



Ride Sheffield: **Greno Woods MTB Proposal**

Overview:

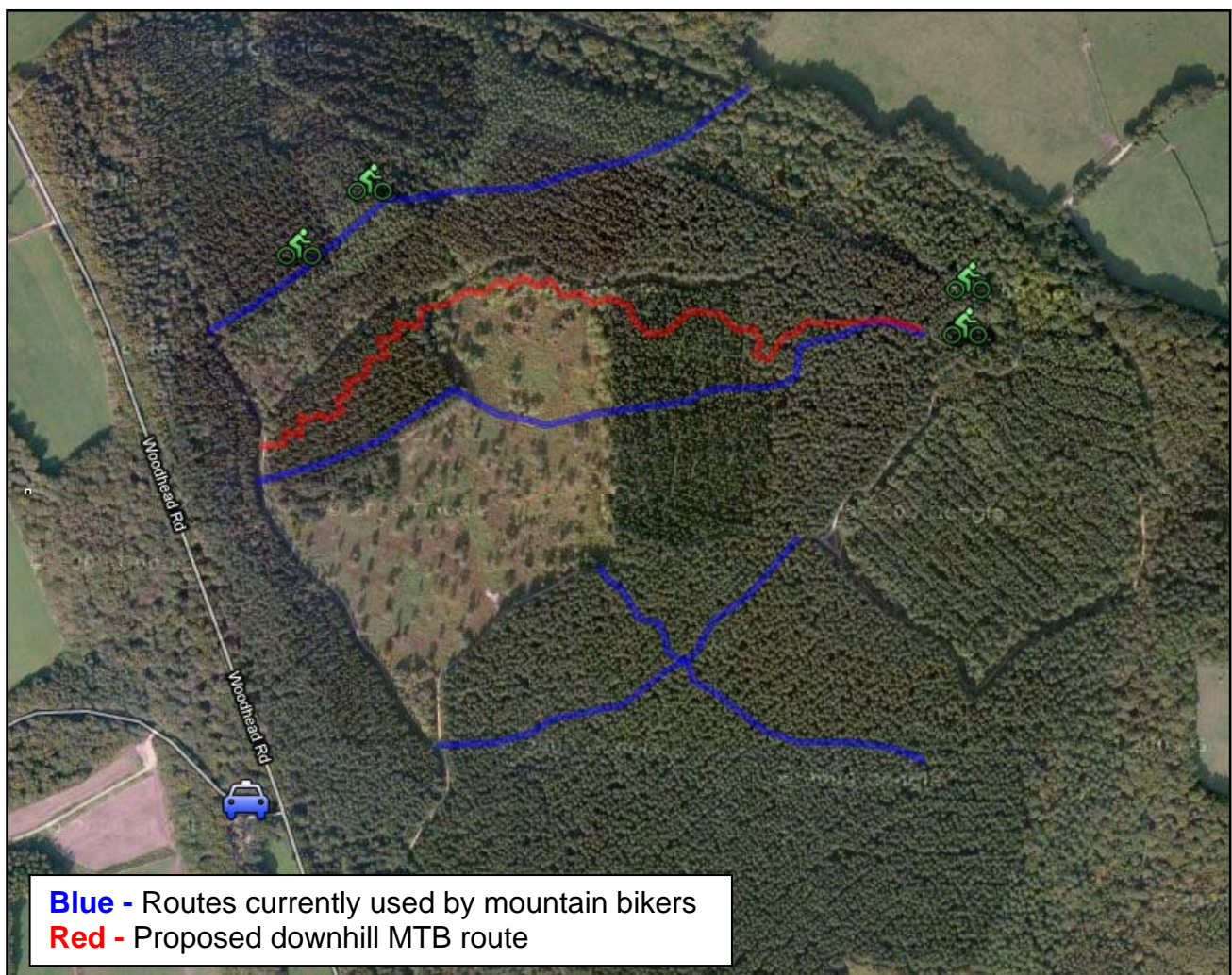
Greno Woods have been home for mountain bikers for as long as the sport has been in this country; it hosted races up until 1994 and provided the training ground for World Downhill Mountain Bike Champion Steve Peat.

Its flowing rocky trails are one of the reasons for its popularity, providing a challenge for all abilities, its less severe gradient makes it more appealing to less experienced riders and its free draining soil means that even in the worst conditions it can be ridden with little impact on the trail or woodland environment.

Since the woods have been managed by Sheffield Wildlife Trust, the scope for mountain biking has been investigated further. The success of Peaty's Steel City Downhill showed that with 200 competitors and over 500 spectators, the woods were more than capable of sustaining more mountain biking activities. It also raised £2,000 for the Greno Woods Appeal

We would like to be able to make mountain biking a popular and sustainable activity in Greno Woods and aim to make a short circuit in the woods that would use largely existing trails. The details of which are mentioned below

Routes Currently Used By Mountain Bikers:

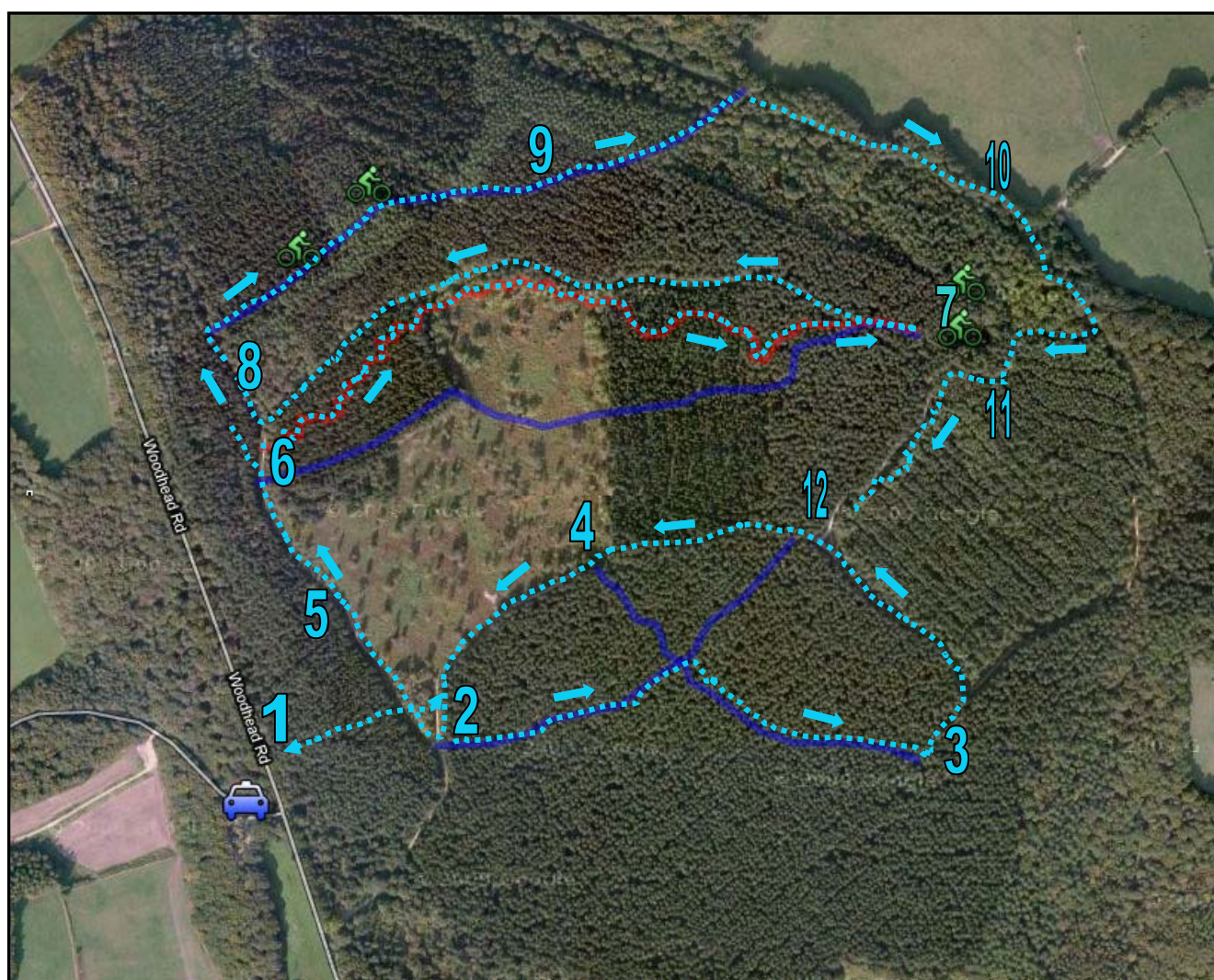


The routes marked on the map show the current trails that are used by mountain bikers, they are predominantly ridden downhill and use the remaining paths in the wood to provide routes back up to the top of the woods and can be ridden in any number of combinations. The ground has held up well on all of these trails; they also all have excellent visibility throughout the trail and where they cross other rights of way.

The trail marked in red is the only new track that we would like to put in, as the track through the heath will be effectively lost when the heathland is fenced off. It would be built with a minimum impact on the environment and to IMBA standards (see below)

Proposed MTB Circuit:

Using the current trails and linking them with other trails in the woods it is possible to make a fun circuit consisting of 3 descents and 3 climbs which can be seen in the map below.



Key:

1. Linking all weather trail from the Wharnccliffe Woods Forestry Commission car park, this would be for two way traffic and would be used by all user groups
2. This is the start of a winding technical descent; it is well used and with a little drainage in places and the removal of the layers of leaf mulch and deeper mud in others could be easily made into an all weather trail.
3. The start of the first climb up, using existing rights of way (footpath)



4. The trail continues up past the heathland using existing rights of way (footpath)
5. The trail passes along the top of the heathland using existing rights of way (footpath) to connect to the next descent
6. This would be the start of the second descent and this would be the only section of the route that would be newly built; descending from the top track (5) all the way down to the top of the quarry area (7)
7. The second climb would head up the sunken trail (permissive bridleway) from the quarry back up to the trail (footpath) that runs along the top of the heathland (5,8)
8. Short linking section of trail (permissive bridleway) linking to the next descent
9. The third descent is fast, flowing and open, it also contains several large jumps; if the trail was to go ahead, these would be made safer by filling in the gaps and alternatives around the obstacles would be made available
10. The trail would carry along the linking trail (all weather track) to the point where the Trans Pennine Trail enters the woods
11. It would then continue up and around the edge of the quarry up toward the heathland on the existing trail (permissive bridleway)
12. The last section would carry you along the existing trail next to the heathland (the same footpath used in section 4) back up to the two way trail near the entrance to the woods

Avoiding Conflicts with Other Users:

The aim is provide a network of trails that can be used by mountain bikers that does not diminish the enjoyment of the woods by others. On the downhill trails it would be expected that these would be predominantly used by mountain bikers. However the remaining sections would be on public rights of way, with traffic coming from both directions. On these sections mountain bikers would yield to other users (walkers, horse riders etc). As all of these trails are of a reasonable width (2m minimum) passing should not be a problem. Also for any rider that is following the loop, these shared sections would be uphill, so speeds would be fairly low.

Build Standards:

The new trail that would be constructed would be built to IMBA (International Mountain Bike Association) standards. Making trails that are fun for all levels of rider, reducing the speeds of less experienced riders while providing a challenge for the more experienced riders. They are also built to be as sustainable as possible, well drained to prevent weather damage and to enable them to be enjoyed regardless of the conditions. More information can be found at www.imba.org.uk

Access:

While many users may choose to drive to the woods and park at the forestry commission car park on Woodhead Road. There is also the option to ride to the woods as it is well positioned on the Trans Pennine Trail, which allows users to ride to the site from Sheffield city centre, Grenoside, Oughtibridge, High Green etc

Signage:

To preserve the feel of the woods it would be good to keep signage of the route to a minimum, but to provide a quality user experience, it would be good to place signs at junctions and the start of the downhill trails. A board on the entrance to the woods with a map of the route and an explanation of the usage and liability would be useful as well. A map of the woods with the route on would be useful too. This could be available on the Ride Sheffield and Wild Sheffield websites

**Sponsorship:**

Mountain biking is very well supported in Sheffield and is also home to several manufacturers, importers and shops. Many of which have shown interest in providing support for grass roots mountain bike projects in the city

Barriers:

The biggest barrier to the development of this route is the fact that the majority of the linking route are footpaths and are therefore should not be ridden by mountain bikers. In fact the current footpath network makes the woods very difficult for mountain bikers to move around without walking large sections of the woods. However the paths are constructed to specifications that would make upgrading any of them to Bridleways a relatively easy task. Also the fact that many mountain bikers and horse riders currently using the routes alongside walkers with little if any conflict, shows that an upgrade would not cause any major problems.

Freeride Bike Park:

The quarry area (7 on the map) could lend itself to future development as a freeride area. It has been used informally for many years for this purpose without issue and if developed in the right way could become a safer and more enjoyable feature.

Thanks:

Thanks to Ride Sheffield, Nick Hamilton, Joe Bowman, Steve Peat, Jon Dallow, Roy Mosley and Steel City Series for their help with this.

Further Information:

www.imba.org.uk

www.ridesheffield.com

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