

## **ASHBY AREA CYCLING NETWORK PLAN**

### **1 Summary**

1.1 This report proposes adoption of an Ashby Area Cycling Network Plan with the principal aim of helping to reduce car-dependency. Its implementation may be secured principally through the policies and actions of North West Leicestershire District and Leicestershire County Councils and of the National Forest Company.

1.2 Key opportunities include Ashby Northern Bypass, the extensive extraction and restoration projects in Ashby Woulds and the continuing development of the National Forest. General design principles are outlined accordingly and schedules of proposals are given in Appendices A and B.

1.3 The contents of the report derive from a series of meetings involving many local interest groups and are also informed by extensive site survey.

### **2 Background**

2.1 One of the outcomes of adoption of a Cycling Strategy by North West Leicestershire District Council in 1996 was the preparation of cycling network plans for the Coalville and subsequently Ibstock areas. This report is the third in the series and covers Appleby Magna, Ashby de la Zouch, Ashby Woulds, Chilcote, Measham, Oakthorpe and Donnithorpe, Packington and Streton en le Field.

2.2 The fourth and final plan will be for the Northern Parishes [ between Coleorton and Lockington-Hemington ] and will hopefully be prepared during 2000. All four plans should then be reviewed to ensure that they effectively interlock, District-wide.

2.3 Partners in the production of this present report include representatives of Appleby Magna Parish Council, Ashby Civic Society, Ashby Town Council, Ashby Woulds Town Council, the Council for Protection of Rural England, "Just Bikes", Leicestershire County Council, the National Forest, North West Leicestershire District Council, the Ramblers Association, the Rotary Club of Ashby de la Zouch, and Sustrans. Special thanks are due to the Cyclists Touring Club Rights Network whose detailed knowledge of the highways and byways of the area underpins the schedules presented in the Appendices.

### **3 Definition and Rationale**

3.1 A cycling network may be defined as a set of interacting on and off-carriageway measures providing safe and continuous routes between residential areas, schools, colleges, work-places, leisure and shopping facilities, rail and bus stations and open countryside.

3.2 The function of a cycling network plan is to:

[i] Help reduce car-dependency.

[ii] Focus resources available through the Local Transport Plan and Minerals and Development Control Planning systems to enable construction of necessary infrastructure.

[iii] Provide context for bidding for grants offered by the European Community,

English Partnerships, the National Forest, the Lottery, Leicestershire Environmental Forum, etc.

- [iv] Enhance the amenity and image of a locality:
  - [a] for the benefit [ including good health ] of local people.
  - [b] to help in promotion of inwards investment.
  - [c] to encourage sustainable tourist activity.

3.3 It is worth noting that, although some of the sections described in the Appendices are rideable now, the network identified is not a map of present cycling routes. Marketing of the existing product is a separate exercise beyond the scope of this report.

#### **4 Design for Safety, Convenience and Continuity**

4.1 The cardinal needs for safety, convenience and continuity demand commitment by all involved in the development process to provision of:

- [i] 20mph zones and traffic calmed streets [especially routes to school, bus and railway stations] in which speeds are physically restrained by a variety of interacting engineering and surveillance measures.
- [ii] Safe crossings of all major roads.
- [iii] Off-carriageway cyclepaths alongside busy roads, through parks and open spaces, following water courses and into the countryside, not least as it is shaped by the policies of the National Forest Company.
- [iv] Pedestrian/cyclist segregation on all but the quieter shared [ off-carriageway ] paths in urban areas. Segregation is generally less necessary in rural settings.
- [v] Clear sightlines at junctions and bends, elimination of ambush points and provision of lighting on all routes that do not serve a purely recreational purpose.
- [vi] Waymarking and publication of easy-read plans to emphasise the presence of the network as a whole and the continuity of routes within it.
- [vii] Adoption of high grade maintenance including regular sweeping, cutting of adjacent vegetation and salting in icy weather.

4.2 The following range of points is also commended to highway designers and development control planners working within the Ashby area:

- [i] New distributor roads should be constructed either with segregated, shared-use off carriageway paths or with mandatory on-carriageway cycle lanes highlighted by means of coloured surfacing and "elephant's feet" across side road junctions.
- [ii] Un-signalled roundabouts present serious problems for walkers and cyclists. Their introduction should be avoided at points where significant flows of non-motorised traffic are likely. Where roundabouts are still built, Toucan crossings should be provided on all appropriate arms.
- [iii] Signalled junctions with walking/cycling phases are preferable to roundabouts. Advance stoplines should always be provided.

[iv] Road narrowings and chicanes should be designed with cycle slips.

[v] New residential areas should be built as "Home Zones", traffic calmed to ensure very slow vehicular speeds. The richer street life thus engendered should enhance public health and security which will in turn help to cut car-dependancy.

[vi] The following publications are commended to designers of all new cycling and walking infrastructure:

"National Cycle Network, Guidelines and Practical Details" [ ISBN 0 9527106 9 2 ]. This is published by Sustrans and endorsed by Government.

"Living Streets" [ISBN 0 907347 51 7] published by Transport 2000 Trust.

## **5 Ashby Northern Bypass**

5.1 Ashby de la Zouch boasts a handsome historic centre, the excellence of which has long been compromised by heavy through traffic. Although some relief has been provided by the new A42, more comprehensive benefits will not be felt until the opening of Ashby Northern By-pass [ANB], funding for which is now secured.

5.2 In this regard, it is urged that a strategy be devised to ensure that "slack" won by diversion of through-traffic is not simply taken up by more local driving. This should consider, *inter alia*, introduction of 20mph zones, more carriageway crossings, widened footways, environmental improvements and off-road walking and cycling routes particularly serving school and commuting journeys. Specific proposals are presented in Appendix A.

## **6 Ashby Woulds and the National Forest**

6.1 The landscapes of Ashby Woulds, for long scarred by mining, quarrying and related activities, are now evolving to serve a future built around light industry, forestry and the service sector, particularly tourism. As coal, clay and landfill sites are worked-out, policies applied by District and County Planning Services and by the National Forest Company are creating new patterns of access on a scale elsewhere only normally achieved by New Town Commissions. Many of the routes described in Appendix B are thus already in-hand or committed.

## **7 National Cycle Network**

7.1 Nearest National Cycle Network routes include Millennium Routes 54 at Burton on Trent and 6 at Osgathorpe and Worthington. Leg 52 between Osgathorpe, Coalville, Ravenstone and Heather is a non-Millennium route, though will hopefully be complete by 2002-3.

7.2 Though none of these pass through the study area, a spur from Worthington could run to Ashby via Beaumont Way. A Leicester to Burton Route has been approved by Sustrans and route identification [incorporating Ashby Woulds Heritage Trail and the Ashby Canal extension to Snarestone] is in hand. A Regional route between Donisthorpe and Lichfield is also to be reviewed.

## **8 Next Steps**

8.1 This report is the product of consultation with interested parties over a period of months and its principal proposals are outlined in the "Overview and Recommendations" sections of Appendices A and B. Once confirmed by Members, it is to be added to the North West Leicestershire District Council's Planning Constraints Database.

8.2 The public manner in which this document has been assembled makes it relevant to the County Council's Local Transport Plan and it should also assist the process of re-designing the town centre following completion of the Northern Bypass.

8.3 Though notionally conceived within a ten year time-frame, cycling plans evolve continuously and the completed Coalville, Ibstock and Ashby Area networks should continue to be reviewed during preparation of the Northern Parishes document.

8.4 Following combination of all four Plans it is suggested that a forum of interested parties should continue to meet at [say] six-monthly intervals in order to:

[i] guide the continuing evolution of the District-wide network and to:

[ii] assist in prioritising the contents of future Local Plans and Local Transport Plans and in directing other fundraising efforts.

8.5 As a related exercise, local circular routes suitable for immediate recreational use should be identified and promoted.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **SCHEDULE OF PROPOSALS FOR ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH**

Appendix A deals with the area most closely related to Ashby de la Zouch as shown at [Map 1](#). The wider study area is described in Appendix B.

#### **Overview with Recommendations**

Like most historic market towns, Ashby de la Zouch boasts a fine centre with inner core of pre-motor-age development that has had to accommodate modern traffic at the expense of walkers and cyclists. In planning for life beyond the opening of the Northern Bypass it is proposed that a prime aim should be to *rebalance* street-priorities over much of the town.

Rebalancing does not imply the exclusion of motor vehicles, particularly from the town centre, as this could damage local business. The principle should rather be to make the most of scarce parking and road space, *inter alia*, by encouraging local walking and cycling. Recommended measures include the application of a 20 mph

speed zone, initially to the town centre, but progressively extending to cover much of the present built-up area.

Many recent suburbs have been planned as "cells". Though some old footpaths remain between them, opportunities for making high quality connections were missed at the time of building. Enhancement of some of these relic paths is still practicable, at a cost, and commitment to the necessary environmental improvements is another of the key arguments of this report. Proposals include an eastward extension of Range Road, the Bath Grounds to Mendip Close track, the Gilwiskaw Brook corridor and a link between Canterbury Road and The Green.

A visionary idea emerging during preparation of this report suggests creation of "Ashby Wheel", a walking / cycling circuit orbiting the town and linked to it via a series of spokes including Gilwiskaw Brook, Money Hill, Featherbed Lane, Range Road and Packington Nook Lane. Other spokes need further research and negotiation. Besides providing an admirable local amenity, this project would augment the local tourist product in just the same way as Peterborough's "Green Wheel".

### **Schedule**

1 Upon completion of the Northern Bypass it is proposed that Market Street, North and South Streets and connecting roads should become the first phase of a town 20mph zone. Though North and South Street may both then serve as sections of key cycling routes, no good link connects them across Market Street as all courts and mews are too narrow to permit riding. The two lines shown on [Map 1](#) are the most convenient but both would need furnishing with plaques bearing the instruction "cyclists dismount and push through X Court".

2-3-4-5 Coalfield Way and Smithy Road serve Ashby Park Industrial Estate. They are wide and well-landscaped and, even when the estate is fully developed, should allow reasonable conditions for cycling. Provision should be made for a path between the end of Coalfield Way and Leicester Road to provide a commuting route from the southern suburbs.

2-61-62 The southern verge of Nottingham Road is sufficiently wide to accommodate a segregated shared use path as far as the main gate of Ashby Grammar School. In building this it would be necessary to widen two culvert crossings, set a bus shelter back, negotiate extra width alongside a filling station and apply continuity markings across side road crossings. Signalled crossings would be required at 61 and 65.

4-6 The presently muddy footpath skirts the southern side of an undeveloped field [owned by Granada] and dog-legs across a small brook. Together with 6-7 and 6-8 it could be surfaced and lit to become part of an excellent commuting route. It would also provide a good spoke in the Ashby Wheel and, on completion of ANB works at the A42 roundabout [53] would link with National Cycle Network Leg 6 via Beaumont Way [55].

6-7 A link could be made with the eastern end of Elm Close without interfering with the playing pitches. This would extend to Nottingham Road at 62 by way of Sycamore Avenue which may be used as it is.

6-8 The main path extends across a rugby pitch and narrows between a hawthorn hedge and security fence at the Range Road end. Subject to negotiation, it may be realigned to avoid the pitch and widened as needed.

8-9 Range Road may be used as it is.

9-10 This section of road, which is intensively used by school pupils, could be designated as a pedestrian preference zone through which vehicles would be subject to a very low speed restriction of, say, 10 mph.

10-11 Cycling through the church yard is unofficially countenanced despite the incidence of a prohibition order.

10-49 At 49 a footpath runs from Wood Street through an industrial back yard to Ivanhoe School. In due course, when the yard is redeveloped, the path through to Wood Street should be enhanced as a main walking / cycling link. Crossing Wood Street would be managed by resignalling Upper Church Street junction and Upper Church Street itself could become an extension of the pedestrian preference zone described at 9-10 above.

10-50 Mount Walk is wide enough for shared use and, subject to extension of the town 20mph zone to Upper Packington Road, would serve as a good school route though currently affected by a "no cycling" order. Depending upon the build-up of numbers walking and cycling it may be necessary to consider fitting of a self-closing gate to check cycling speeds at the narrowest point.

11-12-13-14 South Street and the adopted section of Prior Park Road are relatively quiet and would be further improved by implementation of the proposed 20mph zone [see 1]. The unadopted section of Prior Park Road [14-50] probably provides an unofficial cycle route to Upper Packington Road but may not be formalised as such without the consent of residents.

13-32-31 A shared path may be "tucked" around the edge of Bath Grounds without compromising its open character.

14-15 This important link path provides the town's only motor-free railway crossing. Widening and easing of bends to permit safe use by bikes is highly recommended.

15-16 Mendip Close and Windsor Road may be used as they are.

15-29 Mendip Close and Cambrian Way link through to Lower Packington Road and thus form part of a commuting route from Packington as well as an all weather spoke of the Ashby Wheel.

16-17-30 Lower Packington Road is something of a rat run. This section is level, visibility is adequate and in due course it is hoped that the town's 20mph zone will extend out to point 16. Introduction of pole mounted signs and road logos to warn of the likely presence of cyclists is in any case recommended.

17-18 Avenue Road and Park Close may be used as they are though thought should be given to introducing safety measures at the junction at 17. The existing footpath between Park Close and Packington Nook Road would need widening to accommodate shared use.

18-19 Packington Nook Lane is generally quiet and may be used as it is. However, Tamworth Road at 19 is wide, busy and often very difficult to cross. This barrier must prompt many parents to drive children to the nearby primary school who could otherwise easily walk. Provision of a signalled crossing is suggested as a high priority

18-25 Packington Nook Lane extends as a bridleway to meet Vicarage Lane and much of it is already hard surfaced. This is another Ashby Wheel spoke and, for casual use in dry times, it serves well. Presently unfenced sections near the A42 could be fenced so as to reduce the number of bridle gates needed. Hard surfacing could be extended.

19-20-21 A segregated cycle path should link the proposed signalled crossing at 19 with Willesley Lane via the northern verge of Tamworth Road.

20-22 Ridgeway Road may be used as it is.

21-23 Willesley Lane is used by confident riders despite its poor visibility, narrow carriageway and fast traffic that make it a less than ideal spoke for Ashby Wheel. A replacement is needed.

22-24 A good potential westbound spoke for Ashby Wheel would cross the open space at the end of Ridgeway Road and extend onwards through the rail-side tree-belt. This is discussed further in Appendix 2.

26 Most lanes to and from Packington have already been identified as cycling routes in the Ibstock Area Cycling Network Plan.

27-28 Ashby Road is wide and fast, though with good visibility. Already used by confident commuters, it would be enhanced by addition of painted on-carriageway cycle lanes which would also add to its utility as a spoke of Ashby Wheel.

28-29 Lower Packington Road, though something of a rat run, could be improved by addition of pole mounted signs and road logos to warn of the likely presence of cyclists.

30-31 An opportunity to widen the footway to accommodate shared use on the east side of Tamworth Road may in due course be provided by redevelopment of the NCB Rescue Depot. However, beneath the railway, the path is raised above road level and constrained by a pedestrian guard rail. There would be no alternative here but to oblige riders to dismount and push through the bridge as far as the entry to Bath Grounds.

31-32-13 A new shared path may be tucked around the edge of Bath Grounds without compromising its open character.

32-33 Subject to negotiation with the management of the Royal Hotel, a link may be made between Bath Grounds and Station Road where a zebra or signalled crossing would be needed to serve this school route from the Wilfred Gardens and Trinity Close areas.

33-34 Wilfred Place and Wilfred Gardens may be used as they are.

34-35-36 The unauthorised track through the allotment gardens provides access to vandals who are becoming an increasing nuisance to allotment holders. The Allotments Committee has proposed a new 1.5 metre wide path providing the same connections but skirting the gardens and separated from them by a high security fence. It is hoped to negotiate a widening of this path to permit reasonably safe use by cyclists.

Although the cut through between houses on Donnington Road [35] is tightly pinched, the extension to Moira Road is just wide enough to permit shared use. Sympathetic negotiation with all interested parties will be essential if this three-way link is to be officially secured for cycling.

36 Subject to satisfactory resolution of the Allotment section, a zebra or signalled crossing would be needed on Moira Road at this point.

36-37 A cut through an existing hedge would be needed to link the new crossing with Highfields Close. The latter may be used without modification.

37-38-39 Removal of a hawthorn hedge alongside the playing field would permit widening of the existing footpath between Highfields Close and Abbey Drive [38]. Alternatively, a gap could be made through the hedge at the head of Highfields Close to allow construction of a cyclepath on the field side of the remaining hedge. The narrower link through to Churchill Close [39] is less accommodating and, without community consent, would be difficult to formalise as a cycling route.

38-65 This unsurfaced field path to Blackforby has been proposed as a spoke for Ashby Wheel. Before progressing the idea, consent of landowners would be needed as cyclists have no legal right to ride on public footpaths.

39-40 Churchill Close may be used as it is. Its junction with Burton Road is already furnished with a mini roundabout that forms part of a suite of calming measures that have helped reduce speeds on the main road.

40-41 Marlborough Way is a residential distributor and rat run between Burton and Smisby Roads. Nonetheless, subject to its inclusion in the town 20mph zone, it must serve for there is no reasonable alternative.

41-42 Adequate space is available for construction of a cyclepath in the western verge of Smisby Road though some bank retention and a signalled crossing would be needed at 41. This commuting route would serve the developing Tournament Road Industrial Estate and should extend as far as the ANB, thus providing another spoke for Ashby Wheel.

41-44 Gilwiskaw Brook corridor, though neglected and pinched in parts, has potential to become a key traffic-free route linking the Smisby Road employment sites, Hood Park Leisure Centre and the Town Centre. It would also form part of a school link for children from the northern end of the Marlborough Way estates. It is strongly recommended that this corridor be environmentally enhanced to make it, effectively, a linear extension of Hood Park.

42-59 Ashby Northern Bypass cycletrack will form part of the proposed Ashby Wheel.

44-45 In Hood Park some widening of the existing track may be necessary to accommodate shared use and care would be needed to respect the fine avenue of mature trees. It is hoped that segregation may not be requested as signing and paintwork would not complement the visual amenity of the park.

45-48 A potentially excellent link between North Street, The Green, Mill Bank and Marlborough Way would require a Toucan crossing at the Callis.

45-49 The eastern end of North Street is presently designated for one-way traffic. It has more than adequate width for this purpose and allows driving at speeds higher

than appropriate close to a school gate. Following completion of the ANB and [hopefully] application of a town centre weight limit, North Street will no longer have to accommodate heavy vehicles during the Statutes. It is therefore recommended that a contra flow cycle track be created between the car park and Ivanhoe School gates.

46 Several paths cut through between Smisby Road and the Marlborough Way estate. Though all are narrow, requiring bikes to be pushed, the Sherborne Drive to Rotherwood Drive jitty also links usefully with the Gilwiskaw corridor via Park Road.

47-48 Canterbury Drive and the path that links it through to the Callis follow an excellent course connecting extensive suburbs with the town centre and schools. An opportunity to improve the footpath section was missed when the adjacent primary school playing field was fenced on the line of the pre-existing boundary.

As with Gilwiskaw Brook corridor, it is strongly recommended that this path should become the subject of an urban design exercise allowing its conversion as part of a main walking / cycling route. This would, inter alia, entail the [eventual] re-erection of the school fence several metres back from its presently constricting line.

49-60-63 A presently narrow footpath [Ivanhoe Way] leaves North Street at Ivanhoe School gate. It edges through an industrial yard and across fields to Featherbed Lane, meeting a private drive from Ashby Road on the way. Subject to negotiation of permissive public use of these tracks by cyclists, it would be possible to construct a very valuable school route serving both Ivanhoe and the Grammar Schools.

51-52 This part of a proposed spoke of Ashby Wheel would need protection by reduction of the present speed limit to 30mph out as far as Corkscrew Lane junction. Painting of on-carriageway cycle lanes should also be considered.

53 When built, the link road between the A42 and Nottingham Road roundabouts incorporated a short cyclepath joining neither with the A512 nor the A519. This collects northbound riders coming off the A42 roundabout after they have crossed two of the slip roads and deposits southbound riders at the roundabout with the other two slip roads directly ahead.

At the Nottingham Road roundabout the track connects neither with the similarly isolated Discovery Road section [57-58] nor with the signed cycling route on the old main road to Breedon [56]. These present fragments should be comprehensively joined up as part of the ANB project.

54 This would be a link to the A519 and [potentially] with the Coal Bunker site. Signals may eventually be required at slip roads.

55 Before being marketed as part of a spur from the National Cycle Network at Worthington, all major road crossings on this link to Beaumont Way would need signal protection.

56 Short "horns" of cyclepath are needed to keep riders clear of traffic manoeuvres associated with Nottingham Road roundabout

57-58 Discovery Road, as the first phase of ANB, already has a segregated cycletrack.

57-65 A cycletrack will be needed between the Roundabout and Resolution Road

where it should be signalled across Nottingham Road to join the south-side cycle path [2-61-62 above]. This should be built at the same time as ANB.

58-59 Ashby Northern Bypass bridges over but should be connected with Featherbed Lane at 59.

59-60-61 Featherbed Lane may be used as it is though surface improvements may be anticipated as necessary between the presently developed section and ANB. A signalled crossing will be needed at 61. [ Also note 2-61-62 above].

59-85 As far as point 85, Featherbed Lane carries bridleway status and may be used by cyclists. See also 83-85-86 in Appendix B.

60-65 The footpath linking Featherbed Lane with Resolution Road is already well surfaced and wide enough to permit cycling. Resolution Road may be used as it is.

62-63 This section of Wood Street is sufficiently wide to accommodate painted on-carriageway cycle lanes. A signalled crossing would be needed at 63 to serve riders to and from Ivanhoe School.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **SCHEDULE OF PROPOSALS FOR WIDER ASHBY AREA**

Appendix B describes the wider plan area as shown on Map 2. Map 1 point numbers reappear here only when related to a previously un-described section of the Network. **[Please note map 2 is currently not available for the internet version of this document.]**

#### **Overview with Recommendations**

The landscapes of Ashby Wolds, for long scarred by mining, quarrying and related activities, are being healed to serve a future built around light industry, forestry and the service sector, particularly tourism. As coal, clay and landfill sites are worked-out, the evolving policies of District and County Councils and the National Forest Company should continue to plan new movement patterns on a scale elsewhere normally only achievable in New Towns.

Some routes described below lie beyond the area officially covered by the Ashby Area Network Plan. Though sympathetic, officers of neighbouring authorities point out that not all these ideas are accepted as firm policy and some may well change. It is nonetheless hoped that parallel plans will be drawn up by adjacent Councils in order that a unified network may eventually extend seamlessly across administrative boundaries which are of scant significance in the context of economic and landscape regeneration.

#### **Schedule**

23-72 Willesley Lane has been proposed as an Ashby Wheel spoke and is currently used by more confident riders despite poor visibility, narrow carriageway and fast traffic. A replacement is needed. The most appealing alternative, if negotiable, would be 24-73.

24-73 To the west of Ridgeway Road open space and south of the railway is a

mature, wedge-shaped woodland in which informal public access is enjoyed. To the east of Willesley Wood Side and south of the railway lies Willesley New Wood where access will hopefully be arranged in future. The two woods are separated by some 600 metres of agricultural land across which it is proposed that attempts be made to establish a new forestry belt incorporating a metalled track.

25-70 Measham Road, west of Packington, has been proposed as part of the rim of Ashby Wheel. It becomes quite busy during rush hours and would warrant cyclist warning signs and road markings. The B4116 at 70 is busy with fast traffic, well outside a speed restricted zone. "Ashby Wheel" warning signs and road markings and anti-skid surfacing should be provided to alert drivers to the likelihood of meeting people crossing.

25-76 Babelake Street is public highway for much of its length southwards from Packington. Its southern end reduces to footpath status and formal use by cyclists would have to be negotiated with the owner[s]. See also 76-146.

26-77 Red Burrow Lane is quiet and may be used as it is en route for Normanton and Heather.

26-78-79-80 Spring Lane linking through to Normanton and to Alton Grange is part metalled unclassified county road and part rough byway best used in dry weather. Surface improvements would have to accommodate motor traffic.

36-74 This unsurfaced field path has been proposed as a spoke for Ashby Wheel. Before the idea may be progressed it will be necessary to seek the consent of the owner, Mr Pope of Chestnut Farm.

42-92 It has been proposed that the Northern Bypass cycletrack as far as Blackfordby turn [92] should form part of the rim of Ashby Wheel.

52-81 Corkscrew Lane has been proposed as part of the rim of Ashby Wheel. It becomes quite busy during rush hours and would warrant cyclist warning signs and road markings. At 81 the route would turn into the Coal Bunker site en route for Beaumont Way.

54-55 & 54-81 These are potential links within the Coal Bunker site which should be created at the time of restoration or redevelopment. They would also connect back to 53 [Appendix A].

55-82 Beaumont Way has potential for extension to meet National Cycle Network at Worthington. This route will be elaborated in the future Northern Parishes Cycling Network Plan report.

56-83-84 Nottingham Road is wide and fast and, despite running parallel with the A42, remains busy. Though signed for cycling [in preference to the A42] it is far from ideal and would benefit from provision of wide painted cycle lanes, warning signs and road markings.

66-87 This unsurfaced field path to Blackfordby, which skirts a recent Forest Tender Scheme site at Prestop Park, has been proposed as an Ashby Wheel spoke. Before progressing this idea it will be necessary to seek the consent of the owner[s]. The Ramblers Association may also have reservations about sharing a public footpath with cyclists.

70-71-72 Willesley Wood Side, a quiet rural lane, is proposed as part of the rim of the Ashby Wheel. It is already gated against through traffic close to the A42 bridge but has in the recent past been used by travellers. It may well be worth considering reducing its status to bridleway in order to permit the introduction of a sturdy new gate close to 72.

71-119-135 This is a sketch route through Willesley Wood linking Willesley Wood Side lane with the line of Ashby Canal [118-119-120] and the southern access from Hicks Lodge Phase 2 [73-134-135]. Its realisation would have to be negotiated with The Woodland Trust.

72-73-74-75 Also proposed as part of the rim of Ashby Wheel, this section of Willesley Lane remains relatively quiet.

73-134- These are metalled cycling tracks shown in papers associated with the Hicks Lodge 135 Phase 2 planning application.

74-134 This is a potential access through Hepworth's Sweethill Wood linking Willesley Lane with a proposed Ivanhoe Line railway station [see also 133-134].

75-91 The B5003 is busy with fast traffic. Crossing it requires a Toucan linked by off-carriageway cycle tracks with Willesley Lane and the residential roads of Norris Hill.

75-114 This appears to be a "logical" link in the network. However, in the absence of any public right of way, success in its development will depend entirely upon the outcome of negotiations with the owner[s].

76-146 Swepstone Road carries much fast traffic and is unsuitable for use by inexperienced riders. If this section is to form part of the local cycling network an off-carriageway track will be needed and this may be planned into the adjacent [south side] land restoration when this progresses. Signs and road markings would also have to be provided to alert drivers to expect to meet people crossing.

82-84 Though unclassified, the lane between Newbold and Nottingham Road is narrow and quite busy. Further consideration will be given to the best means of making this connection in the context of the Northern Parishes Cycling Network Plan report.

83-85-86 Although used informally by cyclists, the track between Nottingham Road, Old Parks Farms and the line of Ashby Northern Bypass enjoys public footpath status only. Cycling may only be formalised with the consent of the owner[s].

84 A spur to Staunton Harold takes off from Nottingham Road at 84.

87-92 It has been proposed the Heath Lane should form part of the rim of Ashby Wheel despite being steep, bendy and narrow at the Blackfordby end. As this lane also becomes quite busy during rush hours, cyclist warning signs and road markings may well be considered necessary.

87-88 In Blackfordby it has been proposed that Ashby Wheel should use quiet residential streets though safety measures may be thought desirable at Butt Lane [88].

88-89 Boothorpe Lane, another section of the rim of the proposed Ashby Wheel, is a

quiet rural cul de sac.

89-90 This attractive, unsurfaced bridleway, though proposed as part of the rim of Ashby Wheel, is suitable for cycling only in dry weather.

89-149-99 Gorse Lane is a partially metalled bridleway enjoying high views over surrounding countryside before dropping to Feandock Covert. It is presently crossed by New Albion haul-road. [see also 112-113-114-149].

89-94 A roughly metalled bridleway links Boothorpe with the Hepworths site at Swadlincote.

89-95-98 This section, including the B586 underpass at 98, can be created upon restoration of the New Albion site, circa 2013.

90-91 The Blackfordby-Norris Hill road is busy at rush hours. Before becoming part of the rim of the proposed Ashby Wheel, cyclist warning signs and road markings may be considered necessary.

92-93 Ashby Bypass cycletrack should extend to Woodville, Swadlincote and Burton though consideration of the route westwards beyond 93 is beyond the scope of this report.

93-94-95 The proposed road needed to service redevelopment of Hepworths' site should incorporate a cycletrack.

93-95,93-96-97-103 Reclamation of the old Woodville loop line has been mooted by South Derbyshire District Council. This section runs from Hepworths' site via Swadlincote Woods, the proposed Gateway Bridge [97], the Ski Centre and Gresley Pottery to Church Gresley Wood. Safety measures would be needed at main road crossings en route.

95-100 A potential link via a present footpath following restoration of the New Albion site.

98-99 Bridleway through Feandock Covert.

99-100 The track between "Conkers" and Spring Cottage Road could be improved and extended to Donington Island in the near future by widening the Reservoir Hill / Mushroom Lane footway. This would form part of a "Conkers"-Donington Island-Church Gresley Wood-Swainspark Wood-Towpath Site-Ashby Woulds Heritage Trail circuit.

98-100-101-102-121 Some of these links form part of Phase 1 of the Donington Island restoration. 101-102 could shortly be incorporated in the "Conkers" circuit. Once the New Albion site is full in about 2013, the haul road beneath the B586 [98] and through to Swainspark will become available. Road safety measures will be needed at 101, 102 and 121.

99-111-112 The B586 here carries fast, heavy traffic. An off carriageway cycletrack will be needed. Protected crossings will be needed at 99 and 112.

101-103-104-105-102 This set of routes include Hepworths' Church Gresley Wood and could be incorporated in the proposed "Conkers" circuit. Road safety measures, possibly including warning signs, road markings and anti-skid surfacing, will be

needed at 101 and 102.

105-106-107 Swainspark Wood could accommodate trails including a Church Gresley Wood to Towpath link as part of the "Conkers" circuit. Safety measures would be needed at road crossings at 106 and 107, also alongside the railway.

106-108-121 Restoration plans for the Towpath Site include proposals for a surfaced track forming part of the "Conkers" circuit. Road safety measures would be needed at 106 and 121.

107-108-109-110 Although proposals for Veronica Revill's Wadland Wood currently don't include the arrangements shown here, it is suggested that consideration be given to the creation of these "logical" links. To complete this plan it would be necessary to negotiate the up-grading of a short length of footpath at 110 which lies outside the Woodland Grant site. The owner[s] of this latter have not yet been identified.

110-130 Part suburban street and part quiet lane, this section would extend one of the proposed Wadland Wood routes [107-108-109-110]. Safety measures would be needed at the B5004 crossing.

111-115 The path between the B586 and the Heart of the Forest Visitor Centre will remain outside the Forest Discovery Centre payzone and is also accommodated in plans for the adjacent employment site. This key link warrants a high standard of design and construction.

112-113-114-149 Upon completion of filling of Moira Pottery void, the haul road from New Albion is to become a bridleway.

113-133 This appears to be a "logical" link in the network. However, in the absence of any public right of way, success in its development will depend entirely upon the outcome of negotiations with the owner[s].

115-116 Whether or not this short section of the old alignment of Ashby Canal is ever re-watered, it would form a useful addition to the local cycleway network. A protected crossing of the B5003 would be required at 116.

115-122 This is a key existing link between the Heart of the Forest Visitor Centre and Ashby Woulds Heritage Trail.

116-117-118 This section of Ashby canal is currently being re-watered. Its towpath will be constructed to accommodate cycling.

117-123 This is a good existing link between Moira Furnace and Ashby Woulds Heritage Trail.

117-129 A short off-carriageway section of cyclepath may be felt necessary at 129 to enable riders to reach the unclassified road to Short Heath without "touching" the B5003.

118-119-120 Re-watering of this section of Ashby Canal may take many years to resource. In the meantime it could become an excellent link in the local cycling network. Protected crossings of Measham Road [the B586] would be needed. Pasture Lane could provide an alternative to section 119-120.

118-124 This is a good existing link between Ashby Canal and the Ashby Woulds Heritage Trail.

120-126 Quiet roads through Oakthorpe link the line of the Ashby Canal with Ashby Woulds Heritage Trail.

121 Ashby Woulds Heritage Trail, the proposed Towpath site bridleway and one of the access routes into the Donington Island site meet where the B5004 crosses the Ivanhoe railway line. Engineering measures will be needed to ensure adequate safety at this important route junction.

121-122-123-124-125-126-127-128 Ashby Woulds Heritage Trail is a well established, high quality railway trail managed by Leicestershire County Council. It enjoys good actual or potential links to the local cycling network at all numbered points. If and when part of the trail is incorporated in the re-watered Ashby Canal, cycling will be accommodated on the wide towpath.

125-136 This somewhat speculative route would make an appealing link if negotiable. However, its realisation will probably have to await the possible eventual promotion of Seal Pastures Plantation as a woodland grant scheme with public access. Agreement with the owner[s] of fields between the plantation and Donisthorpe would also be needed as, currently, the route enjoys public footpath status only. If and when this project begins to appear practicable, it will also have to incorporate a protected crossing of the heavily trafficked A444 at Acresford.

126-137 Though a Byway for only part of its length, this stony track is currently used informally by cyclists. Formalisation of this use would require agreement with the owner[s].

127-137 Approximately 70% of this link follows the existing roads of Westminster Industrial Estate. The final section crosses fields where no path of any kind presently exists. Completion of this route would require agreement with the owner[s].

128-138 Measham High Street is bustling though traffic speeds are low.

128-139-144 This section of the Ashby Canal is currently the subject of a Transport and Works Act procedure needed to bring the full length into public ownership. Re-watering is planned and the reconstructed towpath will accommodate cycling. A connection will be made with Quarry Lane at 144.

128-153 Birds Hill is open, fast and busy in rush hours. Nonetheless its good visibility, width and usefulness prompt local cyclists to propose its addition to the Ashby Area network. Provision of on-carriageway cycle lanes, logos and warning signs should be considered.

129-130 This route passes beneath Ashby Woulds Heritage Trail without connection and joins the B5003 at Gorse Leys.

130-131 At present there is no alternative but to use this section of the B5003 en route for the quiet lanes around Netherseal. Signs and road markings may be thought necessary to warn drivers of the likely presence of cyclists.

131-132 This relatively quiet road at the edge of Overseal may be used as it is.

132-147-148-170 These lanes between Overseal and Netherseal are relatively quiet

and already commonly used by local cyclists.

133-134 This track between a new housing site and Hepworth's Sweethill Wood would give access to a proposed Ivanhoe Line station which will hopefully incorporate a ramped bridge over the railway.

134-135 This link, shown as a footpath in documentation associated with the Hicks Lodge Phase 2 planning application, would presumably become an all purpose access to the proposed Ivanhoe Line station at 134.

136-170 Subject to overcoming the problems associated with link 125-136 from Donisthorpe, this relatively quiet lane between Acresford and Netherseal may be used as it is.

137-150,137-152 This stony track currently enjoys public footpath status only. Formalisation of present unofficial use by cyclists would require agreement with the owner[s].

138-139-140-141-142-143-144-145 Bosworth and Swepstone Roads and Quarry Lane all also figure in the Ibstock Area Cycling Network Plan. They are reasonably quiet and may be used as they are. Care is needed at the B4116 crossing between 138 and 139 where additional safety measures may be called-for.

140-146 This rough bridleway, only partly metalled, is best used only in dry weather. Improvements may be sought when the partially derelict site of which it forms part is restored.

150-151 Although the cul de sac between the A444 and Stretton le Field is very quiet, the main road is busy with heavy traffic and unsuitable for use by inexperienced cyclists.

151-171 Approximately 70% of the route shown is presently an unsurfaced field footpath. The remainder, at the western end, is a stony track. An unsurfaced bridleway parallels 151-171 a little to the north. A public footpath runs similarly parallel to the south. At their A444 ends, both parallel routes can only be reached via the dangerously busy main road.

An initial discussion between representatives of the Ramblers Association, Leicestershire Bridleways Association and the County Council's Rights of Way Section has established a common interest in achieving a straight-over crossing of the A444 for horse riders and cyclists as well as walkers. Vicky Allen has kindly supplied a list of landowners in the area and it is suggested that the next step would be for County RoW officers to meet owners to explore possible ways forward.

The line between Stretton and Chilcote shown on the plan must thus be accepted as provisional pending the outcome of further negotiation.

152-153 Part of this route follows the private drive from Tamworth Road to Manor House Farm. The remainder crosses fields where no path presently exists. Though no public rights exist on any of this section, it has been proposed for addition to the local cycling network. Progress will depend upon the outcome of negotiation with the owner[s].

153-154 This relatively quiet lane may be used as it is.

### **The Four Counties Cycle Network**

The Four Counties Cycling Network is an idea promoted by Appleby Heritage and Environment Movement [see Appendix C]. Sections appearing on Map 2 are described below.

154-155 Snarestone Road is reasonably quiet and may be used as it is though safety measures would be required at the B4116 crossing at Snarestone.

154-163 This reasonably quiet route forms part of FCCN Routes 1, 2 and 3. Safety measures would be appropriate at the A444 crossing at Appleby Parva.

155-156-157 Swepstone Road [ including 143 and 145] and Derby Lane also figure in the Ibstock Area Cycling Network Plan. Both may be used as they are.

155-158 AHM proposals include this section of Ashby Canal though note that sections of the towpath need repair. British Waterways view is not reported.

156-159 Between 156 and Gopsall Wharf this rough byway is best used in dry weather. Recent repairs have improved the section between the canal and the B4116 at 159.

159-160 The B4116 is busy, de-restricted and unsuitable for inexperienced riders. Provision of an off-carriageway track with warning signs and logos at crossings should be sought.

160-161 This private lane did not figure in the Ibstock Area Network Plan due to reservations expressed by Gopsall Estate managers whose support must be won before it becomes part of the FCCN.

160-162-164-163 Shelford Lane to Norton Juxta Twycross [off Map 2] may be used as it is, forming part of a circuit which reappears at 164.

163-173 Salt Street is an ancient, steep, stony byway. It joins a relatively quiet minor road just before No Man's Heath where safety measures will be needed at the B5493 crossing.

163-165, 166-167-168 -169-170 A quiet lane leads down Appleby Hill from 163, leaving Map 2 at 165 en route for Austrey. The circuit briefly re-enters Map 2 at Newton Regis before heading off again for Seckington, Thorpe Constantine and Clifton Campville. It finally re-appears at 169 en route for Netherseal.

167-172 This link northwards from Newton Regis is part quiet lane, part bridleway and would benefit from safety measures at the B5493.

170-171-172-173 These lanes are quiet, picturesque and recommended for cycling though safety measures may well be needed at the B5493 crossing at No-Man's Heath.

***End of schedule***

### **APPENDIX C**

## **Notes on the Four Counties Cycle Network as proposed by Appleby Heritage and Environment Movement**

### **The Four Counties Cycle Network.**

#### **Foreword**

Appleby Heritage and Environment Movement (AHEM) is a local group that has been active for over five years. It is run by local people and aims to enhance and protect our rural environment through the promotion of conservation, the opposition to inappropriate development and the preservation of the character of our village.

AHEM has undertaken many environmental projects including tree and wild flower planting, bird box provision and bench installation. It is currently planning a wild flower meadow and wooden signs for the village entrances. Many of these projects have been partly funded by the County Council - Local Landmark grants, the District Council - through Landmark Northwest, and the Rural Community Council. The remainder has been funded through subscriptions to AHEM by its members.

One project AHEM would like to be involved in is the creation of local cycling routes that would be not only of great benefit to our village but also to many other local parishes....

#### **Aims**

The long term aim is to create "the four counties cycling trail" to link the "border parishes" of our four neighbouring counties to each other, to local attractions, eg the National Forest, Shackerstone railway, Bosworth Battlefield and to other designated cycle routes.

The short term aim is to provide smaller cycling trails linking together local parishes by the provision of safe, accessible routes along quiet roads and upgraded bridle ways and footpaths.

Our general aims are;

to encourage cycling as a means of experiencing the local countryside,

to develop a "fitness for fun" attitude amongst local people and encourage them to use the cycle routes as a method of promoting general wellbeing.

to reduce the pressure on the countryside by the use of less intrusive means than cars and in so doing reduce pollution, congestion and danger to other road users

to persuade land owners that enhanced footpaths and bridle ways can have positive effects on local economies and local people without having a detrimental side effect on the countryside or earnings.

#### **How?**

AHEM will work with members of the District Councils, Parish Councils and Sustrans (Sustainable Transport) to identify appropriate routes and use their expertise to highlight problem areas, advise on the approach to landowners etc. Through these bodies and others, funds, required for tracks which need upgrading and / or maintenance, or for the production of maps or leaflets, could be accessed to take the project forward.