

## DORSET HIGHWAYS MANAGEMENT

### NOTES OF MEETING

Subject	Throop Gauging Weir Bridge	Date	15 May 2012
		Place	County Hall
Those Present	John Burridge (JB) – DCC Bridge Management Simon Arscott (SA) – DCC Structures Design Carmel Wilkinson (CW) – DCC Rights of Way John Williamson (JW) – DCC Rights of Way Sofia O’Sullivan (SOS) – Bournemouth and Poole Rights of Way Kevin Humphreys (KH) – DCC / Sustrans Sue McGowan (SMG) – DCC Transport Planning Adam Bows (AB) – DCC Transport Planning Paul Jones (PJ) – DCC Countryside Ranger		
Apologies			

#### Proceedings

#### Action

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 Throop Bridge came to attention of Bridge Management team in 2008, uncertain what maintenance was undertaken prior to this date.
- 1.2 Agreement dated 4<sup>th</sup> July 1989 indicates EA liable to cover 20% cost of maintenance.
- 1.3 Existing bridge 52m long, 1.1m wide with parapets suitable for pedestrians (although known to be used by cyclists)
- 1.4 Repairs to treads, handrails and posts would be sufficient to keep bridge operational if the main timber structural elements were in good condition.
- 1.5 The main timber elements are in very poor condition. The rot has penetrated 80 – 100 mm into the top of the beams. Strength of beams is still sufficient for current loads. Deterioration is continuing. Remaining life is to be measured in months. Inspection is now scheduled on 2 monthly basis. If any inspection detects rot greater than 100mm deep at a critical location the bridge will need to be closed.
- 1.6 New bridge will be in place for minimum 50 years. Need to ensure it does not unnecessarily restrict future demand for use.

#### 2. Temporary Bridge

- 2.1 Concern over condition and rate of deterioration has lead to decision to install a temporary bridge at upstream end of the weir structure. Keeps route open and allows demolition and replacement without closure.
- 2.2 Width and parapet protection provided on the temporary bridge will be of equivalent standard to the existing bridge. Short ramps will be steeper than existing.
- 2.3 Temporary bridge will require consent from Environment Agency (EA) as weir owner and in their Flood Defence consenting role. EA normally take 2 weeks to respond to an initial enquiry and up to 2 months for formal application.

SA

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| 2.4 | Check ownership of landing area on north bank and gain permission of landowner.   | SA       |
| 2.5 | Temporary scaffold design being undertaken by SW scaffolding<br>Quotes to be sought for installation, hire for 12 months and dismantling. | SA<br>SA |
| 2.6 | Installation will require access to south bank via Hicks Farm (land under control of Bournemouth Parks Dept. and Christchurch BC)         | SA / SOS |

### **3. Discussion of Rights of Way Network**

- 3.1 Sustrans survey of existing crossing use indicates 500 movements per day at weekend not holiday period, 300 movements per day on week day.
- 3.2 Desire to have a crossing in the area that is usable by all equestrians, cyclists, mobility vehicles and pedestrians.
- 3.3 The most direct route, likely to produce the most benefit to users, was to press for a shared use of crossing planned by Wessex Water to the Berry Hill treatment works. This would link to Stour Way south of the river on land controlled by Bournemouth and to new bridleways on privately owned land to the north.
- 3.4 Wessex Water needs the crossing to enable more lorry movements to treat additional waste. Discussion as to whether provision of public crossing could be linked to planning permission as a condition. Wessex Water aim to start May 2013.
- 3.5 At existing crossing to south of river, the right of way leaves the public highway crosses the tailrace from the mill and another weir on the line of the old river channel before crossing the flood plain to the main Throop Weir. This weir is owned by the EA and is listed. The accesses across the weir and tailrace are narrow and only suitable for pedestrians. Listing would make gaining permission to substantially upgrade the crossing unlikely.
- 3.6 An alternative south of the river would to dedicate a new right of way via Hicks Farm (owned by Bournemouth BC) and land owned by Christchurch BC (managed by DCC countryside rangers). This would require path construction but no new structures to cross watercourses.
- 3.7 To the north of the existing weir crossing the right of way divides into two. Approaches have been made in the past to the landowner regarding rededication of the footpath as bridleway and this has met with resistance. Agreed not to pursue this further.
- 3.8 In conclusion, all agreed that construction of a replacement bridge at Throop Weir should be limited to providing a replacement crossing that was designed for Equality Act compliance rather than looking to upgrade the crossing for a wider spectrum of users.

### **4.0 New Bridge Design**

- 4.1 Equality Act would require bridge to be wider to cater for combined use by mobility vehicles and pedestrians. Existing bridge too narrow. Agreed a bridge around 2m wide would be practical [need to check design standards]. Wider would be incongruous in the setting, narrower would be unnecessarily restrictive.
- 4.2 Although not promoted or dedicated as a cycle route it is known that cyclists use the route. Parapet height should be suitable for cyclist use i.e. 1.4m high as opposed to 1.1m high to avoid exposing DCC to unnecessary risk.

- 4.3 Implications of making the bridge wider are that loads on the supports are increased. The EA are unable to supply structural details of the existing weir structure. Investigation could be done by breaking out concrete but difficult underwater. Requires investment without any guarantee of proving the supports as sufficient. Supports would in any case need modification. More likely that a wider bridge would be constructed on new supports just downstream of the existing with links back to the EA structure for their operational use.
- 4.4 Relocation may require planning permission and possible legal process for diversion of right of way. Need to check land ownership on the river bed. SA
- 5 Funding Sources**
- 5.1 Temporary bridge will be funded by LTP maintenance allocation for bridges
- 5.2 LTP bridge budget is for maintenance and includes replacement of structures that reach the end of their lives. The replacement is only on a like for like basis. In this case a 1.1 m wide bridge on the existing support structure. Extra cost of providing a wider bridge on new supports would require additional funding to be found from elsewhere.
- 5.3 First action required is for estimated cost to be prepared for like-for-like replacement and for wider bridge to evaluate the additional funding required. SA
- 5.4 Possible additional funding sources to be approached when value known:
- 5.5 Bournemouth – Local Sustainable Transport Fund SOS  
LTP SMG
- 5.6 Christchurch – contact not known
- 5.7 Sustrans – unlikely as not dedicated cycle route KH
- 5.8 DCC – Corporate AB/CW  
LTP SMG
- 5.9 Environment Agency SA
- 6 Communication**
- 6.1 Project to be led by Bridge Management Team
- 6.2 First Action to be discussion with Peter Finney – DCC portfolio holder regarding strategic importance of the bridge and subsequent communication with stakeholders to be guided by this discussion. CW
- 6.3 Stakeholders identified to date:  
David J Fox - DCC Local Member  
Clerk - Hurn Parish Council  
Ron Whittaker – Bournemouth Borough Councillor  
Anne Rey - Bournemouth Borough Councillor  
Christchurch Borough Council – Technical Officer or Comms Officer  
Environment Agency – various officers