
Helensburgh, Cardross and Dumbarton Cyclepath Update

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report updates Members on the progress made since the previous report to the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee on 17 June 2021, in relation to the delivery of Argyll and Bute Council's long-standing commitment to the provision of a dedicated, high quality walking and cycle route linking Helensburgh, Cardross and Dumbarton.
- 1.2. Developed design work is ongoing for the outstanding sections of the route linking Colgrain to the Geilston Burn and Ferry Road to Dumbarton. WSP have sought engagement with all identified landowners affected by the route to gain their input to support the design development. Engaging with landowners has taken longer than originally programmed. Design progress has also been delayed by a significant number of project change requests submitted by WSP. Wider community engagement is now planned for September 2021, following the completion of landowner engagement and design options development. Final design is now forecast to be completed in Q4 2021/22.
- 1.3. As instructed by this Committee on 17 December 2020, Officers have been in touch with the relevant landowner in relation to the potential for land acquisition to allow the completion of the section of the route from Geilston Burn to Murrays Crossing at the earliest opportunity. Following discussions, the landowner has stated that they do not wish to consider any land acquisition prior to the designs for the full route being finalised.
- 1.4. Construction of the permanent pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Geilston Burn recommenced in early August. Commencement of the construction was delayed due to change requests submitted by the bridge contractor. Construction of the permanent bridge is forecast to be completed by October, with surfacing and signage to be finalised by the Council's Roads Operations team following completion of the bridge.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. It is recommended that the Helensburgh and Lomond members:
 - 2.1.1. Welcome the recommencement of the construction of the section linking Cardross Railway Station to the Geilston Burn, Cardross.

- 2.1.2. Note the rescheduling of the community engagement to inform the design to September 2021.
- 2.1.3. Note the revised timescale for completion of the design of the route linking Colgrain to Geilston Burn, Cardross and Ferry Road, Cardross to Dumbarton.
- 2.1.4. Note the landowner between Geilston Burn and Murray's Crossing has declined to progress land acquisition negotiations prior to the design for the full route being completed.

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3.0 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1. This report updates Members of the progress made since the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee on 17 June 2021 in relation to the delivery of Argyll and Bute Council's long-standing commitment to the provision of a dedicated, high quality walking and cycle route linking Helensburgh, Cardross and Dumbarton.
- 3.2. Full details of the project, including previous progress is available in the project update reports previously presented to this Committee, most recently on 17 June 2021.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1. It is recommended that the Helensburgh and Lomond members:
 - 4.1.1. Welcome the recommencement of the construction of the section linking Cardross Railway Station to the Geilston Burn, Cardross.
 - 4.1.2. Note the rescheduling of the community engagement to inform the design to September 2021.
 - 4.1.3. Note the revised timescale for completion of the design of the route linking Colgrain to Geilston Burn, Cardross and Ferry Road, Cardross to Dumbarton.
 - 4.1.4. Note the landowner between Geilston Burn and Murray's Crossing has declined to progress land acquisition negotiations prior to the design for the full route being completed.

5.0 DETAIL

Finances

- 5.1. **Design (Colgrain to Cardross & Cardross to Dumbarton).** Funding for the design development has been confirmed from the 2021/22 Transport Scotland Places for Everyone programme, administered by Sustrans. This is a highly competitive challenge fund which requires projects to closely comply with the

ever evolving design requirements set by Sustrans as administrators of the funding.

- 5.2. **Construction (Cardross Rail Station to Geilston Burn).** Estimated construction costs in 2021/22 are £196,000. Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) has confirmed £100,000 2021/22 capital funding to support the delivery of the Cardross to Geilston Burn section of the route currently under construction. £96,000 has been confirmed for 2021/22 from the Transport Scotland Places for Everyone programme, administered by Sustrans. These competitive challenge funds will cover the forecast construction costs.

Design

- 5.3. Transport Scotland's Places for Everyone funding programme, administered by Sustrans, is structured around 8 project stages with gateways which require approval from the Sustrans Project Board at the end of Stage 2 (Concept Design) and Stage 4 (Technical Design) to progress to the next stage. The project stages are (0) Strategic Definition, (1) Preparation and Brief, (2) Concept Design, (3) Developed Design, (4) Technical Design, (5) Construction, (6) Handover & Close Out and (7) In Use.
- 5.4. **Developed design** (stage 3) work is ongoing for the outstanding section of the route linking Colgrain to Geilston Burn, Cardross and Ferry Road, Cardross to Dumbarton. WSP have sought engagement with all identified landowners affected by the route to gain their input to support the design development, which has taken longer than originally programmed. Design progress has also been delayed by a significant number of project change requests submitted by WSP. Wider community engagement is now planned for September 2021, following the completion of landowner engagement and design options development.
- 5.5. **Technical Design** (stage 4) engineering investigation and design finalization is planned to be progressed following completion of the develop design stage. Final technical design is now forecast to be completed in Q4 2021/22.
- 5.6. Once completed, the Developed Design and Technical Design will complete the design stages required prior to land acquisition and construction.
- 5.7. **Landowner engagement.** The design work includes engagement with relevant landowners to help inform the designs. WSP have sought engagement with all identified landowners affected by the route to gain their input to support the design development. However, this has taken longer than originally programmed.
- 5.8. **Community engagement.** A key element of the contract awarded to WSP for the development of the designs for the route linking Moss Road, Colgrain to Cardross and Cardross to Dumbarton is to undertake community engagement to inform the designs. Due to the landowner engagement taking longer to complete than originally programmed, it is now planned this engagement will be undertaken in September 2021. Due to the covid-19 pandemic this

consultation will be online via the Council's website. Officers will work with local community groups and the council's media team to promote the engagement to enable wide participation.

- 5.9. **Helensburgh Town.** It is planned to submit a funding application to Transport Scotland's Places for Everyone fund, administered by Sustrans, for funding in 2021/22 to undertake a high quality community engagement to identify demand for and a potential route(s) of the Cyclepath from the western edge of Helensburgh into the centre of the town. At time of writing it is not known when the Places for Everyone programme will reopen for new applications. Sustrans have recently delayed a decision panel for later design stages funding from August to November due to higher than expected competition for available funding, so it could be several months until new applications are accepted. The uncertainty of when it may be possible to apply for funding for this stage of work makes it highly unlikely that it will be possible to complete the planned work in 2021/22 given the required time for procurement and the work required.

Geilston Burn to Murray's Crossing

- 5.10. On 17 December 2020, the Committee instructed Officers to look at the options in relation to land acquisition to allow the completion of the section of the route from Geilston Burn to Murrays Crossing at the earliest opportunity. Officers contacted the relevant landowner's land agent and landowner, with a meeting taking place on 30 June.
- 5.11. Following discussions, the landowner has stated that they do not wish to consider any land acquisition prior to the designs for the full route being finalised.

Construction: Cardross Station to Geilston Burn

- 5.12. Following approval from SEPA for work around the Geilston Burn to recommence, the temporary (pipes) bridge was reinstalled in the burn in late May.
- 5.13. Construction of the permanent pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Geilston Burn recommenced in early August. Commencement of the construction was delayed due to change requests submitted by the bridge contractor. Construction of the permanent bridge is forecast to be completed by October.
- 5.14. Following construction of the permanent bridge, Roads Operations will undertake the final surfacing and completion of the route linking Cardross Station and the Geilston Burn.

Programme

- 5.15. **Appendix 1** provides an outline programme of the key stages and forecast timescales for each section of the Phase 1: Helensburgh to Cardross section of the Cyclepath, Phase 2: Cardross to Dumbarton and Helensburgh: Hermitage Academy to Town Centre.

- 5.16. **Appendix 2** provides an update on Land Negotiations for Helensburgh, Cardross and Dumbarton Cyclepath. **[EXEMPT]**

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1. Completion of the Helensburgh, Cardross and Dumbarton Cyclepath will provide a dedicated, high quality, accessible walking and cycle route linking Helensburgh, Cardross and Dumbarton. This route will provide opportunities for all in the Helensburgh – Cardross – Dumbarton corridor to travel more sustainably and actively by walking and cycling. This will provide a safe alternative to having to use a private car to travel between these communities and help lower Argyll and Bute’s carbon footprint. Funding for these works has been secured from our key active travel partners with further bids being developed to enable the construction of further sections of the cycleway following detailed design work and as and when land purchases have been concluded.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1. Policy

Completion of this project will support the Council’s SOA outcomes 2: We have infrastructure that supports sustainable growth and 5: People live active, healthier and independent lives. The project also supports achievement of the Scottish Government’s objectives set out in the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS) and Let’s Get Scotland Walking - The National Walking Strategy.

7.2. Financial

The design, construction and land purchase will be funded by external grant funding applications. The council have not contributed any funding to design or capital costs. There is evidence to indicate that people who are more active, for example by walking or cycling, are less likely to require social care services in later life which could result in a future saving to the Council although the value of this would be difficult to quantify.

7.3. Legal

Continued input will be required from Legal Services to support contractual agreements and land purchase including a CPO should this be deemed necessary.

7.4. HR

None.

7.5. Fairer Scotland Duty:

7.5.1 Equalities

Completion of this project will provide opportunities for all in the Helensburgh – Cardross – Dumbarton

	corridor to travel more sustainably and actively by walking, wheeling and cycling.
7.5.2 Socio-economic Duty	The route has been designed to be DDA compliant and will provide a safe and accessible route for those with mobility aids including wheelchairs and parents/guardians with a child's pram or buggy.
7.5.3 Islands	There are no adverse impacts.
7.6. Risk	There is a reputational risk to the Council if the project is not completed within a reasonable timeframe.
7.7. Customer Services	None.

Executive Director with the responsibility for Development and Economic Growth: Kirsty Flanagan

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Appendix 1: Helensburgh, Cardross & Dumbarton Cyclepath Programme
Appendix 2: Update on Land Negotiations for Helensburgh, Cardross and Dumbarton Cyclepath [EXEMPT]