

P3 Pathways Group Meeting

30th March 2021, 7.30pm Online (Zoom)

Attended: Tom Currie (Chair) Brian Gaskin, John Seales Denise Davies, Graham Davies, John Hall, Sandy Walker, Andrew Careless

Apologies: David Brown, Sue Brown, Nick West, Tom Manley, John Seales, Tom and Louise Kiely, Connor Furnival, Rodington Parish Council

1. Welcome

TC welcomed all to the meeting and to SW as this was his first meeting. Introductions made.

2. Notes and actions (notes of 23.2.21)

Noted.

TC reported back on the outstanding issue at the Old Smithy, Longdon on Tern. Discussion had taken place with Phillip Davies, Sugden Farm and Mr Paul Ralphs of Sherwood, Sugden Lane / Rodington Road. There is an informal route via a field gate adjacent to Mr Ralphs' property, a bungalow. A formal complaint has been made to Telford and Wrekin Council reporting the blocking of the route through the Old Smithy. This has hitherto been the access route to R16 but this is disputed by the owner. AC confirmed there is no ROW marked on the definitive map, and no historical record. That said, there is a well maintained stile on that property and it is local knowledge that this is an established right of way. Therein lies the dispute. PD has padlocked the field gate, as access via this gate is causing Mr Ralph and family quite a lot of stress. TC advised Mr Ralph to submit a formal complaint, with supporting information. Discussion ensued in the group and the following was agreed:

Actions – AC will contact Mr Ralph and advise him of the options available.

As for the group, it was agreed to arrange a site visit to review the options, and discuss these with Philip Davies.

Action – Arranged to meet on Thurs 8/4/21 2pm at Tayleur Arms and invite Phillip Davies to attend if available.

3. Substantive Discussion – R6/R4b

AC confirmed an intention to consult on a diversion of route at Rodenhurst Lane's approach to Oakhurst. According to evidence, Rodenhurst Lane constitutes a 'Restricted Byway', or an existing right of way; there is ample historical evidence of useage. The proposal is to provide a 3 Mtr wide (statutory width) surface with compacted MOT (min 4cm deep) rolled. This would connect with Rodenhurst Lane at the gate point, opposite Oakhurst; it will maintain the ROW but divert it around the side of the farm cottages, to exit onto ROW 4B. Effectively this will reduce the potential for injury risk as pedestrians currently go through the Business Park where there is constant forklift truck and construction activity. Health and Safety is the major consideration.

SW confirmed that business activity volumes are only going to increase, and confirmed this proposal made good sense.

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DD and GD objected to the proposal, as they had previously expressed concerns about this possible diversion. Questions were raised concerning the possible degradation over time of the new route, if this was created.

TC sought confirmation of who would be responsible for maintaining the new route.

AC confirmed it would be Telford and Wrekin.

DD raised the issue of how the new route would be fenced off.

AC confirmed this would be done properly, down the full length of the new route.

SW asked for clarification on what forms of transport would be allowed to access the new route.

AC confirmed this can and would be built in from the start, to prevent access by motor vehicles, but not horses, or cyclists, pushchairs etc. This rationalisation would also form part of the legal dedication of the route under NERC legislation.

GD – What if Telford and Wrekin failed to meet its responsibilities to maintain the route?

AC – There is a legal remedy available by making an application via the Magistrates Court. However, he stressed this route would be installed to the correct highway standards, and maintained. AC also confirmed that Telford and Wrekin Council would negotiate funding of the installation of the new route with SW.

AC confirmed gates would be installed at both ends of the new route, with clear signage.

GD – Expressed concerns about getting the job done on time, given the delays experienced to date on installation of basic signposts/ gates on other routes.

SW – Understands these concerns, but stressed the health and safety concerns arising from increased industrial use of the Business Park. He said, “There’s an accident waiting to happen...”

GD – concerned that this is a big undertaking and asked about the timescale involved.

AC – indicated this would be a minimum of 4 months and, if opposed, could take up to 12 months. There followed discussions on ownership of Rodenhurst Lane and who would need to be consulted.

GD – said the implications of the new route would be closing off access to Rodenhurst Business Park from Rodington and this will require signage.

SW – Confirmed the official route to the Business Park is already via Ercall Mill end. SW will re-install signage if/where required.

AC – confirmed there would have to be full public consultation. All plans would go to respective landowners and interested parties, vis Oakhurst, Honeysuckle Cottage etc.

4. Route 3

There was a discussion on the stated intentions of NW to have R3 leading down his Northern boundary to R6 (2 stiles to be replaced by a kissing-gate) and then following the Eastern boundary South to the entrance from Church Lane. These proposals are fully supported and the request to progress this was again made to AC.

AC confirmed the first stage of outstanding work will be completed as we come into April and the new budget.

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5. Route 7

Entering Rodenhurst Lane and crossing onto R7, this route crossed land owned by GD. He has previously stated a request to move this parallel to its current route across his land, but to avoid a severely flooded area. R7 will retain its current route West of Rodenhurst Lane but access needs urgent improvement.

AC confirmed this diversion would have to await the determination of Rodenhurst Lane (dedications of route) but that it should not present any problem, probable timescale being 3 months. AC agreed this diversion made good practical sense. Application costs would normally rest with the landowner but these will be waived.

6. AOB

DD asked whether the new proposed route would make any difference to the access between R6 and 4B in the interim. Also if there would any restrictions in the longer term in prevented use by landowners on Rodenhurst Lane.

AC – Confirmed there was no change whatsoever on either point. However, he had asked that the accessibility be improved adjacent to the two barriers on the Business Park.

SW confirmed this had already been agreed, and work will be undertaken shortly.

Route R8 – This route is unused and an application will be made by SW to extinguish this.

Longdon on Tern – JH confirmed a notice-board currently needs replacing by the Shrewsbury and Newport Canal Trust. There's no local map showing the existing rights of way; this will be updated on the new notice board.

JH mentioned difficulties of access onto Long Waste (motorbike racing track) and Red House Farm where a ROW goes through a private garden and the local landowner has prevented access.

Next meeting 18th May 2021, 7.30pm at The Bull, Rodington