

Date: 22/8/07  
Our ref: orowip1  
Your ref:



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24 AUG 2007				
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Dear Terence,

### Oldham Draft Rights Of Way Improvement Plan Consultation

Thankyou for sending us the details for the Oldham Rights of Way Improvement Plan for consultation.

I would first like to complement you on the production of this document. We hope that the research and partnership building work undertaken during the production of the ROWIP will be valuable to you in the long term, and help with the implementation of the plan in the long term.

#### Introduction and policy context

- o This is very clearly set out and easy to understand and covers all of the main issues.
- o I thought that table 3 showing the linkages between the ROWIP and the other relevant policies could usefully have sat here as an easy reference tool

#### Local context

- o You give a useful introduction to the characteristics of the borough and its transport and rights of way network.
- o I would have found the addition of a map showing the route networks useful for flagging up where the main concentrations and gaps were. We interpret the brief for stage 3 of the process as including both the condition of the network with regards to surfacing and accessibility as well as identifying specific opportunities for improvement. This might be safe routes for all users away from busy roads, easier access to attractions for both locals and visitors, circular routes, safe routes to schools and shops, consideration of care homes, livery yards and other concentrations of needs and

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links in broken chains of routes. While you had identified some in the table in appendix c it would be useful to know how the decision to survey this suite of routes were taken, and to see the specific routes identified by the user groups.

- It would be useful to have some data on the amount of use the ROW network gets in order to justify the choice of priority routes. Were these in priority areas. Do you have any research on the proportions of residents with mobility problems, visual impairments, with no access to a car, of minority ethnic origin...?

### **Statement of action**

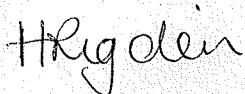
- This is very clearly laid out and staffing and costs clearly indicated. I thought the references to relevant partners was helpful. Each of the tasks and actions was clearly explained

### **Consultation with the user groups and others**

- In stage 2 of the process in the appendix, would it be possible to provide a table of the questions used in the consultation meetings and also a list of the groups involved. Sometimes raw data can also be valuable as background information. What was the process used to decide on the priority routes?
- In your consultation with Stakeholders, were permissive routes such as those available under the agri-environment schemes investigated? The new Higher Level Scheme can contribute in areas where links to CROW land, new routes around towns and villages and upgrades of routes to higher rights are needed.

I hope you will find these comments useful and look forward to the publication of the finalised plan.

Yours Sincerely



Hannah Rigden

Natural England  
Communities advisor  
Cheshire to Lancashire