

Craighouse to Corran Sands, Isle of Jura Active Travel Route Progress Report

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report updates Members on the progress made in relation to developing plans to improve opportunities to walk, wheel or cycle between Craighouse and Corran Sands on the Isle of Jura. This project was identified as a priority for the community in the Isle of Jura Community Action Plan 2018 – 2023.
- 1.2. Officers secured external funding in 2023/24 from the highly competitive Transport Scotland Places for Everyone (PFE) programme, administered by Sustrans, to enable initial feasibility (stage 1) and development of concept designs (stage 2).
- 1.3. A project steering group including representatives of Jura Community Council, Jura Community Development Trust, Argyll and Bute Council and Sustrans was formed. The steering group helped guide the project to ensure it delivered to the needs of the community.
- 1.4. Two design options have been developed to concept design, a do-minimum option which remains within the existing adopted road corridor of the A846 and a do-something option which provides a higher level of service to users but requires additional land. While concept design usually produces a single, preferred option, two options were developed as the community preference is for a do-something option but there are challenges in securing landowner agreement to the very high specification for an off-road path imposed by Sustrans.
- 1.5. A 2024/25 funding application has been submitted to Transport Scotland's Places for Everyone (PFE) programme to enable identification of a final preferred option, and for this option to be progressed through Developed Design (stage 3) in 2024/25 and Technical Design (stage 4) in 2025/26. A decision in regard to 2024/25 funding is expected in late summer 2024. Should members decide not to support the future development of the project the funding application will be withdrawn.
- 1.6. Technical design (stage 4) is the final stage of the design process and a further report will be presented to Members prior to commencement of any construction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.7. It is recommended that the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands members:

- 1.7.1. Support progression of the project to full Technical Design, as required by the external funder.
- 1.7.2. Instruct Officers, subject to securing external funding, to identify a single preferred option and to continue development of the designs for this option to Developed Design (stage 3) and Technical Design (stage 4).

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

**Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands
Area Committee**

**DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC
GROWTH**

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- 4.10. The paid PFE fund administrators, Sustrans, impose a significant number of design conditions on the PFE funding. These include an aim of providing a high level of service under Cycle by Design (2021) guidance and limitations of a minimum 3m width for off-road paths and a maximum gradient of 7%. Where cyclists are expected to on road Sustrans require designs to include a maximum 20mph speed limit.
- 4.11. A number of design options were identified for discussion with the community, Argyll and Bute Council Roads and Infrastructure Service, landowners and other stakeholders. From these discussions two options were developed to concept design stage, a do-minimum option and a do-something option. Both option include new pedestrian footways within Craighouse, with the main differences being outside Craighouse between the village edge and Corran Sands.
- 4.12. Do-minimum option aims to minimise any private land required and therefore restricts the design to the current corridor of the A846. As such, outside Craighouse it consists of minor interventions on the A846 to improve visibility, manage vehicle speeds are key locations and improve opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists to 'step-off' the A846 to allow vehicles to pass. While a cheaper option and deliverable without private land take, the do-minimum option fails to provide a high level of service under Cycle by Design.
- 4.13. Do-something option aims to provide a high level of service under Cycle by Design and to meet more of the Sustrans imposed design requirements. As such, outside Craighouse the proposal was for an off-road wide path which mirrored the alignment of the A846 but would require access to private land. To reduce cost, the design proposed returning onto the A846 for short distances to cross 3 larger rivers using the existing A846 bridges rather than constructing new bridges specifically for the path. To more closely align with Sustrans design requirements, the do-something option was proposed at 2m wide with a bound surface. The proposed width still requires to be agreed with Sustrans, as while it is more in keeping with the rural location it is lower than Sustrans stated design requirements. While supported by the community, the main landowners expressed concern that the provision of an off-road path was out of keeping with Jura and therefore have not agreed to this option at present.
- 4.14. The community expressed a preference for the do-something option, but agreed with the view that the Sustrans imposed minimum width of 3m for a share-use path is excessively wide for the likely user numbers on Jura, and that a 2m wide path would be more appropriate. Unfortunately, engagement to date with Sustrans has failed to secure their agreement to a derivation from the design standards imposed to enable a less obtrusive path width to be considered. It is planned to continue engagement with Sustrans, community and landowners in future design stages.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1. Provision of an improved walking, wheeling and cycling route linking Craighouse and Corran Sands on the Isle of Jura would provide opportunities for residents and visitors to travel more sustainably and actively by walking and cycling. This

will provide an alternative to having to use a private car to travel between these communities and help lower Argyll and Bute's carbon footprint. Funding for the

with mobility aids including wheelchairs and parents/guardians with a child's pram or buggy.

6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty

The route, once completed, will offer residents and visitors the opportunity to choose to travel using active modes, which are lower cost than alternative modes of transport. The route will also improve access to essential services, retail, leisure and employment opportunities for residents living along the route. The path will also offer opportunities for individuals to travel for leisure.

6.5.3 Islands

There are no adverse impacts.

6.6. **Climate Change**

Active Travel is the least carbon intensive mode of travel. Providing the opportunity for residents and visitors to consider an alternative to having to use a private car to travel between these communities will help lower Argyll and Bute's carbon footprint.

6.7. **Risk**

There is a reputational risk to the Council if the project is not completed within a reasonable timeframe.

6.8. **Customer Services**

None.

6.9. **The Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**

Active travel is the most accessible mode of travel to young people, as it does not have any minimum age limits, does not require any form of licence, is free to use and is not tied to any fixed timetable.

All new active travel infrastructure is designed to be utilised by an unaccompanied 12 year old.

Engagement feedback demonstrates even stronger support for the delivery of the active travel route from younger members of the community than the already high overall level of community support. Wider engagement with school pupils indicates that the vast majority of pupils strongly support the provision of new active travel infrastructure, even where it would adversely impact other modes of transport.

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