



## Active Travel Tranche 4 – Holbeck Connector

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2024

Report of: David O'Donoghue, Principal Transport Planner

Report to: Highways and Transportation Board

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Chief Officer for the design and implementation of the active travel scheme known as Holbeck Connector which forms part of the Active Travel Fund Tranche 4 programme (ATF 4).

Leeds City Council, in partnership with West Yorkshire Combined Authority, submitted a bid to Active Travel England for Active Travel Fund Tranche 4 funding. This was a competitive bidding process aimed at schemes that enable walking, cycling and wheeling journeys. Active Travel England reviewed and supported schemes that were well developed, high quality, scored well on their 'Route Check Tool' and provided value for money.

On the 19th of May 2023 the successful bids were announced. Leeds City Council were awarded funding to progress with five out of the eight schemes submitted. Holbeck Connector is one of those schemes with ring-fenced funding to deliver segregated cycle provision and improved crossing facilities along Whitehall Road between Spence Lane and Loverose Court. The scheme is currently valued to be £1.9m. This report seeks approval for the injection of funding within the capital programme, approval of the design and authority to implement the changes on site.

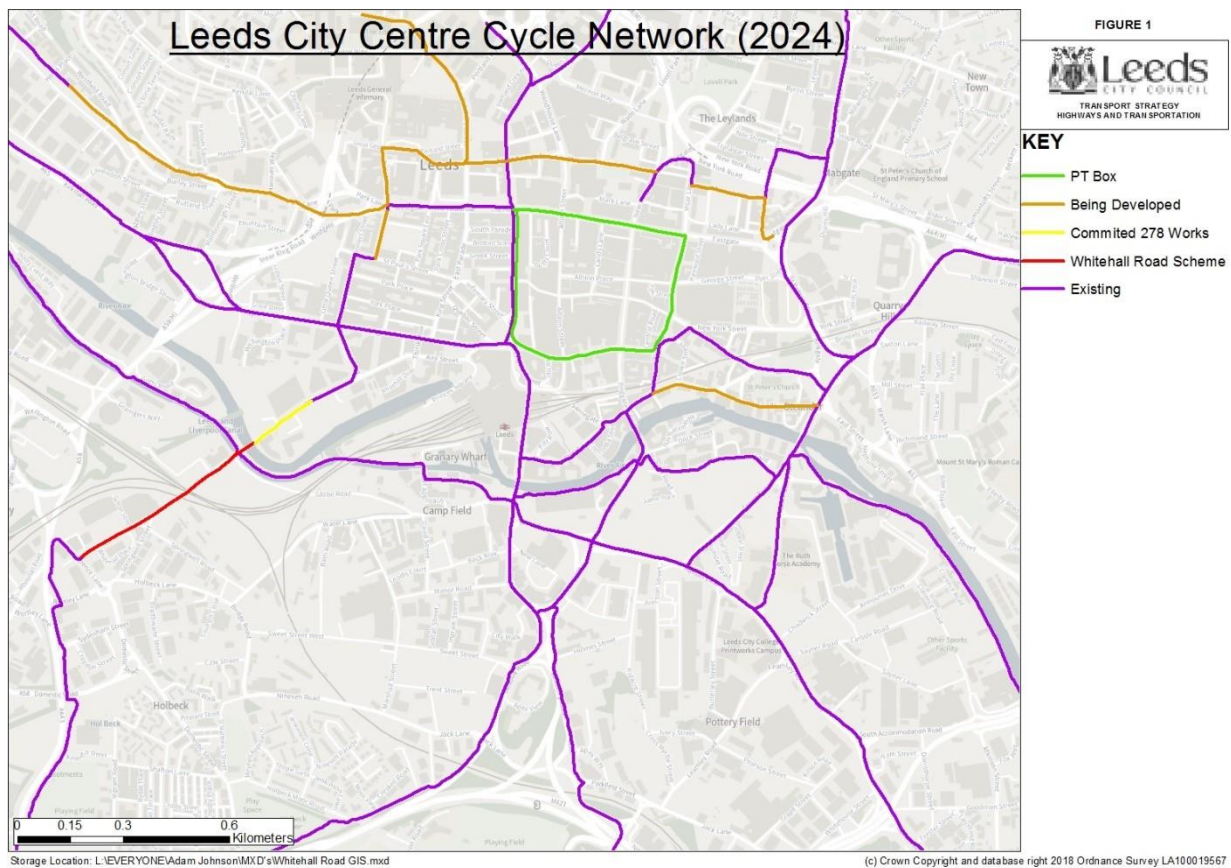
### Recommendations

The Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation) is requested to;

- i. Note the contents of the report and approve the design of the Holbeck Connector scheme;
- ii. Give authority to inject and authorise spend of £1.9m of Active Travel Fund Tranche 4 grant funding to develop, design and implement the scheme;
- iii. Request the City Solicitor to advertise Traffic Regulation Orders and, subject to no objections being received, to make and seal the orders as advertised;
- iv. Give authority to display notices on site under the provision of Section 23 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to inform the public of the proposed formal pedestrian crossing; and
- v. Approve the construction of cycle tracks under the powers contained under the provisions of Section 65(1) of the Highways Act 1980 for segregated or shared joint use by pedal cyclists and pedestrians.

### What is this report about?

- 1 This report concerns the active travel scheme known as Holbeck Connector. The scheme aims to provide segregated cycle provision on Whitehall Road thus completing a missing strategic gap in the developing city centre cycle network, linking existing schemes (Ingram Way cycle route and the West End cycle route). See Fig. 1 for local context.



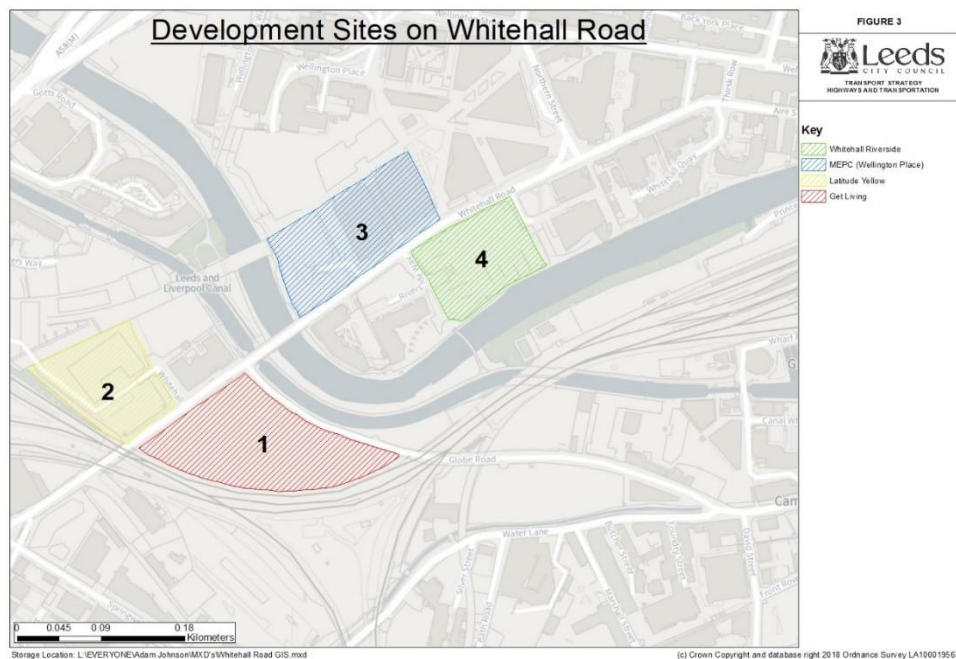
*Fig. 1 Cycle network map showing the scheme and the surrounding network.*

- 2 The proposed scheme is costed at £1.9m and will be fully funded by Active Travel England's Active Travel Tranche 4 grant funding.

### **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 3 The scheme will continue Leeds City Council's (LCC) programme of proving a high quality segregated and connected cycle route within and across the city.
- 4 This scheme is fully funded from the Active Travel Fund Tranche 4 grant funding and has been ring fenced to deliver the below outputs on Whitehall Road;
  - 576m of fully segregated bi-directional 3.0m wide cycle route.
  - Creation of landscaped public space, including space for future installation of docks for the LCB e-bike project.
  - Location for 1 x e-bike docking station.
  - 1 new pedestrian/cycle crossing.
  - 1 upgraded pedestrian crossing.
  - 1 upgraded junction to tie in with the existing Ingram Way off highway cycle route.
  - Junction alteration at Globe Road to simplify turning movements and mitigate potential bus delays.
  - Enforcement camera to cover the proposed banned turning movement.
- 5 A package of TRO's is required to support the delivery of the scheme. This package of TRO's comprises:
  - No Motor Vehicle Parking or Loading on Footway or Cycle Track restriction on all parts of the new infrastructure.

- No waiting or loading at any time.
  - Prohibition of right turning vehicles from Whitehall Road onto Globe Road.
  - Closure of Springwell Street between Whitehall Road and Springwell Road.
  - Revocation of existing Pay By Phone parking bays on Springwell Street (5 bays) and Whitehall Road (3 bays).
- 6 The tracks will be physically separated from the footway and carriageway. Cycle tracks within the public highway are created by a highway authority under sections 65 and 66 of the Highways Act 1980. The space within the public highway will be reallocated in accordance with the current policy to provide room for the bi-directional cycle provision and safe crossing provision.
- 7 The design has been developed alongside works linked to known development sites located along Whitehall Road as shown in Fig. 3. Engagement with relevant developers is on-going. Two of the four sites (site No. 3 and 4) are soon to enter into Section 278 agreements and the changes will be delivered in conjunction with the Holbeck Connector scheme.



*Fig. 3 Whitehall Road nearby developments.*

- 8 Leeds City Council have a long-term aspiration to reconfigure and signalise the junction of Whitehall Road and Globe Road, however, this would be delivered in conjunction with a nearby development as and when it comes forward. The Holbeck Connector proposal requires alterations at this junction and has been designed in a way that minimises abortive works in the future.

### **How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

- Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

- 9 The Best Council Plan outlines Leeds City Council's positive and distinctive vision for the future of the city that is inclusive and healthy. This scheme will be extending the provision of walking and cycling facilities and help to deliver the Best Council Plan Priorities as detailed below.
- 10 By minimising the negative effects of traffic, the scheme will support Health and Wellbeing, Child Friendly City and Age Friendly Leeds by extending opportunities for healthy and physically active lifestyles, enhancing the city for future generations, alongside supporting independence and increasing safety of vulnerable road users.
- 11 This project aligns itself to Leeds Transport Strategy and Vision Zero in helping to develop safe, quality environments for walking and cycling and providing transport infrastructure which links areas of social deprivation to jobs and opportunities of a prosperous city centre.

- 12 The project also reflects the aims of regional and national strategies. The West Yorkshire Transport Strategy seeks to increase active travel and improve the transport network for vulnerable road users. It will also help to deliver Active Travel England's objective for 50% of trips in England's towns and cities to be walked, wheeled or cycled by 2030.
- 13 In 2017 the Government published its first Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (The Strategy). The Strategy sets out the Government's ambition to make walking and cycling the natural choices for shorter journeys or as part of a longer journey. The Strategy supports the transformation of local areas: change which will tackle congestion, change which will extend opportunity to improve physical and mental health, and change which will support local economies. The Strategy's objectives are to:
- increase cycling activity, where cycling activity is measured as the estimated total number of cycle stages made
  - increase walking activity, where walking activity is measured as the total number of walking stages per person
  - reduce the rate of cyclists killed or seriously injured on England's roads, measured as the number of fatalities and serious injuries per billion miles cycled
  - increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 that usually walk to school

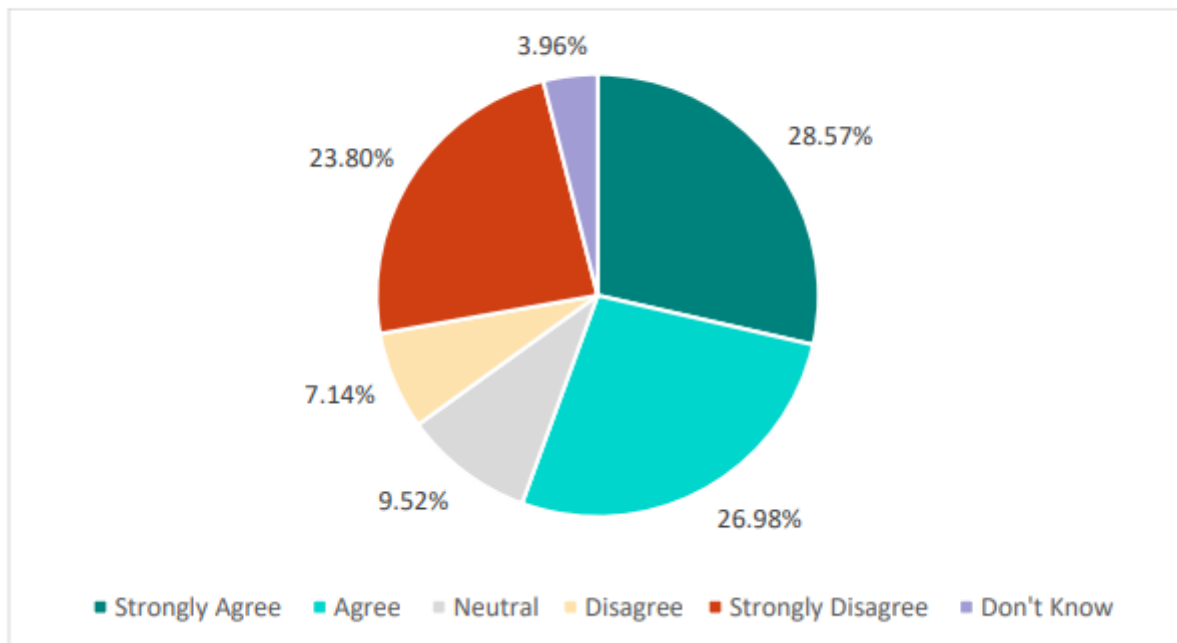
### What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: Hunslet & Riverside, Beeston & Holbeck

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes                       No

- 14 **Public Consultation** - The public consultation summary report is available on the West Yorkshire Combined Authorities website. As part of the consultation, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed that the proposed plans (for each section) will improve connections for cycling in and around the city centre. 55.6% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed, while 30.9% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- 15 When asked if they had any other comments regarding each section of the proposed scheme, the most common themes raised regarding each area were:
- i. General positive comments (13)
  - ii. Concerns about cyclists having to cycle on main carriageway (12)
  - iii. Concerns about shared use spaces for cyclists and people walking (12)

**Holbeck Gateway: To what extent to you agree that the proposed plans will improve connections for cycling in and around the city centre?**



*Fig. 2 Consultation Summary*

- 16 Moving forward the intention is to provide an update on the scheme via West Yorkshire Combined Authority's public consultation page with the latest scheme plan.
- 17 **Ward Member Feedback** – Hunslet & Riverside and Beeston & Holbeck councillors were consulted as part of the original consultation via email. Ward members notified recently with an updated plan and programme. To date, no adverse comments have been received.
- 18 **Emergency Services and West Yorkshire Combined Authority** – All statutory consultees were consulted via email and have been provided an updated plan and programme. To date no adverse comments have been received regarding the proposals.
- 19 **Stakeholder Groups** – Both bus operators and the Cycle Forum Sub-Group have been given early sight of the scheme and involved in the development of the design. From a bus operator perspective, they have concerns about delays currently experienced on Whitehall Road and risk of further delays during the construction phase. Officers have been regularly providing updates through the Bus Operators Infrastructure Group and will be setting up a bespoke meeting to explain the programme and traffic management arrangements.
- 20 The Cycle Forum are fully supportive of the scheme.
- 21 Active Travel England endorsed the project at bid stage and have fully supported the design.
- 22 The scheme will complement development sites along Whitehall Road as shown in Fig. 3. Engagement with relevant developers is an on-going process.

**What are the resource implications?**

- 23 This scheme is fully funded from the Active Travel Fund Tranche 4 grant funding and has been ring fenced to deliver the outputs on Whitehall Road as detailed in point 5.
- 24 The funding and scheme have several challenges, most notably the timescales for delivery. There is an expectation that the scheme will be constructed by March 2025. To achieve this, and minimise any future impacts on the highway, Network Management have given permission for the work to start on site Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October.
- 25 The scheme forms part of Highways & Transportation Annual Programme and is being project managed and designed by internal resources.

26 Delivery of the works on site will be carried out by one of our framework contractors on the Minor Highways Term Contract.

27 Not delivering a scheme in accordance with the Grant funding agreement may result in LCC having financial clawback from the ATE or West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

## 28 Capital Funding and Cashflow Table

### Active Travel Phase 4 - LCC capital programme

Current Injections into the capital Programme as at October 2024	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2024 £000's	FORECAST			
			2024/25	2025/26	2026/26	2027/28
			£000's	£000's	£000s	£000's
ACTIVE TRAVEL PHASE 4 – LCC	7,439.6	190.4	4,809.6	2,439.6	0.0	0.0
TOTALS	7,439.6	190.4	4,809.6	2,439.6	0.0	0.0
Authority to Spend to date as at October 2024	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2024 £000's	FORECAST			
			2024/25	2025/26	2026/26	2027/28
			£000's	£000's	£000s	£000's
EASTERN GATEWAY	382.0	36.2	345.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
OTHER FEES	79.8	79.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTALS	382.0	36.2	345.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Authority to Spend required for this current approval HOLBECK CONNECTOR	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2024 £000's	FORECAST			
			2024/25	2025/26	2026/26	2027/28
			£000's	£000's	£000s	£000's
CONSTRUCTION	1,300.0	38.1	1,261.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
FEES	307.5	36.3	271.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
OTHER	266.4	0.0	266.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTALS	1,873.9	74.4	1,799.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total overall Funding	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2024 £000's	FORECAST			
			2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
			£000's	£000's	£000s	£000's
GOVT GRANT - ATF 4	7,439.6	190.4	4,809.6	2,439.6	0.0	0.0
Total Confirmed Funding	7439.6	190.4	4809.6	2439.6	0.0	0.0
<b>Total Funding Balance</b>	<b>5,183.7</b>	<b>79.8</b>	<b>2,664.3</b>	<b>2,439.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

## **What are the legal implications?**

- 29 It is important that the scheme is developed and delivered in accordance with the Grant funding agreement and timescales. There is a risk that not doing this could result in LCC having financial clawback from the ATE or West Yorkshire Combined Authority.
- 30 There is a requirement to promote a Traffic Regulation Order for the Movement and Waiting restrictions needed.
- 31 The scheme includes the installation of segregated cycle tracks or shared joint use by pedal cyclists and pedestrians at various locations along the route, and these provisions are created by a highway authority under sections 65 and 66 of the Highways Act 1980.
- 32 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out in relation active travel infrastructure, and a scheme specific equality screening has been undertaken as part of the design process, see appendix B.

## **Options, timescales and measuring success**

### **What other options were considered?**

- 33 In terms of layouts and the design, multiple options were presented at an internal workshop. These options included variations to the cycle route, location of crossings, movement within the area and entry and exit points. The preferred option, as per drawing TM-00-906-01-01D, best reflects these discussions and recommended way forward.
- 34 The scheme has been designed from first principals in line with Local Transport Note 1/20; Cycle infrastructure design which lays out how cycling infrastructure should be designed and delivered which has shaped much of the layout of the schemes.

### **How will success be measured?**

- 35 Linking up and filling gaps in the existing and planned cycle network will deliver improved connectivity to, and around, the city centre. Filling in this gap will help unlock suppressed demand for cycling and multiply the benefits of other schemes by improving connectivity across the cycle network.
- 36 There are multiple success criteria, these are;
  - i. Delivering on time
  - ii. Delivering within budget
  - iii. Producing a design that is approved by Active Travel England
  - iv. Improve cycle connectivity of Leeds city centre with new infrastructure by end of 2024/2025
  - v. Increase the number of cycle trips on the scheme route by 40% by 2027
  - vi. Improve safety – improve safety for people cycling in Leeds city centre by introducing infrastructure that meets the needs of users according to traffic speeds and volumes, as set out in national LTN1/20 cycle infrastructure design guidance.
  - vii. Environmental improvements – supporting mode shift to active travel to help improve air quality and reduce transport carbon emissions, while enhancing the immediate environment and creating more healthy and attractive streetscapes.
  - viii. Health and wellbeing improvements – enabling more active travel, which comes with significant health benefits, not least a reduced risk of premature death.

### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

A breakdown of the milestones that were submitted as part of the ATF 4 bid are detailed below. In summary the GFA stipulates two key milestones:

- Each scheme to be committed\* by March 2024

- Each scheme to be completed on site by March 2025

*\*A commitment could consist of a contract for design and construction, or a business case approving delivery of a scheme agreed with Council executives.*

A Strategic Outline Business case was approved by West Yorkshire Combined Authority for the full ATF programme. A project specific business case has been through WYCA's assurance process therefore the scheme is deemed to be committed.

Forward planning of the scheme It is proposed that the scheme will start on site Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2024.



## **Appendices**

- Appendix A: TM-00-906-01-01D
- Appendix B: EDCI (Equality Diversity Cohesion and Inclusion) Assessment

## **Background papers**