

## Promoting Accessibility, Health and Wellbeing Part 2: Cycling and Planning Principles



Cyclist on local lane

### Purpose of Report

This report has been produced by members of the Scotforth Rural Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group with particular knowledge and experience of cycling and the Local Plan and national policies relevant to promoting cycling as a sustainable and healthy form of transport. This provides evidence to support the vision for improvements to roads and junctions that will make roads safer and attractive for cyclists to use across the parish. Delivery of many of these improvements is largely within the remit of County Highways with funding coming from its own budget, grants or developer contributions – the Vision is therefore an aspiration that will be consistently and persistently pursued over the life of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

### Description of Cycling in Scotforth Parish

1. Walking and cycling have significant health and environmental benefits. Increased exercise in the open air contributes to physical health and mental wellbeing and the provision of attractive and safe routes for walkers and cyclists can reduce reliance on the private car (especially for short journeys) and thereby contribute towards reduced energy consumption and air pollution.
2. Scotforth provides for some leisure opportunities for the inhabitants of Scotforth and also the adjacent areas. It also offers opportunities for employees at the adjacent University site to take alternative routes to and from work other than the car. There is good evidence that an opportunity to reflect on the day ahead or just gone by on a more leisurely route home is beneficial.

3 The neighbourhood area includes some important routes for cycling and walking, as it lies between the major employment centre at the University and the town centre.

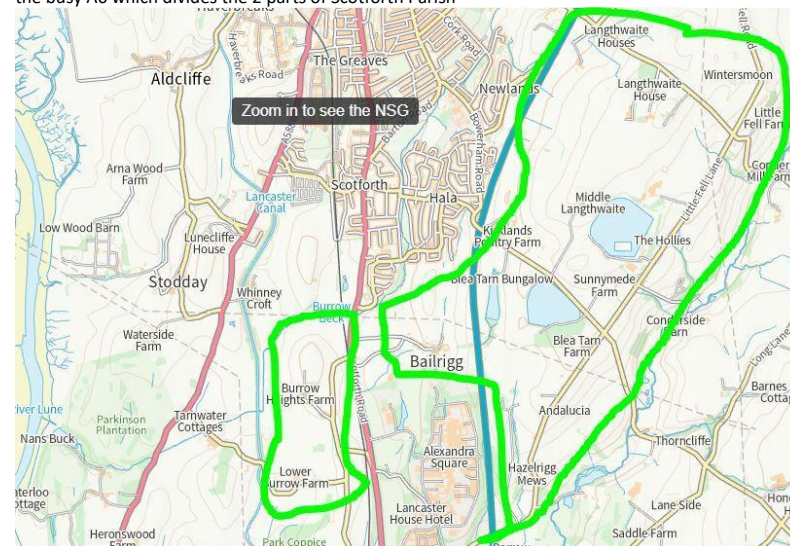
The routes include the heavily used cycle / walking path that links the University to the outskirts of Lancaster and then the town centre.

4. There are 2 main cycle routes from the University going North that avoid the busy and dangerous (high collision rate) A6. One route goes along Bailrigg Lane and the other crosses it within the borders of Scotforth PC. Bailrigg Lane is a narrow lane along sections of which 2 cars could only just squeeze past each other. There is no pavement or “escape” verge. The lane is used by cyclist and walkers and is fairly busy particularly during commuting periods. A further difficulty is the poor sight lines both for the route that joins at the east end and also for the other route as it crosses the lane. Local people are aware of the potential dangers however delivery drivers are often noted to be driving too fast.

5. The University promotes cycling and states that 500 staff and a 1000 students enjoy cycling to campus as their main mode of transport.

6. Lancaster was named as one of only 6 locations in England to be a “Cycle Demonstration Town” in 2005. The idea was to promote cycling using central government monies. Sustrans evaluated the scheme in 2011 (Outcomes of the cycle demonstration towns programme april 2017) and reported a greater growth in cycling in Lancaster area (compared to a matched area) than the other demonstration towns. Cycling and cycle routes are clearly important to the people of Lancaster which includes Scotforth Parish. Further promotion of cycling encourages more cycling.

7. Other roads in Scotforth Parish are mainly classified as B roads or unclassified. Of note however is the busy A6 which divides the 2 parts of Scotforth Parish



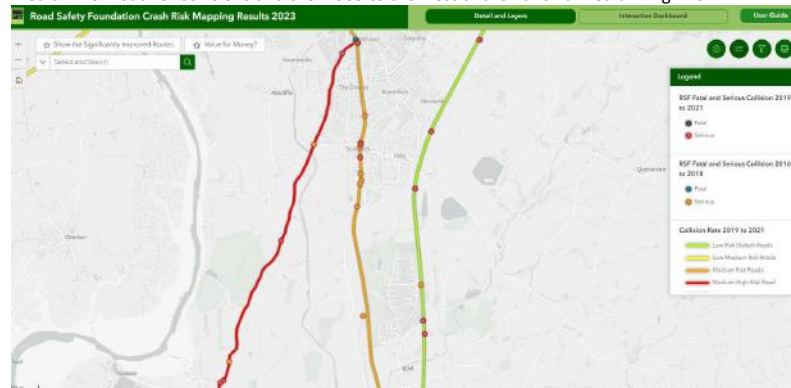
- Legend
- green indicates approx parish boundary
  - Red main roads
  - Blue Motorway
  - Pale yellow B roads over 4m wide
  - Uncoloured unclassified roads less than 4m wide

Several of the B roads are used by cars to either commute to the North avoiding Lancaster town centre or to avoid congestion on the A6. As such cars tend to be travelling rapidly. These roads have no pavements and often the verge is too difficult to walk on or the road has a hedge either side. Highland Brow, Five Ashes Lane and Tarnwater lane are B roads that all start with a 4m width but have substantial narrowing along them making them a bottle neck with larger vehicles regularly getting stuck!

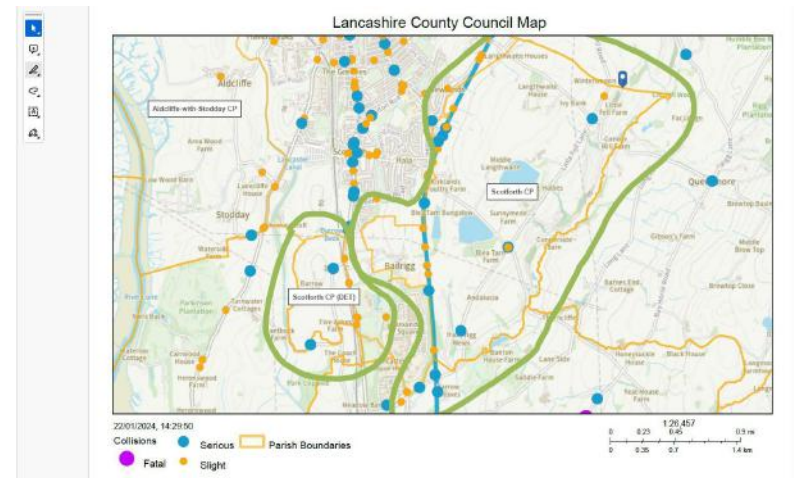
All this needs to be taken into context as these roads are also used by cyclist for leisure, exercise and commuting. It should be noted that these roads give access for cyclists to the highly acclaimed Forest of Bowland, to the highly popular Glasson Dock to Lancaster cycle way as well as other areas.

8. Of particular note for cyclist and car drivers are the crossroads on Little Fell Lane with Blea Tarn road and Langthwaite road. There are regular accidents at these junctions mainly when cars fail to stop and drive straight through a stop sign. This is evidenced from local knowledge and by the state of the infrastructure around the junctions which is regularly rearranged! Unfortunately the official “collision” statistics do not reflect this. These are particularly dangerous areas for cyclist.

9. The A6 which divides the 2 parts of Scotforth Parish is designated by Road Safety Foundation as a medium risk road for collisions and the A 585 to the west of the Parish a medium high risk.



Other statistics from Lancashire show the collisions reported. Local knowledge would suggest that many “collisions” are not reported so this is probably the tip of the iceberg.



Green line indicates rough outline of the 2 parts of Scotforth Parish.

Cyclist are aware of these danger areas and seek routes with less risk . This often includes the lanes of Scotforth Parish.

## Planning Policy Context notes

Review of Lancaster Local Plan (LP) with reference to accessibility ( cycling walking and horse riding) and health.

Of note is that Lancaster City Council decided to review the LP in September 2023 with conclusions expected in 2026. Also of note is that the City Council chose to embark on a Climate Emergency Partial Review of the local plan which is due to report in early 2024. Some of the development plan documents ( DPDs) are available to take into account.

From DPD “Sustainable Travel supplementary Planning Document”:-

Transportation, including walking, wheeling and cycling for all, is a key factor to what makes a place liveable,ensures access to key services, brings in goods and services, facilitates employment, and links communities. It should be viewed holistically within and beyond the development as a key way to deliver on community, climate and environmental priorities. However,transportation links can also cause community and environmental damages and further inequity. Whether through fragmenting habitats through road linkages, run off pollution from surfaces, inadequate provision or links, or poorly designed infrastructure which does not fully support the most vulnerable users.

The “Cycle Development Town” project (2005) showed that by putting in place the right infrastructure positive changes to travel behaviour can be achieved. New developments will therefore need to begin at the earliest stages of design to prioritise walking, cycling and accessibility to public transport, rather than these being a secondary consideration to car travel.

Developments must ensure they facilitate residents to make the lowest carbon and healthiest choice and provide safe and attractive alternatives that can benefit all residents in the district: families, children, people living with disabilities, people with mobility challenges, and women. New transportation links must support the environment rather than fragment and damage it and contribute positively to green and blue infrastructure. This must be incorporated into early into travel assessments, travel plans and design work.

### Relevant policies in the Lancaster Local Plan

**T2 Developing the Walking and Cycling Network:** Sets out a commitment to build upon the walking and cycling network, with new pedestrian and cycle routes to be segregated, include supporting infrastructure, and be inclusive. This builds on NPPF para 104 which sets out :- Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that: ...:-

c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued.' Paragraph 106 goes on to say that 'Planning policies should: d) provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans).'

**SP10 Improving Transport Connectivity:** This policy seeks to ensure that the improvement and growth of transport corridors is prioritised, including the promotion of active travel.

### Development Management DPD's

**DM57 Health and Well-Being\*:** The policy sets out a generic approach towards health and well-being looking at various aspects of development which can impact on the health and well people of people and communities

**DM61 Prioritising Walking and Cycling\*:** Lays out the requirement that development proposals prioritise pedestrian and cycling. It states that development to be 'highly accessible' for walking and makes case for setting walking distances better than the average. It advises that the Council will ensure that development proposals maintain, and where possible improve the existing pedestrian infrastructure, and ensure that no adverse impacts are created for the pedestrian environment, particularly in relation to pedestrian safety, and provide appropriate pedestrian access for all sections of the community. The Policy goes on to say that 'development proposals should also encourage greater opportunities for cycle users through good design, and deliver appropriate cycle access. Proposals should also include appropriate linkages to the existing cycle network and secure and covered cycle parking and storage facilities.'

### DM62 Vehicle Parking Provision and Electric Vehicle Charging Points\*:

This policy outlines the parking provision that must be included at development sites including parking for cycles and mobility scooters. It also outlines the need for electric charge points and how these can be incorporated into new development sites.

### DM63 Transport Efficiency and Travel Plans\*:

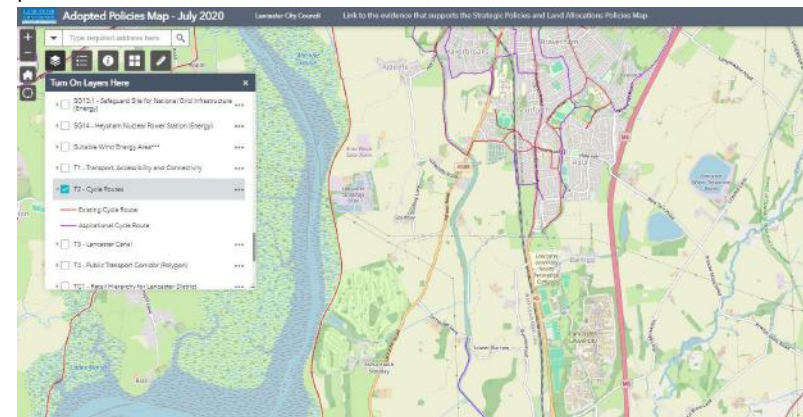
The policy supports sustainable transport and contributions to improve the transport network, particularly to facilitate walking, cycling and public transport. It sets out that proposals that will generate a high level of trips will require a Transport Assessment and a travel plan which prioritises a model.

### Other comments :-

The National Model Design Code (Part 2) states that in designing streets, the needs of pedestrians and cyclists should be considered first, then public transport, service and emergency vehicles and only then motor vehicles. It goes on to say that walking and cycling should be the first choice for short journeys, particularly those of 5 miles or less

### 3.4 Providing Well Designed Cycling Infrastructure

Policy T2 expects proposals to support the development of the existing cycle network. Diagram below identifies the strategic network and of existing and aspirational routes as shown on the Local Plan policies map. The design and provision of new cycle networks should follow the principles set out within the Governments latest guidance within Local Transport Note 1/20 on Cycle Infrastructure Design.



Proposals are expected to ensure that these principles have been applied in their preparation and that meaningful additions to the cycle network are provided as part of the new development. This means providing direct and logical additions to the network and should result in new infrastructure being linked to the existing network so that proposals are not isolated and trips by cycle are not seen as unattractive or dangerous.

Consideration should be given to nearby trip attractors and the location of the existing cycle network. Proposals are expected to take account of the existing network and, wherever possible, provide links to it. If this is not possible then upgrades to the existing network are expected. A maximum 5 km distance is considered to be an acceptable cycling distance between development and local services and employment. Most development taking place in and around the urban areas of the district will be within 5 km of urban centres. Of more importance however is the need to provide safe and useable links between new development and services and employment areas. In most cases this will require connecting to the existing cycle network as defined in Policy T2, and in particular to the strategic network which provides off road routes. Such connections will require upgrades/alterations to existing footways and highways and discussions with the Highways Authority are recommended at the earliest opportunity.

Within sites infrastructure should be of the highest quality in accordance with LTN1/20.

Shared pedestrian/cycle paths should not be the default approach. They can often cause conflict between users and are only appropriate where there are few pedestrians and where cycle speeds are likely to be low. Mobility scooters make use of cycle paths, and as such cycle path design should allow for cyclists to safely pass the mobility scooter user. Also, cycle path design is expected to be such that they are wide enough to allow cyclists to safely pass each keeping in mind that not all cyclists are the same and there may be children, cargo bikes, adapted cycles, tricycles, and bikes with trailers sharing the same path. Cycle routes should, in the first instance be through the provision of segregated cycle routes. This approach follows best practice and the guidance set out in LTN1/20 which promotes creating safe space for cycling within highways. Segregated routes can take many forms and the level of segregation will be dependant on the volume and speed of traffic on the highway.

Cycle routes must be hard, smooth, level, durable, permeable and safe in all weather. There must not be any disruption to the surface such as from drains except in special circumstances such as streets with heritage value. There should not be level changes on the route such as from speed humps. They should have a clear programme of maintenance. This SPD does not cover all aspects of good design for cycling infrastructure and as such development proposals are expected to follow the guidance laid out in LTN 1/20 available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120>

Scotforth NP would expect new cycling infrastructure design to follow Policy T2

Part of T2 says This means providing direct and logical additions to the network and should result in new infrastructure being linked to the existing network so that proposals are not isolated and trips by cycle are not seen as unattractive or dangerous. Proposals are expected to take account of the existing network and, wherever possible, provide links to it. If this is not possible then upgrades to the existing network are expected. Mobility scooters make use of cycle paths, and as such cycle path design should allow for cyclists to safely pass the mobility scooter user. Also, cycle path design is expected to be such that they are wide enough to allow cyclists to safely pass each keeping in mind that not all cyclists are the same and there may be children, cargo bikes, adapted cycles, tricycles, and bikes with trailers sharing the same path. Cycle routes should, in the first instance be through the provision of segregated cycle routes.

Cycle storage :- Dedicated secure cycle parking is required for new development as set out in Appendix E of the Development Management DPD. This should be at ground floor level. For residential uses, garages can be utilised but should be of sufficient size to allow for the of storage of bikes associated with the house size. In other cases storage should be sought within the building in the first instance in the form of a dedicated ground floor storage area. If this is not possible then covered and secure bike sheds maybe appropriate.

### Review of Jacobs report 2016

Produced to be used in the development of the Lancashire Plan for cycling

Principal targets are :-

Doubling the number of people cycling by 2026; ( baseline 2016)

Increasing the number of people walking by 10% by 2026 with a focus on increasing the percentage of aged children 5 – 10 usually walking to school; and

Bring levels of physical activity in all districts to at least the annual national average by 2026.

The principles of cycling networks stated are :-

Safety: Routes should be safe and people must feel safe;

Comfort: Routes must be comfortable e.g. ease of wayfinding (signage), little hindrance from other road users (car parking) and surfacing which is appropriate to the facility; and

Attractiveness: Routes and urban spaces should be pleasant and attractive spaces in which people want to spend time; this is particularly important in the context of urban centres.

Priority: Local Transport Plans and Transport Masterplans in Lancashire have established prioritising walking and cycling above motorised modes of travel. We will implement this hierarchy when improving existing infrastructure and guiding new development to make walking and cycling convenient and attractive.

## Conclusion: Applying Principles and Practice into Scotforth Neighbourhood Plan

The report Promoting Accessibility, Health and Wellbeing considers in Part 1 walking, riding and driving and in Part 2 cycling and presents a vision for how accessibility should be improved in the Neighbourhood Area as and when opportunities arise or are pursued. Development proposals must consider how they can contribute towards realising the vision summarised in figure 1 of Part 1 and figures 2 and 3 in Part 2.

Scotforth NP would endorse the principles laid out above from the NPPF, County Council Plans and the Lancaster Local Plan. The extracted principles are important to Scotforth NP.

In practice these principles turn into desired actions at the local level and in particular would include where possible:-

- Improvement of junctions where cycle and walk ways cross roads. The most obvious of these is the University cycle / walk way as it crosses Bailrigg Lane. The sight lines need to be considerably improved. Traffic calming measures along Bailrigg Lane need to be considered.
- Improvement of connections from University to City centre. Particularly with regard to safety. These routes would include cycle ways alongside but separate from the A6, in particular the section north of Filterhouse / Bailrigg Student Living ideally ought to include a separate bridge over Burrow Beck. Increased safety on Burrow Road and Blea Tarn Road achieved through sensible speed limits
- New housing needs to include the ability to store a cycle
- Use of Tarnwater Lane, Burrow Road and Five Ashes Lane by HGV's needs to be prohibited except for deliveries.
- Where possible making more use of the verges as a safe place to walk needs to be implemented. This is particularly important on Bailrigg Lane, Burrow Road, and Blea Tarn Road.
- Footpaths should use kissing gates rather than stiles. Hardcore surfaces should be used for heavily used footpaths.
- 30-40 mph speed limits need to be appropriately introduced on all B-class roads and STOP junctions implemented for the most accident prone junctions in the parish.
- Cycle networks design should prioritise safety, comfort, and attractiveness and take priority over motorised modes of travel

- When land use is changed consideration of the potential for further cycle and footpath connections must be explored and become a planning condition.
- The provision of footpaths and cycleways outside Scotforth PC boundary needs to be taken into account when considering planning within Scotforth PC

Figure 1 below summarises the vision of improvements throughout the parish that will promote the use of cycling in line with the Local Plan and national planning guidance.

Figure 1: Proposed improvements to support cycling in Scotforth Parish

