

Catcheside, Emily - Oxfordshire County Council

From: Harris, Paul - Oxfordshire County Council
Sent: 05 April 2022 14:55
To: Catcheside, Emily - Oxfordshire County Council
Cc: Hamer, Katherine - Oxfordshire County Council
Subject: HIF1 Planning Application Comments (Public Rights of Way)

Dear Emily,

With regards to this application I have the following broad-brush comments to make. I've put these in bullet points but I'm happy to provide more information as needed.

1. **Walk, Cycle, horse-ride assessment & review (WCHAR).** The comprehensive nature of this is noted, but there are two points that need to be considered. Firstly the assessment is based on use-count surveys for one week in November. This could have been expanded to a set of survey periods that included spring and summer bank/public holidays and for a greater number of weeks. I am satisfied that the results of the survey are broadly sufficient. Secondly, the WCHAR extends to only 1km from the centreline of the development. Whilst the reasoning behind this is understood, sometimes there may be paths or users that could be affected by the development away from that boundary but are not included. I am satisfied that on balance there is no need to extend the survey distance.
2. **Route alterations.** No changes to the public right of way's legally recorded direction or width must be made without first securing appropriate temporary or permanent diversion through separate legal process. For permanent diversions this is normally s257 TCPA 1990 but it may also be achieved through Side Roads Order. If the SRO forms part of the application then diversion proposals need to be shown. Temporary changes have their own lead times. PRow that will be unchanged still require protection and mitigation throughout the build processes. This either means the current line needs fencing off along with adequate stand-offs and surfacing, or additional mitigation identified in the CTEMP is employed.
3. **Offsite mitigation s106.** It is noted that there is consideration of public rights of way uses and that overall, access for NMUs will increase. Both these provisions are welcomed as addressing localised direct impacts of the scheme. It is considered likely that the roads network in the wider locality may experience an increase in traffic volumes as a result of this infrastructure scheme as well as the additional housing linked to it. Despite the mitigation in the scheme there may be additional demand for access away from traffic for recreational and leisure users. OCC Countryside Access will therefore monitor the impact of the scheme on the area access network and NMUs and will seek to secure funds from all sources for necessary improvement, extension and upgrades on highways and with 3rd party landowners in line with the aims of the adopted OCC Rights of Way Management Plan aims.

Highways GA sheet-specific comments

4. Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 1: The proposed raised parallel NMu crossings on the two minor road arms appear to be very close to the new A4130 roundabout. I would ask that this is assessed under RSA 1/2

5. Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 2: Footpath 243/3 needs to have access provided through the VRS/hedging to connect with the shared use footway/cycleway. A replacement sign needs to be installed, possibly indicating that the route is a cul-de-sac at the A34
6. Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 3: Although use of Cow Lane bridleway and routes onwards towards Didcot are not used by equestrians, the proposals shouldn't do anything to make access worse for them. From the plan it is clear that access is not being made worse.
7. Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 4: The Science Bridge might benefit from some kind of physical separation measures between vehicle traffic and NMUs to give confidence to users. As the shared foot/cycle path will be bi-directional there needs to be enough width in each lane to enable use by less confident users. There may also need to be headlight glare reduction so that NMUs are not dazzled by oncoming vehicle headlights. Speed management in the form of average speed cameras may be considered here given the close proximity to NMUs and the presence of the drop the other side of the parapet. Please give consideration to this in detailed design or RSA. These are not grounds for objection just suggestions to consider.
8. Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 5 (image extract below): It is assumed that the indicated parallel crossings' for NMUs are either signalised or NMU-priority? How will the left hand turn for road users prevent harm to NMUs? The overrun strip will extend the hazard area for NMUs and they will have to monitor traffic on the main road the the junction. This may need reviewing.



9. Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 6: The new bridleway/NCN 5 alignment seems to provide reasonable access for NMUs and ties in with other NMU route options
10. Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 7: The Collett Roundabout and connecting routes seem to provide reasonable access for NMUs and ties in with other NMU route options
11. Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 8: The proposed bridleway link is welcomed. A diversion/stopping up process is likely to be needed to remove or move bridleway rights from the access road/haul road onto the new route. The new bridleway's width, surface, fencing, furniture and signing should all be agreed with OCC Countryside Access. If agreement cannot be reached under s25 Highways Act 1980 the its creation should be achieved through s26Highways Act1990 Creation Order or inclusion in the Side Roads Order.
12. Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 9: The proposed bridleway link is welcomed. A diversion/stopping up process is likely to be needed to remove or move public rights currently running along the access road/haul road onto the new route. A TRO or stopping up process will be needed for the 'stub' PRoWs running to Appleford railway crossing. In addition a legal process will be required to divert/stop up byway 373/10/restricted byway

106/4 rights along the haul road and replace these with a bridleway on a separate margin. The new bridleway's width, surface, fencing, furniture and signing should all be agreed with OCC Countryside Access. Given the presence of the haul road there needs to be physical separation measures between the shared use bridleway and the road (a combination of verge, vegetation and barrier is recommended) along with vehicle speed restraint measures.

Note that there is an aspiration for a grade-separated NMU crossing at Appleford railway line to provide access along the B4016 to the NCN and PRow network. This scheme could make provision for this facility to be included in the new highway so that access could be easily retrofitted and activated. It is noted that the proposed Toucan crossing to the south of the new haul road junction could provide this future connectivity.

13.Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 10: No comment

14.Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 11: No comment

15.Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 12 (image extract below): Access for cyclists between Sutton Courtenay and Appleford Station should be made easy as a result of this road development. I am concerned that a shared used cycleway is provided the whole way – this could use suitable PRow if there was not the space on the B4016 road, subject to permissions. There needs to be user controlled crossings at all points so that NMUs have priority.



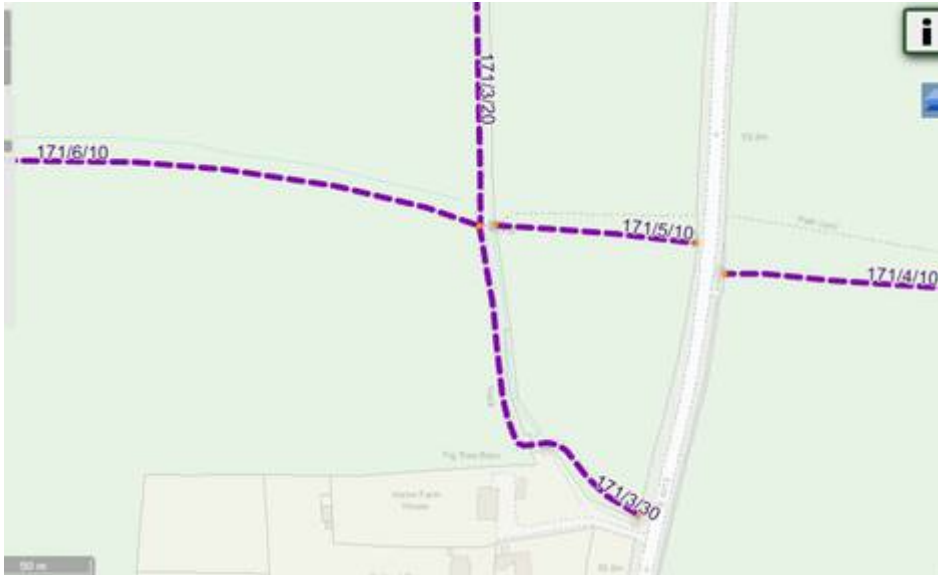
16.The new Thames Bridge would benefit from physical separation measures between vehicle traffic and NMUs – possibly in the form of VRS or raised kerbing to give confidence to users. As the shared foot/cycle path will be bi-directional there needs to be enough width in each lane to enable use by less confident users. There may also need to be headlight glare reduction so that NMUs are not dazzled by oncoming vehicle headlights. Speed management in the form of average speed cameras should be considered here given the close proximity to NMUs and the presence of the drop the other side of the parapet. Note

that there are likely to be many NMUs using this bridge as a destination so careful consideration should be made of providing a viewing area/refuge area so that these people stopping to not impact on moving NMUs. A personal example from a French Voie Verte alongside the River Loire is shown below where the road employs two types of physical separation barriers on different road types along the same route. I am not objecting to the proposal, just suggesting using an example from France where access for less confident users including accompanied young children can be made better.



17. Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 13: See above for 'refuge/viewing area' comment. The proposed footpath access to the Thames is welcomed. This should be provided as a maintenance and emergency vehicle access route (with public footpath rights) – suitably surfaced to 2.5m+ width and with lockable anti-vehicle gates installed. Signage and other measures should give access for walkers and prevent cyclists and other types of user gaining access. The restriction area should have a facility for maintenance vehicles with/out plant trailers to pull in safely off the carriageway whilst gates are being unlocked
18. Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 14: No comments
19. Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 15: No comments
20. Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 16: This is a complex layout affecting a substantial area and I hope this can be rendered in 3d so that landscape, amenity and biodiversity benefits can be optimised. The layout needs to be logical and coherent for NMUs as well as road users. At this stage I am not asking for changes – merely to be able to see the layout please.
21. Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 17: No comments
22. Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 18: No comments
23. Highways GA/Landscape Sheet 19 (image extract below): The road arrangements necessitates a partial diversion of footpath 171/5 and its resurfacing. Part of the route of 171/3 is affected by a new road crossing it and the offline uncontrolled crossing point is noted. If it is within scope provision of a replacement footbridge between 171/5 and 171/6 could be considered along with surface and other improvements to the footpaths within the road corridor – 171/3, 171/5 and 171/6





Please let me know if you need additional comment/detail

Kind regards, Paul

Paul Harris BSc MSc MIPROW
Principal Officer – Public Rights of Way Access Strategy & Development
Oxfordshire County Council
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/countrysideaccess