National Cycleway in association with HS3: Preliminary Feasibility Study

Route maps and notes December 2015

Manchester to Sheffield and Barnsley: Fieldwork Note Annex B21

- Traffic free and access roads
- On road

John Grimshaw & Associates

Royal HaskoningDHV

PHIL JONES ASSOCIATES
Transport planning consultants
Introduction

This document is one of 22 Annexes to the main HS2 Cycleway Project Report. It sets out the preferred routes which were identified in workshops, refined in subsequent field surveys and then discussed further with local authorities.

The detailed mapping shows the different traffic free and on road sections, and includes brief notes and photographs describing points of particular interest along the route.

Background to the First Stage

In January 2014, the Department for Transport (DfT) commissioned consultants, Royal HaskoningDHV, to carry out a Feasibility Study into creating a series of world class cycling routes from London to Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds. The project considers a study area that is generally three miles either side of the planned HS2 Rail alignment, and was conceived as an opportunity to deliver excellent local facilities for communities along the whole length of the proposed railway.

It is envisaged that each section of cycle route would serve as an important facility at a local level, connecting where people live to where they want to go to; and by linking the individual sections together, a continuous long distance could be created that would provide an attractive leisure and tourism facility as well.

As far as possible the project was also to enhance pedestrian routes, and in some cases bridleways too, all within the context of creating continuous, safe and attractive routes which would encourage the public to cycle for local trips, for leisure and as tourists.

The report of this first phase of work was completed in December 2014. It included a total of 18 detailed annexes, of which this is one, each of which described a section of the preliminary route options in some detail. The routes themselves were derived from discussions with local authorities and other interested bodies, backed up by cycling the routes as far as this was possible.

In order to avoid too much repetition in the text and explanation of details, a selection of photographs of appropriate arrangements and details from both the UK and the Netherlands is included here to indicate the sort of quality of route the HS2 Cycleway aspires to realise.
Considerations of a National Cycleway associated with a future new high speed railway from Manchester to Sheffield

1 Preamble

Over 2014-2015, the Department for Transport has been considering the feasibility of creating a National Cycleway from London to Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester. The objective of this work has been to consider how best to provide cycling (and walking) routes of the highest standards common in Europe, through towns and settlements along a general corridor 3 miles either side of the HS2 Railway route. As well as opening up local opportunities for everyday journeys, the linking of these numerous local routes would give the opportunities for longer trips and even an end to end journey from London to remote destinations including the Peak District. The Study Team have also been asked to consider the options for a similar National Cycleway to correspond with a northern west/east high speed railway in order that opportunities for creating such a route are not lost in planning of such a railway. Our report on this route has been broken down into three separate documents, from Liverpool to Manchester, Manchester to Sheffield and Manchester to Leeds. This document covers the section from Manchester to Sheffield.
2 Options for a National Cycleway from Manchester to Sheffield

Whilst at this stage no route for a future high speed railway has been detailed, a working assumption might be that it would follow a direct line east from Manchester Piccadilly to make a triangular connection with HS2 at some point midway between Sheffield and Leeds to complete its journey to each city. Whatever the route, much of the line would be tunneled through the Pennines and so of no relevance to cyclists. These same high hills pose challenges to cyclists as well, especially if the route is to become popular for all and a catalyst for change, as are the intentions of the National Routes.

The choice of route options is limited, and really only two possible ways are feasible – via the Woodhead crossing along the route followed by the Trans Pennine Trail (TPT), and via the approximate corridor of the existing railway to Sheffield, passing through Castleton. Each route is the same length – 50 miles. Both routes have their attractions and were surveyed for this study. The southern options take one through some exceptionally scenic parts of the National Park but this is nearly twice as hilly (800m of climb compared with 450m on the Woodhead route), it has some exceptionally long and steep hills (for example climbing eastward from Chapel-en-le-Frith) and it relies upon the new 10kms of the Peak Forest Canal Towpath which has limited scope for widening and improvement. Compared with this the Trans Pennine Trail route is generally less arduous, is well established, and the pursuit of this general routing would give the partner authorities the resources to resolve a number of outstanding discontinuities which would consolidate their long years of work and considerable investment.

This study recommends that the possible National Cycleway follows the option via Woodhead, and it is this route which is detailed in these notes. At the same time we recommend that the work to create the southern route as part of the National Cycle Network (NCN) should continue so as to provide alternative routes in to the National Park, a memorable experience in its own right, with the potential for a 100 mile round tour and weekend trip.

The arrangement of the notes on the following pages comment upon key features along the Woodhead TPT route. They include proposals for resolving the outstanding “gaps” for discussion with the TPT consortium of local authorities who have developed and now manage the route. It should be noted that the TPT is a multi-user trail and caters equally for walkers and equestrians. Over the years its standards have continuously improved as demand requires and funds allow. We have adopted the newly reconstructed section east of Dunford Bridge as the standard for the whole of the traffic free sections of the proposed route.

Elsewhere we envisage adopting the best European standards for the route, as set out in the Dutch CROW design guidelines which stress continuity of route, freedom from barriers and attractiveness of the journey. Rather than describe each point in sometimes repetitive detail, we would refer the reader to the following photographs which illustrate the standards envisaged for the National Route.
Design Standards - Summary

A set of design standards was developed as part of the first stage of the feasibility study. These are available as a separate document. The design standards strongly emphasise the need for continuity and integration of cycle infrastructure, and that facilities should be appealing to the end user and also consider the needs of non-users. The design standards are a working document, and will be reviewed throughout this stage of the feasibility study in order to best take into account differing local contexts.

The design standards are consistent with the project’s overall aim of the National Cycleway being a domestic exemplar of what high-quality integrated modern cycling infrastructure looks like: safe, direct, coherent, comfortable and attractive. The design standards also emphasise that adaptability will be important as the UK grows its cycling mode-share.

A strong focus is on the best practice seen in places with high levels of utility cycling like the Netherlands and Denmark. Attention is also paid to inclusivity, which not only covers all potential types of cyclists – including those with mobility impairment – but accessibility for all types of other users who will interact with the infrastructure. Benefits to the wider community should also be encouraged: even if individuals do not directly use the route for transport or leisure purposes, the design should take the opportunity for place-making along the route to improve the attractiveness of town centres or other areas through which the route passes.

The default position of the design standards is that cyclists should be afforded their own dedicated space with physical separation from other users. This is an effort to move away from infrastructure strategies that default to a shared use path, or on-carriageway facilities with limited protection from motor vehicles on busy roads. The design standards, however, do allow for sharing with motor traffic, pedestrians or equestrians in certain circumstances – normally where volumes are low. Steps may nevertheless be required to engineer these conditions where they are not currently present. It is likely that many extant greenways through open space or in the countryside which are shared with pedestrians and equestrians would already be suitable for use by the National Cycleway with few changes necessary. In more built-up environments, however, the design standards promote the implementation of dedicated infrastructure for cyclists, consistent with the best practice found elsewhere in the world where cycling for everyday journeys is commonplace.

The design standards acknowledge the varied contexts of the areas through which the route is likely to pass. Quality of infrastructure should be highest where potential for the route to be used is greatest, which is in urban areas or between sizeable settlements in rural areas. However, designs should not be put forward that prevent further expansion as usage grows or new journey possibilities are created that stimulate demand for movement.
HS2 Cycleway: A visual checklist of proposed standards

Throughout the section of HS2 Cycleway route described in these notes, it is intended that the overall route is created to the highest standards of design, of surface, of continuity and attractiveness all based on current best practice guidelines, including the Dutch CROW manual. The following examples drawn from England and Holland indicate what is intended, even though the brief descriptive notes attached to the route section maps may not explicitly say so. The photographs are loosely arranged to run from the town to the countryside ending up with the all-important junction and crossings details. These are required at each and every intersection with trafficked roads.

0 The HS2 Cycle route will start in the traffic calmed core of the town where cyclists share the road space on equal terms with motor vehicles. (Massluis)

1 Almost without exception cyclists will be permitted 2 way down one way streets in order to maximise their direct networks. (Gouda)

2 Sympathetic treatment of main street in typical small town

3 Closure of main street to traffic. (Rotterdam)

4 Typical English town with “pedestrianised” town centre already paved to delineate cyclists. (Stafford)

5 The Embankment, London, showing the space created for the Cycle Superhighway

6 Where space is limited the removal of the central white line and introduction of advisory cycle provision emphasises the presence of cyclists. (Gouda)

7 One lane of the road made into a two way cycling track (Redcliffe Bridge, Bristol)

8 Reallocation of road space through residential development to create 2 way cycle route. (Breda)
9 Cycle track set well back from main road and separated by avenue trees. (Rotterdam)

10 Wide promenade in urban park. (Tamworth)

11 New cycle track in Warwick University grounds with lighting

12 Typical railway path, 2.5m wide rural areas, 3.0m minimum urban areas. (Derby, Melbourne)

13 Wide towpath on Calder navigation

14 Narrow 2m wide towpath on Erewash Canal; note sealed surface with appropriate coloured gravel

15 Typical National Route in rural areas on lightly trafficked road. (Boxtel to Eindhoven)

16 Typical measures to show traffic on lightly trafficked rural roads on routes advertised for cyclists

17 Quiet lane approaching Lichfield – 20mph

18 Typical minor cul-de-sac in Holland, links to ongoing path for cyclists. No motor vehicles permitted except farm vehicles
19 Similar farm access on the way to Waddesdon

20 National Cycleroute (LF) parallel to main road in rural Holland. (LF13 Alphen)

21 Stone based cycle route through National Forest near Ashby-de-la-Zouch

18 Field boundary path with cattle grid and wicket gate approaching Kenilworth

22 Single stage toucan crossing of dual carriageway in Aylesbury

23 Dual use crossing of side road in Gouda

24 Priority crossing of side road at Gouda

25 Cycling zebra at Aylesbury

26 Path continuing parallel to main road (Gouda). Note the crossing is arranged on the desire line
28 Priority crossing in Rotterdam
29 Continuity of route on London Cycle Superhighway to Canary Wharf
30 Direct priority crossing in Lancaster
31 Direct crossing in York on the desire line
32 Treatment of approaches to splitter island at roundabout in Aylesbury
33 New shared use bridge over railway at Aylesbury Station
34 Tank Top bridleway bridge over M1
35 Major new cycle route attached to railway bridge approaching Nijmegen
36 Wide, on the level, underbridge at Tamworth
The first part of the proposed route follows the alignment recommended for the HS2 Cycleway routing towards Manchester Airport. Once on the Fallowfield Loop Greenway it follows the Trans Pennine Trail (TPT) route to Reddish Vale.

1. Piccadilly to University Link.
2. Oxford Road is the main thoroughfare through Manchester University. Promote a Promenade and Cycle Route as a central feature of the campus.
3. The HS2 routing suggested making Whitfield Park and Platts Field Park highlights of the journey and thereby opening up these two spaces to easier access by cycle from their hinterland.
4. An alternative would be to forge a cycling route along "Curry Mile". Adding together the space occupied by the current rather fragmentary cycle lanes, widening footways and trimming down road space should give sufficient for a 3m wide 2-way cycling route along the one side of the road. Care will be needed to provide for car parking for the numerous curry houses and takeaways.

5. The Fallowfield Loop crossing of the main road, and the link past the entrance to Sainsbury’s car park is fairly good, but should be retextured to provide complete continuity to National standards.

6. The link past the car park is sufficiently spacious.

7. The Fallowfield Loop line provides a direct route to the east in attractive surroundings. Further work is needed on links and connections.

8. The current ramp comes in from the north side of Langford Road West. It would be much better to construct a new ramp from the road down to the railway on the west side, especially for cyclists travelling from Reddish towards the University.

9. Langford Road West is an attractive tree lined thoroughfare with no parking on the carriageways. Continuous cycling lanes would be appropriate here, and vehicle speeds reduced to 20 mph.

10. Longford Road is one way (to east) and contraflow cycling should be introduced.

11. Mill Lane drops steeply and although lightly trafficked it would be beneficial to construct a greenway through the vacant land (branch line) to the south of the road. This will give a traffic free route for the primary school and to Reddish Vale. Take care to make a 1:20 ramp down to cross Hollow Vale Drive on a raised zebra.

12. The severe barrier under the railway arch needs to be removed, or revised so as to allow easy passage of cyclists. (This point applies all through the Tame Valley where the dimensions of barriers vary).

13. Good traffic free green lane with concrete surface and wide views.
Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield | Map 1 - Manchester Piccadilly to Reddish Vale (9.6kms)
Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield | Map 2 - Reddish Vale to Hyde and Godley

The proposed route builds on the work of the TPT alignment. The option of a long on road route via Denton and Hyde town centre would be difficult to engineer to a sufficient standard, and even then would possibly not attract the patronage which a high standard greenway could secure. The main “improvements” to the TPT are to realise a level riverside route under the M60 to overcome the deficiencies of the TPT route via Denton, and to engineer a far better connection from the riverside to the Apethorn and Godley railway path.

1. Reddish Vale Country Park and Visitor Centre.

2. The current TPT climbs on a rough track to Hyde Hall, has an unrideable link between Kingsley Close and Yew Tree Road, and returns to the riverside via the main Stockport Road. Its usage must be very low indeed.

3. Build a new route under an arch of Reddish Vale Viaduct and follow the floor of the valley, either on the riverside or set back against the edge of the flood plain.

4. Beyond the M60 the route must follow the line of the footpath and rise up to avoid the meandering river. 1:20 gradients can be achieved through these attractive open spaces.

5. The existing poor connection to the Stockport Road can be overcome by negotiating to pass along the edge of the treatment works land where there is unused open space.

6. Provide a controlled crossing of the Stockport Road.

7. This whole length is generally good although the surfacing material is soft in wet weather (we advocate a sealed surface throughout the National Cycle Route section similar to the excellent work on the TPT east of Dunford Bridge). It may be possible to reduce the length of the diversion at Haughton Vale.

8. The climb up from the riverside to the railway path is poor – steep and rough. It needs to be engineered to the same standard as the excellent new link recently constructed from Broadbottom to the Gamesley Sidings. A suggested alignment is shown on the detailed plan.

9. The Apethorn-Godley railway path is generally well built, but its links are poor. In particular a direct connection to Hyde Town Centre is required which could be arranged via reconstructing the existing link to Tower Road.

10. Link to Godley Station.
As the TPT approaches the foothills of the Pennines the terrain becomes more challenging. The TPT partners have been introducing improvements – in particular the magnificent Gamesley Woodlands on extensive former sidings, but the current route via the Stockport Road to Hattersley is completely unsuitable for its purpose other than to give continuity of the TPT route.

The principal challenge here is to engineer a level route through the imposing Hattersley railway cutting and Great Wood, and to introduce a bridge over the Hadfield and Glossop railway at Gamesley in order that the new Sidings Woodland route can link to the settlement and Hadfield.

Existing route via Godley Green and the main road to Broadbottom is so circuitous and the traffic such that this is completely unsuitable for a National Route.

The TPT currently follows this Stockport Road over the high Hattersley Viaduct

We have to forge a level route along with the existing railway path past Godley Junction. To start with we can use the existing path.

Make a connection at the former station to link back to station approach, Kerry’s Food and Godley station.

We can then continue along former sidings and a large area of scrub wood.

Continue along the railway corridor setting a new fence between the path and the operational railway.

Construct new station bridge to link across the railway for route to Hattersley.

From Hattersley viaduct looking west to the station. The National Cycleway would run along the floor of the cutting a little to the left of the tracks in this picture

Pass under the high-level bridge under the main road.

Move away from the railway land to run through the former sidings of Great Wood.

Connect to existing footpath over the railway which could be improved to provide a further connection to Hattersley and to the Riverside.

Continue through the wood and bridge the brook on the level to reach the existing exit gate.

Follow the cul-de-sac and then cycle up to join the main road in Broadbottom.

This section of the main road has an easy grade and could be dealt with by means of cycling lanes.

To avoid the steeper section of the main road take Mill Brow, which could be two way for cycling and Bostock Road.

Widen the pavement for shared use and follow Lynefield Terrace and then use existing path or make a new path with an even gradient to rejoin the main road adjacent to the river bridge.

The existing metal bridge is one way working controlled by traffic lights so suitable for cyclists.

View of the railway viaduct over the Etherow. At this point the main road is reduced to single way working controlled by traffic lights.

An excellent new zig-zag path has been constructed up the hill to avoid the main road. This design could be used elsewhere.

Pass under the high iron bridge of the main Glossop Road.

Site of the planned station. Construct a new bridge over the railway with earthwork approach ramps made from local materials. This should be arranged in anticipation of the future station and provide the necessary link between platforms. As there is plenty of space here earthworks approach ramps from local excavations will reduce the costs – as shown in the sketch.

Follow the line of the former railway through the edge of the woodlands, moving away from adjacent houses if necessary.

Use the newly opened shared use light controlled crossing.

Refurbish existing narrow railway path.

The bridge is lost at Cottage Lane and this should be replaced in order to create a level route.

Redesign the final ramp off the railway route to join the sewage works road, all at 1:20 (the former railway embankment is lost here).

Rebuild the riverside path to a good standard (if possible) or follow the road.

At this point to National Cycleway should diverge from the TPT goal of a riverside path because this greenway route will eventually bypass the Town Centre – a vital stopping off point and refuelling opportunity for cyclists crossing the Pennines.
28 The existing toucan crossing inexplicably ends in very difficult barriers and a steepish gradient. This all needs redesigning and a 1:20 gradient through to the link to Lower Barn Road.

29 Follow residential roads and introduce a 20 mph speed limit throughout the town.

30 Attractive High Street and shops leading up to the railway station.
Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield | Map 4 - The Longdendale Trail and Woodhead Reservoirs (6km)

Hadfield Station to Woodhead Tunnel

This whole section follows the TPT route along the route of the former main line railway. It is a spectacular traffic free route through open countryside. A certain amount of clearance of lineside vegetation needs to be maintained so as to be able to appreciate these views. Also the surface is relatively poor and should be brought up to the standard east of Dunford Bridge.

1. Construct a route straight off the end of Hadfield Station platform in order that the public arriving from train can walk or cycle direct onto the Trail.

2. Existing bridge over road.

3. Trans Pennine Trail.

The Longdendale Trail has always been a central highlight of the TPT

4. A link to these tea rooms would be very useful as this is the last refreshment before Dunford Bridge.

5. Existing “at grade crossing” is well arranged but a direct lead in from the west would be useful.

6. The gradient either side of the flood bank constructed across the railway at Woodhead Reservoir needs to be eased for wheelchair users.

The Trans Pennine Trail in action

Platt Road bridge would give a direct link to Hadfield Station

The Longendale Trail takes you right away into the edge of the high moors

Approaching the Woodhead Tunnels where the path needs to be widened into the adjacent works access road
Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield | Map 4 - The Longdendale Trail and Woodhead Reservoirs (6km)
Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield | Map 5 - The Woodhead Crossing (5kms)

This section is a highlight, and the highpoint, of the TPT. On a fine day cycling along Long Side on the old packhorse road is a moment to savour. Its problems are 3 crossings of the main A628 road, where the traffic is so heavy that only the presence of a slow moving heavy lorry creates a gap for trail users to cross. At times, from a distance the traffic is so continuous that one wonders how one will actually manage to cross the road at all.

This problem has long been recognised and these notes indicate the directions of a solution to this key problem.

1. The existing access road to Woodhead Station.
2. The existing track doubles back and sets the gradient for the climb up to the trunk road and the Packhorse Track. It needs a full asphalt surface and careful drainage to ensure that no standing water erodes the Trail or ices over.
3. A possible arrangement of a bridge over the trunk road is shown in the detail. There is no reason why the south side approach should not be in earthworks and then the bridge span level onto the hillside beyond. If possible the design would be a “green” bridge to take the trail across the road in a sympathetic way.
4. The existing path climbs very steeply up the hillside to reach the Packhorse route a good way above its lowest point. It would be much better to make an entirely new alignment rising at an even gradient to join the track at this low point. This whole climb requires a sealed surface.
5. The Packhorse track is very well built with good drainage. Its stone surface is generally smooth, particularly once the way reaches the mile long level section of Long Side. This surface may be sufficient as it is.
6. The TPT crosses the trunk road again, dips down to the attractive Salters Brook Bridge and then climbs back to cross the road again. To avoid these dangerous crossings requires a new path on the north side of the main road. In order to maintain the high moorland sense of isolation the path should not be constructed too close to the main road (say no closer than 50m even though this means climbing higher up the hill to start with) and all level changes should be as even and gentle as possible. The detailed plan shows a suggested route which would need to be adjusted for local sensitivities and constructed at the appropriate times of year to take account of nesting birds. But if built well this path would provide the visitor with an enhanced appreciation of this Pennine landscape.
7. Join the existing road to Dunford Bridge.
8. Access to Winscar Reservoir and minor roads to the north including route 68, the Pennine Cycleway, and a potential rural road route to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park and Wakefield.

Looking back at the A628 with its almost continuous stream of heavy traffic. The level space which could host the bridge ramp can be seen just beyond the white truck.

The start of the climb up to the packhorse road

Looking west along the packhorse road

View of the landscape to be crossed by a TPT deviation to bypass two trunk road crossings

Windle Edge to Winscar Reservoir and Dunford Bridge

Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield | Map 5 - The Woodhead Crossing (5kms)

Long Side is a definite highlight of the Woodhead Crossing

The proposed path must contour well away from the main road if it is to achieve an easy gradient at the Salters brook crossing
Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield | Map 5

The Woodland Crossing (5kms)

Detail of points 3-6 showing the main components of a good crossing

25m climb over 500m @ 1:20
To Dunford Bridge
Aim for 500m long path to achieve 1:12 gradient
Level section on 400m contour

Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield

The Woodland Crossing (5kms)

Path 3m wide and 3.5m between walls
Ramp at 1:12 over 80m with level landings at each end
Ramps from reinforced earthworks sown with heather

25m bridge designed to take heather clad walls across the main road

To Woodhead Station

See detail plans

Sketch of landscaped bridge over main road at Woodhead

Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield

Traffic free and access roads
On road

Scale 1:25,000 at A3

0 0.5 1 1.5 2 2.0 km
Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield | Map 6 - Dunford Bridge to Penistone Railway Station

This whole section follows the TPT along its railway route. The first section has an excellent surface which was laid for visitors to the Tour de France which came this way. We are taking this surface and width as the default arrangement for the National Cycle Route from Manchester to Sheffield.

1 The high quality path finish runs from Dunford Bridge to Hazlehead.

2 The start of the Stocksbridge option. This is an ambitious route currently under construction as part of the Cycle City Ambition Project to give access to the countryside. It certainly will provide an option for the way to Sheffield. We consider that the TPT route should be followed for the National route because it gives access to Penistone Station and provides the way to Barnsley for a route north to Leeds.

3 The vital bridge over the A628 close to the site of the Bullhouse railway tragedy commemorated on a nearby plinth and picnic site maintained by TPT voluntary rangers.

4 This section has a narrow and a rubberised path construction. It is adequate for the present although it does not ride so well.

5 The route is excellent and continuous all through Penistone, passing a bike workshop and café on this former freight depot.

6 The Trail passes the back of Penistone Station with a direct link to the platform.
Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield | Map 6 - Dunford Bridge to Penistone Railway Station

Map showing the Dunford Bridge to Penistone Railway Station section with various locations marked 1 to 6.
The proposed route continues along the TPT route to Wharncliffe Woods. Again it is mostly in an excellent condition.

1 Over this length the Trail runs adjacent to the operational line. It is noticeable that the dividing fence is a transparent design rather than brutal palisade. This makes a great difference to the travelling experience.

2 A new ramp is needed to Roughbirchwood Lane so as to give a direct route to Barnsley. It is better that cyclists use Bower Hill to Four Lane End, than climb a much steeper off road hill as may be more appropriate for equestrians.

3 Thurgoland Tunnel has a remarkable 30 second reverberation time!

4 This last section of the Trail does not have a sealed surface which is necessary given the adjacent riding stables at Wortley and consequent heavy use of the path by equestrians.

5 This is a conveniently placed bridge under the A616.

6 The signed route via Wharncliffe Woods climbs steeply away from the railway here. For access to the Trail from Deepcar and Stocksbridge a route along the line of the former railway would be the best approach.

7 The final link through to Stocksbridge is not yet defined by the current project. If possible the ideal route would follow the river corridor for an easily graded route as far as the new shopping development.
Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield | Map 7 - The Upper Don Valley: Penistone to Thurgoland and Deepcar (5kms)
The TPT follows the forestry road the whole length of Wharncliffe Woods. This is a fine route but, especially when travelling in the northern direction, does have three long climbs (these are not so noticeable cycling southwards as the railway and the valley are also dropping away in this direction). The surface of the forest road is generally good for its kind and it is not damaged by any current forestry operations or logging.

1 Current proposals envisage using this track the former railway but this means that travellers are faced with 35m of climb which can be avoided by joining the forest road further south – as do most cyclists at present.

2 The optimum route from Deepcar is via this existing industrial site (and future housing area) to use the southern subway to bypass the long hill on the forest road. This route should be adopted for the National Cycleway, leaving the northern part of the Wharncliffe Woods for the TPT.

3 The proliferation of mountain bike tracks emerging from the hillside suggests that the whole wood is a popular adventure ground, even if a cyclist rocketing out of nowhere is somewhat disconcerting.

4 The existing exit from the woods involves a steep scramble and a narrow path to join Oughtibridge Lane. Whilst both these issues can be overcome, the long descent to the riverside cannot.

5 A better arrangement for the long term would be to construct a new subway under the railway at the point where it runs on an embankment, use the remaining disused branch line, and then descend at a long even gradient through the woods to reach the riverside and the corner of Coronation Park for a link to the road.
The construction of the excellent Beeley Wood riverside path has opened up the way to Sheffield.

1. Provide a raised zebra crossing of Oughtibridge Lane.

2. Negotiate to reposition the playing field fence by about 2m to create a more spacious path.

3. The excellent riverside path.

4. Works access lane.

5. Most of the way to Sheffield has good cycle tracks beside the main road. These are being extended to make a continuous road.

6. The options for a direct link to the City Centre, the Station and the Lower Don Valley to Meadowhall remain to be detailed.
Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield | Map 9 - Oughtibridge to Sheffield (6kms)
Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield | Map 10 - Link to Barnsley

A good and direct link to Barnsley is a vital part of the trail development in the area, because of its good rail connection, its population and its central role in developing and managing the TPT. This link is included here as not only is the connection to Barnsley of importance to give local people access to a good route, but this way is one option for making the Manchester and Leeds link.

The main problem of the current TPT arrangements is that the railway path via Worsbrough Country Park bypasses this hilltop town of Barnsley, and the lack of a direct link must do much to reduce the accessibility of the TPT from the area. The hills do not make for easy options, and we suggest that a new link is required from east of the M1 crossing climbing some 70m to Locke Park and thence to the Town Centre.

1 A new ramp needs to be constructed (from fill) to give a direct link to Roughbirchwood Lane for a straight over crossing of the Sheffield Road. This would be a great improvement for pedestrians too as the current steps are very steep.

2 Provide crossing of main road.

3 Bower Hill makes for an easy climb to Four Lane End. The road is wide enough for continuous cycle lanes.

4 A safe crossing of the A629 is required – at the very minimum a central island to cross the road in two stages.

5 This green lane needs to be rebuilt with a good bitmac surface to cope with any run off.

6 Open up the two Silkstone Tunnels to avoid the current very poor bypass path on the edge of the up and down cuttings.

7 Link to Silkstone Common and railway station.

8 This railway path drops away into the Worsbrough valley below Barnsley. The corridor needs a considerable amount of woodland management to open up views over the countryside.

9 It is extraordinary how this former railway bridge sweeps you over the M1 with the minimum awareness of the bedlam of traffic passing below.

10 Forge a new path along this boundary, diverting the existing public footpath onto the new route where this would be convenient to do.

11 Open up a way through Locke Park.

12 Follow residential roads including existing bridge over West Way A628.

13 Forge a route through Barnsley town centre to reach the station. Where this passes through traffic free or pedestrianised areas, create a well-defined route which makes it clear that cyclists are expected, and welcomed, on this corridor.
Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield | Map 10 - Link to Barnsley