
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 16 September 2021 in relation to the delivery of a dedicated, high quality walking and cycle route linking Helensburgh, Cardross and Dumbarton.
- 1.2. Installation of the permanent pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Geilston Burn was completed in October 2021. The Council's Roads Operations team are working to progress with surfacing prior to the end of 2021.
- 1.3. Design work for the outstanding sections of the route linking Colgrain to the Geilston Burn and Ferry Road to Dumbarton has been paused by our design contractor, WSP, pending a Council decision on the significant project change requests submitted by WSP. Wider community engagement is now planned for December 2021, to be led by Council Officers.
- 1.4. Since award of contract to WSP for the Developed and Technical Design stages a significant number of project change requests have been submitted by WSP, amounting to a 66% increase in project costs. We are currently in discussion with WSP in relation to the increased costs and the value-for-money of these change requests.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.5. It is recommended that the Helensburgh and Lomond members:
 - 1.5.1. Welcome the construction of the bridge over the Geilston Burn, Cardross.
 - 1.5.2. Welcome the plan to undertake surfacing of the path linking Cardross Station to the Geilston Burn by end-2021, subject to favourable weather conditions.
 - 1.5.3. Note the rescheduling of the community engagement to inform the design to December 2021.
 - 1.5.4. Note the potential for increased project cost in relation to project change requests submitted by the contractor appointed to complete the design of the route linking Colgrain to Geilston Burn, Cardross and Ferry Road, Cardross to Dumbarton.

Helensburgh, Cardross and Dumbarton Cyclepath Update

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. This report updates Members of the progress made since the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee on 16 September 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.
- 2.2. Full details of the project, including previous progress is available in the project update reports previously presented to this Committee.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. It is recommended that the Helensburgh and Lomond members:
 - 3.1.1. Welcome the construction of the bridge over the Geilston Burn, Cardross.
 - 3.1.2. Welcome the plan to undertake surfacing of the path linking Cardross Station to the Geilston Burn by end-2021, subject to favourable weather conditions.
 - 3.1.3. Note the rescheduling of the community engagement to inform the design to December 2021.
 - 3.1.4. Note the potential for increased project cost in relation to project change requests submitted by the contractor appointed to complete the design of the route linking Colgrain to Geilston Burn, Cardross and Ferry Road, Cardross to Dumbarton.

4.0 DETAIL

Finances

- 4.1. **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.

- 4.2. **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

- 4.3. 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.
- 4.4. **Developed design** (stage 3) work for the outstanding section of the route linking Colgrain to Geilston Burn, Cardross and Ferry Road, Cardross to Dumbarton has been paused by WSP.
- 4.5. **Technical Design** (stage 4) engineering investigation and design finalization is planned to be progressed following completion of the develop design stage. Once completed, the Developed Design and Technical Design will complete the design stages required prior to land acquisition and construction.
- 4.6. **Landowner engagement.** WSP have sought engagement with all identified landowners affected by the route to gain their input to the design development. Landowner comments have been considered and, where appropriate incorporated, within the developed designs.
- 4.7. **Change Requests.** Since award of contract to WSP for the Developed and Technical Design stages a significant number of project change requests have been submitted by WSP, amounting to a 66% increase in project costs. We are currently in discussion with WSP in relation to the increased costs and the value-for-money of these change requests. Additional detail for members is included in Appendix 2.
- 4.8. **Community engagement.** To keep the design development progressing, Council Officers are working to develop the community consultation on the designs for the route linking Moss Road, Colgrain to Cardross and Cardross to Dumbarton. 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. It is now planned the community engagement will be undertaken in December 2021.

- 4.9. **Helensburgh Town.** A funding application has been submitted 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. Disappointingly, despite Sustrans Officers stating they expected to provide a quick decision on the application; since submission of the application Sustrans have now advised that the application will require to be considered by a funding panel. However, at time of writing Sustrans have not been able to confirm a timescale for the next funding panel. The uncertainty of when funding may be confirmed for this stage of work makes it likely that the earliest it will be possible to complete the planned work is 2022/23 given the required time for procurement and the work required.

Construction: Cardross Station to Geilston Burn

- 4.10. The permanent pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Geilston Burn was installed on 29 October 2021. Following installation of the permanent bridge, the temporary (pipes) bridge was removed from the burn.
- 4.11. Roads Operations are now working to undertake the final surfacing, lining and signage to complete the route linking Cardross Station and the Geilston Burn. Subject to weather conditions being favourable, it is planned to undertake surfacing works prior to the end of 2021. Lining and signage are dependent on availability of external contractors and delivery timescales.

Programme

- 4.12. **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, Phase 3: Helensburgh: Hermitage Academy to Town Centre.
- 4.13. **Appendix 2** provides an update on discussions with the design contractor and the current position on land negotiations. **[EXEMPT]**

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1. 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.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1. 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.

6.2. Financial

The design, construction and land purchase will be funded by external grant funding applications. The Council has 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 or HSCP although the value of this would be difficult to quantify.

6.3. Legal

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

6.4. HR

None.

6.5. Fairer Scotland Duty:

6.5.1 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.

6.5.2 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.

6.5.3 Islands

There are no adverse impacts.

6.6. Climate Change

Active Travel is the least carbon intensive mode of travel. Providing the opportunity for residents and visitors to consider an alternative to having to use a private car to travel between these communities will help lower Argyll and Bute's carbon footprint.

6.7. Risk

There is a reputational risk to the Council if the project is not completed within a reasonable timeframe.

6.8. Customer Services

None.

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25 November 2021

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