
Cabinet Member for City Services

30th November 2022

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for City Service – Councillor P Hetherton

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Transportation and Highways

Ward(s) affected:

Binley & Willenhall, Wyken

Title:

Binley Cycleway – Approval of Part of Phase Two and Update on Programme and Finance

Is this a key decision?

No – although the scheme covers a number of wards, it is not considered that the impact will be significant

Executive Summary:

Binley Cycleway will be a 6km long segregated cycleway connecting the City Centre with University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire. It is a regional priority cycle route forming part of the Starley Network, the West Midlands' network of planned walking and cycling routes.

Cabinet Member for City Services approved construction of 75% of the scheme in October 2021. The remaining 25% of the scheme was to be brought back for a further engagement exercise after design amendments were made, following concerns expressed by residents. This further engagement exercise took place with occupiers of properties fronting the scheme in August and September. This report is seeking approval for half of this remaining section of the scheme, between Brookvale Avenue / Binley Road junction and Mill Lane / Clifford Bridge Road junction. The last remaining section between Mill Lane and Tesco access roundabout is still under consideration.

The scheme is fully funded with capital grants from the West Midlands Combined Authority and the Government, and a table covering this is contained within the report.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for City Services is recommended to:

- 1) Approve the revised scheme design and the construction of the Cycletrack for the sections of the route between Brookvale Avenue / Binley Road and Mill Lane / Clifford Bridge Road.
- 2) Note the advertising of Traffic Regulation Orders to enhance the safety of users of the highway and particularly the Cycletrack.

- 3) Approve a targeted further engagement exercise with Wyken ward members and residents for the remaining part of the route, between Mill Lane and Tesco roundabout, and report back at a future meeting
- 4) Note the update of the scheme delivery programme and finances.

List of Appendices included:

- A - Scheme Details
- B - Binley Cycleway Consultation Summary Report

Background papers:

- CCC Cabinet – Draft Coventry Transport Strategy
- City Services - Binley Cycleway – Scheme part-approval, way forward and petition responses

Other useful documents

- WMCA Board – *A Common Approach to Cycling and Walking in the West Midlands*
- Sustrans - *Bike Life West Midlands Report*
- Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Binley Cycleway – Approval of Phase Two and Update on Programme and Finance

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 Cycling levels in the city and across the West Midlands are currently below those of many other metropolitan areas and core cities across the UK. (Coventry is 257th out of 351, and WM is 289th out of 351) The successes these areas have had has not been by chance, but due to a clear and defined ambition to raise cycling levels, and the commitment and will to deliver this change. The biggest barrier to cycling is consistently stated to be ‘fear for safety’. Addressing the safety concerns of existing and potential cyclists has been fundamental to increasing cycling elsewhere. Physically protected infrastructure is the basis for high cycling numbers in places such as the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany.
- 1.2 Cycling has an important role to play in addressing the challenges the city and region face, which include reducing congestion, carbon and pollution, supporting economic growth and employment, tackling obesity and creating places where people want to live, work, learn, shop and do business. Cycling offers an affordable, convenient and low-cost travel option to access jobs, education and leisure opportunities, particularly for people without access to cars. One in three households in Coventry do not have access to a car. Investment in high quality cycle routes is a priority set out in the draft Coventry Transport Strategy which was approved by Cabinet in October 2021. Safe and segregated cycling infrastructure also enables other forms of micromobility to take place such as mobility scooters, scooters, skateboards and many adaptive cycles.
- 1.3 During the West Midlands wide Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) development process, potential strategic core routes were evaluated and prioritised. A route connecting Coventry University and the city centre with University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire (UHCW) scored amongst the highest within the West Midlands metropolitan area. Now referred to as Binley Cycleway, this route was developed throughout 2019 and early 2020, with an allocation of funding being made available from the Transforming Cities Fund in December 2019.
- 1.4 Public consultation was initially held in two phases due to the length of the scheme. The first phase took place in September and October 2020, and the second phase in March and April 2021. Design amendments were made along the scheme and in October 2021, a report outlining these amendments was considered by the Cabinet Member for City Services. The amendments for the remaining 25% of the route were approved for further consultation as more significant in places. These amendments were shared with occupiers of properties fronting the route to inform them of the changes and provide the opportunity for any further feedback to be received.
- 1.5 Construction of the approved sections of the scheme began in January 2022 and is now well underway.
- 1.6 The Binley Cycleway continues on from Coundon Cycleway with a step-change in the quality of cycling infrastructure in Coventry. It will provide a physically separated space within the highway protected from motor traffic and away from pedestrians. It will be safe, coherent, direct, comfortable and attractive, which are the core design principles for high quality cycling infrastructure required to enable people to switch modes and cycle for some journeys. The scheme design meets the standards set out in the latest guidance from the Department for Transport, LTN1/20.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 Following the two consultation periods in 2020 and 2021, officers collected more data around traffic movements and on-street parking demand. Using this additional data collection and considering the detailed consultation feedback received, new amended proposals have been developed.
- 2.2 The main change on Binley Road between Brookvale Avenue and Princethorpe Way has been to make better use of the additional general traffic lane that heads towards Princethorpe Way. Following changes to many people's work patterns after the Covid-19 pandemic, the evening peak hour traffic now reaches a lower peak flow but spread over a longer duration than it used to be. The highest flow rate in this location is 90% of what it was previously. This reduced peak demand offers the opportunity to construct the cycleway in place of a traffic lane rather than through removal of grass verges. This has many ecological and environmental benefits as well as being quicker, easy and less expensive to construct. It also addresses the concerns raised by residents in stage one of the consultation.
- 2.3 Between Princethorpe Way and Brandon Road, the road will be narrowed and one of the inbound traffic lanes will be removed. This will now operate as two lanes towards Brandon Road and one lane towards Princethorpe Way.
- 2.4 The revised redesign re-models the two traffic signal junctions of Binley Road/Brandon Road/Brinklow Road and Brinklow Road/Clifford Bridge Road including the incorporation of pedestrian crossings. New traffic signal equipment will be installed to link the operation of the two junctions thereby enabling a reduction in the width of the road between the junctions improving road safety.
- 2.5 Clifford Bridge Road has a number of small-scale amendments, including changes to the dimension of the carriageway, footway, cycleway and parking bays. Kerbs will be added between the road and parking, similarly to how there are now. There is a reduction in the proposed loss of on-street parking, from 14 to six spaces. Parking demand surveys indicate the current demand for parking will still be accommodated on-street and in addition, most dwellings have off-street parking. To enable these changes in alignment, three additional street trees will be felled. The adjusted alignment enables for the provision of many more trees, with an expected net increase within this stretch of the street to now be ten trees. This section is subject to further engagement and will not be approved as part of this report.
- 2.6 The Cabinet Member for City Services is recommended to approve the revised scheme covering the section between Brookvale Avenue and Mill Lane. The scheme details are shown in Appendix A.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 The consultation was undertaken in two parts due to the size of the scheme. Phase 1 covered Gulson Road up to Brinklow Road and took place between 28th September and 31st October 2020. Phase 2 covered Brinklow Road to UHCW and took place between 1st March and 18th April. Both phases were online with a questionnaire accompanied by downloadable plans.
- 3.2 Using the feedback received from the two consultations, amendments were made to the design and 75% of the scheme was then approved. The rest of the feedback was further considered in more detail for the remaining section (Brookvale Ave to Tesco roundabout) and additional traffic data was also collected. Taking account of this feedback and further

data collection, officers amended the proposals and these were presented to all frontage properties along the remainder of the route by way of a letter and drawing on 15th August. Plans were also uploaded onto the Council's webpage at the same time. The drawing provided to each property was a large scale plan covering the proposals directly outside each property. There were 13 plans in total, all of which were available to view on the council's webpage which was signposted in the letter.

- 3.3 Comments were sought from occupiers of frontage properties on the revised plans for a four-week period ending on Sunday 11th September. Approximately 350 properties were written to and responses were received from nine different respondents during the engagement period.
- 3.4 Responses related to technical clarifications around dimensions of proposed parts of the highway, locations and types of new trees and visibility splays for accesses over the cycleway. Concerns were raised about if the reduction in carriageway width would affect the speed of blue light access, the volume of traffic that uses the road, how deliveries would cross the cycleway, what the impact on trees would be and the reduction in on-street parking.
- 3.5 The concerns raised have all been considered as part of the initial design process in 2021 and, where appropriate, further addressed within the revised design proposals now presented for approval.
- 3.6 It should be noted that only occupiers of frontage properties were asked to feed back on the design amendments in the latest public engagement exercise. However, feedback from the initial two wider public consultations in 2020 and 2022 has been used in the consideration at this time to inform recommendations. The initial consultations allowed broader data collection from a much wider representation of the public. Survey results from the 750 respondents to those consultation phases found that 70% supported segregated cycleways, the single biggest reason for not cycling/cycling more was fear for safety, and the majority would consider cycling/cycling more if there was better infrastructure.
- 3.7 A consultation summary report is included in Appendix B.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 Approving these further sections of the scheme will exercise powers under section 65 of the Highways Act 1980 to create a Cycletrack. Traffic Regulation Orders for loading and parking restrictions will be advertised that will enhance the safety of users of the Cycletrack and the rest of the highway. Notices of Intent will be advertised that will notify the public of the Council's intention to implement controlled pedestrian crossings within junctions and ramps in the carriageway across side-roads. Detailed design will commence for sub-sections of the remainder of the scheme and once each is completed, will be added to the ongoing construction programme. The targeted construction start date for these sections is January 2023, with completion in the Spring. The table below is indicative of where and when construction will take place along the route.

Section		2022												2023								
From	To	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S
Gulson Rd	Stoke Green	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■												
Stoke Green	Biggin Hall Cres			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■											
Biggin Hall Cres	Church Lane						■	■	■	■	■											
Church Lane	Brindle Ave							■	■	■	■	■	■									
Brindle Ave	Brookvale Ave								■	■	■	■	■	■								
Tesco (Cliff Brid)	UHCW									■	■	■	■	■	■							
Seeking approval in this report																						
Brookvale Ave	Ebro Cres													■	■	■						
Ebro Cres	Mill Lane													■	■	■						
Section yet to be approved																						
Mill Lane	Tesco (Cliff Brid)																■	■	■	■	■	■

5. Comments from Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer) and Chief Legal Officer

5.1 Financial implications

The scheme design and the construction of the Cycletrack for the sections of the route between Brookvale Avenue and Clifford Bridge Road / Brinklow Road is fully funded within the Binley Cycleway funding package, as per the table below:

Scheme Stage	Grant	Status	£
DEVELOPMENT STAGE	Transforming Cities Fund (WMCA)	Secure	250,000
	ITB Scheme Development (CCC)	Secure	25,000
DELIVERY	Transforming Cities Fund (WMCA)	Secure	5,000,000
	Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 (WMCA)	Secure	715,000
	Active Travel Fund Tranche 3 (WMCA)	Secure	2,890,000
	ITB Scheme Development (CCC)	Secure	36,000
Total Grant Funding			8,916,000

The largest funding contribution is from the Transforming Cities Fund which is secure, along with the Active Travel Fund tranche 2. The £2.7m Active Travel Fund tranche 3 element has been awarded, but the grant agreement is still to be signed with the WMCA following the submission of an updated Full Business Case by the council. The combined cost estimates and funding of £8.9m includes contingency considered by transport officers to be sufficient to deliver the whole scheme.

The scheme is being delivered in sections by the Council’s Direct Labour Organisation and its sub-contractors and spend profiles have been and will be monitored throughout. In the unlikely event of a shortfall, options to value engineer will be sought to ensure full scheme delivery within the £8.9m budget.

There will be a reduction in highway maintenance revenue required as a result of the scheme because the plans will reduce the area of carriageway through reallocation of road space within the public highway. Cycleways are significantly cheaper to maintain than carriageways over their lifetime because wear and tear is directly related to vehicle axle loading. The scheme will also resurface parts of the existing carriageway and replace

traffic signals with new installations. This effectively resets the maintenance cycle back to its lowest cost point. There will however be an increase in the cost of cleansing as the cycleways will require additional separate rounds of sweeping, particularly where they are tree lined.

There are therefore no additional financial implications for the Council arising from the recommendations of this report.

5.2 Legal implications

The Council in its capacity of Highway Authority and pursuant to S.65 Highways Act 1980, may in or by the side of a highway maintainable at the public expense construct a cycle track which forms part of the highway.

Those Traffic Regulation Orders referred to in this report may be advertised pursuant to existing delegated powers in favour of the Director of Transportation and Highways and made pursuant to powers contained in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984

6. Other implications

Any other specific implications

6.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan (www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)?

These proposals support the Council's core aims, as set out in the Council Plan, by:

- improving the health and wellbeing of residents by improving air quality through the reduction in traffic generated emissions.
- creating an attractive, cleaner and greener city by providing improved cycle routes, better public realm and more greenery on key routes into the city, and;
- making the city more accessible for businesses, visitors and local people through increasing mode choice.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

There is inevitably a mixture of risks associated with such an infrastructure project. Some of the main risks are securing the statutory approvals to implement the scheme, the unknown effects on utility providers' apparatus once the ground is opened, the cost of construction increasing due to external market factors like material costs or plant hire costs, a prolonged bout of inclement weather delaying construction and any lasting impacts of the Covid 19 virus. Learning has been carried forward from the Coundon Cycleway scheme and the parts of the Binley Cycleway constructed to date as many of the delivery risks encountered are common to the rest of the Binley scheme.

A dedicated scheme project manager and multi-disciplinary project management team will control these risks on a day to day basis. The biggest risks are discussed weekly with senior infrastructure delivery officers and reported to the Active Travel Board, which in turn reports to the Strategic Transport Board.

Construction will continue to be principally undertaken by the Council's Direct Labour Organisation (DLO). Specialist support will continue to be provided by Balfour Beatty for electrical works and works at height, and by Yunex for traffic signal installation and commissioning. Both of these companies are already in contract with the Council. Some of the civil engineering works are being and will be delivered for the DLO via a framework of subcontractors.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

There is no impact on the organisation, as all resources required to deliver the scheme will be funded through the grants received from government and the WMCA.

6.4 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Binley Cycleway. This identifies the scheme, by having a beneficial impact on air quality and levels of personal activity, will have a beneficial impact upon those groups of the community who are particularly vulnerable to respiratory disease, such as children and younger people, elderly people, disabled people, people from black and ethnic minority background, and women who are pregnant. New cyclists will benefit from an increase in personal activity which helps combat the health issues associated with inactive lifestyles. The increase in accessibility improves access to economic and social opportunities for households without access to a car.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

The scheme will lead to an increase in cycle use as a mode of transport which will reduce car use. This will reduce the emissions generated by road transport, supporting the Climate Change Strategy and improve local air quality. A reduction in impermeable surface area and increase in trees, hedges and verges will also benefit drainage and the discharge rate into natural watercourses.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

The scheme will result in improved air quality and levels of activity and provide improved infrastructure for people to walk and cycle. The scheme will also upgrade some bus stop infrastructure benefiting TfWM and bus passengers along the route.

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