

SHALLCROSS INCLINE RECLAMATION SCHEME

Planning application for the change of use of a former railway line and associated land and the creation of a multi-user trail for the public

Design and Access Statement

INTRODUCTION

This planning application seeks approval for the construction of a Greenway multi user trail and associated infrastructure along the disused Shallcross Incline section of line. The section of the former railway line under consideration starts adjacent to the scout hut on Shallcross Mill Road, and ends at the intersection with a private lane on Shallcross Crescent. The area of land under consideration is owned by Whaley Bridge Town Council.

HISTORY

Shallcross was once a stop on the Cromford and High Peak Railway line, which crossed the hills to connect the Peak Forest Canal terminal at Whaley Bridge with the Cromford Canal 30 miles to the south.

Shallcross Incline was a notable feature of this line, as the rail cars had to be pulled up the steep incline by a steam engine at the top of the hill. Opened in 1831, the northern end of the railway, including the Shallcross station, was abandoned in 1892.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Derbyshire County Council plans to introduce a new link on the Goyt Valley Trail in Whaley Bridge, Derbyshire. The new proposed link commences at the northern end of the incline, adjacent to the scout hut on Shallcross Mill Road (off New Road) and proceeding approximately 520 metres up the incline, eventually terminating at Shallcross Road.

The objective of the works is to construct an enhanced specification multi user 'greenway' route to reclaim the land from its current state as a disused railway line. The finished greenway will comprise a 2.4m wide formalised surface which will improve accessibility, commuting and leisure opportunities for a wider variety of user groups including pedestrians, runners, cyclists and horse riders. The route will also provide a safe route to school.

The Goyt Valley Trail is an existing route as shown on Drg. No. 9316/1/001 consisting of a surfaced track for the majority of its length. This proposals will serve as a continuation.

Preparatory works will be required in advance of undertaking the main construction works. A programme of vegetation clearance will be undertaken in order to open up a continuous corridor along the full 520m stretch of the proposed route between Shallcross Mill Road and Shallcross Crescent. The target will be to clear an unobstructed corridor with an overhead clearance of 4m approx and a minimum width of 3m which includes the 2.4m finished width of the newly constructed greenway.

This scheme will provide a valuable section of Greenway as identified in the Derbyshire Greenways Strategy and Derbyshire Local Transport Plan Strategic Cycle network.

PROPOSALS

This scheme will provide a multi-user trail for the general public incorporating the removal of existing dereliction, site clearance of debris, waste and foreign material, selected vegetation removal, earthworks to create suitable construction surfaces and gradients, construction of an all weather surfaced track, provision of new drainage, structural repairs and improvements, provision of new access points and associated gate arrangements. The new Greenway will link to other trails and Rights of Way in the area. The proposals will create a facility available for walking and cycling as part of a sustainable transport network. It will also provide new 'Access for All' facilities for disabled and less mobile users.

POLICY AND STRATEGY

The following policies and strategies are provided to outline the necessary support for the application and due consideration has been given in design and construction of the proposed greenway.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND REGIONS

Extract from PPG13 – Transport

- 4.16 Plans may include policies for cycle use of redundant railway lines or space alongside canals and rivers. Sometimes such routes may serve the dual purpose of providing linear parks in urban areas. Routes shared with pedestrians, and sometimes with horseriders, should be considered where space allows. Provision of cycle routes and cycle priority measures should be encouraged in new development. As with pedestrian routes, care needs to be taken to ensure that cycle routes are not isolated from all other activity.
- 4.17 Authorities should encourage the provision of secure cycle parking at public transport interchanges, including railway stations and park and ride facilities, to increase the opportunities to use cycles in combination with public transport and car sharing. Provision of secure cycle parking facilities should be sought in all major developments and in town centres, and at educational institutions.
- 4.18 The Government 1992 White Paper "Health of the Nation" contained specific proposals for developing targets concerned with the health benefits of physical activity and set targets for the reduction of accidents. The creation of safer areas for pedestrians and cyclists can help to ensure that the promotion of physical activity does not expose people to a higher risk of accidental injury, and make contribution to meeting the Government objectives.

Extract from PPG 17 – Sport and Recreation

Local plans should contain policies on the potential use of disused railway tracks, which have an important part to play in offering recreational opportunities in urban areas and the countryside. For example, such tracks can be transformed into footpaths or cycleways, which provide safer alternatives to urban roads, or give access to the countryside. When proposals for redeveloping goods yards or station sites on such

routes are being considered, the aim should be to preserve a corridor for recreational use in order not to interrupt a significant length of disused track with recreational potential. Where a local authority has an opportunity to purchase a disused line, consideration should be given to its potential recreational value.

West Derbyshire High Peak Greenway Strategy

Policy 5 - GD6 – LANDSCAPING

Planning Permission will be granted for development provided that: where appropriate, it will contain a high standard of hard and/or soft landscape treatment in keeping with the character of the area, including the integration of existing features and the use of native species suitable to the location. Conditions will be imposed, and/or planning obligations sought, to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to maintain and manage landscaping features.

Policy 11 - OC3 - SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA DEVELOPMENT

Within the Special Landscape Area defined on the proposals map, development in accordance with policies OC1 and OC2 will be permitted, provided that it will not detract from the special qualities and character of the Special Landscape Area. Where development is permitted in the Special Landscape Area the developer will be required to have special regard to the landscape quality of the area in relation to siting, design and landscaping.

Policy 12 - OC4 - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND DESIGN

Planning Permission will be granted for development considered appropriate in the Countryside provided that its design is appropriate to the character of the landscape. Appropriate design of development shall accord with the characteristics of the type of landscape within which it is located including having regard to and conserving: the landform and natural patterns of drainage; the pattern and composition of trees and woodland; the type and distribution of wildlife habitats; the pattern and composition of field boundaries; the pattern and distribution of settlements and roads;

Countryside

Policy 3 - GD4 – CHARACTER, FORM AND DESIGN

Planning Permission will be granted for development, provided that: Its scale, siting, layout, density, form, height, proportions, design, colour and materials of construction, elevations and fenestration and any associated engineering, landscaping or other works will be sympathetic to the character of the area, and there will not be undue detrimental effect on the visual qualities of the locality or the wider landscape

Policy 9 - OC1 - COUNTRYSIDE DEVELOPMENT

The Countryside will cover all land beyond the Built-Up Area Boundaries defined on the proposals map, including the Green Belt and Special Landscape Area. Within the Countryside, Planning Permission will be granted for development which is an integral part of the rural economy and which can only be carried out in the Countryside provided that individually or cumulatively: the development will not detract from an area where the open character of the countryside is particularly vulnerable because of its prominence or the existence of a narrow gap between settlements; and the development will not generate significant numbers of people or traffic to the detriment

of residential amenity, highway safety, landscape or air quality or otherwise have an unacceptable urbanising influence; and the development will not have a significant adverse impact on the character and distinctiveness of the countryside. Policies relating to specific categories of development acceptable in the Countryside can be found under individual topic headings elsewhere in the plan.

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Environment Policy 4: Derelict Land Reclamation

- 8.56 In drawing up programmes for derelict land reclamation, preference will be given to schemes within the environmental improvement priority areas which provide land for employment generating uses or housing, which improve the potential of a locality for investment or which improve the general environment and/or the provision of recreational, social and community facilities.
- 8.57 In preparing reclamation schemes, sites and features of natural or built heritage importance will be conserved or enhanced wherever possible.
- 8.58 The potential for the creation and management of habitats and landscape features will be given consideration in the determination of after-uses on reclamation sites.

LOCAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY 2006 – 2021

The County's Strategic Transport Aim is to improve local accessibility and promote healthy and sustainable travel choices. Greenways help to achieve this aim which also helps to deliver the transport needs of the Regional Economic Strategy.

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLANS 2006 – 2011

The Local Transport Plan that covers the County is fundamental to the setting of policy and guiding the implementation for walking and cycling initiatives. The development of Greenways fit with the shared objectives of Accessibility, Safety, Tackling Congestion, Improving Air Quality and Quality of Life. The development of new walking and cycling routes is integral to the plan, which identifies a Strategic Cycle Network.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT'S 2010/2011 SERVICE PLAN

Furthermore, the scheme is identified as a priority in the Environmental Services Department's 2008/2009 Service plan under the following:

- Appendix 6 ~ ATA4 Strategic Cycle Network;
- Appendix 10 ~ DJ4 Local Accessibility and Environmental improvements;
- Appendix 11 ~ Derelict Land Reclamation Capital Programme;
- Appendix 12 ~ Countryside Service Programme.

RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2007 – 2012

Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan informs the Local Transport Plan and holds the continued development of the Greenway network as a key element to achieving an improved and better connected path network.

- Aim 3: Provide a more connected, safe and accessible network suitable for all users.
- Identified Need: 3e) Continue with the development of the Greenway programme for the county.
- Proposed actions: iii Continue to develop a multi user greenway network for everyday and recreational journeys. Target 60km of new greenway to be developed 2006-2012 from routes identified in the LTP2 Strategic Cycle Network.

SITE OF INTEREST

The proposed greenway should not have any impact on the Whaley Bridge Conservation area which is approximately 150m north of the greenway.

LAND OWNERSHIP

The area under consideration is owned by Whaley Bridge Town Council.

CONSTRUCTION

For details of the construction layout see drawings 9316/1/001 – 9316/1/006 and standard details B5, B12, M22, M23.

The greenway will be 2.40 metres wide and be constructed of a compacted limestone or similar material topped off with tarmac 'toptrec' or similar approved hard wearing surface material.

There will be a requirement to create a working corridor to allow the safe construction of the scheme and ensure the trails sustainability into the future, the corridor should be approximately 4.00m high and 3.00m wide, although there are areas where existing trees should be left in place to ensure the area retains its natural character.

As part of the proposals, site clearance will be carried out to remove any hazards, general debris or fly tipped material deposited on the site over the years.

LANDSCAPE

Engineering works will be confined to within the width of the proposed greenway surface. Remedial landscape works will only consist of minor areas of seeding to re-establish grass cover adjacent to the finished greenway where localised disturbances may have occurred as a result of the works.

WILDLIFE, ECOLOGY AND PROTECTED SPECIES

Engineering works will be implemented in such a manner as to keep disturbance to wildlife to a minimum, namely all works will be confined to the width of the proposed

trail. Where it is necessary to implement works out side of the proposed width then this will only be allowed where any potential disturbance to flora and fauna is minimal and unavoidable.

All works shall be carried out in accordance with the recommendations contained within the following report:

Extended Phase 1 Survey, Shallcross Incline / September 2010. M. Hampton,
J. Brickland, Peakecology Ltd. Ecological Consultant

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The reclamation works will not have any significant impact upon the environment or any known site of environmental interest.

The trimming and pruning of existing vegetation to facilitate track construction is not considered to diminish any possible environmental significance attributed to the extant vegetation.

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that all contractors' plant and machinery will be fit for purpose and will be serviced and maintained to manufacturer's specifications and operated in such a manner that noise and dust emissions are reduced to a minimum.

The proposed greenway will not be lit permanently by lamp posts, but temporary lighting may be used during the construction period if carried out during the winter period.

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that dust, vibration, noise and odours will be kept to a minimum during the construction works.

Materials required for the construction works will be delivered via the site entrance shown on Drg. No. 9316/1/002 and will be stored on non-ecologically sensitive areas. The allocated areas for Contractor compound and/or materials storage shall be selected carefully, with a view to minimising potential ecological disturbance and in line with the recommendations contained within the Extended Phase 1 Survey, Shallcross Incline.

ACCESS TO SITE

For the purpose of constructing the works, access into the site will be via Shallcross Mill Road, as shown on Drg. No. 9316/1/002. Further, there is an opportunity to access the upper areas of the proposed trail from Shallcross Crescent.

As described, access via Shallcross Mill Road will be the primary access. However, it may be necessary on occasion to utilise the other access points. Care shall be taken to ensure that all transport utilised to carry plant, machinery and materials transported to/from site are suitable for the local and wider transport network, taking into consideration (but not limited to):

- Highway transport weight restrictions;
- Reduced highway widths;

Suitable traffic management shall be employed at site accesses.

HOURS OF WORK

Hours of work will be 0700 – 1900 Monday to Friday, 0700 – 1300 Saturday with no working on Saturday afternoon, Sundays and Bank holidays.

TIMESCALE

5 week contract period, works to be completed by the end of December 2010

