

Q. a revised proposal on the provision of a safe route, including the A357 crossing which details what the cost from the S106 monies would be required

A. I heard this week from Dorset County Council's Principal Transport Planner that 'The feasibility study has been done, and has identified a safe and affordable scheme. This involves two separate crossing points, one Eastbound and one Westbound.

We will prioritise this for funding in September, and expect it to score quite highly because of the matched funding from LEADER. You will have the opportunity to see and comment on the proposed design once the budget has been allocated.'

In tandem with our request to DCC, we have had discussions with the landowners on either side of A357 at its junction with Little Lane. As a result, we have an offer to dedicate as a public bridleway, free of charge, a 3metre wide strip bordering the south of Hayward Lane's northeast flow arm from A357 to its junction with south flow arm. The documentation is ready to proceed and ideally this bridleway will compliment and dovetail with the proposed works by DCC by providing a direct route for cyclists and horse riders to and from the Trailway without using Hayward Lane.

The bridleway option was an important consideration of our LEADER application, pending a decision by DCC, and the S106 funds would be needed to prepare and surface the bridleway to a standard for cyclists and horse riders per verbal estimates by the contractors who quoted for the Project.

As it stands at present, the DCC scheme will assist the crossing of pedestrians by the creation of pavements only leaving cyclists and horse riders to use the road network though all will benefit from warning signage on the A357.

See Plan C attached.

Q. assurance/ evidence that the ongoing maintenance of Little Lane would not be the responsibility of the Parish Council is required

A. We have written assurance from DCC's Community Highways Team Leader who will oversee the Project work, that the Lane's status will not change as a result of the works but will remain an unmade, unclassified public highway.

Q. written confirmation that LEADER funds have been allocated to the project

A. The final LEADER Application was filed mid-July, has satisfied its completeness eligibility review and full appraisal and a decision is expected mid Sept 2017. If successful, the Parish Council as applicant will be offered a Grant Funding Agreement to be signed as soon as possible with a view to the Project work being carried out in October. Time is of the essence due to seasonal weather changes after that.

Q. what is the target level of numbers to use the improved lane?

A. The only measure we can use for this is the same as was required by LEADER outputs namely the current population of the village of Okeford Fitzpaine, i.e. 'Population benefiting from improved tourism infrastructure is 950 persons.' NB. The application was lodged under the Leader Priority: Support for Rural Tourism although it meets many of the criteria for Priority: Provision of Rural Services.