

**A5004 Long Hill Safer Roads Fund Project
Consultation Report**



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The consultation findings expressed herein relate to the A5004 Long Hill Safer Roads Fund project only. This document has been prepared for the sole use of reporting the consultation findings and how they may impact on the safety interventions to be introduced as part of the project scope and to progress to detailed design and installation.

Recommendations or comments contained within in this report should only be read and relied upon within the context of the entire document.

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A5004 Long Hill Safer Roads Fund Project

Consultation Report

Introduction

The A5004 Long Hill Safer Roads project is a Department for Transport sponsored road safety initiative. Research by the Road Safety Foundation and RAC Foundation has identified the A5004 as having one of the worst Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) safety records in the UK, with the route appearing in the list of worst roads. Several road safety interventions are planned for the A5004 Long Hill route, aimed at improving road safety, some of which are sensitive within the surrounding environment. It is standard practice for the Council to consult on the nature and location of the interventions so that its internal consultees, wider stakeholders and members of the public can view the proposals, make comment, and give feedback. This Consultation Report summarises the method by which the consultation was undertaken, the responses made and what impact these have had on the safety interventions to be taken forward into detailed design and installation.

Consultation Methods

Consultation drawings were prepared detailing the locations and nature of the proposed safety interventions along the route. An explanation of the project and the interventions was also drafted. These comprised the consultation materials, which were presented as the on-line Consultation via the County Council's website. The Consultation was also supported by two Public Consultation Exhibitions held "in person" at Buxton, and Whaley Bridge. These Public Consultation Exhibitions were staffed by County Council officers from the Traffic & Safety / Project Management / Road Safety Teams.

DCC holds a list of stakeholders who are mandatory recipients of consultations that the Council undertakes including internal consultee departments and affiliated organisations. Emails were sent out to these stakeholders / mandatory consultees on 1st December 2022, with each email providing a website link to the Consultation Materials and providing details of when / where the Public Consultation Exhibitions were being held.

The Consultation Materials were loaded onto a DCC webpage for the on-line consultation. Letters of invitation to all individual frontagers along the A5004 were hand delivered on 3rd December 2022 (Buxton Area up to Whitehall) and 13th December 2022 (Whitehall to Whaley Bridge) prior to the respective Exhibition Meeting dates. These hand deliveries included the sections of the route passing through the North side of Buxton, Fernilee, Taxal, South side of Whaley Bridge. An invitation to attend the public exhibitions about the proposed works was shared within this consultation exhibition letter, and additionally publicised via press releases / social media feeds.

The on-line consultation started on 1st December 2022 and finished on 15th January 2023. (Note this was an extended Consultation Period, to take account of the Consultation running through the Christmas / New Year period). On-line responses were received from 164 respondents using the feedback questionnaire. Some of those responding completed part of the form but did not give any commentary or views on the proposals. Other feedback was received using the roadsafety@Derbyshire.gov.uk email address (which was made available via the on-line webpage) but there were few respondents using this route. Comments received from people interested in the proposed safety interventions or that had personal insight regarding issues along the route came throughout the above period.

Two public exhibitions were held. One at The Pump Room, Buxton Crescent, Buxton on 6th December 2022, and the other at The Mechanics Institute, Whaley Bridge on 15th December 2022. Both ran between 2.30pm and 8.30pm. Staffing was by the project manager; a traffic and safety officer; a member of the average speed camera team; and staff from the Council's Road Safety & Education and Training Team.

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A record was made of those attending each event as follows:

Exhibition Date	Numbers attending
Tuesday 6 th December 2022 (Buxton)	88
Thursday 15 th December 2022 (Whaley Bridge)	<u>43</u>
Total	131

Not everyone attending the Public Consultation Events submitted responses “on the day”. Many of those attending the exhibition advised that they would consider the proposals further and make a response online.

Consultation Findings

In total there were 184 respondents to the Consultation including Statutory Consultees, those who replied on-line, those who replied via email, and respondents who submitted replies at one of the Public Consultation Exhibitions in paper format.

The consultation literature proposed various safety measures along the route and invited feedback on the proposals. Each written response has been assessed to determine the respondents support or otherwise for each proposed safety intervention. If the respondent did not make comment referring to a particular intervention, then this is a response neither in favour nor against the proposal.

Below is a summary of the numbers of respondents who made definite comments either for or against each of the individual safety measure proposed at consultation / as presented and described in the Consultation Literature and Plans: -

Speed Management Review / Average Speed Camera System. Supportive Comments	58
Speed Management Review / Average Speed Camera System. Unsupportive Comments	34
Clear Roadside Hazards Supportive Comments	27
Site Distance Obstruction Removal Supportive Comments	27
Shoulder rumble Strips Supportive Comments	22
Central Hatching Supportive Comments	20
Protected Turn Lane Supportive Comments	20
Roadside Barriers including Bike guard Supportive Comments	21
Unsignalised Pedestrian Crossings Supportive Comments	20

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Horizontal realignment (A53 / A5004 Junction) Supportive Comments and / or with minor design Improvements / Design Suggestions	23
Horizontal realignment (A53 / A5004 Junction) Outright Rejection / non-support comments.	5
Delineation and signing (intersection) Supportive comments	17
Improve pedestrian crossing facility Supportive comments	21
Footpath Provision adjacent to Road Supportive Comments	25
Bicycle Lane (off-road in part) [Including Improvements to assist interconnectivity with town and existing PRow Network & Quiet Roads] Supportive Comments	33
Bicycle Lane (off-road in part) [Including Improvements to assist interconnectivity with town and existing PRow Network & Quiet Roads] Rejection / non supportive Comments	5
Side Road Unsignalised pedestrian crossing Supportive Comments	11
Bicycle Lane Specific Supportive Comments about OLD ROAD Section.	17
Bicycle Lane Specific Non-Supportive Comments about OLD ROAD Section.	5
<u>In addition, the following General comment categories are shown, with their corresponding number of respondents listed below: -</u>	
Responses where no comments were made, or simply comments such as "long overdue" etc	45
Responses making General Comments about non-Traffic / Non-Road Safety Related Issues not on A5004	7
Responses making General Comments about non-Traffic / Non-Road Safety Related Issues on the A5004	19
Responses making General Comments about additional Traffic / Road Safety Related Issues on A5004, & suggestions for further work / additions to what proposed	67
Responses making General Comments about Traffic / Road Safety Related Issues elsewhere i.e., not on A5004.	13
Specific Education Training Supportive Comments	1

As can be seen from the above summary totals, not every respondent made comment on the proposed safety measures. Of those more major individual Safety Interventions consulted on, there are significantly more supportive responses / comments than unsupportive comments. The more major Safety Interventions are: -

- The Speed Management Review / Average Speed Camera System.
- The Horizontal Realignment A53/A5004 Junction Improvement.
- The Bicycle Lane (off-road in part) which includes the Old Road section.

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It should also be noted that a very significant number of respondents (67) made comments suggesting Safety Interventions additional to those consulted on, or additional points of detail. As there were a significant number of these potentially relevant additional safety interventions suggested, then each of these is examined in more detail below.

Other Suggested Safety Interventions

Many of the respondents made suggestions as to other possible road safety solutions additional to the proposed Consultation Safety Interventions along the A5004 route, which they would like to see introduced. (Some of these included points of detail). Subject to review, it is considered that some of those listed below may be included within the Safer Roads Fund proposals going forward to detail design in addition to those baseline design solutions proposed on the consultation plans.

A) A53 / A5004 Junction Buxton

A roundabout junction was shown at this location on the Consultation Plans. Respondents considered that a more compact roundabout was desirable and should be carefully thought through at this location during the detail design stage. Subject to an assessment of highway capacity at detail design, this suggestion should be carefully considered, as a narrower carriageway (potentially with over-run areas, if necessary, at key locations) would assist Vulnerable Road Users. Derbyshire County Council Conservation and Design Team also raised concerns from a Heritage / Intrusion perspective regarding the proposed change and form of the junction within the Conservation Area. Details regarding the design of the junction and materials to be used therefore need to be finalised / resolved in design as soon as possible. Note that, of those consultation respondents who specifically commented regarding this junction, 23 responses made supportive / positive comments, whereas 5 respondents made negative comments.

B) Road / Carriageway Condition

The condition of the existing carriageway at some locations along the A5004, was raised by several consultees. When the Department for Transport's (DfT's) consultants carried out their "VIDA survey" of the route, carriageway condition was not identified as a significant safety hazard. Therefore, resurfacing of the carriageway has not been included in the measures taken to consultation (as a specific safety remediation proposal), and DfT has not provided funding through this specific Safer Roads Fund Project grant to allow any significant resurfacing of the A5004 carriageway to take place. Any carriageway resurfacing ongoing on the A5004 would therefore be carried out under the County Council's Capital Works Highway Maintenance Service Plan funding, as part of their asset management / forward planning activities to managing the Council's assets.

C) Vehicle Activated Illuminated Signs (Triggered by vehicle speeds)

Respondents proposed vehicle activated signs at hazard points along the route. Note that as part of the design philosophy of the proposals identified for consultation, a rationalisation of individual signs is proposed to overcome possible objections from Peak District National Park Association. (This particularly to discourage the proliferation of individual signs, bearing in mind the pathway of the rural section of the route is through the Peak District National Park). The logic behind the Speed Management approach has been to propose a small number of average speed camera locations (7 in total), rather than using individual signs at specific known collision locations. It is accepted that these camera locations must have taller columns, (rather than individual signposts), but an average speed

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camera system is proven to be the most successful “countermeasure” to bring vehicle speeds down throughout the length of routes, and consequently reduce collisions / reduce the severity of casualties. Note also that a significantly larger number of signposts would be required for the signing of individual collision locations, and these signposts would have to be the wider diameter “passively safe” type.

Of those respondents who made specific comment about the proposed average speed camera system, 58 replies made positive / supportive comments, whereas 34 (a lower number) made negative / unsupportive comments regarding the proposed Average Speed Cameras.

D) Reduce the number of HGVs using the route (introduce a Weight Limit), or downgrade the status of the route from A Class to B Class

Downgrading / reclassifying the route to a B Class route, would potentially reduce the amount of money available from DfT through the Council’s Asset Management / ongoing maintenance programme for carriageway resurfacing / carriageway maintenance. Reducing sources of income is not appropriate when the cost of maintaining the current assets is increasing. A change in classification would also impact signs on the approaches and along the route which would need to be changed to reflect the new route designation. This would add to the implementation cost. As an A class route HGVs should be expected / allowed to use this route, as an alternative to the A6 Primary route further to the east, as may be necessary to access Whaley Bridge from Buxton and vice versa.

E) Make more extensive the improvements to walking and cycle network, particularly improvements off highway to the west side / down into the Goyt Valley.

Whilst the proposals taken to Public Consultation under this Safer Roads Fund project, include for improvements for walking and cycling connectivity (within highway boundaries) to the existing PRoW network, generally there is insufficient funds within the Safer Roads Fund budget/grant for any extensive footpath/bridleway resurfacing or maintenance improvements (off highway). Notwithstanding this comment, a significant part of the Safer Roads Fund grant has been allocated to surfacing/maintenance improvements along the Old Road route rather than the A5004. This will potentially much improve safety for cyclists travelling between Buxton and Whaley Bridge, by taking them off the A5004 main route.

F) Make sure localised drainage improvements are put in place to reduce the occurrence of standing water, or field run-off flowing across carriageway at certain locations (e.g., Elnor Lane area and Moss House Farm area)

More extensive survey work will be carried out at detail design stage, to ascertain achievable solutions where drainage / standing water is occurring.

G) Put Average Speed Cameras in the 30 mph limits in Buxton and Whaley Bridge

There are too many side roads in the urban areas of the towns for average speed cameras to be feasible / workable.

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- H) Review the extents of currently permissible on street parking on Manchester Road Buxton and on A5004 at south side of Whaley Bridge. (Potentially also at Whaley Bridge between Horwich End and Mevril Road where parking can safely be maintained, mark out with parking bays, and move the centreline over.)**

This will be reviewed as part of the detail design process. It is understood that driveways get blocked or have restricted visibility on Manchester Road. Restriction of parking on some sections of Manchester Road (at the narrower sections) may also assist with the design of the footway / cycleway. Also, restriction of parking on A5004 at certain hazard points within south side of Whaley Bridge may improve safety. Reviews at both locations will be carried out as part of the detail design process.

- I) Place a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) on Old Road to prevent it's use by motorised vehicles (except for access). The resurfacing of Old Road could then be done to full width rather than part width (using Ultitrek), and therefore provide a greater width for pedestrians / cyclists / equestrians to use. Or designate as a bridleway for part length. Alternatively with a TRO in place only surface Old Road to half width, to maintain enjoyment as a route for Mountain Bikers also.**

The feasibility of these alternative approaches will be reviewed as part of the detail design process, with an assessment of whether progress of a Traffic Regulation Order / re-classification is likely to be successful or not.

- J) Suggest lowering the speed limit through Fernilee to 30 mph, and lowering the section from Fernilee to Whaley Bridge to 40 mph. Also extend the 40 mph limit on the south side of Fernilee (i.e., Buxton side) to include the known deer crossing point to the routes around Fernilee Reservoir / Fernilee Hall Farm Track.**

These suggestions will be reviewed against criteria for setting local speed limits as part of the detail design process.

- K) Provide segregated cycle lanes in verge between Buxton and Whaley Bridge**

This is not feasible for the full length of the route between Buxton and Whaley Bridge (i.e., there are very significant lengths where there are insufficient verge width available or steep banks beside the road creating engineering difficulties.) That is why the proposal is to use / improve the "Old Road" route corridor to provide a safer cycle link between Buxton and Whaley Bridge.

- L) Place a "static" single speed camera on the top (straight) section of Manchester Road, Buxton (i.e., within the 30 mph limit), in addition to Average Speed Cameras on the rural section. Also improved speed enforcement in Whaley Bridge.**

This can be reviewed at detail design, to confirm if criteria would be met.

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- M) Extend the 30 mph limit out of Buxton to Coldsprings, / (or review the location of the 30/40 mph change point and the 40/50 mph change point in this area) and place a speed enforcement camera (within 30mph limit) near Oaklands (camera both directions). This to reduce vehicle speeds / give additional protection for residents in this area.**

This can be reviewed at detail design, to confirm if criteria would be met.

- N) Just place a static single speed camera on the long straight section between Fernilee and Whitehall, and static speed camera(s) in Fernilee village, along with a speed limit review.**

This is unlikely to reduce vehicle speeds / improve safety over the whole length of the route but will be assessed.

- O) Improvements for visibility and equestrians / pedestrians / cyclists crossing the road at Shawcross Barns, and layby area, and interconnectivity of footways also in this area, with PRoWs etc**

This will be assessed as part of the detail design process.

- P) Footway Link requested to connect with the path below Wainstones and the Midshires Way (just before Rack End)**

This will be assessed / possibly confirmed as part of the detail design process.

- Q) Provide more “Copenhagen type” side road crossings for the shared footway/cycleway on Manchester Road Buxton (to provide priority/continuity for cyclists along the whole length of the A5004 proposed footway cycleways, and review extents of this footway / cycleway all the way up to Old Road, to provide continuity)**

This will be assessed / reviewed as part of the detail design process, but the preference is to install these types of proposals as part of this safety intervention.

- R) Put Advisory Speed Limit advance warning signs up on the bends (in addition to chevrons / safety fencing etc.)**

Signing strategy will be reviewed as part of detail design but avoiding proliferation of individual signs needs to be borne in mind.

- S) Provide Education / Training for cyclists to use this section of the A5004 safely and considerately. (e.g., Too many cyclists in packs / bunching up on slow uphill sections.)**

ETP proposals will consider in detail what education packages are to be delivered for various road user groups on this route, (as part of the Safer Roads Fund grant funding.)

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- T) Please ensure the pavement is reinstated just to north side of Fernilee – This to allow continuous pedestrian route (on one or other side of the road) northwards from centre of Fernilee.**

This proposal is sought to overcome parking / obstruction of the footway by a garage at the northern end of Fernilee. Attempts have been made to clear the footway but have failed. Thus, the footway remains blocked to pedestrians, and they must travel within the road to pass the vehicle obstructions. This will be assessed as part of the detail design.

- U) Reduce the carriageway width of not just the Park Road / Manchester Road Junctions, but also reduce the widths of the Corbar Road and Devonshire Road junctions with Manchester Road, as they are “hostile” to pedestrians /cyclists.**

These options / individual junctions will be assessed as part of the detail design.

- V) Would like at least one or two real time cameras showing state of the weather on the road (to view at home)**

The County Council do not provide / have real time cameras on the highway, other than at the Council’s on highway “weather stations”, which are used for forecasting / prediction and assessment of winter weather road conditions. There are no plans to introduce additional weather station(s) on the A5004, and the Safer Roads Fund grant cannot be used to provide additional “weather information / winter road condition” cameras.

- W) Remove the tall trees at the tight bend on A5004 / the “U corner” / Clough (Devil’s Elbow).**

Vegetation clearance verge cut back and potentially some clearance beyond highway limits is already proposed here, subject to discussions with landowner / United Utilities. The visibility improvements / vegetation cutback extents will be subject to an assessment of Stopping Sight Distance to standards.

- X) Junction from A5004 to Fernilee Reservoir – Needs better advance warning signs. Also “Devil’s Elbow” tight, and too narrow for HGVs/cyclists to safely pass. Needs a high vis vehicle activated sign in advance.**

Signing strategy for the route will be established as part of the detail design process.

- Y) Need more double white line sections / no overtaking sections.**

No overtaking / double white line sections are based on strict visibility criteria i.e., they can only be introduced to the standards where full overtaking sight distance for the speed of the road is available. Checks / further assessment of full overtaking sight distances available will be carried out based on survey, during the detail design process.

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Z) George Street Buxton should not be made one-way

The proposal to make George Street one-way is compatible with the current proposed lay-out for the junction at A53 / A5004. The proposals for the junction will be assessed, and if reduced in size then the necessary impact on George Street will be reviewed.

Conclusion

It is proposed that the layouts / the intended preliminary designs shown at consultation and as described under “Consultation Findings” above should progress to Detail Design. This is subject to agreement being achieved with Peak District National Park Association regarding the average speed camera proposals, and subject to agreement being reached with Derbyshire County Council Conservation and Design Team, regarding the layout / form and materials to be used for the A5004 / A53 junction Improvement. [This junction is currently at consultation stage shown as a standard (i.e., non-compact) roundabout.]

Regarding the inclusion of additional safety measures raised through the Consultation Stage, described above, the feasibility of including such additional measures in the finalised design will be assessed and set against the wider Safer Roads Fund budget commitments/availability. Subject to review and criteria being met / funding being available, assessment will be made of the following additional measures would be taken forward, with reference to the above: - A), F), H), I), J), L), M), N), O), P), Q), R), S), T), U), X), Y), Z).