

MAUD HEATH'S CAUSEWAY – THE GREEN, EAST TYTHERTON TO WICK BRIDGE

Status Report for Calne Community Area Transport Group 12 October 2017

Steering Group:

Christine Crisp, Wiltshire Councillor for Calne Rural Division
Julie Hoskins, Chairman, Maud Heath Causeway Trustees
Mike Rigby, MHC Trustee and Bremhill Parish Councillor
Richard Tucker, Chairman, Bremhill Parish Council
William Bailey, Bremhill Parish Councillor
Mark Stansby, Senior Traffic Management Engineer Wiltshire Council
Matt Perrott, Highway Engineer Calne&Malmesbury, Wiltshire Council

Background:

In 2013, local concerns were voiced over the need for repairs to this 700metre part of the Causeway. The highway authority is responsible for maintaining the safety of the footpath, as well as the roadway, but the Trustees (as well as local people) were keen to find a solution which would result in the retention of as much of the existing fabric of the Ancient Monument footpath as was possible. It became obvious that this would result in a much more expensive piece of work than bare safety and maintenance work, and would not be achievable within either the current highway maintenance budget or the means of the Trustees. To address this, and to make both bids to the Highway Substantive Budget or to charitable foundations possible, Calne Community Area Transport Group (CATG) commissioned a Feasibility Study. This study was funded by CATG (£3,500), the Maud Heath Causeway (MHC) Trustees (£3,500) and Bremhill Parish Council (£1,000), it was undertaken in the summer of 2014, at which time the work outlined in the report came to a total of almost £250,000. Copies of the report were sent to Area Board, the Trustees and the Parish Council in November 2014, since when there has been no action. This meeting was called to decide how the project could be moved forward.

Discussion:

The various elements of the Feasibility Study were discussed exhaustively, seeking various solutions to the impasse and investigating possible cheaper alternatives.

The desire is to retain as much of the current fabric of the Ancient Monument footpath as possible, for conservation reasons. Whilst the fabric does not date back to the inception of the Trust in the 15th century, there is a substantial amount of old stone and cobble still present. The Feasibility Study seeks to raise the height of the footpath, thus preventing it being driven over by vehicles, mostly using present materials, and repairing the cobbled field entrances. In addition, four passing places are provided to facilitate traffic movement.

The group recognised that, although the work of carriageway resurfacing is the responsibility of the highway authority, any work that is undertaken in the future will damage or obliterate the footpath unless that work of raising the path is also undertaken. In addition, although the passing places can be seen as solely highway authority work, they are only provided under the Feasibility Study in order to protect the footpath.

The group decided that the way forward was to follow the project already defined. The costs involved mean that it is most unlikely that funding could be in place in less than two years and

requires that those present persuade their organisations to commit to the project. The following actions were agreed by the group and the current status has been added in red script.

1. A written undertaking by the Trustees to the highways authority that they are committed to the project outlined in the Study and willing to undertake fundraising in order to contribute the cost of the footpath repairs. ACTION: Barrie Giffard Taylor/Mike Rigby. **The written undertaking was received by Parvis Khansari (Associate Director Highways). Due to the change in Chairmanship of the Trustees, no fundraising activity has so far been undertaken.**
2. A re-estimate of the costs of the project at current prices. ACTION: Mark Stansby. **Mark provided a ball-park increase figures of footway works £236,700; Carriageway Works £39,000; Passing Places £41,400.**
3. A presentation to CATG to achieve agreement to pursuing a Substantive Highway Bid for passing place costs, to be undertaken in parallel with footpath fundraising. ACTION: Christine Crisp. **At next CATG on 12 October 2017.**
4. A report to the Parish Council to ensure that it will commit to a contribution to a Substantive Highways Bid as required by CATG. ACTION: Richard Tucker. **Richard brought this up at May Parish Council. Their balance is circa 12K so could go up to £3-4K for project.**
5. Contact with Highways Asset Management to investigate whether the next carriageway resurfacing can be co-ordinated with the rest of the project. ACTION: Matt Perrott/Christine Crisp. **Matt discussed this with Wiltshire Council's consultants when he met them two weeks ago, and they would certainly consider this.**
6. Contact with neighbouring landowners to ensure that hedging and ditching adjacent to the carriageway and footpath is undertaken as soon as possible and maintained to a good standard, in order to improve footpath and highway safety. ACTION: William Bailey. **All hedges cut and ditches tended. Hedges will be cut again in next few weeks. William will keep on top of this.**
7. Examination of footpath and carriageway to investigate possible action by Highway Engineers and/or Parish Steward to clean surfaces and improve footpath and highway safety. ACTION: Matt Perrott. **Matt's team did some work on this early this year. Parish Council might wish to use Parish Steward time to continue the work.**
8. A further meeting to be held in June, or if there is any significant development, whichever is the sooner. ACTION: Christine Crisp. **Insufficient progress so far to justify a further meeting.**