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Feasibility Report

Dame Judi Dench Walk Cycle Route

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Introduction

Dame Judi Dench Walk is the part of the riverside that connects Lendal to Marygate on the east side of the river. This scheme has been suggested several times over the years and is currently being used by cyclists despite there being no cycle route beyond Marygate Tower. The alternative route into the city centre from the riverside path (using Marygate and Bootham) is not very attractive to some people due to its circuitous nature and the volume of traffic, so this route has become quite a popular short-cut.

This missing link on the riverside route, which stretches all the way to Skelton from Marygate, was included in the recent Strategic Cycle Route Network Review and scored well due to a perception that it could be delivered relatively cheaply.

The Site

This stretch of the river side is mainly paved with York stone flags with trees planted every few metres and has a kerbed footpath that borders Museum Gardens. There is a cafe operated from a boat moored at the bank with tables and chairs positioned under the trees mentioned above.

The approach from Museum Street is via a steeply descending, narrow cobbled street, at the bottom of which is the landing from steps from Museum Street followed by a ninety degree bend in the path. The path narrows at the bend and is unsuitable for cycling round at anything other than walking pace. See photo 1.

Beyond this is a narrow, supported walkway over the river, leading to a wider area where the boat trip company begin and end their trips. Crowds tend to congregate and queue in this area. See photo 2.

The vast majority of the proposed route is much wider with a choice of avenues to walk along. See photo 3.

Scheme proposals (Options)

Option 1 Abandon the scheme

Option 2 Install Cyclists Dismount signs at both ends

Consultation

The consultation carried out involved the Council's Property Surveyor and Heritage Renaissance Officer.

The Property Surveyor had several reservations about the scheme that centred around the use of the area by boat owners and the cafe. She highlighted the potential for conflict between cyclists and those boat owners using the facilities behind the proposed route. She also doubted whether the cafe owners would want to continue paying for a trading licence if there was to be a cycle route right beside their tables. This would be a loss of revenue to the Council.

The Heritage Renaissance Officer objected because there would be conflicts between blind and partially sighted people on the one hand and cyclists on the other.

They both considered the area to look and feel like a pedestrian area that was a very attractive place for tourists to linger and enjoy the river, whereas they saw the introduction of a formal cycle route as being disruptive to this.

Cost Estimate

The cost of installing the cyclist dismount signs would be approximately £500.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the scheme to provide a cycle route along this part of Dame Judi Dench Walk be abandoned and instead, cyclist dismount symbols be erected at suitable locations at each end.



PHOTO 1



PHOTO 2



PHOTO 3