

WIRRAL COUNCIL

HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC REPRESENTATION PANEL

23 OCTOBER 2015

SUBJECT:	WIRRAL WATERS ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS (Wallasey Bridge Road - Beaufort Road - Cleveland Street), BIRKENHEAD
WARD/S AFFECTED:	BIDSTON & ST JAMES WARD
REPORT OF:	MARK SMITH, HEAD OF ENVIRONMENT AND REGULATION
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR STUART WHITTINGHAM
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report considers objections to proposals to provide off-road un-segregated cycleway/footpath(s) and roundabout improvements along Corporation Road and Cleveland Street between Duke Street and Beaufort Road as shown on plan 357912-MMD-H-DR-01-0100-001. These proposals form part of Wirral Council's 2015/16 Sustainable Transport Enhancement Package (STEP) Capital Programme of works agreed by Cabinet at its meeting of 20th July 2015.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 On the 17 April 2015, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority approved the Major Scheme Business Case 'A STEP Change for Growth' for the Sustainable Transport Enhancements Package (STEP) to enable scheme promoters to draw down allocated Growth Deal funding to commence the delivery of STEP schemes. Cabinet subsequently gave approval to accept £1,700,000 of STEP capital funding for Wirral with £900,000 allocated for 2015/16 and £800,000 in 2016/17.

2.2 It is proposed that the works as shown on plan 357912-MMD-H-DR-01-0100-001, will link with future works proposed as part of Wirral Council's 2016/17 Integrated Transport Block (ITB) Capital Programme of works. [Cabinet 20th July 2015 - Minutes 35 and 36 refer].

3.0 OBJECTIONS

3.1 Whilst welcoming the provision of improved off-road facilities for cyclists and pedestrians, a representative of the Wirral Society of the Blind and Partially Sighted on the Wirral Pedestrian Forum has objected to the principle of unsegregated cycleways and footpaths as they believe they pose a danger to

visually impaired people who are unaware of the approach of cyclists and cannot take action to avoid them.

In response; shared use routes for pedestrians and cyclists are common practice and in full accordance with Department for Transport advice. They are common good practice and work particularly well where pedestrian flows are light and the risk of conflict is reduced. Additional advisory signing may also be provided asking cyclists to 'share with care' (as recommended by 'Sustrans' the National Cycling Charity).

- 3.2 A number of objections have been received from the Merseyside Cycling Campaign (Wirral Group) who are concerned that...*'there is no context plan showing how or when links from the proposed scheme to the St.James Area, Penny Bridge, Duke Street Bridge, Four Bridges will be implemented or information showing planning permission proposals for the dockland development land adjacent'*.

In response; Merseyside Cycling Campaign (Wirral Group) have been made aware that outline design ideas to link these current proposals with 'Penny Bridge' (via Beaufort Road and Wallasey Bridge Road) and with Duke Street between Birkenhead Road and Gorsey Lane, are still being developed (which include negotiations with adjacent land owners) but will be shared with the group at the appropriate time.

- 3.3 Merseyside Cycling Campaign (Wirral Group) have also stated that as...*' the scheme does not show how the cycle lane will be designed at the junction with existing or future accesses onto the development land, and the Group would further object to any design which requires cyclists to give-way to traffic at side road access points'*.

In response; it should be noted that current legislation does not permit formalised priority for cyclists across side roads unless very specific conditions can be met. In order to achieve those conditions, any such priority crossing can only be provided if the length of the road which is to be crossed consists of a road hump extending across the full width of the carriageway and is constructed pursuant to (a) section 90A of the Highways Act 1980(a) and in accordance with the Highways (Road Humps) Regulations 1999(b). A second 'set' of give-way markings must be provided, set back to accommodate at least one full vehicle, to ensure that any vehicle(s) waiting to turn out of the minor road/access do not impede the cycleway and any vehicle turning into the side road/access can stop at the give-way without any part of the vehicle(s) remaining in the running carriageway of the main road. At this point in the design process for reasons outlined in the response in 3.2 above, it is not yet possible to determine if those conditions could be achieved at any of the existing or indeed any potential future points of access along the Beaufort Road (i.e the 'development land') frontage.

- 3.4 A further objection received from the Merseyside Cycling Campaign (Wirral Group) states that...*'no time-scale is given and it may be that cycle-lane expenditure at this time is premature at this location, bearing in mind the present width of the road and the limited volumes of traffic'*.

In response; the Merseyside Cycling Campaign (Wirral Group) have been made aware that the proposals for Corporation Road - Cleveland Street form part of Wirral Council's 2015/16 Sustainable Transport Enhancement Package (STEP) Capital Programme of works. Draft design options for the Beaufort Road ('development land') frontage are to be considered for inclusion in forthcoming (2017/18 onwards) 'STEP' Capital programmes of work and as previously stated, draft design options for Duke Street (between Birkenhead Park and Gorse Lane) will form part of the Council's 2016/17 STEP Programme of works.

- 3.5` A further objection received from the Merseyside Cycling Campaign (Wirral Group) states that...*'it is not clear how E-W cycle traffic is intended to pass the roundabout and reach the cycle lane alongside the development land'*.

In response, provision has been made for eastbound cyclists to access the proposed cycleway / footway via improved off-road arrangement(s) at the roundabout of Cleveland Street / Corporation Road.

- 3.6 A further objection received from the Merseyside Cycling Campaign (Wirral Group) states that...*'it can be argued that an E-W cycle lane can be accommodated on the south side of Beaufort Road and that the effective mini-roundabout proposed does not pose the problems to cyclists which arise at conventional roundabouts'*.

In response, these proposals also include works to adjust specific elements of the roundabout geometry of Cleveland Street / Corporation Road. These improvements are in line with the latest Department for Transport advice for 'cycle friendly' compact or 'continental' roundabout design.

4.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 4.1 Failure to undertake the proposed scheme would result in a failure to support the priorities of the Liverpool City Region Transport Plan for Growth and the Council's existing Corporate Goals and Objectives.
- 4.2 Failure to undertake the proposed scheme within the set timescale of the 15/16 financial year would result in the funding being lost and would jeopardise any future funding bids to the STEP fund in years 3-6 (2017-2021).

5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 None. The proposed scheme addresses the priorities of the Liverpool City Region Transport Plan for Growth, and the Council's existing Corporate Goals and Objectives.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 As part of the consultation exercise for this scheme letters were delivered to local residents and businesses in the vicinity of the scheme, informing them of the proposals. In addition, consultation was undertaken with Party Spokespersons, Ward Members, Cycle Forum, Pedestrian Forum, Emergency

Services, Freight Transport Association, Road Haulage Association and Merseytravel.

7.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

7.1 None.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

8.1 All groups will benefit from improved road safety and access to opportunity.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

9.1 The cost of implementing these works is approximately £200,000 which will be funded from the 2015/2016 Sustainable Transport Enhancement Package (STEP) Capital Programme of works. Existing staff will be used to undertake the work.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific implications under this heading arising from the recommendation of this report.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The Equality Impact Assessment demonstrating a potential negative implication associated with the implementation of these proposals on the 'protected characteristics', may be accessed via the following link;

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2014-0#wgSM-0>

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no specific implications under this heading arising from the recommendation of this report.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no specific implications under this heading arising from the recommendation of this report.

14.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

14.1 Panel is requested to:

- a) Note the objections received and the Officers' responses; and
- b) Recommend to the Regeneration and Environment Policy and Performance Committee that the proposal as shown on attached drawing no. 357912-MMD-H-DR-01-0100-001 is approved for implementation.

15.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

15.1 To ensure that the Wirral element of the Liverpool City Region's STEP programme delivers against the aims and objectives identified in the STEP

Major Scheme Business Case, in recognition of transport as an enabler of economic growth in the City Region.

REPORT AUTHOR: Mark Redman
telephone (0151) 606 2110
email markredman@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES: Drawing no. 357912-MMD-H-DR-01-0100-001.

BACKGROUND PAPERS/REFERENCE MATERIAL

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority - 'A Transport Plan for Growth'

<http://councillors.knowsley.gov.uk/documents/g6257/Public%20reports%20pack%2006th-Mar-2015%2011.30%20Liverpool%20City%20Region%20Combined%20Authority.pdf?T=10&StyleType=standard&StyleSize=none>

<http://www.merseytravel.gov.uk/about-us/local-transportdelivery/Documents/8375%20Plan%20for%20growth%20WEB%20FINAL.pdf>

BRIEFING NOTES HISTORY

Briefing Note	Date
None	

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT ENHANCEMENTS PACKAGE (STEP)	20th July 2015
Cabinet - TRANSPORT PLAN FOR GROWTH PROGRAMME 2015/16	20th July 2015