

# Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Phase 1 Engagement Strategy 2023

## 1.0 Project Summary

- 1.1 At its meeting in October 2022 the Economy, Regeneration & Housing Committee resolved to progress Phase 1 of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) project (Birkenhead to Liscard) to public engagement stage.
- 1.2 This note sets out the intended engagement process to gather the wider community's views on the revised version of the LCWIP Phase 1.
- 1.3 It is envisaged that the engagement process will commence in late Spring 2023.

## 2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Wirral LCWIP project forms part of the third phase of LCWIP projects within the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority area. The project proposes a high quality Active Travel corridor between Birkenhead and New Brighton (with branches to Seacombe Ferry Terminal and Wallasey Grove Road Station).
- 2.2 The Active Travel corridor will promote walking, wheeling<sup>1</sup> and cycling as viable travel options over short distances to local destinations along the route. The outcomes of the LCWIP project will lead to more active and healthier lifestyles, improved air quality, improved safety and increased support for local businesses in line with the outcomes of similar projects elsewhere in the UK<sup>2,3</sup>.
- 2.3 The full LCWIP route<sup>4</sup> was subject to a pre-consultation exercise by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) in 2020. The results of the consultation indicated that further design work was needed and Economy, Regeneration and Housing (ERH) Committee on 19th October 2022 resolved that<sup>5</sup>:

(1) the Director of Regeneration and Place be authorised to:

(a) undertake the further development and consultation of the Birkenhead to New Brighton Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plan ("LCWIP") as two separate phases – Phase 1 Birkenhead to Liscard, and Phase 2 Liscard to New Brighton (as set out in Appendix 3 to this report); Page 19 Agenda Item 7;

(b) Agree, in consultation with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and the Chair and Spokespersons of the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee and the

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<sup>1</sup> 'Wheeling' includes use of manual or powered wheeled mobility aids that are legal to use on footways, cycle tracks or shared spaces. See - [Mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs: the rules: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/mobility-scooters-and-powered-wheelchairs-the-rules)

<sup>2</sup> See <https://youtu.be/5om1yL7Jxaw> for summary of some projects.

<sup>3</sup> [Walking and cycling: the economic benefits \(tfl.gov.uk\)](https://www.tfl.gov.uk/roadside/products/active-travel) and [Evidence | Active Travel Portal Myth Busters | Evidence for Active Travel](https://www.active-travel.org.uk/evidence)

<sup>4</sup> The full LCWIP route is Birkenhead to New Brighton via Liscard, with 'branches' to Seacombe Ferry terminal and Wallasey Grove Road station.

<sup>5</sup> [Decision - LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN \(LCWIP\) - BIRKENHEAD TO NEW BRIGHTON | Wirral Council](https://www.wirralcouncil.gov.uk/decision-local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan-lcwip-birkenhead-to-new-brighton)

Environment, Transport and Climate Change Committee, the extent, alignment and design of the Phase 1 Birkenhead to Liscard route, to be the subject of the stakeholder and public consultation;

(c) Amend the content or timescales of the LCWIP Engagement Strategy prior to implementation if required, in consultation with the Chair and Spokespersons of the Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee and Chair and Spokespersons of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee;

(2) the LCWIP Phase 1 Engagement Strategy be approved.

2.4 This engagement strategy refers to the outline design of Phase 1 as agreed in October 2022, the extent of which is set out in Appendix A to this strategy.

### 3.0 Funding

3.1 The full cost of the LCWIP project is proposed to be funded through the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement programme. The accountable body for this funding is the LCRCA. The implementation stage of the LCWIP project will be subject to a full business case submission prior to confirmation of funding and delivery, planned for completion in March 2027. The initial estimate of the cost of delivering the full Wirral LCWIP (Birkenhead to New Brighton) is £14m however this estimate will be further refined as the design and business case work progresses.

3.2 The engagement measures set out in this strategy will also be funded by the LCRCA.

### 4.0 Objectives of Engagement

4.1 The main objective of the Phase 1 consultation is to seek views on the proposals. A secondary objective will be to obtain comments on design matters.

4.2 The following guiding principles will be applied to the engagement process for the LCWIP Phase 1 project:

- It should be at a time when proposals are at a formative stage; (NB - Phase 1 is at Outline Design stage);
- It must include sufficient reasons for particular proposals to allow those consulted to give intelligent consideration and an intelligent response; (NB – information explaining the reasons for the proposals and design solution will be provided along with plans and 3D modelling ‘fly throughs’);
- Those consulted should be made aware of the factors that are of decisive relevance to the decision; (NB – the engagement analysis will take a balanced review of responses for all potential users of the entire route and will consider matters of local detail against the wider, longer term benefits);
- Adequate time should be given for consideration and response; (NB – the engagement process will run for eight weeks); and
- The product of the consultation should be conscientiously considered by the decision makers in finalising their statutory proposals/ when the ultimate decision is taken; (NB – decision makers will be provided with all relevant information from the engagement

process to inform a final decision, in accordance with the ERH Committee resolution of October 2022).

4.3 It is anticipated that responses will be received from objectors and supporters. In order to fully inform the process, objectors and supporters will be asked to provide stated reason(s) for their views. This will help clarify levels of support or opposition as some objections may be capable of being resolved via design changes.

4.4 All responses to the consultation will need to provide a postcode and the name of a stakeholder organisation if relevant.

## 5.0 Stakeholders

5.1 The engagement process is focussed on the following stakeholder categories:

- Ward Councillors
- Key stakeholders to be identified and engaged on the scheme.
- Local community and business groups with an interest in the area the route will serve;
- Residents and businesses along the route or within its catchment as they will be daily users.
- All other individuals or groups with an interest in the project (for example employees or visitors who may use the route);
- Other respondents who may not fit within the above categories but can make a valid contribution.

5.2 The 'local' catchment element is not yet defined and it is envisaged that its extent will be agreed with local Ward Councillors.

## 6.0 Key Stakeholders

6.1 The strategy allows for engaging key stakeholders and ward councillors to be engaged informally prior to the main engagement process as well as allowing for a formal response during the engagement, should they wish to do so. This method will allow them to be made aware of the proposals and comment on any key design/operational matters prior to the proposals being issued for wider engagement.

## 7.0 Engagement Process

7.1 The engagement strategy will be multi-faceted to enable access for all and to promote as full a response to the proposals as possible. The process consists broadly of three stages – 'Advising' the wider public, 'Providing' the engagement material and 'Analysing' the responses to the engagement.

7.2 The method for advising people and organisations of the engagement will vary and is summarised in Appendices B and C. In summary the following are the methods to be used to publicise the engagement:

- Face to face or online pre-engagement with Wirral Council officers and Members;

- Face to face or online engagement with external key stakeholders;
- Postal notification direct to local residents, businesses and community groups;
- Email and post direct to organisations outside the agreed postal catchment area; and
- Ongoing use of Wirral Council digital communication channels.

7.3 It is intended that anyone included in Appendix B will have access to engagement material in any format during the process. This is particularly important for seldom heard<sup>6</sup> groups or individuals. The Council will respond to requests for information in different formats on a case by case basis depending on individual needs.

7.4 There are three key strands to providing the engagement material as follows:

- All material will be made available online (on the 'Have Your Say' web page) with supporting promotion across the council's digital communication channels ;
- Key documents and plans will be made available as hard copy at exhibitions<sup>7</sup>; and
- All material will be made available to seldom heard groups, in whatever format is required, on demand if necessary and practical to do so.

7.5 Hard copy material will be made available on request to anyone who cannot access it online or physically visit the planned exhibitions. This may take time to resource depending on demand, so allowance will be made for this in time allowed for responses. Reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate individual accessibility requirements.

## 8.0 Engagement Material

8.1 There are several elements to the engagement material. They are summarised as follows:

- Summary of the proposals, the objectives and changes to how the local highway will operate;
- An overview plan of the Phase 1 route to show key destinations on the route and some illustrative journey times on foot and by cycle;
- Non-technical plans of the proposals at appropriate scale, using simple colour demarcation of footways, cycletracks, roads, crossings and any associated improvements (e.g. public realm, cycle parking);
- 3D visualisation videos of several sections of the route to show how the route will work and what it will look like;
- At some exhibition dates, a virtual reality ride through part of the route by bicycle; and
- A response form to be completed and submitted online or hard copy via post.

8.2 All of the above information will be provided on the Wirral 'Have Your Say' web page for the entire duration of the engagement process. All of the above will be made available at the public exhibitions.

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<sup>6</sup> Seldom heard groups are under-represented people whose views are less likely to be heard by professionals and decision makers.

<sup>7</sup> Noting the need to avoid over producing material that is not capable of being re-cycled.

- 8.3 In addition to the above, an 'easy read' version of the summary of the proposals will be produced and made available both on the 'Have Your Say' web page and at exhibitions.
- 8.4 The engagement process will require respondents to reply via an online response form. This will be available via the Have Your Say web page and will require respondents to register before responding.
- 8.5 Hard copies of the response form will be made available on request, but the registration requirements will be made the same. This will enable anyone without access to an online resource to complete and submit a form or ask a friend/relative to do so on their behalf. All hard copy responses will be input into the online system by Wirral employees and this will be made clear to respondents.
- 8.6 Public exhibitions will be held on several dates and locations, as yet to be confirmed. At this stage it is anticipated that the locations will be in Birkenhead and Seacombe<sup>8</sup>. If Ed's place is still available, it will also be used. Wirral officers will be present at the exhibitions to help guide visitors and explain the proposals. Where possible, questions will be answered but as the process is partly to allow information gathering, not all questions can be answered. The exhibitions will also include the 3D modelling 'fly through' videos and virtual reality bike rides on some dates.
- 8.7 Exhibition venues will be on or close to the LCWIP Phase 1 route. They will be accessible for anyone with mobility needs as well as within walking distance of bus and rail services. Where possible, venues will be near to or allow safe storage of bicycles.
- 8.8 An LCWIP engagement email will be set up to allow anyone to submit queries about the consultation process and advise of accessibility requirements. Due to the scale of the proposals, the email address will not be used for explaining or discussing the proposals in more detail.
- 8.9 It is expected that some comments on the proposals will be received via email. In this scenario, Wirral officers will contact the originator and ask for comments to be submitted via the Have Your Say web page. If this is not possible, officers will advise the respondent that their email response will be input into the online system by Wirral officers and cross referenced with the original email response for audit purposes.
- 8.10 It is not anticipated that high volumes of response will be received in hard copy form (i.e. letter). Where they are received, officers will input the response into the online system and cross reference with the original hard copy response for audit purposes.
- 8.11 It is not expected that a specific telephone contact will be provided. Any queries or requests received by the Council's central telephone contact will be dealt with on a case by case basis (i.e. where individuals do not have online access or cannot access an exhibition). Council officers will action the request with the overall objective to allow the respondent to review engagement material and respond.

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<sup>8</sup> Subject to suitable venues being available.

- 8.12 The Council's Communication and Marketing Team will support the engagement process by promoting across its digital channels to encourage people to visit the Have Your Say website and exhibitions to find out more about the scheme and submit a response. Communications support will continue throughout the length of the engagement period. Engagement responses provided within the comments of any social media or digital channels will not be accepted as formal responses.
- 8.13 Should any petition or group response be received, this will be analysed separately and reported alongside the main response. Any petition will only be accepted if it complies with the Council's guidance on submitting petitions.

## 9.0 Timescale

- 9.1 It is proposed to allow a period of eight weeks for the engagement as soon as possible after the end May 2023<sup>9</sup>. In some cases, where individual circumstances mean some time is required to prepare and issue accessible material, responses will be accepted by an agreed extended deadline.
- 9.2 It is anticipated that a report further to the engagement will be prepared to seek a decision on the way forward for the project. It is anticipated that this will be presented to the appropriate Committee in Autumn 2023.

## 10.0 Analysis and Reporting

- 10.1 All responses will be collated and analysed using the online 'Have Your Say' reporting process. This will provide analysis and be the basis for a report to the relevant Committee to direct decision making regarding the scheme (see Appendix C).
- 10.2 The analysis process will provide an overview of the percentage of responses who support and who object to the proposals. Given the strategic nature of the project, it will be difficult to define the precise number of people who will potentially respond to the engagement. The local catchment area, stakeholders and attendee numbers at exhibitions will be recorded to provide a guide to the number of potential respondents.
- 10.3 Further information will show summary information on respondents as well as location (including breakdown of responses by Ward) as well as whether respondents are a resident, employee of Wirral Council, elected Member of Wirral Council, a voluntary or community organisation, a local business or other type of respondent.
- 10.4 Finally, the reporting will include all comments received from respondents categorised into 'support' or 'object.' Officer responses to the comments will be provided.
- 10.5 A report on the consultation will be prepared in Autumn 2023 to seek a decision to proceed to the Phase 1 detailed design and implementation stage. The report will review the analysis

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<sup>9</sup> Allowing for post-election Ward Councillors and Committee Chairs and Spokespersons to be briefed in line with ERH resolution (October 2022)

and conclude on overall level of support for the proposals, including whether detailed matters raised in comments are capable of being addressed.

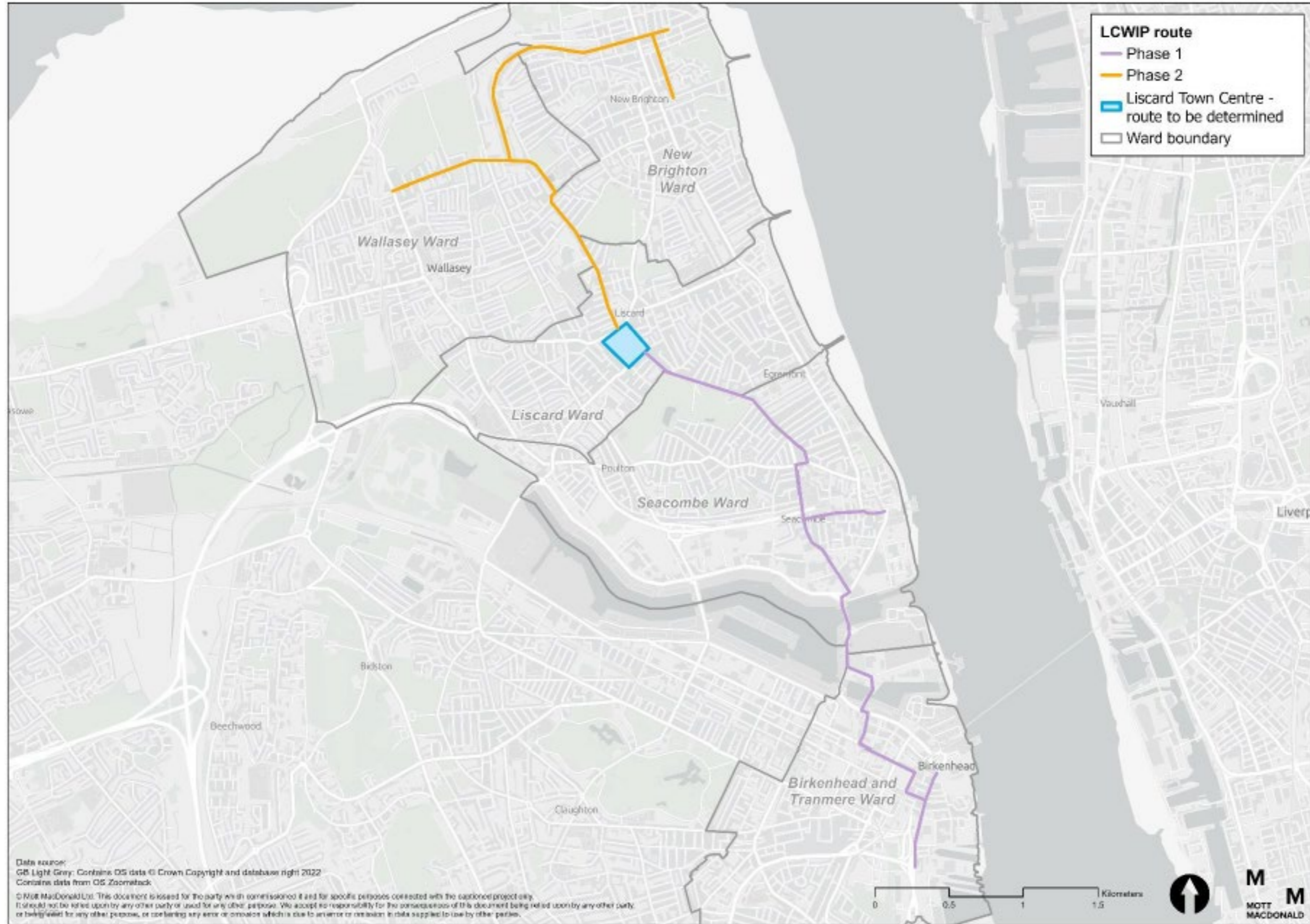
## 11.0 Statutory Processes

- 11.1 The LCWIP engagement will allow the inclusion of elements that require a statutory process (e.g. waiting restrictions and speed limits) to be shown as part of the overall scheme. This will allow comments received to influence the final design and support the justification of proposals to be delivered via statutory process (e.g. Traffic Regulation Orders).
- 11.2 Appendix D summarises the statutory processes requirements. It should be noted that this process is largely dictated by national regulations and Wirral Council's normal processes for progressing traffic.
- 11.3 During the statutory processes, any objections received that cannot be resolved will be reported in accordance with the council constitution, either via delegated officer powers via committee for a final decision.

## 12.0 Recommendation

Active Travel Working Group is asked to comment on this draft engagement strategy to enable the Director of Regeneration and Place to finalise the strategy in accordance with the delegated authority given to him by the Economy Regeneration and Housing Committee of 19 October 2022.

## Appendix A – LCWIP Phase 1 and Phase 2 Extents



## Appendix B – Engagement Method Summary



	Key interests	Key influence	Engagement method
Members of Parliament	National community representative	Decision making nationally	1 2 3
Local Councillors	Local community representative	Decision making locally	1 2 3 7
Emergency Services	Operational community safety	Detailed design	6 1 2 3
Wirral Council Officers	Network Operation and safety Waste collection Public Health Climate change	Detailed design	6 2 7
Merseytravel	Network operations	Design and operation	6 1 2 3
User Groups	Network user representation	User advice	1 or 4 2 3 5
Accessibility Groups	Access and mobility representation and design	User advice	1 or 4 2 3 5
Business Groups	Wirral Chamber of Commerce	User advice	1 or 4 2 3 5
Local Businesses	Local economy and servicing, network users	User advice	4 2 3 5
Community Groups	Community representation and users	User advice	1 or 4 2 3 5
Local Residents on route	Daily network users	User advice	4 2 3 5
Other Wirral or Merseyside Residents	Daily network users	User advice	2 3 5
Schools and Nurseries on route	Daily network users, children	User advice	4 2 3 5 School access to 3D model for local project

Engagement Method Key:

1	Invitation to engagement via email	5	Bespoke material (for hard to reach groups/people) on request
2	Website, digital communication and 'Have Your Say' engagement. Easy to use plans and 3D model visualisation with online questionnaire.	6	Pre-engagement design review meetings
3	In person exhibition invitation with easy to use plans and 3D model visualisation and hard copy questionnaire	7	Member briefings or reports
4	Invitation to engagement letter via post	ALL	Wirral Council Digital Communication

## Appendix C – LCWIP Phase 1 Engagement process flow chart



Appendix D – LCWIP Phase 1 Statutory Processes Flow Chart

