largely completed between February and April 2014 by Derbyshire County Council as part of the Pedal Peak II Project using funds provided by the Department for Transport. It involved widening the existing footway on the north side of the carriageway, within the highway boundary, to create a new route 2.5m-2.7m wide that provided a shared use path for less confident or younger riders as well as for use by pedestrians and horse riders.

Within the Pedal Peak II bid the scheme identified was to continue the route further along the Hope Valley, providing a route segregated from motor vehicles, as far as Hope, to connect to the NCN 6 Little John Link which provides a mainly on road route between Sheffield and Manchester.

The funding to complete the second phase of this project from Bamford through to Hope is made up of match funding identified by Derbyshire County Council through the Local Transport fund for the financial year ending March 2016.

Construction of the Phase 1 scheme generated a considerable amount of local interest and indicated that a public consultation exercise would be required before the Phase 2 scheme was progressed further. Therefore, Sustrans was commissioned to carry out the following tasks to inform the Pedal Peak Project:

- Review the existing Phase I scheme and liaise with the Pedal Peak Project Officer over potential additional improvements to complete that scheme and the costs and benefits of doing these.
- To explore options for where the Phase II route could go to connect up with both ends of the Sustrans Little John Route (NCN6) – this would include how a route can be incorporated within the existing highway but would also look at any other options.
- To harness the local interest, enthusiasm and knowledge generated through Phase I and from earlier proposals (ref submission of a petition to the County Council requesting a safe off road cycle route for pupils at Hope College to use to cycle to school) and liaise with appropriate local groups and organisations within the Valley over suggestions and proposals for where the next stage of the route could go. Consultation with user groups should not just be limited to cyclists and should include working with local horse riding groups and other potential users of such a route. This exercise is partly to assess local demand for the new route and the likely impact on usage of the potential options.
- To carry out a series of local public consultations.

2.0 Consultation

Sustrans carried out a public consultation exercise in the Hope Valley to determine levels of support for the completed Phase 1 section of the route between Hathersage and Bamford and for the proposed Phase 2 extension from Mytham Bridge, Bamford to Hope Station. The consultations took place at the venues and times noted below;

Monday 10th November 2014, 4-8pm, Hope Valley College,

Thursday 13th November 2014, 4-8pm, Hope Valley College,

Saturday 15th November 2014, 10am-4pm Hathersage Memorial Hall

Across the three days 150 people visited the venues and provided comments via post-it-notes attached to the scheme plans. Comments were also made via a brief questionnaire and after the event by e-mail.

Over 300 comments were recorded. Commonly occurring statements are noted in the table below. The majority of comments supported improvements to cycle facilities along the Hope Valley (88%) although the favoured nature and location of any future route varied. Those opposed to the scheme (10%) were predominantly horse riders who did not consider the proposed shared use facilities to be suitable for horses. The remaining comments, mainly from local residents concerned general Highway matters (maintenance and traffic speed).

2.1 Responses from Individuals

Table 2.1 Summary of Comments (Supportive)

Phase 1	
Provide a link further into Hathersage.	41
Provide a link into Bamford.	29
General support for further links.	19
General support for the improvements.	16
Provide a link to Grindleford.	8
Phase 2	
Supportive, but reduce the number of road crossing points.	42
General support for further links.	21

Complete the scheme as shown on the drawing.	18
Continue the route to Hope College.	17
Provide a link to Bradwell.	12

Other comments made by more than one respondent included, 'Any crossing points (of the main road) should be controlled' (6), 'Cyclists should have priority at side roads' (5) and, 'Continue the route between Brough and Hope via the Cement Works' (5).

Table 2.2 Summary of Comments (Not Supportive).

All but five of the comments received in opposition to the proposals regard the existing and potential situation for horse riders. Five emails contained almost all of the comments noted below regarding horses using the existing and proposed facilities.

Phase 1	
Phase 1 has made the situation more dangerous for horse riders as the narrow verge now has fast moving traffic on one side and cyclists on the other (two way cycling can also 'spook' horses.	6
Mytham Bridge is very dangerous for horses.	1
With the number of horses in the Hope Valley there are not enough Bridleways.	5
Phase 2	
Phase 2 will make the situation for horse riders more dangerous. The proposed shared use path is not wide enough.	7
Don't start Phase 2 if it can't go all the way into Hope (not horse rider related).	5
The shared use path must be available for use by horse riders.	1
Should the scheme go ahead then signs requiring cyclists to warn horse riders of their presence are required.	1
The proposals compromise Health and Safety.	1

Reduce the speed limit.	1
Please influence Trustees of Bamford recreation ground to allow a concessionary Bridleway.	1

Table 2.3 General Comments.

Comment	
Clear up hedge cuttings from path surface.	4
A section of the Phase 1 path is damaged.	1
Retain the existing on road cycle lanes.	1
Reduce traffic speeds.	1

2.2 Responses from Organisations

A number of organisations replied to the consultation and their responses are included in full below:

2.2.1 Response on behalf of the Peak District National Park Authority

The Peak District National Park Authority is grateful for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed route for the Hope Valley Link Phase 2. The National Park Authority is supportive of the principle of the proposals, but does have some concern with regard to some of the details, and in some cases the lack of information provided. This response comprises a mix of general comments and those of a more detailed nature.

General Comments

1. There is a general concern about the number of proposed road crossings for the route, this is from two perspectives: -
 - a. Safety – the principle driver for this route is to permit a relatively safe (off-road) route for unescorted young people to cycle along the valley. Crossing the road will undermine this cause.
 - b. Too many crossings will deter use of the route to the extent that more experienced cyclists will simply not bother to-ing and fro-ing, and sections of the route will become redundant.

2. The width of the route is narrow in places and may be too narrow for safe passing - especially if horses are permitted to use it.
3. The termination of the route is a concern in as much as it feels like unfinished business.
4. It is difficult to assess the full impact of the route because of a lack of detail, for instance materials to be used and the design of the route.
5. The route is not located within a Conservation Area but there are two listed buildings along the road. These are: -
 - a. The Farm, Hope Road (LEN 1096587); and
 - b. Milepost, Hope Road (LEN 1087854).
6. In addition, there may be non-designated heritage assets along the route that may be affected by the proposed work. Has any work been done to identify these? If not, some information may be available via the Derbyshire Historic Environment Records. A walk-over survey by a suitably qualified field archaeologist is also recommended. The Peak District National Park Authority is able to provide a brief for this work if it would be helpful.
7. The postulated line of the Roman road to the fort at Brough crosses the line of the route, therefore it would be really useful to know the extent and levels of any excavation that may be undertaken to deliver the route.
8. We would recommend that any historic paving/ground treatment along this route is retained and made good. Stone kerbs would be preferable to PCC. Details and materials should be in keeping with their surroundings, using locally sourced traditional materials and retain a rural character rather than urban. We would therefore suggest that the National Park Authority be consulted further with regard to the details of the proposed dropped kerbs, new signage & posts, fencing, ground surfacing and any other new works once they are known.

Route Specific Comments

These comments are provided on the route in an east to west direction from Mytham Bridge to Hope Station.

1. The first section on the north side of the carriageway from a point west of Mytham Bridge to a crossing point adjacent to the western boundary of Riverside appears to be a sensible option. There is a suggestion of realigning the kerbline on the southern side of the road, would this lead to the crossing point and the second part of the route being moved / extended eastwards? If

so, how far towards Shatton Bridge would this be, and would it impact on the safety of users crossing the road?

2. The second section of the route on the south side of the carriageway adjacent to the western boundary to the next crossing point, west of Glenbrook Activity Centre has a number of pinch points where the width of the route may prove problematic for mixed use: -
 - a. The first part of this section has a 1.0m width, it is difficult to see how cycle-cycle and cycle-pedestrian passing / overtaking movements will safely take place.
 - b. The part of the route that goes around a corner opposite Lumley Pool is set to vary between 1.1m and 2.0m. As above, where the width is 1.1m this may affect safe passing / overtaking, particularly where the route goes around a corner, which may impact on visibility.
 - c. The section between Four Acres and Hursal is stated to be between 1.5 and 1.7m, again the width appears low for a multi-user route.
3. The third section on the north side of the carriageway between the 2nd and 3rd crossing points from east to west is a relatively short section. If possible, the alternative option of continuing the route on the south side of the carriageway would be preferable from a user's perspective, although this would be dependent on the ease of delivery and the impact of such an approach. However, the listed Milepost (LEN 1087854) is located on the south side of the road at this point, and should the alternative option be taken forward, the proposed works should not be allowed to impact on this feature or its setting.
4. The fourth section between the third crossing point westwards and the junction of the B6049 with the A6187 is screened from the road, but may require ongoing maintenance to ensure a 2m width. On this section there is a reference to the raising of the Advanced Direction Sign to 2.3m+ with the utilisation of passively safe posts. Whilst the requirement to raise the sign is recognised, we would recommend that the sign is kept to the lowest safe mounting height. At present the road sign is screened by the group of trees growing behind it, which limits its visual intrusion on the wider landscape. If the new mounting height is kept at around 2.3m the trees will continue to provide an element of screening, minimising its visual impact. There may also need to be some thought given to the crossing of the B6049, particularly as west-east movements may be made from between vehicles queuing at the junction, leaving westbound vehicles turning left at the junction with limited visibility of cyclists / pedestrians.
5. The fifth section from the puffin crossing at the B6049 junction to the entrance road to Hope Station appears of adequate width. It is proposed to remove two

trees on this route; this has raised some concern amongst both the Landscape and Planning teams. We would recommend early consultation with the National Park Authority's Tree Conservation Officers with regard to this matter.

6. The early termination of the route prior to Hope Village is of some concern. Whilst we appreciate that the congested nature of the main part of the village may limit scope for a continuation of the route this far, there is scope to utilise spare carriageway width west of the Aston turning. From this junction through to the commencement of housing with the properties known as Penrith and Smithy Cottage, the centre of the road is crosshatched. A narrowing of the carriageway would enable the route to continue to the edge of the built up area whilst acting as a traffic calming measure on a 30mph section of road that feels and is largely treated as if it had a 40mph speed limit.

Summary

As stated previously the Peak District National Park Authority is supportive in principle of the delivery of Phase 2 of the Hope Valley Link and recognises the benefits that such a route would offer both residents of and visitors to the area.

However, it is important that the delivered route is safe and attractive to users whilst blending in as far as possible with its surroundings, thus minimising its impact on the wider landscape and historic heritage of the National Park. We would therefore be grateful if you could respond to the questions raised in this response, and consult us further on the detail of the design when this is known.

2.2.2. Response from Peak Horsepower

Peak Horsepower is a British Horse Society affiliated bridle way group. We have 300 members, many of them based in the Hope Valley. The Hope Valley Riding Club, which has over 170 members, is affiliated to us. We work to extend and improve the bridleway network in the Peak district National Park and one of our chief concerns is the danger posed to horse riders by motorised traffic.

We appreciate that the funding for the multi-user way has come from cycling sources but we are very concerned indeed that both the existing section from Hathersage to Sickleholme and the proposed extension to Hope significantly increase rather than decrease the danger to horse riders. Prior to the existing section being constructed, riders in the area would ride either in the cycle lane or on the broad grass verge with the footpath on our inside giving us a further 'escape space' if our horse was spooked by the traffic.

Now, the verge is only inches across. If we use the cycle lane we are sandwiched between fast moving (the smooth tarmac surface encourages high speed) cycles on our inside and fast moving traffic on our outside. (Horses are always ridden in the same direction as the traffic so as not to be faced with 'scary monsters' coming towards them.) If we use the multi-user way cycles can approach at speed from either

in front or behind. There is also a problem with crossing the two driveways. We cannot see the traffic emerging as it is hidden by the hedge and we are sat too far back to peer round. Previously, drivers would emerge beyond the hedge where they had good sight lines for horses on the verge or on the road. One resident's car has already been driven into by a cyclist who ignored the give way marking on the track.

The proposed extension puts us in an even worse situation. For the majority of its length the track is too narrow for horses and cycles to pass safely, nor would we cross the road to use sections facing oncoming traffic. We are now to be sandwiched between the cycleway and the road traffic as described above with no room for a spooking horse to avoid cycles or vehicles. The road has many bends. We may round a bend to find cycles speeding towards us. If a horse shies, it will shy into the path of oncoming traffic.

The Hope Valley is home to many horse riders (well over 50 horses are kept within a 30 min riding distance of the main road). We are very poorly off for bridleways and many regular 'round rides' will include minor roads and inevitably a stretch on the main road.

We feel that safety of all users would be better served by imposing a 40 mph speed limit over the full length of the road, and widening the existing cycle lanes.

We are extremely concerned by the proposals and intend to contact the Police to let them know that we think the proposals are dangerous.

2.2.3 Response from British Horse Society

I have been alerted by Peak Horsepower and Hope Valley Riding Club to the Sustrans proposals for cycleways in the Hope Valley.

On behalf of the British Horse Society I wish to express my deep concern about the danger to horse-riders posed by the proposals. The BHS is very much in favour of multi-user trails and there are plenty of examples of paths in Derbyshire that are shared happily and safely by horses, cycles and pedestrians. However, it seems that in the case of these proposals the safety and convenience of cyclists have been considered at the expense of other users. I'm sure that you can understand that grass verges on the side of the highway provide a relatively safe haven for horses from motorised traffic and we view the proposed changes to this feature with alarm.

2.2.4. Response from Bamford and Thornhill Recreation Ground Trust

As discussed we are currently writing a village plan for Bamford and traffic through the village is the biggest issue. I wanted to follow up on the question of whether you could source any traffic volume data for Bamford. There are sensors in the road at both ends of the village, but I have no idea if they are active and if any data is collected. It would be interesting to know though.

We had a recreation ground meeting last night, which unfortunately was poorly attended so we deferred a discussion about a bridleway until the next meeting in January, however those there felt that if we could work with someone like Sustrans to develop plans for a bridleway that fitted with the use of the grounds and that funding was found for it, then the Trustees were likely to be supportive.

2.2.5 Response from Hope Valley College

In response to the consultation about the Hope Valley Cycle route, Hope Valley College offer the following. We fully support the development of sustainable transport for our students, and have already put in place secure cycle storage and a wide programme of cycling activities. However, the safety of children is paramount and we would only support a scheme that enables students to cycle in safety to and from the College. We have concerns over the safety of the route that has already been constructed between Hathersage and Bamford as this entails children having to ride on the road under a narrow railway bridge, and cross over a busy road. The plans for Phase 2 include children having to make at least 5 crossings of the A6187. We are also concerned about the route through the centre of Hope as there are two junctions, both of which are hidden by a bend in the road when approaching the village from Brough.

Our preference would be for a route either to the North or South of the main road that uses existing footpaths or rights of way. We would be more than happy to look at options such as these in more detail with you.

2.2.6 Response from Reading Agricultural Consultants Ltd on behalf of a client

1. The following response to consultation on the proposed extension of the Hope Valley Cycle Link between Bamford and Hope is made on behalf of our client, a resident of Hope and the owner and occupier of agricultural land between Hope and Castleton who is a longstanding client of Reading Agricultural Consultants Ltd (RAC).
2. Our client has an interest in the development of cycle links in the Hope Valley arising from earlier proposals which included an off-road link between Brough, Hope and Castleton which directly affected his land and farming interests. He was represented by ourselves at an open meeting at the Hope Valley College at which the resistance of local landowners and farmers was strongly expressed to the off-road proposals. As a significant part of the local interest in a cycle route along the A6187 was the provision of a safe route between the Hope Valley settlements and the College, it was suggested that better use of the existing highway land should be examined as it was considered that sufficient land was available to provide for both vehicular and cycle/pedestrian needs.
3. The proposals now under consideration reflect an examination of the highway land option promoted by our client and his colleagues. That is to be welcomed. However, the proposals do not extend to the critical length which accesses the

College from the Travellers Rest PH or Castleton. In respect of the section now being considered, it is doubtful whether this provides a safe route to the College in view of the number of occasions that users will be required to cross from one side of the carriageway to the other. A truly integrated route would require some adjustment to the highway alignment.

4. Irrespective of the 'safe route to school' aspect of the cycle link, it is clear that the current proposals are part of the County Council's much wider strategic transport and recreational objectives, which in turn relate to the aspirations of Sustrans for a long distance linkage between Sheffield and Manchester and the National Park. The Hope Valley Link element of this objective extends to Castleton and over the length between Bamford and Castleton overlaps the Sustrans route. It is this wider use objective and the uncertainty as to the aspirations of the County Council and Sustrans in respect of the Hope-Castleton area which exercises our client and his colleagues.
5. It would seem imprudent to end the current proposals on the Hope side of the Travellers Rest PH junction in the absence of some thoughts on how cyclists are to progress beyond this point to Castleton, or how students in Castleton might access the College. In this respect we would re-iterate our client's established position. Firstly, he would resist any proposals to upgrade the footpath between Pindale Road, Hope, and the Castleton Road at Castleton, and passing through his land, to a cycleway. This footpath is already a source of interference with his farming activities, which a greater and more diverse use could only exacerbate. Secondly, he would be concerned by any proposal to nominate Pindale Lane itself as a cycle route between Hope and Castleton. Our client's land interests about the lane over a significant length where the highway is narrow, there is no verge, and the boundary feature is a dry stone wall. There is insufficient space to allow a vehicle and a cyclist to pass. It is inevitable that a cyclist faced by a vehicle would need to stop and dismount, with the likelihood that there would be contact with the wall. Wall maintenance is already an issue in relation to existing recreational use of the lane and its use as access to a camp site and outdoor centre. Our client would resist any proposal to acquire land or rights over land adjoining the lane to overcome the issues of constrained width.
6. In conclusion, while there is no objection to the current proposals for the extension of the Hope Valley Link, it is considered that affected and interested parties should have the opportunity to consider these in the context of the totality of the project.

2.2.7 Response from Hope Valley Cyclists

In terms of the current funding, we think it is essential that it is used to make the route that parallels the road between Hathersage and Hope safe and the most crucial part of this is to eradicate the need to cross the main carriageway twice at the point where the width on the South side is currently too tight to allow a segregated shared use path. So the priority should be to ensure that the carriageway is moved slightly north,

to allow the route to continue on the South side (Point 5 on our slides). Everything else can be fundraised for separately or is not essential for the route to work. Removing those two crossing points by moving the carriageway is absolutely essential, if it is not done the route will not work.

Our other priorities for spending of the current funding are:

- Cycle and pedestrian phases to the lights at the two existing traffic light junctions i.e. at the turnoff to Bamford and to Brough
- A cyclist/pedestrian/horse riding activated crossing point at the point where the route crosses the carriageway back to the North side again nearest Hope.
- Widening the footway into Hathersage to enable a path to continue from where it currently stops into the village, to enable the route to be joined safely.

While we think linking the route to Bamford through the recreation ground is an excellent idea, we think that this is something that additional funding could be found through a stand-alone proposal, whereas sorting out the main carriageway (or spine route) should be done with this current money.

This is reflected in the results of our own survey, where when asked how they would prioritise limited funding, a clear majority opted for making sure the main route was sorted out ahead of spending the money on links into the villages.

We got very good engagement through our survey. We had 260 responses; an overwhelming majority (93%) were supportive of an improved off-road cycle route along the Hope Valley. Responses came from a wide mixture of people, 17% were under 18, 7% between 18 & 30, 69% between 31 and 60 and 60% over 60. 40% were female and 60% male.

While we can see why proposals such as improvements to the bridge and a boardwalk to improve the shared use path are included, looking at their costs, compared to the relatively little difference that they would make to the usefulness of the route, our view is that these should not be funded with the current money.

3.0 Conclusions

The consultation exercise results indicate that there is widespread support in the Hope Valley for improvements to be made to cycle facilities around the Valley, particularly those that will reach to Hope Valley College but that the number of road crossing points should be reduced if possible. Support also exists for improvements to the existing facilities via improved links into Hathersage and Bamford. In addition improved cycle and pedestrian links to Bradwell and Grindleford are supported.

There were however significant concerns about the scheme expressed mainly by horse riders, but also by some local residents, that would need to be considered.

All of the issues raised during the consultation need to be given due consideration by Derbyshire County Council.