

An assessment must be completed for all key decisions included in the Forward Plan.

Stage 1 This stage determines whether a full assessment is required

1.1 Description of the proposed decision

1.2 Will the proposed decision have the effect of flora and fauna of either increasing or reducing the range of species and habitats within the borough

Yes No

If no, proceed no further if yes continue to stage 2

Stage 2 This stage helps understand whether any impact on biodiversity is positive or negative

2.1 Will the proposed decision have a positive or negative impact on biodiversity? (A positive impact would increase the range of species or habitats or increase the protection of existing habitats, a negative impact would do the opposite.)

Positive negative

Currently the work will have a positive impact on the biodiversity of the areas. Work at **Whitaker Park** and **Sunnyside Play Area** (Mill Row) will have no impact. Work at **Taylor Avenue Woodlands** will have a positive impact, through tree thinning and bulb planting. This will allow significant trees to flourish and from creating gaps in the canopy will allow light to pass through to the forest floor, thus promoting growth of additional native flora. Whitworth Cycleway project currently has positive impacts through sowing wildflower meadow seeds on new and some existing grass verges adjacent to the cycleway length. As Whitworth Cycleway is such an extensive project a full Ecological survey has been carried out as well as a full bat survey. Recommendations will be followed from both surveys as work occurs on the ground.

2.2 Describe the impact, in particular drawing attention to scale. For example removing the only habitat in the North West for a particular plant is clearly of great significance, whereas a negative impact on a very common plant is of less significance.

The work will be of low significance to the impact of Biodiversity, however recommendations include further surveying of the potential impact.

If the impact is positive you need go no further

Stage 3 This stage allows any negative impact to be balanced against the other positive benefits of the proposed decision using the framework created by the wellbeing power set out in the Local Government Act 2000

3.1 Indicate the benefits which will be delivered by this decision under the following headings. As far as possible quantify benefits (eg by jobs created)

Economic

Estimated £600,000 investment into Rossendale, improving council maintained facilities. Will reduce maintenance costs and reduce the likelihood of insurance claims being made.

Environmental

Focusing on making the most of our fabulous rural setting, the cycleway will take users away from traffic on the main road. Providing the infrastructure to allow local residents to make a travel choice. Improvements to play areas will contribute to the general 'look' of the immediate neighbourhood.

Social

Increasing safety by providing cyclists and walkers with an attractive, traffic free route.

Making sure people have a long and healthy life. Consultation with local residents has suggested that residents would use the route to travel to work, to school, the shops, to heritage features and to recreation facilities – promoting healthy lifestyles.

Consultation has taken place between Groundwork and primary schools in Whitworth. This has led to close involvement with the schools as they are using the cycleway as a focus for their 'change of land use' topic in their geography lessons. Whitworth High School and St Bartholomew's Primary school have travel plans. A cycleway, giving pupils the option to cycle to school safely will allow the schools to move forward with their action plans.

Making sure we're a borough where all opinions count and people respect and celebrate difference.

3.2 Are there steps which are planned or could be taken to mitigate the impact on biodiversity (eg relocating certain species during building work)

Contractors will abide by strict rules, as set out in the contract to ensure damage to biodiversity is minimal and short term as possible.

Stage 4 This stage sets out the balance between the negative impacts on biodiversity and the other positive impacts so that Councillors can make an informed decision.

Positive impacts
(eg X jobs created)

Negative Impacts
(eg acres of habitat lost)

n/a

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