

Agenda Item No. 4(c)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

28 July 2015

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**A616 CLOWNE TO CRESWELL – PROVISION OF A SHARED CYCLE
PATH AND REALLOCATION OF FUNDS FROM THE LOCAL TRANSPORT
PLAN TO THE CLOWNE BRANCH LINE PROJECT**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To seek the Cabinet Member's approval for the re-allocation of funds from the 2014 -15 Local Transport Plan for the A616 Clowne to Creswell, shared pedestrian cycleway project to the Clowne Branch Line Project and to inform Members of the consultation exercise that took place.

(2) **Information and Analysis**

Background

Concerns had been raised about the safety of cyclists using the A616 Sheffield Road from Clowne to Creswell. In order to improve cycle facilities on this route, a scheme was proposed to upgrade the existing footway and highway verge (along its southern side) into a shared pedestrian and cycle path, for a distance of approximately 1,500m, (see Appendix 1). The scheme was included as part of the 2014-15 Capital Programme.

Investigations have identified that the highway verge on this route is designated as a local wildlife site; the quality of the Magnesian limestone grassland means that common Glow Worms and Common Lizards are present. The designation covers both sides of the road verge.

Local stakeholders were consulted on the proposals and four objections were received, including one from Natural England and another from Local Member Duncan McGregor.

Councillor McGregor has stated that he wishes to object to the proposals to widen the existing footway on the A616 between Clowne and Creswell. His reasons for objecting are detailed below:

- *“It is unacceptable to endanger children and other pedestrians that already use the route, especially as there are a number of areas where the existing footway cannot be widened to an acceptable width to facilitate both cycles and pedestrians.*
- *At the locations where the footway cannot be widened, if cyclist dismount signs were erected they would be ignored, as cyclists are not likely to get on and off their bikes every time they encounter a narrow area of footway, therefore causing problems for pedestrians.*
- *The area is a designated local wildlife site and is also a road verge reserve, due to the significant quality of the Magnesium limestone grassland and wildlife in the area. It is also located next to the Markland Grips SSSI site. As this is such an important environmental area and other works, even grass cutting which is only carried out annually in a specific manner, have not been allowed in this area, so therefore why is this proposal of such importance that it overrides all of the above information?*
- *The proposed shared cycleway/footway only extends from Gapsick Lane junction in Clowne to the junction of Hazelmere Road, Creswell. How do cyclists actually travel to the proposed route as there are no other designated cycle routes to use in this area?*
- *What is the background to this scheme, how has it come about? Are there significant accidents to warrant such a scheme? Councillor McGregor would be very interested to see any accident reports, and also would like to read the ecological survey report that was carried out in the area.*
- *It is proposed to construct a multi-user path along the route of the old railway line which runs virtually parallel with the A616 between Clowne and Creswell, which would provide a much safer environment for cyclists to travel off road between the two communities, and therefore highlights the question of why would a shared cycleway/footway be required on the existing footway.”*

Officer Comments

Investigations identified that most, but not all, of the length of the existing footpath on the A616 Sheffield Road (along its southern side) could be upgraded to a shared pedestrian/cycle path. As a result, cyclists would be required to dismount on three narrower sections of the path which are of insufficient width to accommodate a shared pedestrian/cycle path.

An expansion of the footpath to create a cycleway in the protected road verge will result in a loss of glow worm and reptile habitat, as well as the flora. If the proposal was to go ahead, measures would need to be undertaken to protect relevant species, such as glow worms, reptiles and breeding birds, affected by the proposed works.

Officers consulted on the proposal to upgrade the existing footpath to a shared pedestrian/cycle path on the southern side of the A616 Sheffield Road, Clowne to Creswell. As a result of this process, four objections were received, including one from Natural England and another from Local Member Duncan McGregor. The objections are summarised below:

- The route is not suitable as cyclists would have to use the normal busy highway at each end of the path.
- Three sections are not suitable for widening, therefore cyclists would have to dismount on these sections.
- Three sections are not to be widened and could therefore present potential danger to both cyclists and pedestrians.
- Why is this proposal a priority in these difficult times?
- The path is well used and is part of the Markland Grips, being a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the grass is only cut once per year due to the fauna and insects.
- Any loss in the habitat would have very negative impacts on the known Glow Worm and Common Lizard populations.

There is also considerable desire for the creation of an off-road cycle/ pedestrian route connecting Clowne with Creswell along the former railway line. Where possible, it is preferable for cyclists to use dedicated cycleways, which are physically separate from the main road. Opening up of this route would enhance the calcareous grassland and retain a glow worm habitat on the A616 verge while providing a traffic free cycleway for commuters.

Members will be aware of a community event and ongoing investigatory works on the Clowne Branch Line Project, following £30,000 being secured from the Public Health Resource Fund for what is known as a “Green Tonic Project” in Clowne area. The “Green Tonic” groups being volunteers undertaking practical countryside management tasks that contribute to improved health and wellbeing and more information is detailed within a previous report which was submitted and approved at Cabinet Members meeting on the 5 May 2015. Following on from this, it has been identified that a bridged link is needed between Barton Street and Mitchell Street at Clowne to connect to the

branch line and it is therefore felt that the monies from the A616 cycleway project be re-allocate to create an easy access ramped connection together with any associated design costs.

In light of these early proposals and the detail of the objections from Councillor McGregor, officers feel that the proposal to upgrade the existing footway and highway verge into a shared pedestrian and cycle path is abandoned.

(3) **Financial Considerations** This work forms part of the approved Local Transport Plan 2014-15 Capital Programme of works and included a budget of £50,000.

Other Considerations

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

(4) **Key Decision** No.

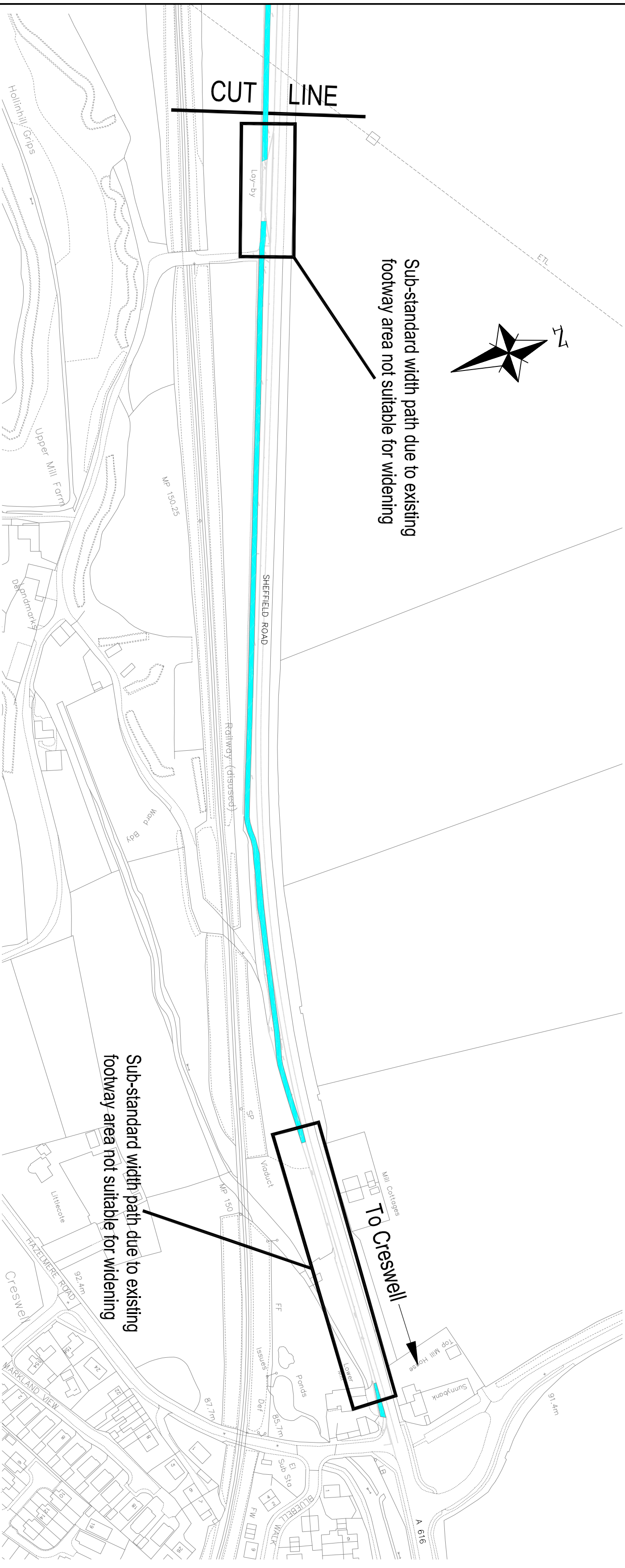
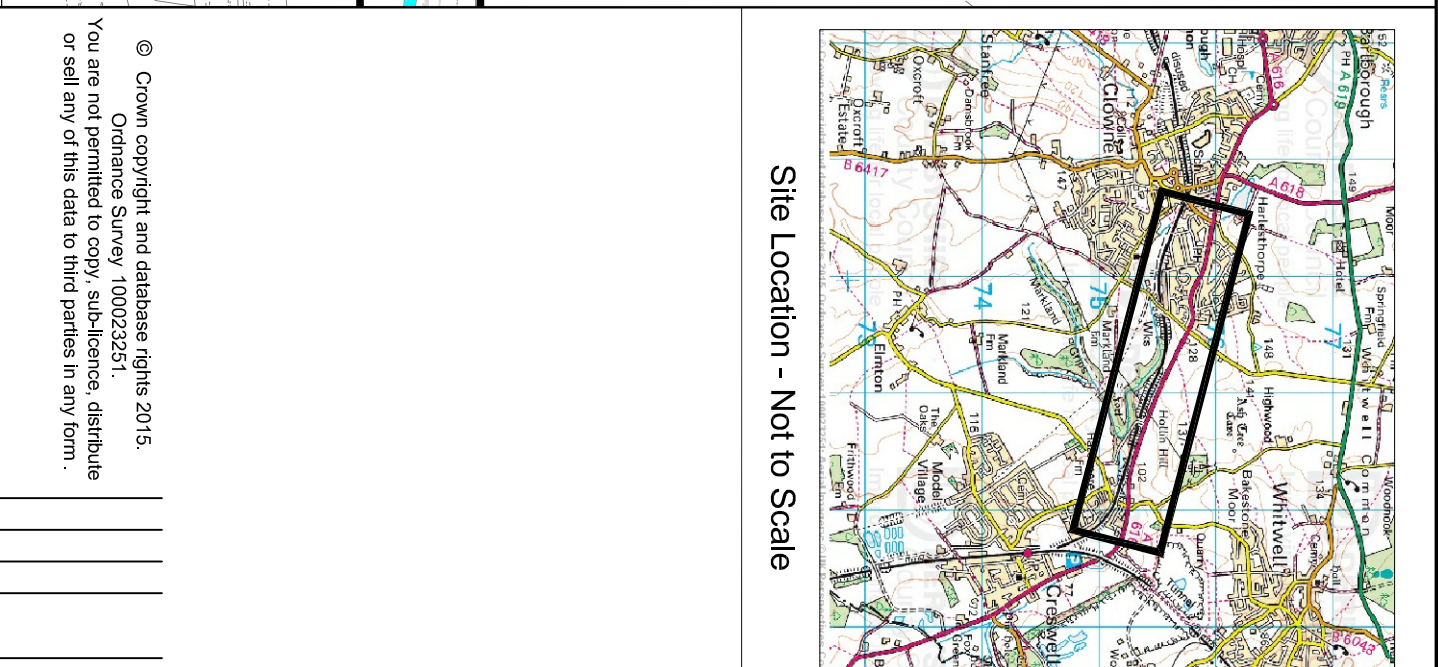
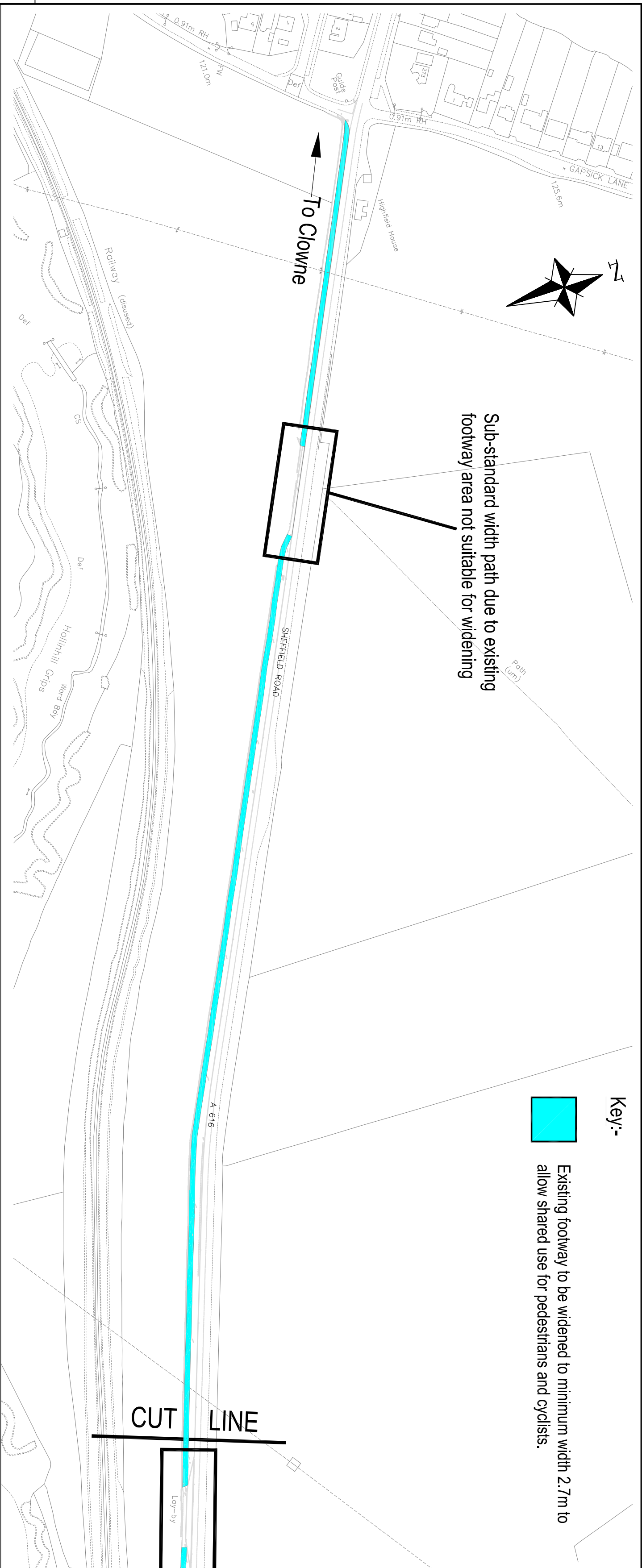
(5) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(6) **Background Papers** Correspondence held on file in the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – Lee Wright, extension 38674.

(7) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That the Cabinet Member:

- 7.1 Approves that the scheme for a shared cycle path on the A616 Clowne to Creswell be deleted from the 2014-15 Local Transport Plan.
- 7.2 Approves that the allocation for the above project (7.1) of the £50,000 budget from 2014 – 15 Local Transport Plan be transferred to the Clowne Branch Line Project to create an easy access ramped connection, together with any associated design costs.

Mike Ashworth
Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment



AMENDMENT DETAILS		By	Date						
DRAWN BY J. Watson	CHECKED BY T. Mather	APPROVED BY T. Mather							
Date 5/5/2015	Date 7/5/2015	Date 7/5/2015							
ORIGINAL DRAWING SIZE 420 x 594 (A2)									



DERBYSHIRE
County Council

Improving life for local people

Mike Ashworth
Strategic Director - Economy, Transport and Environment

ECONOMY, TRANSPORT & ENVIRONMENT
HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT
HIGHWAY DESIGN



PROJECT TITLE	A616 CLOWNE TO CRESWELL PROPOSED SHARED FOOTWAY - CYCLEWAY
DRAWING TITLE	CONSULTATION PLAN

DCE Project Reference Number	14-030209	SCALE	Not to Scale
Drawing Number	14-030209/Cons1		