

Assurance Panel Summary

Scheme Details

Project Name	Fredrick Street walking and cycling route (Rotherham Town Centre Active Travel Package)		
Grant Recipient	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council		
MCA Executive Board	Transport and Environment	MCA Funding	£ 502,881
% MCA Allocation	55%	Total Scheme Cost	£ 921,881

Appraisal Summary

Project Description
<p>The scheme forms part of the River Don Corridor. This corridor connects two of the City Region's key growth areas running from central Sheffield and Rotherham, and on to Doncaster.</p> <p>Frederick Street provides a key route across the town centre; however, cycling is currently prohibited. Currently the layout of the street and public realm is unattractive and would not adequately accommodate cyclists. This is a barrier to cyclists crossing the town centre. Most alternative routes are around the core town centre along major traffic dominated roads with large junctions.</p> <p>Public realm improvements on Frederick Street incorporating cycling infrastructure in the core town centre with amendments to the traffic regulation order to allow cycling (currently prohibited) along this street. Currently the layout of the street and public realm is unattractive and would not adequately accommodate cyclists. The improvements will, in particular, improve the environment for pedestrians accessing Rotherham Bus Interchange, and a safe, direct route across the north side of Rotherham town centre where none presently exists.</p> <p>The proposals form part of a package of measures to improve access to and within Rotherham town centre by foot and bicycle. Separate full business cases will be submitted for the other projects – Sheffield Road walking and Cycling improvements and Forge Island Footbridge. The figure below illustrates the location of the scheme, in the context of the other elements of the Rotherham Town Centre package.</p> <p>The MCA funds will be used to fund the following linked to the Frederick Street scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the preparation of costs associated with the design development of the preferred options. This will include both preliminary design, detailed design and associated scheme promotion and consultation material; • the construction of the package of scheme in section 2.2 above; and, • scheme monitoring and evaluation activities (where not handled at a package level). <p>The output of the scheme amounts to 140 m of route for non-motorised users.</p>
Strategic Case
<p>The Strategic Case sets out the need for a scheme, and the strategic rationale for the delivery of the preferred option which can be accepted based on this being a high quality scheme that will improve local permeability, with subsequent impacts on generating new pedestrian and cycle trips with wider positive traffic, environment and economic outcomes.</p> <p>Whilst there are some limitations in the Strategic Case, these are considered missed opportunities to further strengthen the business case, rather than critical concerns. The scheme has a particularly strong Economic Case and therefore, there are no issues with the Strategic Case that would override this. The</p>

business case sets the scheme in the context of the MCA's strategic objectives, the SCR Transport Strategy and the TCF Programme objectives. As such, the Strategic Case presents a clear rationale for the scheme in relation to leading strategies and objectives pertinent to the study area.

The key weakness is the lack of a target for the level of walking and cycling uplift in the SMART objectives. The MCA can mitigate this through benchmarking the scheme with others in SCR and through agreeing the monitoring and evaluation approach. The AMAT assessment used to set the Value for Money is a good starting point for setting a target. The core scenario suggests an uplift of 68 cyclists per day and ~1,500 walking trips.

Value for Money

The Economic Case uses the correct approach (DfT's AMAT) to appraise the benefits and costs of the scheme and uses the tool and accompanying qualitative detail to link the scheme's benefits to the problems identified to the Strategic Case. All aspects of the appraisal are consistent with the assumptions and clarifications agreed at OBC stage.

The core appraisal indicates a BCR of 12.1 representing 'very high' VfM.

Sensitivity testing has however demonstrated a certain volatility in scheme benefits resulting in a BCR range from 0.8 to 22.2, albeit it is considered that the method of calculation to reach a BCR of 0.8 is particularly conservative. Costs incorporated within the appraisal are consistent with the Financial Case and includes Optimism Bias as detailed in section 4.18, which has been correctly applied.

No supplementary modelling of wider impacts for the scheme has been undertaken. In response to a clarification question to the OBC, RMBC has identified that the scheme may have wider benefits in terms of increased tourism, increased productivity and an enhanced image for Rotherham. Given that the scheme is demonstrating 'very high' VfM, as presented in the Economic Case and the supplied core AMAT, assessment of wider impacts is not considered necessary.

Overall a strong Economic Case is presented for the scheme.

Risk

Cost certainty as reported within the Financial Case is at 75%, which is lower than the 95% that should be expected at FBC stage following tender returns. It is understood following clarification questions that RMBC intend to provide a final costing based on the tender return at the approval stage. This cost can be reflected in the final contract. The final costs are not expected to have an impact on the Economic Case or Value for Money of the scheme.

Elements of cost uncertainty are reflected in the risk register for the scheme although no qualitative risk assessment has been undertaken. RMBC has indicated through the FBC and clarification questions that they would pay for additional costs relating to risk.

The risk allowance for the scheme is low and reflects that most of the risks which emerge as a scheme is developed have been controlled and costed. The risk allowance is ~£36,000 with the top risks reflecting potential impacts of Covid in delivering the scheme e.g. supply chain impacts on costs.

Delivery

The Management Case has broadly demonstrated RMBC's ability to deliver the project, monitor progress, the key milestones are appropriate and realistic, whilst the outline of an effective monitoring and evaluation plan is in place.

The intention to complete the scheme by August 2021 is considered realistic. The lack of a detailed programme presents an obstacle in terms of monitoring progress, holding accountability for timely delivery, and identifying new programme risks as these emerge. RMBC has provided limited detail on the project programme and how project risks have been developed and it is recommended that the panel consider approaches to ensure that effective programme and risk review measures are in place during project delivery.

RMBC intend to deliver the majority of the scheme in-house, albeit with procurement exercises for materials and hostile vehicle barrier installation.

Legal

As this scheme is a series of improvements to the public commons, this improvement cannot have state implications. The improvements will be protected for public use by virtue of being public highway.

Recommendation and Conditions

Recommendation	Contract Award, subject to conditions
Payment Basis	Payment on defrayal
Conditions of Award (including clawback clauses)	
<p><i>The following conditions must be satisfied before contract execution.</i></p> <p>RMBC to confirm final tender prices.</p> <p><i>The following conditions must be satisfied before drawdown of funding.</i></p> <p>None.</p> <p>The following conditions must be included in the contract</p> <p>RMBC to work with SCR MCA to undertaken appropriate Monitoring and Evaluation of the scheme.</p>	

Record of Recommendation, Endorsement and Approval

Barnsley Digital Innovation Hub

Appraisal Panel Recommendation		Board Endorsement		MCA Approval	
Date of Meeting		Date of Meeting		Date of Meeting	
Head of Paid Service or Delegate	Ruth Adams Deputy CEX	Endorsing Officer (Board Chair)		Approving Officer (Chair)	
Signature		Signature		Signature	
Date		Date		Date	
S73 Officer or Delegate	Simon Tompkins Finance Manager	Statutory Finance Officer Approval Name: Signature: Date:			
Signature					
Date					
Monitoring Officer or Delegate	Steve Davenport SCR CA Solicitor				
Signature					
Date					