

Committee: ACCESS
Date: 25 October 2007

Report: HEAD OF PARK MANAGEMENT

ACTIVITIES

Meeting of the 'transforming outdoor Yorkshire' working group
Meeting of Sustainable travel partnership working group
Meetings with Cumbria County Council regarding the public rights of way delegation agreement
Meeting with North Yorkshire County Council as above
Meeting with YDMT and Natural England about the Go Dales project
Meeting of the Green Lanes Liaison Group
Meeting of Active Craven

ISSUES FOR MEMBERS CONSIDERATION

Adoption of North Yorkshire ROWIP

1. Members will be aware that at the April meeting of this Committee; members considered the Draft North Yorkshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan, which had been prepared by staff of North Yorkshire County Council, with the input from officers of the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors National Park Authorities and with the advice of the three Local Access Forums which cover North Yorkshire.
2. On the issues of funding work currently proposed within the Plan, a member asked if the Plan might link to Local Area Agreements. The Transport and Visitor Management Officer agreed to take that matter back to the technical group responsible for the preparation of the Plan.
3. The Committee resolved (minute 22/07), that, subject to member and officer comments being taken into account:
 - (a) the Authority confirms its support for, and congratulates North Yorkshire County Council on the production of, the draft North Yorkshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan; and
 - (b) any delegation of the implementation of Rights of Way Improvement Plans from North Yorkshire County Council to the National Park Authority should be accompanied by resources to undertake the work.

4. The public and partner organisations have given the plan wide support with few changes to the plan being required following the wide public consultation carried out. Minor adjustments, have been made to the plan in response to the comments that have been received. The most significant of these are the inclusion of:

- a reference to Natura 2000 which indorses the protection of areas of special environmental designation.
- a note at the start of chapter five, which covers the plan's policies; this states that all the policies must be considered together in implementing this plan. This avoids possible holes which might emerge at a later date, if sections of the plan are challenged.

5. A full copy of the final plan can be obtain from Andy Ryland, if Members wish to see this.

6. North Yorkshire County Council have asked that this Authority now adopts the Rights of Way Improvement Plan as the catalyst for maintenance and improvements to rights of way within the North Yorkshire part of the Yorkshire Dales.

Recommendation:

7. Subject to funding being available, that the Authority adopts the Rights of Way Improvement Plan as the catalyst for maintenance and improvements to rights of way within the North Yorkshire part of the Yorkshire Dales.

ISSUES FOR MEMBERS TO NOTE

a) Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group

8. The notes of the September meeting of this group are provided as an annex to this report, for members' information.

b) Transforming Outdoor Yorkshire – Update

9. The Transforming Outdoor Yorkshire – Outdoor adventure working group has been considering initiatives that it can develop through a collaborative approach across the sub-region. One possibility being considered alongside the 'year of adventure' is the promotion of an "iconic" mountain bike route crossing the country through North Yorkshire and Cumbria and the three National Parks (this was reported in the July Head of Park Management report). Consultants are now being appointed to look at the feasibility of a route that will link the Lake District Coast with the North York Moors Coast using the existing bridleway network and be largely off-tarmac. It is anticipated that such a route will have a much broad appeal than the current 'expert' coast to coast mountain bike route which passes through the area, being suitable for "intermediate" mountain bikers. There would not compete with or duplicate existing coast to coast cycle routes. The idea is supported by both the North Yorkshire ROWIP and North Yorkshire Cycle Strategy.

10. Before the idea is developed further a feasibility study, is being commissioned by the project partners which include North York Moors, Lake District, and Yorkshire Dales National Park Authorities, North Yorkshire and Cumbria County Councils. The consultants are expected to report back to the project group in March 2008.

RECOMMENDATION

11. Members are asked to note the report

**JON AVISON
HEAD OF PARK MANAGEMENT
September 2007**

Background documents: none

**Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group Meeting
6 September 2007
The Victoria centre, Settle**

Notes of Meeting

Present:

Chair:

Dr Malcolm Petyt, YDNPA Recreation Management Member Champion

Members:

Ben Heyes (Landowner representative & LAF)
Jon Beaven (Businessman & LAF)
Michael Bartholomew (GLA& LAF)
Stuart Monk (NYTMAG)
Geoff Wilson (TRF & LAF)
Phil Eckersley (Natural England)

Officers in attendance:

Jon Avison (YDNPA)
Mark Allum (YDNPA)
Doug Huzzard (NYCC)

Apologies:

Mark Sandamass (Mountain biking)
Mark Dale (4x4 users)
Neil Hesletine (Farmer)
Matt Neale (YDNPA)
David Gibson (CCC)

1. Welcome and introductions

Phil Eckersley (Natural England) was welcomed to his first meeting.

2. Notes of previous meeting and matters arising

The group were brought up to date with the works being carried out on Ling Gill and Cam High Road, and the use of a temporary traffic regulation order to facilitate this.

3. Code of conduct leaflet distribution

The code of conduct leaflet has now been printed and the Ranger Service will be distributing copies to local garages and cafes used by trail bikers. Group members also suggested a number of other options:

- Petrol stations along the A65

- A number of motorbike retail outlets
- Local B&Bs specialising in accommodation for motorcyclists
- TRAC members
- TRF distribution

GW also suggested a press release with a scan of the cover.

**Actions: SM will follow up local contacts.
KB to look at a press release**

4. Route assessment report - Windy Pike Lane

The evaluation report had been circulated and the following key points were highlighted:

- Unsurfaced unclassified county road, and a cul de sac route
- No ecological and archaeological issues identified
- 181 motor vehicle movements per month on average, with the overwhelm majority being agricultural
- Fine views from the route
- Stone track up to the vegetation has a mixture of infill materials
- Section on vegetation surface has no distinct track

Recommendation

The advice of the group, which was a consensus, was to continue to monitor the route. In addition it was suggested that consideration be given to the placement of a suitable sign at the Hanlith end informing users that the route was a dead end.

5. Route assessment report – Dead Man’s Hill

The evaluation report had been circulated and the following key points were highlighted:

- Cross-boundary route – part in the National Park and part in Nidderdale AONB
- The route needs to be considered as a whole
- An unsurfaced unclassified county road, with a satisfactory stone surface for the section in the National Park but badly damaged section on the Nidderdale side
- Some potentially vulnerable habitat and bird species close to route
- Historic route and some important heritage features such as Lodge and reservoirs
- 216 motor vehicles per month on average, approximately split 53% agricultural/47% recreational
- Important cross fell route for all users, giving access to a ridge walk, and other bridleways

SM said that this is an important route for recreational motor vehicle users, and that concerns about vehicles leaving the route need to be treated as an enforcement issue.

DH said that in respect of repairing the route there will be priorities on the unsurfaced network, just as there are on the surfaced road network, and that, following assessment of individual routes there will be cases where a proactive approach is justified.

It was acknowledged that noise from motor vehicles, especially on the Nidderdale side, will affect a wide area.

Recommendation

The advice of the group is that there is a need to continue to monitor the impact on tranquillity, and there were issues around motor vehicles leaving the route. There is a need to carry out repairs on the zig zag section, and prevent vehicles short cutting on this section. Consideration should be given to place signs warning motor vehicle users that leaving the route could result in restrictions on use being put in place.

6. Route assessment report - Turbary Road

The evaluation report had been circulated and the following key points were highlighted:

- The route passes through SSSI/SAC but no vulnerable features have been identified on the route itself;
- Earthwork features near the route could be vulnerable to increased usage;
- This is a high level traverse route with great views, and very few signs of human influence along its length;
- There is water erosion on the walled track, and some bad damage on the vegetation section;
- 48 motor vehicles per month on average, approximately split 56% agricultural and 44% recreational use;
- Average of 2.3 motorcycles per Sunday;
- Currently not a through route for 4x4s;
- Route provides limited connections for walkers in terms of footpath network (but does provide access to Open Access land).
- Very important caving area
- Very remote and tranquil area

JB believes that this may not be a through route from an historical perspective. This led to a long debate but no conclusions could be drawn.

Cavers do take motor vehicles along the route, to get nearer the caves - predominantly the first walled section.

Recommendation

There was consensus amongst the group, that this route needs some form of restriction. But no consensus could be reached on the type of TRO, with both a full TRO and a seasonal TRO being considered. It was also suggested that any TRO could create a one way system, and should apply to 4x4s all year round.

7. Route assessment report - Stake Road

The evaluation report had been circulated and the following key points were highlighted:

- No vulnerable ecological or archaeological issues on the route itself, but some vulnerable features close to the route;
- Historic route with good views along its length;

- Overall the route is in good condition;
- 385 motor vehicles per month on average, with approximately 75% of this being agricultural use; [did the group discuss the location of the counter?]
- A long route with good connections to the bridleway network for cyclists and horse riders.

Recommendation

The advice of the group was to continue to monitor the route, and to carry out minor repairs at the Kidstones end, and to continue to carry out regular maintenance along its length.

8. Route assessment report – Long Lane (Helwith Bridge)

The evaluation report had been circulated and the following key points were highlighted:

- The route passes through an SSSI but Natural England see no vulnerable features - unless vehicles leave the track;
- No vulnerable archaeological features identified;
- Great views of Pen-y-Ghent but quarries are major landscape detractor;
- Noise from the road and quarries affect the lower part of the route;
- There is some minor damage to the route surface, but no deterioration over time has been apparent
- 125 motor vehicles per month on average, with approximately 77% of this being agricultural
- Part of the route is Pennine Way, and offers a short route to the summit to Pen-y-Ghent, and is well connected to the rights of way network
- Upper section of route is tranquil with a very good track surface

Recommendation

The advice of the group was to continue to monitor the route.

9. Update report on the West Cam Road route

The West Cam Road had previously been considered by the group, and since that meeting a second logger had been placed on the upper section. The vehicle logger data shows:

- On the upper section there is an average of 113 motor vehicles per month, with 70% of these being motorcycles. Motor vehicle use on the upper section is predominantly recreational.
- On the lower sections there is an average of 222 motor vehicles per month, with 35% of these being motorcycles. The lower section has higher levels of agricultural use.

SM believes that levels of use on the West Cam Road will reduce if the Cam High Road (Gearstones) is closed.

MA pointed out that Cam High Road (Gearstones) will be closed to motor vehicles by a TTRO through to February 2008 for periods when contractors are working on site.

Recommendation

The advice of the group was to continue to monitor the route, and in particular to look at the impact of the TTRO placed on the Cam High Road. In addition it was agreed that the badly damaged section of the route needs to be repaired.

Other points raised

JA explained when the Authority expects to receive TRO powers, and the possible process for consulting on any orders.

Action: KB to circulate regulations to group when received.

GW questioned whether it would be possible for ANPA or ENPAA to write to the motor cycle industry concerning the need to reduce noise from motorcycles.

Action: JA/KB to look at possibilities

GW questioned whether any of the routes being considered were used as part of trials events, as this can sometimes help interpret vehicle logger data. It is not believed that any of the 15 routes so far considered are used by trials events, but this may be a factor on forthcoming routes.