

**Report of Mineral Planning Officer**

**Report to Director of City Development**

**Date: 13<sup>th</sup> August 2014**

**Subject: Design & Cost Report for Construction of Skelton Cycleway Stage 1 and Fabrication and Erection of a Bridge over the River Aire**

**Capital Scheme Number: 16902 / BRI**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Garforth and Swillington	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. Work on developing the Skelton Cycleway Project has now advanced to a point at which works necessary to take the cycleway across the River Aire can be procured.
2. Funding for this Stage already exists in the Capital Plan. It is proposed that Sustrans be commissioned to design, build and operate the cycleway including the new bridge. The model for this arrangement develops from previous agreements between LCC and Sustrans, e.g. Guiseley-Yeadon cycleway.

**Recommendation**

3. The Director of City Development is requested to approve the expenditure of up to £318,801 from the budget for the Skelton Cycleway for the purpose of procuring the works and a further £76,059 for a commuted sum to maintain the cycleway and bridge for 40 years.

## **Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 Approval is sought to spend up to £394,860 from the Coal Authority grant to construct 295 metres of cycleway and fabricate and erect a 2.5 metre wide x 21 m long bridge over the River Aire and manage the cycleway for 25 years and the bridge for a period of 40 years.
- 1.2 The capital scheme will cost up to £318,801 and £76,059 will be used as commuted sum to fund maintenance over 40 years and transferred to revenue.
- 1.3 The cycling charity Sustrans would design, build and operate the length of cycleway created, including the bridge which they would own.

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 Completion of the Roundhay-Rothwell and Temple Newsam-Rothwell cycleways requires a means of crossing both the River Aire and the Aire & Calder Navigation (the canal). There is only one affordable means of crossing the river and that is by a new short bridge at the river's narrowest point where there is a weir. The full route requires also to cross over the canal but this is not within Stage 1. Importantly, even if it proves impossible for any reason to also cross the canal, Stage 1 provides direct access to the Trans Pennine Trail, which of itself is a worthy objective.
- 2.2 It has been a council objective to secure crossings of the river and canal at this location since 1986 when planning permission was given for opencast coal working and the diversion of the river. For many reasons this objective has not hitherto been achievable.
- 2.3 The Capital Scheme includes funding originally of £450,000 obtained from the Coal Authority of which £32,900 has been spent repairing the bridleways which form the northern approach to the Stage 1 length of this proposed cycleway.
- 2.4 It is proposed to enter into a contract with the cycling charity Sustrans for the organisation to design, build and operate the cycleway and bridge for 40 years.
- 2.5 All the land subject to the works is owned by the City Council. Access is required for the construction works across 3<sup>rd</sup> party land - a 6 month licence is to be granted by RWE Npower to allow equipment and materials to be brought over the company's land to enable construction of the bridge's southern foundation. From the north – the delivery route for the bridge - there is a right of access in a legal agreement dating from 1988.

Stage 2 of the cycleway will be subject to bids for external funding.

## **3 Main issues**

### **3.1 Design Proposals, Full Scheme Description and Programme.**

- 3.2 The Project includes the fabrication of a steel bridge and the placing of the order represents programme start. The manufacture period for the bridge is approximately 4 months and the works on site would take approximately 6 weeks.

- 3.3 The scheme includes the construction of two sections of cycleway totalling 295 metres leading to and from the proposed bridge. [A cycleway is a strip of hardcore with a tarmac topping 2.5 metres wide].
- 3.4 The bridge will arrive as a single 20-22m long fabrication and will be craned into place and lowered onto foundations. Full planning permission was granted in July 2013.
- 3.5 It must be appreciated that the cost of gaining access to deliver the bridge is potentially greater than the cost of the bridge itself and installing it across the river. The distance between Pontefract Lane and the river is well over a mile across potentially soft ground. Thus the expenditure on providing a load bearing route is very weather dependent. The budget includes for up to £115,388 of works to ensure the bridge will not sink into soft ground en route. If weather conditions turn out to be very favourable then some of this provision will not be required. However in view of the changeability of the weather and the need to prepare the route a few days in advance it would not be realistic to expect only a little of this provision to be needed.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1.1 There is an officer group within the council working on the delivery of this project, together with the cycling charity Sustrans. Consultations have taken place with land owners . The Wyke Beck Community Forum has also been consulted at the time of the planning application (as the Wyke Beck Cycle Route will feed into the new section and TPT. The Environment Agency is a key partner as the area forms part of the flood management infrastructure for Leeds and is a registered reservoir. Local Members are being kept informed.

### **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 4.2.1 Due regard has been taken to equality as part of this proposal. This additional section of cycleway is essentially the provision of cycling infrastructure, which can also be used as a public footpath and is open to everyone equally... The new path will be of benefit to relevant protected characteristic persons also such as people pushing prams and people in wheelchairs in view of the smooth running surface and absence of obstructions (e.g. lamp posts). There are no steps and the maximum gradient is quite shallow.

### **4.3 Council policies and City Priorities**

- 4.3.1 Development of the core cycle network supports the Local Transport Plan objectives to improve connectivity to support economic activity and improve the quality of life through the Healthy City Physical Activity Strategy.
- 4.3.2 Completion of Stages 1 and 2 of this project will link the city north to south and provide access from both ends into the TPT and hence into the city centre and also into the large employment areas of Cross Green.

#### 4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 Stage 1 is fully covered by allocated funds in the capital plan. The council's partner in this project, Sustrans, is an experience provider of cycleways and has successfully partnered the council on other schemes within Leeds. In this project the charity aims to cover its costs of delivering the project elements which it will also manage for 40 years. Sustrans will own the bridge outright. The charity has already worked with the council at its own cost to prepare this scheme. Taking all elements together it is considered that the funding being made available to Sustrans constitutes good value for money.

#### 4.4.2 Capital Funding and Cash Flow.

Funding Approval :	Capital Section Reference Number :-						
Previous total Authority to Spend on this scheme	TOTAL	TO MARCH	FORECAST				
	£000's	2014 £000's	2014/15 £000's	2015/16 £000's	2016/17 £000's	2017/18 £000's	2018 on £000's
LAND (1)	0.0						
CONSTRUCTION (3)	31.3	30.3	1.0				
FURN & EQPT (5)	0.0						
DESIGN FEES (6)	0.0						
OTHER COSTS (7)	1.6		1.6				
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>32.9</b>	<b>30.3</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Authority to Spend required for this Approval	TOTAL	TO MARCH	FORECAST				
	£000's	2014 £000's	2014/15 £000's	2015/16 £000's	2016/17 £000's	2017/18 £000's	2018 on £000's
LAND (1)	0.0						
CONSTRUCTION (3)	241.5		241.5				
FURN & EQPT (5)	0.0						
DESIGN FEES (6)	0.0						
OTHER COSTS (7)	77.3		77.3				
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>318.8</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>318.8</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
Total overall Funding (As per latest Capital Programme)	TOTAL	TO MARCH	FORECAST				
	£000's	2014 £000's	2014/15 £000's	2015/16 £000's	2016/17 £000's	2017/18 £000's	2018 on £000's
Private Sector	373.9	30.3	343.6				
Total Funding	373.9	30.3	343.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Balance / Shortfall =</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Parent Scheme Number : 16902  
 Title : Skelton Bridges & Bridleways

#### Revenue Effects

4.4.3 £76,059 has been identified from the Coal Authority monies to be used as a commuted sum to fund maintenance over 40 years and transferred to revenue.

## **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

- 4.5.1 The Director of City Development has the delegated authority to approve the recommendations in this report.

## **4.6 Risk Management**

If this work is not progressed then other connecting cycle routes substantially completed will not achieve their potential. Existing routes north of the river will not be connect to their target destination, namely Rothwell. There will be no direct cycling link from Rothwell into the Trans Pennine Trail nor into the Aire Valley employment area from the south. In terms of achieving and carrying out the works the potential risks have been identified and are being managed within the project.

## **5 Conclusions**

- 5.1 The proposed scheme is the first and most significant element of a two stage project to provide a north- south cycling route east of the city centre which is mainly off highway. Its anticipated completion will lead to improvements in connectivity, sustainability and health.

## **6 Recommendations**

- 6.1 The Director of City Development is requested to approve the expenditure of up to £318,801 on the capital works for the Skelton Cycleway and bridge for the purpose of procuring the works and a further £76,059 for a commuted sum in revenue to maintain the bridge and cycleway for 40 years.

## **7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

- 7.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available for download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.