
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 December 2021 in relation to the delivery of a dedicated, high quality walking and cycle route linking Helensburgh, Cardross and Dumbarton.
- 1.2. The section of route linking Cardross Station to Cardross Park opened in December 2021 and is already being well used by the community. Following this, the Council's Roads Operations team continue to work to progress with the final surfacing, signs and lines for the whole route linking Cardross Station to the Geilston Burn. It is now expected this work will be completed early summer 2022 to fit within the available delivery capacity.
- 1.3. Community engagement on the developed designs for the outstanding sections of the path, linking Colgrain to Cardross and Cardross to Dumbarton was undertaken in Dec 21/Jan 22. This consultation received a total of 464 responses, with the majority of respondents supporting the design proposals.
- 1.4. Officers are working with WSP to consider the outcomes of the community engagement prior to further developing the designs to final constructible technical design stage.
- 1.5. The delivery of the Helensburgh – Cardross – Dumbarton Cyclepath is dependent on securing highly competitive challenge funding, committing appropriate match funding and securing access to private land for the route.
- 1.6. The Council's Active Travel Team (1.3 FTE) is part of the Strategic Transport Team within the Development and Economic Growth Service. No Council funding is currently received by the Active Travel Team. All project costs, including internal staff costs, have to be funded via successfully securing external challenge funds.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.7. It is recommended that the Helensburgh and Lomond members:
 - 1.7.1. Welcome the opening of the route linking Cardross Station to Cardross Park.

- 1.7.2. Note the plan to complete works for the final section of the route in Cardross by early summer 2022.
- 1.7.3. Note the results of the community consultation on the proposed designs for the outstanding sections of the path.

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. This report updates Members of the progress made since the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee on 17 December 2021 in relation to the delivery 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 opening of the route linking Cardross Station to Cardross Park.
 - 3.1.2. Note the plan to complete works for the final section of the route in Cardross by early summer 2022.
 - 3.1.3. Note the results of the community consultation on the proposed designs for the outstanding sections of the path.

4.0 DETAIL

Finances

- 4.1. **Design (Colgrain to Cardross & Cardross to Dumbarton).** Funding for the design development has been confirmed from the 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).** Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) has confirmed £195,000 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.

- 4.3. The Council's Active Travel Team (1.3 FTE) is part of the Strategic Transport Team within the Development and Economic Growth Service. No Council funding is currently received by the Active Travel Team. All project costs, including internal staff costs, have to be funded via successfully securing external challenge funds.

Community Consultation

- 4.4. Council Officers undertook 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 was online via the Council's website. The consultation was promoted to local community groups and via the Council's Communications Team to enable wide participation. West Dunbartonshire Council assisted with promoting the consultation to their local community.
- 4.5. The consultation was available on the Council's consultation webpage between 09 Dec 2021 and 23 Jan 2022 (45 days). A total of 464 responses were received. Of these, 457 (98.5%) were from individuals, with 5 (1%) from community organisations and 2 (0.4%) from businesses.
- 4.6. The community organisations who responded were Cardross Community Council, West Dunbartonshire Access Panel, West Dunbartonshire LAF, Drumchapel Cycle Hub and GoBike-Strathclyde Cycle Campaign. The businesses who submitted a response were Craigend Nursery, Cardross and Taylor Wimpey Strategic Land.
- 4.7. Of the individual respondents, 164 provided home postcode information, with the majority being in the vicinity of the path. 69 respondents were from Cardross (G82 5**), 22 respondents from Helensburgh East, Craigendoran and Colgrain (G84 7**), 22 respondents from Helensburgh North (G82 9**) and 20 respondents from Helensburgh West, Rhu & Shandon (G84 8**).
- 4.8. **Moss Road, Colgrain to the Geilston Burn Bridge, Cardross.** Of the 457 individual respondents, 444 (97%) supported the design proposals as being good for the community while 13 (3%) did not support the design proposals. All 5 Community Organisations and both business respondents supported the design proposals.
- 4.9. A total of 154 comments were provided in relation to the Colgrain to Geilston Burn designs. The main themes of the comments were urges to complete the path, requests for seating, lighting or segregation and comments on the route, of which 10 supported the preferred route and 4 noted preference for previous route alongside A814.
- 4.10. **Signalised junction at Ferry Road/A814, Cardross.** Of the 457 individual respondents, 398 (87%) supported the proposal to install a signalised junction at Ferry Road/A814 as being good for the community while 59 (13%) did not support the design proposals. All 5 Community Organisations and both business respondents supported the proposal.

- 4.11. A total of 139 comments were provided in relation to the proposals for a signalised junction at Ferry Road/A814, Cardross. The main themes of the comments were the need to reduce traffic speeds, support for installation of traffic signals to assist crossing A814 and a preference for an alternative route which avoided any crossings of the A814.
- 4.12. **Ferry Road, Cardross to Ardoch.** Of the 457 individual respondents, 429 (94%) supported the design proposals as being good for the community while 28 (6%) did not support the design proposals. All 5 Community Organisations and both business respondents supported the design proposals.
- 4.13. Respondents were asked to provide suggestions for how we could further improve the designs for the section of cyclepath linking Cardross and Ardoch. A total of 84 comments were received. The main themes of the comments were a preference for a route which avoided any crossings of the A814 and urges to complete the path.
- 4.14. **Route options through Ardoch.** A short section of the route through Ardoch still requires the final alignment to be confirmed. This is due to the route being adjacent to/through a site which has outline planning permission for residential development. Respondents were asked for their preferred alignment for this short section of the route. Of the 457 individual respondents, 69 (15%) preferred an option adjacent to the south side of the A814 road, 155 (34%) preferred an option through the development site adjacent to the north side of the railway boundary, and 233 (51%) answered that they had no route preference. Of the Community Organisations one preferred adjacent to the south side of A814, one preferred through development site adjacent to north side of railway boundary and 3 expressed no preference. Of the business respondents one preferred through development site adjacent to north side of railway boundary and one expressed no preference.
- 4.15. **Signalised crossing of the A814 in Ardoch.** Of the 457 individual respondents, 384 (84%) supported the installation of a signalised crossing in Ardoch as being good for the community while 73 (16%) did not support the proposal. All 5 Community Organisations and both business respondents supported the proposal.
- 4.16. Respondents were asked to provide suggestions for how we could further improve the designs for a pedestrian crossing of the A814 in Ardoch. A total of 104 comments were provided. The main themes of the comments were traffic speeds through Ardoch, visibility of crossing point for traffic and preferences for a route which avoided any crossings of the A814.
- 4.17. **Sea defenses at Ardoch.** Respondents were asked to provide suggestions of how we could further improve the designs for the sea defenses. A total of 73 comments were received. The main themes of the comments were a desire to see the path completed, requests for seating, and concerns about the maintenance of the path particularly in terms of flotsam and jetsam debris and water/puddling on the path.

- 4.18. **Ardoch to Havoc Park, Dumbarton.** Of the 457 individual respondents, 439 (96%) supported the design proposals as being good for the community while 18 (4%) did not support the design proposals. All 5 Community Organisations and both business respondents supported the design proposals.
- 4.19. All respondents were asked to provide any suggestions they had for how we could further improve the designs for the section of cyclepath linking Ardoch and Havoc Park, Dumbarton. A total of 63 comments were provided (appendix 5). The main themes of the comments were support for completion of the path, concerns around security including lighting, requests for landscaping to obscure the Havoc Sewage Works and suggestions to route away from the foreshore.
- 4.20. **Further comments.** A total of 220 comments were provided. The main themes of the comments were overwhelmingly urging to complete the path, followed by the importance of good maintenance, suggestions for alternative routings and points around the two proposed crossings over the A814.
- 4.21. **Appendix 1** provides the full results of the community consultation on the developed designs.

Main comments from consultation

- 4.22. Completion of the path. The Council continues to work to complete the design and construction of the whole path, linking Helensburgh, Cardross and Dumbarton. This project requires access to privately owned land, but not any residential gardens, along the majority of the route, and will require successfully securing highly competitive external challenge funding for the construction of each phase of the route.
- 4.23. Amendment of the route. Requests to amend the route, primary to avoid having to cross the A814, and suggestions of alternative routes were received. Amending the route to avoid crossing the A814 would require land from residential gardens and/or the construction of a 1.2km sea defence along the coast between Cardross and Ardoch on the seaward side of the railway which is protected as part of the Inner Clyde SSSI and RAMSAR site. Amending the route in line with any of the other suggestions would require a new design process for these amended sections which would incur further time and cost, thereby delaying delivery of the path. The current preferred route was confirmed by this Committee on 20 June 2019 following a consultation in spring 2019 with landowners and the community on potential route options.
- 4.24. Visibility of A814 crossings. The signalised junction of the A814 at Ferry Road, Cardross and the signalised crossing of the A814 at Ardoch have been located to ensure visibility of the signals for drivers and for pedestrian/cycle users of the crossings in line with the appropriate roads design guidance and speed limits in force.
- 4.25. Traffic speeds. Comments related to vehicles perceived to be exceeding the signed speed limit in both Ardoch and Cardross, in addition to requests for lower

speed limits to be implemented. The speed limit is determined by the Roads and Infrastructure Service based on national guidance. Roads Officers have confirmed they consider the current speed limits on the A814 of 40mph in Ardoch, 30mph in Cardross and national (60mph) out with built up areas to be appropriate.

- 4.26. Seating. While specific locations have not yet been determined, it is planned to include appropriate seating in the design of the path. The seating will be located to minimise any risk of seating areas becoming a focus for anti-social behaviour.
- 4.27. Lighting. The location of the path, largely within a rural context would make the provision of street lighting out of keeping with the area, potentially intrusive to local properties and have a potential negative impact on local wildlife. The provision of lighting along the length of the path would also significantly increase the cost of the path. It may be possible to provide 'solar stud' type lighting in selected locations on the path at a more manageable cost, however this lighting is designed to delineate the path and does not provide wider area lighting. The view to a pedestrian/cyclist may be best described as looking like a set of airport runway edge lights.
- 4.28. Security / Safety. A small number of respondents noted concerns around personal safety/security concerns mainly related to potential anti-social or criminal behaviour. While the path is mainly within a rural environment which limits natural observation of the route from local residential properties, the design aims to minimise potential areas attractive to anti-social behaviour and to maximise visibility along and from the path.
- 4.29. Bins. Provision of bins on the route will be dependent on securing agreement from Roads and Infrastructure Service to collect the waste at appropriate timescales. This will require any bins to be located to provide convenient access for refuse vehicles.
- 4.30. Segregation between pedestrians and cyclists. The path is design to the current high-quality standard of 3m width (slightly wider than a single-track road) and is designed to be shared by pedestrians, wheelers (e.g. those using mobility aids) and cyclists. Providing segregation between cyclists and pedestrians, usually only considered appropriate in locations with very high use, e.g. major city centre routes, or where there is a high crossing movement, e.g. adjacent to building lines, would require a significantly wider overall path of 5m+ wide and would not be expected to significantly improve the user experience.
- 4.31. Equestrian use. A small number of comments were included in relation to potential equestrian of the path. The path is not designed for equestrian use. This is due to the administrator of main funding source, Scottish Government's Places for Everyone Programme, administered by Sustrans, stating they consider equestrian adaptations to be out with the scope of the funding. Providing fully for equestrian use would require the route to have a maintained head clearance of 3m - 3.5m and potentially a 2m soft verge for riding on. The Highway Code (revised Jan 22) states that riders should not take a horse onto a cycle track.

- 4.32. Landscaping. A number of respondents suggested landscaping elements, including screening the Havoc Sewage Works within West Dunbartonshire from the path and providing views over the River Clyde. Opportunities to improve views and provide appropriate screening from industrial activities and/or to minimise disturbance for wildlife will be considered as part of the design development.
- 4.33. Ecology. The provision and maintenance of wildflower or other planting, and information on local ecology/history/community information has been identified as an area where the involvement of the local community is key.
- 4.34. Maintenance. Maintenance of the route would be best delivered via the Roads and Infrastructure Service as the Council's roads maintenance capability. The path is designed to provide access for appropriate maintenance vehicles to ensure the path can be maintained.

Design

- 4.35. 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.
- 4.36. **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. Officers are working with WSP to consider the outcomes of the community engagement prior to progressing the necessary design work and the outline programme (appendix 1) has been updated to account for this.
- 4.37. **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.
- 4.38. **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.
- 4.39. **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

- 4.40. The section of route linking Cardross Station to Cardross Park opened in December 2021 and is already being well used by the community.
- 4.41. The permanent pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Geilston Burn was installed on 29 October 2021. Following this, the Council's Roads Operations team continue to work to progress with the final surfacing, signs and lines for the whole route linking Cardross Station to the Geilston Burn. It is now expected this work will be completed early summer 2022, to fit within the available delivery capacity.

Programme

- 4.42. **Appendix 2** provides an updated 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.
- 4.43. **Appendix 3** 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.
- 5.2. The delivery of the Helensburgh – Cardross – Dumbarton Cyclepath is dependent on securing highly competitive challenge funding, committing appropriate match funding and securing access to private land for the route.

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 Service – None

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

Policy Lead: Councillor Robin Currie

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For further information contact:

Colin Young, Strategic Transportation Delivery Officer
Colin.Young@argyll-bute.gov.uk / Tel: 01546 604275

Appendix 1: 2021/22 Community Consultation Results

Appendix 2: Helensburgh, Cardross & Dumbarton Cyclepath Programme

Appendix 3: Update on Land Negotiations for Helensburgh, Cardross and Dumbarton Cyclepath [EXEMPT]