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Subject: Stonehenge A303 ISH on draft DCO and OEMP Written submission following oral presentation given on 30 August 2019 [Ref 20017562]
Date: 03 September 2019 11:52:07

To the Planning Inspectorate

From Myra Bennett, British Horse Society Wiltshire County Access Officer (Ref 20017562)

1 The Cycleway (shown on the TRO10025 - 2.9 General Arrangement Drawings Sheet 4 and 5) between the end of Bridleway Z (TRO10025 – 2.6 Rights of Way and Access Plans sheet 4) east of Green Bridge 2 parallel to the old A303 out of Winterbourne Stoke and Bridleway Y (Ibid sheet 5) beginning just east of the new Longbarrow roundabout was originally designated as a Bridleway (see TRO00025-334-6-2 26 October 2018).

I submit that entire length of the route Bridleway Z, Cycleway out of Winterbourne Stoke, round the new Longbarrow roundabout and on east over Bridleway Z must retain the designation Bridleway.

This allows for the avoidance of all doubt in the future that equestrians have a legal right of way out of Winterbourne Stoke, and around the new Longbarrow roundabout via suitable Pegasus crossings.

The designation Cycleway does not in law necessarily confer equestrian rights of way*. The route designated Cycleway as above is a vital East–West link in the improved access offered for equestrians by the scheme and a crucial legacy for riders and livery yard businesses in the area. The designation Bridleway confers on cyclists and walkers an equal legal right of way with horse riders, and does not preclude the use of a suitable shared-use surface; there is therefore no impact of the designation Bridleway rather than Cycleway on any arrangements on the ground.

In the Written Summaries of oral submissions put at the Traffic and Transport ISH hearing on 13 June 2019 (REP 034 agenda item 4.6) Highways England explains that over the sections of the originally proposed Bridleway route parallel to the old A303 into Winterbourne Stoke, (now shown as brown Cycleway on the General Arrangement Drawings sheets 4 and 5), there ‘is insufficient width between the existing hedge and edge of carriageway to accommodate a shared use route suitable for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians. While the existing A303 carriageway could be reduced in width by up to a metre to reflect its change in status, this would still not provide sufficient width.’ It goes on to explain this lack of ‘sufficient width’ by noting that ‘for routes used by equestrians the separation of the route from the carriageway should be a preferred minimum of 1.8m (Cl.

7.23) which would not be able to be provided at this location.’ It seems to be for this reason alone that HE have decided to use the designation Cycleway rather than Bridleway in this location.

However, the route in question is still to be provided for equestrians as a ‘shared use route’ even where the ‘preferred minimum’ distance from the carriageway is less than 1.8 metres. If horse riders are expected to pass over this length of right of way as part of their rights over the Cycleway, there is no reason why it cannot be designated as a Bridleway – the minimum separation distance is a ‘preferred’ rather than a mandatory guide. It is moreover unclear how long the affected section of route is; Highways England state that there is an intervening highway verge which equestrians could be ‘allowed’ to use *parallel* with the proposed shared use Cycleway, see below.

Heather Price of Highways England informed me in an email dated 27 August 2019 that ‘In summary, the connection between the Z and Y sections of the proposed bridleway [see the Rights of Way and Access Plans TRO10025-2.6 sheets 4 and 5] would be via the intervening highway verge parallel with the proposed shared use cycleways – the details are more easily seen on the General Arrangement Drawings (sheets 4 and 5 of the document APP-012 in the examination library)’. Also that ‘In our response to agenda item 4.6 [ISH 13.6.19] we clarify that [...] there is sufficient room within the new highway boundary to facilitate allowing equestrians to use the (highway) verge parallel with the shared use cycleway to Longbarrow junction.’

If this is the case, then the highway verge, as well as the width of the currently proposed Cycleway, can and must be dedicated on the DCO as a Bridleway. It is not sufficient to ‘facilitate’ or allow equestrian use, the DCO needs to provide for a Bridleway where equestrians are expected to pass and repass.

No query has been raised or comment made about the lack of space to provide sufficient division between horse riders and traffic in the Cycleway currently shown leading around the roundabout (Sheet 5 of the General Drawings). Therefore there is no reason why this right of way round the new Longbarrow roundabout should not continue to be designated as a Bridleway, not a Cycleway.

Note: There is no indication on the DCO as to the space allowed for the accommodation of NMUs waiting to use the two road crossings involved at the Longbarrow roundabout. The provision of such space should be clearly indicated on the DCO.

**During the ISH of 30 August 2019, at agenda item 3.1, Wiltshire Council asked that the*

term Cycleway be added to the DCO as including equestrian rights and used throughout as a consistent term. This definition, while helpful, does not have the legal status of the designation bridleway as far as equestrian use is concerned.

2 I support the points raised in the presentation made by Mr Roger Upfold concerning the importance of having specific provisions in place (a) for suitable surfacing to be provided for multi-user NMU rights of way, and (b) for suitable crossing controls for walkers, cyclists and horse riders where these rights of way cross roads, as at the proposed new Longbarrow roundabout.