

Assurance Panel Summary

Scheme Details

Project Name	A635 Active Travel Link		
Grant Recipient	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council		
MCA Executive Board	Transport and Environment	MCA Funding	£2,404,480.68
% MCA Allocation	100%	Total Scheme Cost	£2,404,480.68

Appraisal Summary

Project Description
<p>The Applicant has identified this scheme to respond to growing demand for cycling to work, education and for leisure and health purposes. The A635 Active Travel Link Scheme is a package of measures which seeks to promote walking and cycling connectivity on the A635 between Stairfoot Roundabout and Hollygrove Round in Goldthorpe.</p> <p>The Scheme comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a crossing facility for Oakhill Primary Academy; • Widen footways that run parallel along the A635; • Improved bus stop facilities with real time information, shelters and seating for patrons; • Improve junctions along the route with side roads allowing active travel priority when crossing the junction; • Improved street lighting • Wayfinder and signage. <p>The desired outputs for the TCF programme relevant to the A635 Active Travel Scheme are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24km of improved walking and cycling infrastructure; • 72km of new walking and cycling infrastructure; • 20 junction improvements to benefit non-car modes, with 7 bus gates. <p>The scope of activities required for the delivery of the A635 Active Travel scheme comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed design of the preferred option, the inclusion of off and on-road pedestrian and cycling provision and associated highway improvements; • Incorporating improvements to public realm including Green Infrastructure into the scheme; • Consultation events with key stakeholders in relation to the design and construction of the scheme to gauge opinion; • Resolution of any issues arising; • AMAT appraisal; • Data collection; • Scheme evaluation and monitoring following completion of the scheme; • Preparation of the Full Business Case; • Internal Governance – Cabinet reports, Ward Member briefings etc; • Air Quality Surveys; • Procurement and construction, including contract administration, supervision and compliance with Construction Design Management (CDM) Regulations; • Promotion and implementation of any Traffic Regulation Orders required; • Liaising with the local Cycle Forums and area Committees; • Liaising with key businesses / stakeholders / residents on the route with regard to traffic management.
Strategic Case
<p>The applicant has included references to the key policy documents which we would expect to see to demonstrate alignment with the Strategic Objectives of the MCA and BMBC. While specific references to</p>

the relevant sections are made, the contribution this scheme makes to the policies has not been clearly set out. A stronger description of the strategic alignment would describe specifically what the scheme will deliver against a number of the key policy and strategy documents. The FBC will require a more detailed assessment of how the scheme itself works to address specific aims and objectives in each of these strategy/policy documents.

The Applicant does however provide six clear and SMART objectives that are consistent with the nature of the scheme and the MCA's Strategic objectives. In section 3.6 the applicant sets out clear objectives and defines targets against which the scheme can be measured.

The applicant has set out a clear 'Do Nothing', and alternative 'Do Minimum' and 'Do All' options alongside the Preferred Option, highlighting the effects of not proceeding, investing in a smaller scale scheme or the challenges in delivering a larger scale scheme. Alternative options have been appropriately discounted.

The Applicant has been clear on the consequences of the scheme not going ahead, that it would infer a lost opportunity to deliver better active travel connectivity within Barnsley and associated economic benefits.

An update should be provided for the FBC, including working with the MCA Exec Team during further design to work through how the route will meet SCR/MCA cycle design standards.

Value for Money

The Applicant has undertaken proportionate modelling, using the Department for Transport (DfT) Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit (AMAT), consistent with WebTAG guidance.

The Applicant presents a Core BCR of 1.37 : 1 and has undertaken sensitivity testing to consider the key areas of risk. The Applicant has tested:

- a 50% increase (+£413,000) in construction costs, reducing the core BCR of 1.37 : 1 to 1.07 : 1. A further increase of £131,000 would be needed before the BCR falls below 1 : 1.
- a 25% decrease in take-up of Active Travel below the central forecast uplift. This would bring the core BCR of 1.37 down to 1.12 : 1.

As such the benefit cost assessment undertaken for the scheme appears to be robust to key sensitivities and includes the consideration the potential effects of COVID-19.

Costs are estimated on an appropriate basis at OBC stage, drawing on costs from previous schemes delivered through SCRIF and BMBC's schedule of rates.

Overall the approach taken is appropriate, but there are some detailed methodological concerns with the analysis which has been undertaken which will impact the value for money assessment and will need to be resolved before and FBC can be approved:

- The Applicant should apply a base level of Active Travel in the modelling for the Darfield to Goldthorpe housing/employment site stretches of the proposed scheme. This is currently set to zero as the routes are not yet established. However, the baseline should refer to active travel trips made between these destinations and around the area using alternative routes.
- In terms of the uplift in active travel applied we note that:
 - a 375% increase has been applied for Field End Business Park to the Goldthorpe employment site against a quoted value of 353%.
 - The Options Assessment Report (OAR) includes statement that suggests a 51% for cycling and 26% for walking. The AMAT form shows 930% and 76% respectively.
 - These points should be clarified and corrected in the AMAT, OAR and main Business Case document.
- Modelling has only been undertaken for the Preferred Option. This will suffice for the OBC but will need to be provided for the FBC.
- The Applicant needs to update figures relating to the Economic Case based on the latest/updated modelling undertaken, reflecting changes to the baseline required (stated above).

- No modelling of wider impacts has been undertaken. Beyond the benefits assessed using the AMAT, the scheme stands to deliver improved connectivity and access to the town centre (increasing access to key facilities and jobs), wider environmental benefits to the surrounding areas and wider well-being benefits. The Applicant should explore these wider benefits qualitatively as part of the FBC, particularly given the marginal BCR value.

The benefit cost assessment undertaken for the scheme appears to be robust to key sensitivities. The sensitivities will need to be updated given any changes applied to the modelling (i.e. changes to costs and/or to baseline active travel).

Risk

The key risks to the project in terms of the economic case relate to the effect on usage of COVID-19, potential additional costs relating to the final scheme design and procurement. The Applicant should ensure that risks to the BCR and wider Economic Case are appropriately covered for the FBC.

It is proposed that the project will draw on a £272,000 contribution from BMBC. This contribution is not consistently reflected in the business case and must be resolved in the FBC.

Uptake of Active Travel is a key risk to the project in terms of Value for Money. The applicant should explore what activities can be put in place or leveraged from complementary activity to underpin the success of the scheme. E.g. promotional activity.

A risk allowance of circa. £325,000 is included in the core scheme costs, accounting for unforeseen cost overruns. This is based on a detailed Quantitative Risk Assessment provided as Appendix E. This risk allowance is significant and reflect uncertainty for land and ground investigations. The approach is prudent for this stage of the project.

Delivery

The applicant has set out clear project management and governance arrangements. The milestones that have been set out are proportionately detailed and sensible. The Applicant has set out the planned approach for procurement of the core scheme works and for planning consultancy in appropriate detail for the OBC.

Details for procurement are yet to be finalised. 'Option A' or 'Option B' for the NEC4 contract will be pursued and the final tender documents are still being developed. It is anticipated that the procurement process will run alongside the planning application and that it will have been completed in time for the FBC.

The Applicant must ensure that the procurement route is confirmed for the FBC alongside a detailed description of the preferred approach and clear timetable/milestones.

The Applicant needs to set out an outline timetable relating to any dependencies – e.g. for land acquisitions and/or planning relating to e.g. path widening or TROs. Details of any dependencies should also be set out under 3.10 and 3.4.

The applicant has set out clear and detailed plans for monitoring and evaluation at OBC stage.

Legal

BMBC's Legal Team considers that the State Aid test is not satisfied in respect of BMBC in its capacity as the Highway Authority for BMBC for the purpose of carrying out highway improvements in the public highway.

Recommendation and Conditions

Recommendation	Approval to progress to FBC and draw down further scheme development funds
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>None at this stage. Inclusion of condition are subject to submission of the Full Business Case.</p> <p><i>The following conditions must be satisfied before drawdown of funding.</i></p> <p>None at this stage. Inclusion of condition are subject to submission of the Full Business Case.</p> <p>The following conditions must be included in the contract</p> <p>None at this stage. Inclusion of condition are subject to submission of the Full Business Case.</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					