

District Councillor's Report to June 2017 Parish Council Meeting

Proposed Footpath Along the Z Bends

Following on from previous updates with regard to a footpath along the Z bends on Wigan Road I have had a further update and can confirm that this footway scheme has now been added to Wigan Councils Strategic Transport Route Assessment Plan (STRAP). The STRAP provides a list of potential interventions which could be implemented to help reduce congestion on our strategic road network. The list of schemes will be used for future bids for funding should funding become available.

As I have pointed out previously this is a long term project especially given the current financial climate and I have been pursuing this since being elected and don't expect a quick resolution, however to be added to the S.T.R.A.P is a significant step forward and my colleagues Mike Crosby Damian Edwardson and I believe that this is an issue worth persevering with on behalf of our residents.

I have put a brief outline of the issue below for your information so you can understand some of the issues involved:

B5375 WIGAN ROAD, SHEVINGTON ("Z" BENDS)

CONSTRUCTION OF FOOTWAY ALONG WESTERN EDGE

The B5375 Wigan Road links Shevington with Wigan through the more rural areas of Crooke and Standish Lower Ground. The route is also used by traffic travelling between Wigan town centre and Junction 27 of the M6, to bypass possible congestion on the A49 primary route.

The existing route comprises a carriageway which narrows to 6 metres in width in places, with no adjoining footway on either side. This forces vulnerable users to travel in the carriageway where there is little space for vehicles to safely manoeuvre around them.

The proposal is to construct a 2m wide footway along the Western side of the carriageway from opposite the entrance to John Pit to opposite number 64 Wigan Road, a distance of some 465 metres.

There is no natural safe crossing point at the southern end of the proposed footpath which is further complicated by the guardrail to the culvert being erected on the edge of the carriageway. The culvert itself would also have to be extended. A suitable safe crossing point would have to be defined at this location.

The existing footpath to the eastern edge of the carriageway at the southern end is 1.6m.

The existing footpath to the Western edge of the carriageway at the northern end is 1.2m.

There is an existing footpath 25m long at the entrance to Launswold Stud/Vauses Farm; however, the width at this point is restricted to 1.0m between the garden wall and the carriageway.

Appendix A

There are two existing BT poles and eleven lighting columns within the line of the proposed footpath which will require re-positioning.

The creation of a footway at this location will require the removal of several mature trees, and also the removal of a well-established hedgerow. A previous scheme proposed for the opposite side of the road would be less damaging as the trees and hedgerows on that side are of lower quality and condition. The Capital Asset Value of these trees should also be taken into account.

Observations at this location have identified problems with larger vehicles, such as HGVs and buses. There is little widening along the curves of the route, making it difficult for large vehicles to pass within the confines of the existing carriageway when travelling in opposite directions. There is a concern that these larger vehicles may overrun the proposed footway whilst negotiating the bends and smaller vehicles may drive over it to avoid larger vehicles. This would create a hazard for pedestrians using the footway. On a positive note the provision of a footway and the necessary removal of the trees/hedgerows would improve visibility around the bends.

This section of carriageway is recognized as a secondary distributor used by numerous commercial vehicles and buses in each direction. There are few pedestrian generators along this section of carriageway which would suggest that the majority of pedestrians may use this footway for leisure purposes only.

The costs to deal with the existing culvert and construct the footway are estimated to be in the region of £100,000. This does not take into account removal/replanting of existing trees/hedgerows, land acquisition costs, accommodation works and statutory undertakers' works all of which could substantially increase this estimate.

Shevington Vale Community Primary School

As part of the ongoing transition process re Shevington Vale Primary school a decision by Portfolio Holder for Resources and Reform has been published:

Shevington Vale Primary - Tender Acceptance

Decision: The Portfolio Holder for Resources and Reform agrees the agreed maximum price and appoints the successful contractor, Warden Construction Ltd, to the project to address essential condition issues and remodelling to increase the capacity to 210 pupils; including budget release for the project.

Dist Cllr Paul Collins