

Agenda Item No. 4(f)

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE**

**20 December 2018**

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND REVISED PROPOSALS FOR A NEW  
SHARED USE CYCLE PATH, B6057 BETWEEN DRONFIELD AND  
UNSTONE**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To consider the results of public engagement and the receipt of a petition objecting to proposals for a highway improvement scheme to provide a new, shared use cycle path at the side of the B6057 between Dronfield and Unstone.

(2) **Information and Analysis** Cabinet has received a number of reports regarding cycle and pedestrian projects supported by the Local Growth Fund (LGF) Sustainable Travel Programme (STP) of the Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire Local Enterprise Partnership (D2N2 LEP). These include the Chesterfield Rail Station Access, Ilkeston Gateway and the Dronfield to Unstone shared cycle route. This programme has drawn down £2.1 million of LGF to support Council Plan (2017-2021) and Derbyshire Cycling Plan (2016) commitments to develop a Key Cycle Network (KCN) for Derbyshire and provide improved cycle infrastructure to connect local people of all ages and abilities to jobs and leisure opportunities. Cycle and pedestrian improvements also support wider priorities for encouraging more active lifestyles and improving health and well-being.

Proposals to develop a shared cycle route between alongside the B6057 between Dronfield and Unstone were approved by Cabinet on 10 January 2017 (Minute No. 8/17 refers). In January 2018, detailed proposals for the route were presented to the Cabinet Member meeting, following a period of public consultation in October 2017. At the meeting in January 2018, The Cabinet Member agreed to defer a decision on the detailed proposals for the cycleway to allow further consultation with local community, in particular, Dronfield Town Council and the Post Office.

**Context for a New Route**

Proposals for a cycle route between Dronfield and Unstone were recommended to Cabinet for inclusion within the LGF sustainable travel

programme to support economic growth proposals being developed by North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC). This included an economic regeneration framework (Dronfield 2035: A Vision for the Town) for Dronfield town centre, economic growth proposals at Callywhite Lane and a proposal for 235 new homes on land located off Shakespeare Crescent and Sheffield Road, south of Dronfield. The cycleway supports connectivity between Dronfield and Unstone to the Peak Resort leisure and health development and future connectivity to High Speed 2 services, at Chesterfield. It is anticipated these economic growth proposals will increase travel demand in the area, and due to the limited opportunities for increasing road traffic capacity, provision of infrastructure for alternative sustainable modes of travel is essential to cope with sustainable growth in this area. The draft (2018) North East Derbyshire District Local Plan (NEDDLP) Policy SP1 supports the provision of a cycle route alongside the B6057 corridor as an integral part of its strategy for Dronfield.

The importance of a cycle route from Chesterfield to Dronfield is supported by strategic evidence such as the Department for Transport's (DfT's) funded, National Propensity to Cycle Tool, which identifies the B6057 corridor as having a higher potential to encourage more people to cycle in this locality.

### **Summary of the Proposals**

Officers have previously investigated and appraised four different route options for a cycle route connection between Dronfield and Unstone. These are outlined later in this report. Officers have also carried out an extensive investigation of the preferred route option for the provision of a 2.4km off-road cycle route alongside the B6057 Sheffield Road. The proposal has subsequently been revised following public and stakeholder feedback. The physical conditions have presented several design challenges for retro-fitting infrastructure and optimising the available space for the benefit of all transport users, residents and businesses. Consequently, the design has been required to consider minimum design standards in some locations and, subject to detailed design work and Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) (where required), the proposals incorporate (see Appendix 1 also):

- Provision of a shared footway by widening the existing footway on the eastern side of the B6057, from Cemetery Road in Dronfield to Loundes Road in Unstone (NB Shared paths for walking and cycling are common practice).
- Provision of a shared footway by widening the existing footway on the western side of the B6057, from Loundes Road to connect to the existing bridleway network at the proposed Peak Resort entrance (Birchall Golf Club entrance).
- Widening of existing footways by converting highway verge where possible. Where no highway verge is available, either the carriageway width is to be reduced and rationalised to make better use of available

road space, or localised footway width restrictions will be required (but within acceptable limits).

- Improved road crossings providing more priority for pedestrians and cyclists, including a new Toucan crossing across the B6057 near Loundes Road in Unstone, new raised plateaux across Crow Lane, Loundes Road and Cheetham Avenue, and the closure of Old Whittington Lane and Church Street junctions to traffic. Other minor junctions and business entrances are proposed to be modified by use of new kerbing and green coloured surfacing to ensure that road users are clearly aware of pedestrian and cycle activity on the route.
- Retention of all existing bus stops. The bus layby near Cemetery Road, Dronfield would be removed and the bus shelter and signs moved to enable the shared path to pass behind and therefore, eliminate conflict between bus users and cyclists.
- Regularisation of parking outside Unstone Post Office and south of Loundes Road.
- Various signage and markings to encourage cyclists to reduce speeds.
- Additional wayfinding infrastructure in Dronfield to direct cyclists to key destinations in the town centre.
- Localised road narrowing to support reduced traffic speeds in Unstone village.

### **Public Engagement**

A significant amount of public consultation has been carried out throughout preparation of the proposals. These include hosting two public exhibitions and attendance at a public meeting in Unstone, following the Cabinet Member meeting of 11 January 2018, as well as considering the outcomes of previous consultations carried out by partners; for example, the Development of the Regeneration Framework for Dronfield. These events have been widely publicised through press releases, letters to householders along the proposed route, and individual meetings. Public engagement that has contributed to the development of the proposals include:

- Discussions with NEDDC, Dronfield Town Council and Unstone Parish Council.
- Discussions with the local member.
- Hosting regular local cycle stakeholder groups, including group cycle corridor audits carried out in 2015.
- A61 Growth Corridor stakeholder and local member meetings (2015-16).
- Letters to householders in Dronfield and Unstone (overlooking and adjacent to the route) to consult on the preliminary design proposals in 2017.
- Two public exhibitions of detailed plans of the route proposals held in Dronfield Library and the Sandpiper Hotel on Sheffield Road in January 2018.

- Attendance at a public meeting in Unstone arranged by the local member in May 2018 (41 people attended).
- Results of a household survey (which was delivered to 530 households in Unstone) and an Online Survey carried out by the local member.
- Consideration of a petition with 430 signatures objecting to the proposed Dronfield to Unstone cycle link, received by the Cabinet Member meeting on 5 April 2018 (Minute No. 31/18 refers).
- Direct correspondence and meetings with several respondents to the public consultations.
- Consideration of the outcome of previous resident and community consultations to develop local strategies; for example, the regeneration framework for Dronfield and the NEDDLP.

The following additional consultees and local stakeholders were also invited to the public exhibitions, or were sent copies of the public exhibition plans for comment:

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| • Transition Chesterfield             | • Sustrans                                  |
| • Chesterfield Cycle Campaign         | • NEDDDC                                    |
| • Grassland Hasmoor Big Local         | • Active Derbyshire                         |
| • Cycling for Everyone –<br>Dronfield | • Local Derbyshire County<br>Council Member |
| • Derbyshire Constabulary             | • Dronfield Town Council                    |
| • Derbyshire Fire and Rescue          | • Unstone Parish Council                    |
| • East Midlands Ambulance<br>Service  | • Dronfield Civic Society                   |
| • Road Haulage Association            | • Dronfield Health Centre                   |
| • East Midlands Chamber               | • Lee Rowley MP                             |
| • North Derbyshire NHS                | • Freight Transport Association             |

### **Support for the Proposals**

There has been a general consensus during feedback that infrastructure to provide off-road cycle route provision is important in Dronfield and Unstone to support more people of all ages and abilities to cycle more for work and leisure. There is a wide acceptance both locally and nationally that this supports economic regeneration and growth and leads to more active, healthier lifestyles. Similar broad support for cycling measures were often expressed by respondents who objected to the detailed proposals for a route alongside the B6057. On balance, therefore, it is considered that provision of cycle infrastructure in Dronfield and Unstone are supported, but further consideration to the detailed proposals for the B6057 route is required.

Analysis of the feedback from the 2017 household survey and the 2018 public exhibitions indicates majority support for the provision of a shared cycle route alongside the B6057. Thirty one responses were received from the 2017

household survey, with 14 of the responses making statements in support of the proposal and a further five with no objection, but highlighting queries or concerns for consideration. The 2018 public exhibitions were well attended and resulted in 86 responses being received. Seventy two percent of respondents to the public exhibitions made comment that they supported the proposals; 20% of people objected to the proposals; a further 5% had concerns but no opinion of support; and 3% of responses provided no opinion at all.

Comments in support of the proposals are summarised below:

- It will provide an alternative safer route for vulnerable cyclists and pedestrians.
- Helps to provide a longer distance route connected to Chesterfield and beyond.
- Good to see investment in Dronfield.
- Will provide a safer route for families and less confident cyclists.
- Children will be able to use it to go to school.
- Positive development to improve access to green spaces in communities.
- Real significant step to getting people out of their cars and onto bikes, i.e. will contribute to reduced traffic, provide health benefits and encourage cycling to work.
- Good forward planning regarding the amount of traffic in the area, e.g. potential for additional traffic from Peak Resort.
- Excellent for physical and mental well-being.
- Will give local people access for leisure and commuting, including in winter time, well-lit and safer for women to use.
- It will bring trade to the community and be good for local businesses, will bring a boost to the community.
- Hopefully will connect through to Sheffield eventually.
- Will make it possible to cycle down to the shops.
- Excellent improvement over what is currently a quite dangerous section of road.
- Fully supportive as would provide a safe link to access the railway station – I don't feel safe cycling on the road.
- Good to connect to the bridleway network, requests an additional connection to Hill Top.
- Cycle schemes are vital if carbon emissions and congestion are to be reduced.
- More cycle routes are needed.
- (As a teacher) it is important to facilitate safe and environmentally friendly transport options around schools.
- Old Whittington Lane and Church Street junctions with B6057 are dangerous and their closure to traffic is supported.
- The scheme has been designed to be fully accessible for wheelchairs and

disability scooters and removes the various narrow sections of existing footway.

- The fully off-road facility through the main residential areas would encourage more people to take up cycling for leisure.
- Encourage young people to access the new bike paths within Peak Resort and beyond, without arriving by car and will create a new social activity for everyone to enjoy.

The County Council was also copied into a response from the Derbyshire Constabulary to a resident where they expressed a recognition of the need to maintain road safety along the route and made comment about the need for compromise between reducing road space and creating space for vulnerable road users. The proposal has also received support from local cycling groups and a Dronfield community group which expressed support due to the multiple benefits the route would have for local residents of all ages and abilities in the community.

### **Concerns and Objections to the Proposals**

Whilst the proposal for a cycle route alongside the B6057 has received majority support over the period of consultation concerns and objections have been expressed by residents, a local business, Unstone Parish Council and Dronfield Town Council. Most notably, a petition with 430 signatories objecting to the proposals was received in April 2018. The Cabinet Member should note that the petition was a general objection to the proposed cycle route, and did not specify a reason for the objections.

Feedback from the two public exhibitions and the public meeting in Unstone, when considered alongside the results of surveys carried out by the local member for Dronfield East and the petition, indicates that objections and concerns raised about the proposals are primarily focussed around the impact of the route on residents and the local business in Unstone village. These concerns and objections can be summarised into three key areas of concern for Unstone village:

- The perceived negative impact that road narrowing proposed in Unstone village would have on traffic speeds and road safety. These issues would worsen as more housing and employment development takes place in the Dronfield and Unstone area.
- The perceived negative impact that road narrowing would have on the ability of customers to park outside Unstone Post Office; and the impact that disruption during the construction phase and the loss of parking would have on the viability of an important local business.
- Whether alternative cycle route options have been considered, and that other route options may be more appropriate.

Other concerns expressed are notably the appropriateness of shared cycle and pedestrian routes and risk of conflict between users; design considerations where physical constraints have informed the width of the route to minimum design standards; and value for money from the public purse.

A summary of the main objections and concerns reported about the proposal are as follows:

- Localised road narrowing will have a negative impact on congestion, pollution and road safety and will not allow buses and lorries to pass safely.
- The B6057 has a high volume of traffic and is likely to get busier with further housing planned in the area and from employment development.
- The road is too busy, with traffic travelling at high speed, to be able to safely support a cycleway and would be too dangerous for families.
- Sections of the route will be less than 2 metres wide, which would be outside the standard. Risk of collisions between pedestrians and cyclists on the shared path, particularly in regard to cycle speeds and approaching unheard, e.g. on Unstone Hill.
- Potential for conflict between cyclists and pedestrians outside Unstone Junior School.
- Disruption during the construction phase is excessive. Concern about the impact of the proposals on the Post Office and Farm Shop business during the construction phase. Road narrowing will cause significant problems for motorists accessing the Post Office.
- Access over the railway bridge is a compromise that leaves itself open to abuse.
- Loss of the bus layby on Chesterfield Road, Dronfield.
- Closure of Church Street will remove an alternative access to the B6057 during wintry conditions.
- Other route options should be considered. Preference for other route options, e.g. via Highgate Lane.
- Many of the paths are poorly maintained and cannot see this route being maintained any better.
- Concern about HGVs passing cyclists on Unstone Hill.
- Requests for visibility improvements at Cheetham Avenue junction.
- More detail required about how the route would be provided under the railway bridge on Unstone Hill, and concern about cycle speed.
- The money would be better spent elsewhere, e.g. supporting local bus services, improving crossings, etc.
- Whether there is evidence of need and the business case for providing a route. Queries whether the assumption that the cycle path will reduce the number of motorised vehicle journeys is optimistic.

## **Detailed Considerations**

Over recent months, officers have fully assessed the concerns and objections raised during public and stakeholder engagement. This has been supported by a full appraisal of four different cycle route options, an Equality Impact Analysis (EIA), Health Impact Assessment (HIA) checklist, Road Safety Audit and use of specialist software to assess vehicle movements along the corridor. The remainder of this report sets out the design response and recommendations for revisions to the proposals in response to feedback.

## **Impact of Road Narrowing on the Operation of Traffic and Road Safety in Unstone Village**

The B6057 route currently supports average traffic flows up to 11,000 vehicles per day and reflects its status as a local connection between Dronfield, Unstone and Chesterfield. This level of flow is relatively high for a 'B' class road, despite the A61 dual carriageway to the west offering a strategic high quality bypass for longer distance travel. Feedback has raised concerns that proposals to narrow the road and create a shared cycle route would increase perceived issues of congestion and reduce road safety by increasing risk of collisions between passing vehicles. Two residents have recently written to the Council citing further concerns following a recent collision between a passing bus and heavy goods vehicle on the B6057 in Unstone village. Feedback has also highlighted a concern about increased traffic levels that could be generated from planned housing and employment development in the area.

The scheme proposes to narrow the B6057 road in several locations to a minimum 6.5 metres width where there is insufficient road verge available to create an adequate width shared cycle route. Narrowing of the existing road is only proposed in locations that have been assessed as having good forward visibility. Although UK practice has generally adopted a standard width of 7.3 metres for new roads, narrowing existing roads is commonplace across Derbyshire and appropriate in many circumstances, particularly in built up areas where there are benefits for reducing speeds and enabling people to cross.

In order to understand the importance of road narrowing on vehicle movements, officers have re-assessed all proposed locations using specialist software for vehicle tracking and turning manoeuvres, based on the maximum legal vehicle size to understand the impact of road narrowing on vehicle movements. Maximum legal vehicle size is recognised by the Road Haulage Association and Freight Transport Association as the maximum size of vehicle able to travel on UK roads. These assessments have shown that all vehicles travelling on the B6057 would be able to safely pass each other in all locations where narrowing is proposed. The proposals to introduce regularised parking at Unstone Post Office, as considered later in this report, will require buses and heavy goods vehicles to give way to other vehicles when vehicles are



parked outside the Post Office, in both the existing situation and with the road narrowing option.

Whilst road narrowing is shown not to impede the flow of traffic, it is recognised as a tool to improve road safety by encouraging people to drive at a slower or more consistent speed. Officers therefore consider there are potentially additional benefits from road narrowing that would help address some of the concerns highlighted from residents in Unstone village about the impact of traffic and its speed on their community. Whilst road casualty data (analysed between 2014 and 2016) indicates the B6057 between Dronfield and Unstone has a low risk collision rate, officers have undertaken speed surveys that show that the 30mph speed limit is regularly being exceeded, which suggests that the **risk** of collisions is likely to be higher than casualty data suggests:

- 39mph average speed (85<sup>th</sup> percentile) at Unstone Hill.
- 36mph average speed (85<sup>th</sup> percentile) at Unstone School.
- 33mph average speed (85<sup>th</sup> percentile) at Unstone Village centre.

Residents also highlighted a concern about the impact from future increases in traffic movements associated with proposed housing and employment developments in the Dronfield area. The NEDDLP anticipates that mitigation measures may be required in Dronfield, and recognises the importance of sustainable travel measures supporting development to reduce congestion and improve air quality and health. It is anticipated that there will be limited scope to provide significant additional capacity for motorised vehicles along the B6057 corridor and, therefore, support for alternative sustainable transport modes will be required if more journeys are to be accommodated without worsening traffic-related impacts.

### **Unstone Post Office**

Unstone Post Office is one of several businesses in Unstone village. Feedback during public engagement has indicated that the business has a high dependency for on-street parking outside its premises on the B6057. A petition objecting to the installation of the proposed cycle link has been received from the Post Office which was accepted at the Cabinet Member meeting on 5 April 2018 (Minute No. 31/18 refers). The petition comprises a binding response of whether the respondent is in favour or against the cycle route proceeding, with no specific reasons set out as to why objections were being made. Four hundred and thirty petitioners recorded their objection to the proposals. However, feedback at the two exhibitions and the public meeting in Unstone held in 2018, suggests that a principal concern of petitioners is the impact of proposals on the operation of the Post Office. On this basis, officers have carried out an analysis of the location of objectors, which indicates the importance of the Post Office to local residents and an understanding of the level of 'passing trade' to the Post Office. The majority

(57.6%) of objectors were identified as living outside the area where the scheme is proposed.

The Cabinet Member should note that existing TROs in the vicinity of the Post Office do not currently provide for on-street parking during opening hours. However, traffic surveys show that informal parking throughout the day outside the Post Office supports the customer base.

### **Proposed Amendments to Cycle Route**

Officers have examined various options for the proposals in the vicinity of the Post Office. A revised option is recommended that formalises short-stay parking (subject to completion of a TRO) outside the Post Office, alongside the proposals to narrow the carriageway to 6.5 metres to create a shared cycle route. This option has been analysed using the same specialist software for vehicle tracking, to consider the impact on traffic movements and ensure that it is comparable to the existing situation.

Vehicle tracking software indicates there is adequate road width currently for a northbound car and a southbound car to pass each other at the same time, whilst passing a vehicle parked outside the Post Office. However, there is insufficient width currently for any larger vehicles to pass at the same time as another vehicle when a vehicle is parked outside the Post Office. Assessment of the recommended option indicates that whilst the road width is reduced, traffic movements are largely unaffected and passing traffic would need to do so with caution which is the same level of caution as the existing situation.

In addition to regularisation of parking, there is evidence to suggest that investment in cycling and walking infrastructure is often associated with positive impacts on retail spending at the local level. Improvements, including cycle parking at key locations along the route, can be explored during the detailed design stage to maximise support for the local economy.

Stakeholder feedback requested provision of a puffin crossing in the vicinity of the Post Office to provide safer access for older people, pedestrians and cyclists. Current levels of usage would not meet the criteria for provision of a controlled crossing, however, it is anticipated that provision of a narrower road width and slower vehicle speeds should make the road easier to cross.

### **Alternative Route Options**

As part of the engagement process, respondents have suggested alternative routes along the disused Unstone rail line and the existing bridleway network via Ouzle Bank. Officers have considered three additional route options during the option appraisal stage in the development of these proposals:

- Option 2: A route utilising the alignment of the former Unstone rail line.

- Option 3: Upgrade of the existing Bridleway No. 51 connecting Unstone to Highgate Lane.
- Option 4: Upgrade of the existing Bridleway No. 51 with connection to Hilltop Road.

These routes have been appraised using the following methodologies: DfT Route Selection Tool; Sustrans Cycle Route Design Principles and the Council's KCN Stage 1 prioritisation criteria to enable the relative merits of each route option to be compared. The appraisal has involved consideration of directness, gradient, safety, connectivity, comfort, attractiveness, contribution to 23 different sustainability objectives and deliverability.

Further to consideration and comparison of all four options, it is concluded that a route alongside the B6057 corridor is the preferred route option because:

- It connects, and is highly accessible, from adjacent urban areas in Unstone and Dronfield.
- The route has a more attractive gradient for cyclists which will encourage usage.
- The route connects employment areas and local services including, Callywhite Lane and Unstone Post Office and the proposed Peak Resort major development site and is therefore supporting 'good growth'.
- It offers a hard surfaced route that is overlooked by neighbouring properties and is lit during the hours of darkness, thereby offering a safer route, accessible at all times of day and night throughout the year.
- The land is within the control of the Highway Authority and it already functions as a highway representing minimal change to its nature and greater value for many.

A route broadly following the abandoned Unstone railway line to the east of the B6057 was shown to be potentially beneficial, however, due to complex land assembly, previous public opposition to potential impact on a local wildlife site and concern about increased maintenance and structures liability, this option was not considered to be deliverable (a key component of LGF grant). Option 3 is largely in place now with cyclists legally able to use the highway. This option is less attractive as a cycle route due to significant gradients to be negotiated in both directions, together with a lack of lighting and properties overlooking the route. Option 4 is the longest of the four routes, which offers an advantage of reducing the steepness of the southbound gradient, however, it requires a significant length of route on-road, mixed with busy residential traffic.

### **Appropriateness of Shared Cycle and Pedestrian Routes**

The appropriateness for pedestrians and cyclists to share the same space was commented on by several respondents during public engagement. The principle for pedestrians and cyclists sharing the same space is now well-

established in Derbyshire on the greenway network, as well as locations adjacent to the carriageway. They are now commonplace across the UK and installed as standard in many new developments. Full segregation between pedestrians and cyclists is becoming more commonplace on busy urban routes.

The geometric design for shared footway proposals has been made in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (TA 90/05). The design guide sets out that a 3.0 metres wide route is preferred wherever achievable, but 2.0 metres wide routes are acceptable where the combined pedestrian and cycle route use is less than 200 users per hour. A pedestrian survey carried out in 2018 indicates that the maximum usage of the B6057 footway is 110 two-way flow during school entry and exit times; and also noted that 12 cyclists were already using the footway throughout the day.

Officers have examined road casualty data from similar shared cycle routes in other parts of Derbyshire (at Clay Cross, Temple Normanton, Bamford, Ilkeston and Long Eaton). These indicate that no injury collisions have occurred during the period of September 2014 and August 2017. The wider risk to pedal cyclists on Derbyshire's roads is illustrated by a total of 469 collisions involving cyclists over the same period, resulting in 6 people being killed and 91 seriously injured. Two cycle collisions resulting in slight injuries occurred on the B6057 corridor during this period, one involved a cyclist crossing Church Street junction on the footway and one at the junction with Cemetery Road.

Officers have taken account of feedback about particular locations along the proposed route, which are considered to be potentially hazardous, and have improved the design to establish a much wider shared route than is currently in place for most of the route length; 61% of the routes length is widened to 3.0 metres wide and a further 36% widened to over 2.0 metres (the majority tending to be 2.6 metres). A short section of narrow route near Cheetham Avenue is proposed to be retained following feedback that indicated that retention of an existing pedestrian refuge was more important than provision of a wide section of route. Additional measures are proposed to reduce conflict between pedestrians and motorised vehicles along the route, including a new Toucan crossing in Unstone village, closure of Church Street and Old Whittington Lane junctions, and enhanced visibility of road crossings.

### **Design Constraints**

The preparation of the design of the B6057 route proposals has encountered physical constraints at four key locations along the route. Feedback during public engagement has indicated concern about the solutions available to highway designers.

### **a) Unstone Junior School**

The existing footway outside Unstone Junior School is substandard and narrow (1.3 metres useable footway width) and is protected from passing traffic by a short section of pedestrian guardrail along the school's frontage. Respondents are concerned that there would be increased risk of conflict between cyclists and pedestrians due to limited space available to create a shared cycle path. Officers have carefully considered the design of the route outside the school, and provision of a much improved 2.2 metres shared cycle path can be achieved by removing existing highway white hatching. This would formalise existing road narrowing in this location. Officers consider that shared use is appropriate in this location, given good forward visibility for approaching cyclists, and the ability to provide additional footway width, bearing in mind that pedestrian flows are well below 200 per hour. Signing and road markings would be installed to advise cyclists to 'share with care' past the school. The pedestrian guardrail would be relocated to the edge of the road to ensure that parents and children are protected from traffic. A reflective bollard would also be installed at either end to improve awareness of the guardrail to passing motorists.

### **b) Unstone Hill**

Unstone Hill is the only location along the B6057 where the gradient is outside the preferred gradient for design of new cycle routes. The DfT route selection tool indicates that it is, though, an easy gradient for cycling. Respondents have expressed concern about the original proposals for this location due to the narrow width of the shared route and possible speeding cyclists. Officers have reconsidered the potential for road narrowing in this location and have been able to accommodate a 1.9 metres shared route width to provide additional space for pedestrians and cyclists to pass safely. Additional warning information in the form of signs and road markings to 'share with care' and to travel slowly on the downhill approach is also proposed in accordance with highway design standards.

### **c) Unstone Railway Footbridge**

The B6057 route crosses the main Midland Main railway line 100 metres north of Old Whittington Lane. Pedestrians currently use a footbridge adjacent, but separate to the carriageway to cross the railway line. This footbridge is substandard in its width and height of parapets for use by cyclists. The cost of providing a new cycle bridge would be significant and potentially abortive as the footbridge may have to be replaced as part of any future electrification of the rail line associated with High Speed 2. Feedback has expressed concern that the proposal for signs to advise cyclists to dismount at this location will be ignored and other options should be explored. Cycle dismount signs are only introduced where no acceptable design option is available to accommodate cyclists. At present there are no alternative solutions available because of the physical constraints of the railway and topography. However, there may be

potential in the longer term to lobby Network Rail to provide a multiuser bridge in due course.

#### **d) Footway North of Cheetham Avenue**

A short 66m section of substandard route width is proposed north of Cheetham Avenue. Public feedback during consultation demonstrated that retention of a pedestrian island on the B6057 was more important than establishing a 3.0 metre wide route on this section.

#### **Disruption During the Construction Period**

It has been made apparent during public engagement that the B6057 through Unstone village has been subject to disruption on several occasions in recent times. Several respondents, including the Post Office owners, have also raised concern about the impact of disruption during the construction period and the potential impact on trade. Officers anticipate that the scheme will require approximately an eight month period to build the shared route. The route can be built in a phased approach, and can be planned around other street works that may be necessary, to keep disruption to a minimum. However, temporary road works would be required to ensure the safety of Council staff and road users during construction. Officers have previously spoken to the Post Office owners and would meet with all business owners to discuss a programme of works, access needs and options to minimise disruption prior to work commencing in the general vicinity of businesses.

#### **Value for Money Assessment**

The grant funding is to be drawn down over the period up to 2020-21, and is governed by the D2N2 LEP Local Assurance Framework (LAF). Essentially, this requires business cases to be compliant with HM Treasury's Green Book and demonstrate that projects are worthwhile, deliverable and provide good value for money.

The business case for the overarching STP was prepared for the four D2N2 upper tier local authorities by an independent specialist transport consultant. The consultant carried out a value for money assessment of the programme proposals by adopting the nationally recognised DfT transport analysis tool, called WebTAG (which all projects that require Government approval are expected to use). The assessment concluded that the proposals for cycling and walking infrastructure across the region are able to demonstrate a strong economic case showing an indicative benefit-cost ratio of 5.95 (i.e. £5.95 benefit to the local economy from every £1 invested). This is based on a mid-point between a high cycle growth scenario (DfT target for 100% increase in cycling) and a low growth scenario (45% increase in cycling as evaluated by Sustrans). The Cabinet Member should note that the economic case has been prepared for the wider D2N2 area package of cycle routes, rather than focussing on individual proposals, and should also note that a similar business case prepared for cycle improvements alongside the A61 Derby Road,

Chesterfield, indicated a mid-point benefit-cost ratio of 4.04. The DfT Value for Money Framework indicates that benefit-cost ratios in excess of 4.00 are considered very high value for money schemes. Officers anticipate that more people cycling will provide an uplift to businesses in the Dronfield and Unstone area.

### **Officer Conclusion**

There has been significant interest in the proposals to provide a shared cycle route between Dronfield and Unstone. The two public exhibitions and public meeting in Unstone were well attended. Many people and stakeholders have also responded via feedback forms, correspondence, local member surveys, and petition objecting to the proposals.

On balance, however, there is a good level of support for the introduction of cycling measures in Dronfield and Unstone. The proposals to introduce a shared route alongside the B6057 have emerged from consultation to develop local planning and regeneration strategies and have proved popular with many residents and cycle stakeholders, receiving majority support during a 2017 household consultation and at the two public exhibitions. The proposals to introduce an off-road route to support new or less confident users and the wider connections to Chesterfield via the proposed KCN, were often given as substantial factors for support for the project.

However, the proposals are not universally supported and objections are primarily focussed in Unstone village. Key concerns are the impact of the proposals on the viability of the Post Office and the impact of road narrowing on congestion and road safety. There is also concern about conflict between pedestrians and cyclists on the route.

Some parts of the scheme proposals were popular for more people, including the proposals for closing Church Street and Old Whittington Lane junctions, not least because of the many issues cited around speeding traffic. Similarly, the proposal to install a Toucan crossing in Unstone village was supported, as a facility has been requested previously.

Officers have examined all concerns raised during public consultation and, as a result, have revised the proposals where physical constraints allow. The revised proposals recommended in this report are designed to support the local economy and local businesses, with measures such as a proposal to regularise parking outside Unstone Post Office and develop construction plans in collaboration with businesses is anticipated to address the concerns raised. The impact of road narrowing on the B6057 has been carefully assessed to ensure that risk of collision is not increased. Officers consider that road narrowing will have a beneficial impact on road speeds along the corridor and to reduce risk of collisions.

The introduction of shared routes into existing communities often raises concern about conflict between pedestrians and cyclists. Most of the route can be provided with a wider shared route that meets highway design standards, appropriate for the level of usage. Mitigation measures have been suggested where feedback has highlighted particular concerns at Unstone Hill and Unstone Junior School. A short section of substandard route is proposed north of Cheetham Avenue to retain an important pedestrian crossing for the B6057.

Emerging local plans include economic growth proposals in the Dronfield and Unstone area. Feedback has highlighted concern about increasing travel demand associated with economic growth and encouraging more people walking and cycling will be vital for Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire to encourage clean growth. On-balance, therefore, the recommendation is to proceed to implementation of the proposals set out in this report.

### **Local Member comment**

Councillor Dale has been briefed by officers.

(3) **Financial Considerations** The D2N2 STP has allocated £2.1 million LGF grant funding to Derbyshire projects from the £5.8 million total available for the D2N2 LEP area. Cabinet has previously approved the acceptance of this grant and allocated £900,000 towards the design and construction of the Dronfield and Unstone cycle route (Minute No. 8/17 refers).

(4) **Legal Considerations** The grant funding is for the provision of infrastructure improvements and, therefore, falls within the general Block Exemption Regulations (GBER) in relation to State Aid.

As outlined in the body of the report, the County Council may use its powers under the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 (RTRA) to make TROs. The Council's Constitution provides that the Strategic Director - Economy, Transport and Environment can exercise the powers of the County Council to make TROs under the RTRA. The Council is required to observe the procedures laid down in The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. The Council has the discretion to hold a Public Inquiry in the event of objections being received to this proposal.

(5) **Equality and Diversity Considerations** An EIA and HIA checklist has been prepared to consider the impact of the proposals on the protected characteristic groups and health. The EIA contains ten actions. Six of the actions are taken account of in the body of the report:

- Action 1 – Appraisal of route options.
- Action 2 – Provide appropriate mitigation to reduce the potential for conflict between pedestrians and cyclists and other vehicles.



- Action 3 – Introduce measures to manage the speed of cyclists on Unstone Hill.
- Action 4 – Introduce a wider shared route and additional warning measures outside Unstone Junior School.
- Action 6 – Introduce measures to support local businesses, including Unstone Post Office.
- Action 9 – Maximise the benefits from road narrowing in Unstone village.

The following actions are not contained in the body of the report, but are recommended as future actions to maximise the benefits of the route and to monitor concerns raised during public and stakeholder engagement.

### **Action 5 – Monitor pedestrian and cycle use along the route**

The EIA recommends that Officers carry out monitoring of the use of the route following 12 months of operation to consider impacts, including:

- A user interview survey, including a consideration of the operation of a narrow section of route north of Cheetham Avenue.
- Cycle and pedestrian counts to monitor usage of different route sections.
- Speed survey of cycle use.

### **Action 7 – Examine the creation of an off-road shared route via Mill Lane to Dronfield Railway Station**

The proposals set out in this report terminate off-road provision at Cemetery Road at the edge of Dronfield town centre. The EIA recommends that a feasibility study be carried out to examine an extension of off-road provision via Mill Lane into Dronfield town centre.

### **Action 8 – Promote opportunities for employees to cycle to work and children to cycle to school**

The EIA recommends that opportunities are taken via existing sustainable travel planning work with schools and businesses to encourage more people to walk and cycle to maximise modal shift.

### **Action 10 – Consider longer term opportunities for segregated routes**

The EIA recognises that proposals for a shared route along the B6057 corridor is appropriate for levels of usage. However, future KCN strategies for Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire cycle networks should consider full segregation between pedestrians and cyclists should significant modal shift occur.

(6) **Social Value Considerations** Sustainable transport investment will provide better connectivity along the B6057 corridor and improve access to jobs and services. The shared cycle path will improve connectivity to support the delivery of new employment growth sites, and develop a thriving tourism sector to support the creation of new jobs in the local economy.

(7) **Transport Considerations** The Council Plan (2017-21), the Derbyshire Local Transport Plan (2011-2026) and the Derbyshire Cycling Plan (2016-2030) supports the development of cycling and pedestrian networks. The proposals support the delivery of economic growth associated with new employment and leisure development by seeking to manage travel demand by prioritising walking and cycling improvements within the early build out period of new development.

### **Other Considerations**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, property, human resources, environmental, health and considerations.

(8) **Key Decision** No.

(9) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(10) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details - Jim Seymour, extension 38557.

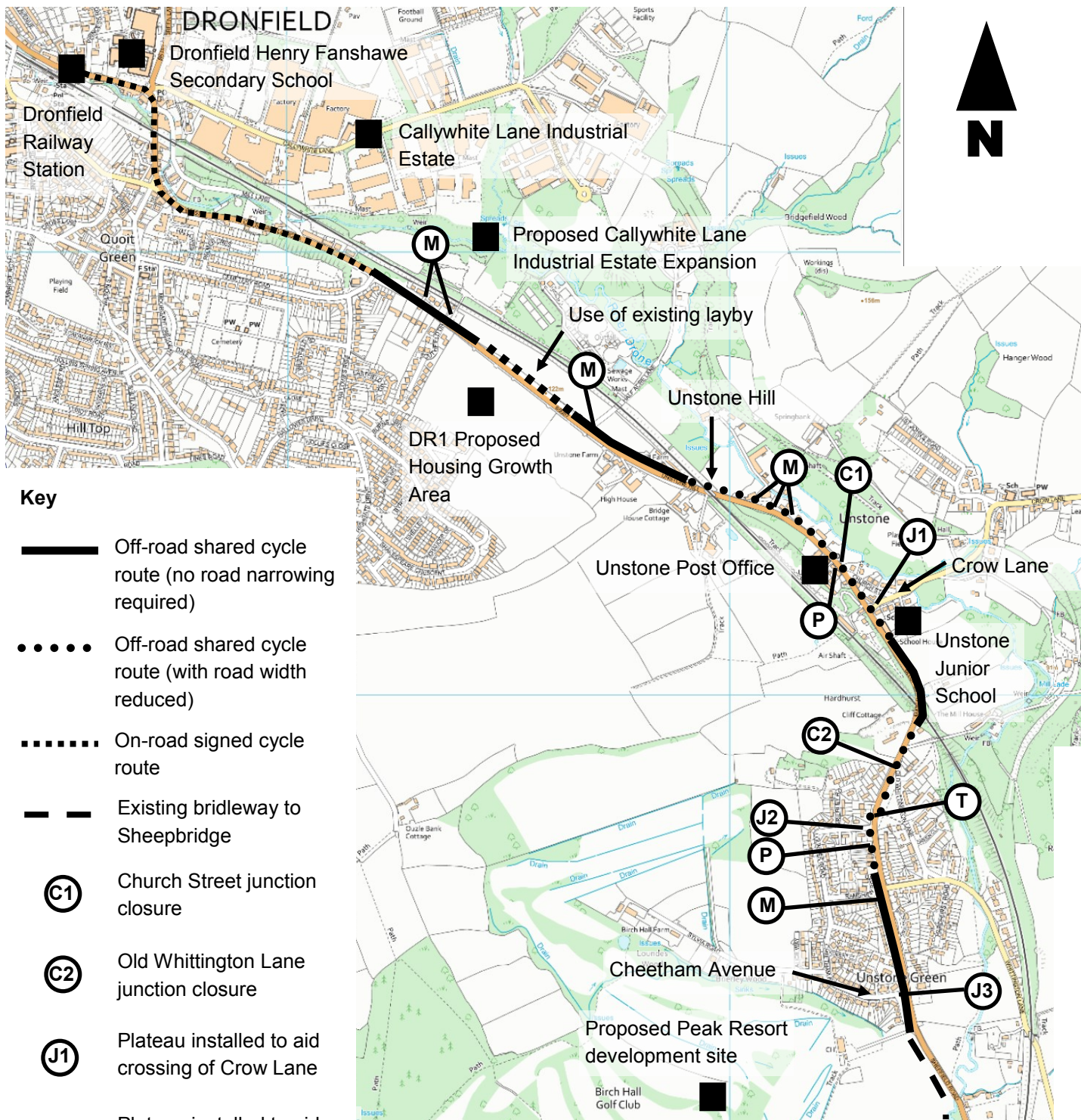
(11) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That:

- 11.1 A new, shared-use cycle path on the B6057 between Cemetery Road, Dronfield and the existing bridleway network at Unstone be implemented, as set out in this report.
- 11.2 Construction planning should be discussed with local businesses along the B6057 prior to works commencing.
- 11.3 Monitoring of pedestrian and cycle use on the route be carried out after 12 months of operation.
- 11.4 An off-road route connecting Cemetery Road to Dronfield Railway Station and opportunities for fully segregated routes are considered in due course.
- 11.5 Employees and school children are encouraged to use the new shared cycle route as part of ongoing travel planning work with local businesses and schools.
- 11.6 The Local Member and lead petitioner be informed accordingly.
- 11.7 The Cabinet Member notes that the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment intends to undertake the necessary steps

required by the Local Authorities' (Traffic Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 to make required Traffic Regulation Orders necessary to implement the proposals set out in this report.

- 11.8 A further report will be submitted to the Cabinet Member in the event that objections to the necessary Traffic Regulation Orders are received.
- 11.9 If no objections are received, the necessary Traffic Regulation Orders will be confirmed.

**Mike Ashworth**  
**Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment**



Crown copyright and database rights 2018.  
Ordnance Survey 100023251

## Appendix 1 B6057 Dronfield to Unstone Shared Cycle Route Proposals