

Wheelrights Routes Group

Notes of meeting on 6th March 2021

by Zoom

Present: Bill Gannon (BG), Nick Guy (NG), David Naylor (DN), Dareyoush Rassi (DR), Mike Lewis (ML), Victoria Williams (VW).

Apologies: Allyson Evans (AE), John Sayce (JS), Chris Walsh (CW).

DN chaired the meeting.

1. **Matters arising** from last two meetings: Routes Group (RG) on 9 Jan. and Wheelrights (WR) on 10 Feb.

- (a) 2021-22 Routes. (RG: Item 2.) Our understanding is that JS has submitted them to the Council but has not heard what routes they have sought funding for.
- (b) Mayals Road. (RG: Item 4., WR: Item 2.7) On 10 Feb. the residents sent a letter, signed by 144, to Councillors expressing their concerns. It is in the Mayals Road section of <https://www.wheelrights.org.uk/infrastr.htm>. DN emailed Gwenda Owen on 11 Jan. She replied that she would let him know of developments. He has not heard since. NG confirmed that WR, CUK and the official Residents Association all continue to oppose the Council's plans for two hybrid tracks.
- (c) Walter Road. (WR: Item 2.1) At the 25 Feb. CAP meeting Cllr Nick Davies advised that a meeting is to be arranged with Simon Jones and cllr Mark Thomas to consider this.
- (d) Pontarddulais link. (WR: Item 2.5.) NG confirmed that the 4 March meeting had taken place but has not heard the outcome.
- (e) New Member. (WR: Item 3.6.) DN welcomed VW who has now joined the Routes Group.

2. **Commonplace Routes**.

DN explained that our role was to assess the entries – more than 200 pins had been placed on the Swansea County map – with a view to coming up with a list of recommended routes for the Integrated Network Map (INM). NG said that, based on advice from JS and Tim John, we should aim for 5-10 routes. It was noted that most of the pins on the map related to shortcomings on existing routes rather than proposed ones and were not just about cycling. Clearly filtering is necessary. DR helpfully offered to catalogue the entries to help us with the assessment. We would take this on and endeavour to complete this by the next meeting (on 10 April). **[Action All.]**

VW asked for clarification on what we were supposed to do. Clearly the aim is to identify new routes for inclusion on the INM. DN was uncertain on just how, but noted that the 11 routes we had short listed for 2021/22 funding (1a above.) were part of the INM and our assessment should include a check on the extent to which the pins supported this selection in addition to the 5-10 new routes. As to how, perhaps his view on this can be expressed by a modification of the adage: 'The skill how to do comes of doing.!'

3. **Gowerton-Kingsbridge Route**.

DN suggested that the time was now ripe to revive the idea first proposed following a site visit by John Grimshaw, Eifion Francis and himself in 2009. The proposal is that the route should use the abutments of the old railway bridge to provide a direct route north. DN tabled a brief report (In the Appendix. Amended as location of section under construction now confirmed.) which he had prepared following a recent visit. He noted that this route would provide a convenient alternative for those not wishing to go to Gowerton Station. It would join the section of route currently under construction just north of the railway. While the merits of this link were accepted it was suggested that it should not be given priority NG spoke against as he felt that bridges on other routes in Swansea should have priority. AE however had informed DN by email that she thought it a very good idea.

5. **Next meeting**.

10.00 am on Saturday, 10 April. (If restrictions lifted possibly face to face?)

Notes prepared by
David Naylor

APPENDIX

Gowerton Station Bypass

A proposal.

The section of the shared use path from Alder Way in Gowerton to Kingsbridge was opened in February 2021. At the time of writing construction had started on its continuation south to Gowerton Station. A disadvantage of this route for those not wishing to access the station is that the railway footbridge has to be crossed. The proposal is that a bridge be constructed across the railway using the old railway bridge abutments just west of the station to provide a direct link from NCR 4 to the new path which it would join a short distance to the north.

On 30 April 2009 John Grimshaw, during a two day visit to Swansea in the company of the writer and one other, looked into the feasibility of this link. He judged that it was feasible, that the abutments could be used for a new bridge and that this would provide a desirable at grade crossing which would avoid the diversion via the station. A problem was that a property had been constructed near the north abutment which might be in the way of the potential route. The proposal was not followed up. Since then the north platform and the footbridge were constructed and it was decided to route the path over the footbridge.

The writer visited the site shortly after the Alder Way to Gowerton section had been opened. Work to link it to Gowerton station had not then started. He found that although there was a property in the way of a direct line across the old bridge abutments, the proposed link would be taken across waste ground around the property as illustrated by the purple line on the map.

The south end of the link would connect with NCR 4 via the car park, the north end of which is visible on the map. The new link would join the main path as shown. The photos below were taken by the writer on this visit.

Construction of this link would provide a direct route between Gowerton and Kingsbridge which avoids the railway footbridge. The route via the station will serve the useful purpose of providing access to the station from the north.

David Naylor
March 2021

* This is the line of the connection to the station under construction at the time of writing.

