

28/10/20

REPORT TITLE	Acceptance of Tender and Award of Contract – A41 Eastham STEP Footway/Cycleway Scheme
REPORT OF	Simon Fox, Interim Assistant Director for Highways and Infrastructure

REPORT SUMMARY

This report agrees acceptance of a tender from Cambrianway Ltd and award of a contract for the construction of highway improvements to the A41 New Chester Road, Eastham and considers an outstanding objection made regarding the scheme design.

The proposal to improve pedestrian and cycling facilities on the A41 at Eastham supports the Wirral Council Plan 2025, underpinning the main drivers of sustainable regeneration and addressing the climate emergency through the promotion of green and healthy living.

The work will take place within the Eastham Ward.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Interim Assistant Director for Highways and Infrastructure:

- (1) Notes the objection received and the Officers' response; and
- (2) Approves the proposal as shown on attached drawing no. CO00205643-AMEY-HGN-CPL-DR-C-101 for implementation.
- (3) Accepts the tender for the A41 Eastham STEP Footway/Cycleway Scheme submitted by Cambrianway Ltd to Wirral Council on 5th October 2020;
- (4) Approves the award of contract to Cambrianway Ltd, in the sum of £386,531.00, subject to contract.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Wirral Council has been awarded £3,025,000 STEP funding from the Combined Authority for implementation of Wirrals' Sustainable Transport Enhancement Package (STEP) programme years 3 to 6.

- 1.2 The A41 Eastham STEP Footway/Cycleway Scheme forms part of the Liverpool City Regions STEP programme by improving transport links and supporting the delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure to bring about further growth in our economy, reduce carbon emissions and support residents to increase levels of active healthy travel. The scheme will create an off-road shared use cycle/pedestrian path along the east side of the A41 and will link the existing shared use cycleway and footway on the A41 to the north of Eastham Village Road and the newly installed cycle route improvement work at junction 5 of the M53.
- 1.3 The tender from Cambrianway Ltd represents the most economically advantageous tender received, is fully compliant, and is within allocated budgetary provision.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The design of the scheme was very carefully considered and alternative options were investigated. There are several pinch points along the length of the scheme due to the width of the dual carriageway on A41 New Chester Road and the alignment of the footway along private boundaries.
- 2.2 Acquiring private land along the route to widen the proposed shared use cycle/pedestrian facility was dismissed as a realistic option due to the layout of the private properties concerned.
- 2.3 The option of reducing the southbound A41 carriageway from two lanes to a single lane was also considered. This was dismissed as this would severely affect capacity on that route and could have significant implications on the surrounding highway network.
- 2.4 The option of not implementing the scheme was discussed but it was agreed that although the shared footway/cycleway does have a number of pinch points along the route, the improvements to the existing footways were worthwhile and would provide better facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.
- 2.5 Tenders for the construction works were invited on 2nd September 2020 from eight suppliers, selected from the appropriate categories within Constructionline. Tender return date was 5th October 2020.
- 2.6 Seven tenders were received by the due date and have been evaluated, with moderation of the process by the Council's Procurement service, as follows:

Tenderer	Price (60%)	Quality (25%)	Social Value (15%)	Total Score
Cambrianway Ltd	£386,531	85.5%	86.65%	89.51%
Tenderer 2	£331,862	77.0 %	43.84%	89.09%
Tenderer 3	£414,027	73.5%	33.49%	74.61%

Tenderer 4	£449,423	76.0%	20.80%	69.65%
Tenderer 5	£573,008	70.0%	73.56%	66.25%
Tenderer 6	£403,416	47.0%	0%	63.10%
Tenderer 7	£433,567	52.3%	0%	61.22%

2.7 Consequently the tender from Cambrianway Ltd is the most economically advantageous and is recommended for acceptance.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 On the 16th December 2016, following submission of the Full STEP Business Case, the Combined Authority approved the programme for years 3 to 6 of the Sustainable Transport Enhancements Package (STEP).

3.2 As part of this STEP package the A41 Eastham STEP Footway/Cycleway scheme will introduce highway measures aimed at improving pedestrian and cycle facilities along A41 (New Chester Road) between Eastham Village Road and junction 5 of M53 Motorway. The proposal includes the introduction of:

- An off-road shared use cycle/pedestrian path along the east side of the A41 which will link the existing shared use cycleway and footway to the north of Eastham Village Road to the newly installed cycle route improvement work at junction 5 of the M53
- Junction realignment at Eastham Village Road (south)/ A41 New Chester Road to improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians
- Improvements for cyclists at the junction of Stanley Lane with A41 New Chester Road by creating a wider shared surface
- The removal of the existing bus stop lay-by south of Shell Garage to create a wider shared use path
- Changes and relocation of street furniture along the route to remove clutter and obstructions along the new shared use path

3.3 During the final stage of the design of the scheme the Department of Transport published a new Local Transport Note (LTN 1/20) that advised designers on best practice, standards and legal requirements of cycle infrastructure design. The guidance suggests that there should be 5 core design principles: coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive.

3.4 The Department of Transport are also in the process of reviewing the Highway Code to consider changes in the way people travel and aims to improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians.

4.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

4.1 As part of the consultation exercise for this scheme letters were delivered to residents and businesses directly affected by the project. In addition, consultation was undertaken with Party Spokespersons, Ward Members,

Active Travel Forum, Emergency Services, Freight Transport Association, Road Haulage Association and Merseytravel.

- 4.2 During the consultation exercise five people contacted the Council with enquiries relating to the proposals.
- 4.3 From those enquiries there is one outstanding objection to the scheme, summarised as follows:
- Breaks in the flow of the route will slow riders down and tempt some to disregard the vehicle and pedestrian/ cyclist priority arrangements. Priority should be given to the cyclist or pedestrian at vehicle accesses along the route.
 - In response; Local Transport Note 1/20 promotes direct design principles for cyclists and the document says that routes should provide the shortest and fastest way of travelling from place to place and this should include providing facilities for cyclists at junctions that minimise delay and the need to stop. However, this scheme was designed before the release of this guidance. Further consideration has been given to priority at junctions and accesses onto the A41 along the route but safety of pedestrians, cyclist and drivers is a key concern considering the 40mph speed limit.
- 4.4 Post contract award, the Project Manager and Contractor will engage with stakeholders and the public affected by the works and provide information and updates on progress as appropriate.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The original STEP budget for the A41 Eastham STEP Footway/Cycleway scheme was £1,045,000. Due to site constraints during the design process there has been changes to the original proposals for the scheme at concept stage. As a result, the STEP funding allocation has been redistributed between this scheme and another of Wirral's STEP funded projects at Duke Street, Birkenhead.
- 5.2 The overall STEP budget for this project has now been reduced to £820,000.
- 5.3 The tenders received were very competitive and came in under the pre-tender estimate. The total price of the recommended tender received from Cambrianway Ltd of £386,531 plus contingency costs can be met by the STEP project budget allocation.
- 5.4 Other elements of the project including street lighting, cycle parking, and tree planting will be procured separately through existing council supplier contracts. All costs of the project can be met by the revised STEP project budget allocation.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The proposed contract is fully compliant with the Council's Contract Procurement Rules and follows the terms of the STEP funding agreement with the Combined Authority.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

- 7.1 There are no additional resource implications. The contract will be managed by existing Council Project Managers and Amey Consultancy through an existing service support contract arrangement.

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 8.1 As with any civil engineering construction project, construction risks will exist, such as unidentified ground conditions or obstructions and inclement weather. Risks that are realised will potentially have time and cost effects. However, a project risk register will be maintained in accordance with good project management practice and time and cost will be actively monitored and managed within the budget and contingency identified in section 5 above.
- 8.2 Failure to carry out the proposed improvement works will risk the potential claw back of expended funds / committed funding by the Combined Authority for non-delivery as outlined in the funding agreement.
- 8.3 Failure to implement the delivery of the scheme could also result in a reputational loss of confidence in Wirral Council as a partner to deliver schemes and could jeopardise future funding opportunities at city region level.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Whilst there are no direct equality implications arising from this report, it is acknowledged that the associated actions from the delivery of the A41 Eastham STEP Footway/Cycleway Scheme may need to monitor any equality issues and mitigate any negative impact that may emerge.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The project delivers significant improvements to the local streetscene and the infrastructure provided promotes sustainable transport alternatives such as walking and cycling in a key economic growth and regeneration location for Wirral Council. This project will therefore deliver qualitative improvements to the environment and help minimise emissions contributing to climate change thereby contributing to the Council's objective to reduce carbon outputs in line with the Climate Emergency declaration and associated strategies.

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APPENDICES

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Cabinet –STEP Years 3- 6 Programme agreed by Cabinet at its meeting of 19th June 2017.
2. Documentation published by the Department for Transport in Local Transport Note 1/20 has been used in the preparation of this report.
3. Commercial tender information.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
None in last 3 years	