



Report

To: Cabinet

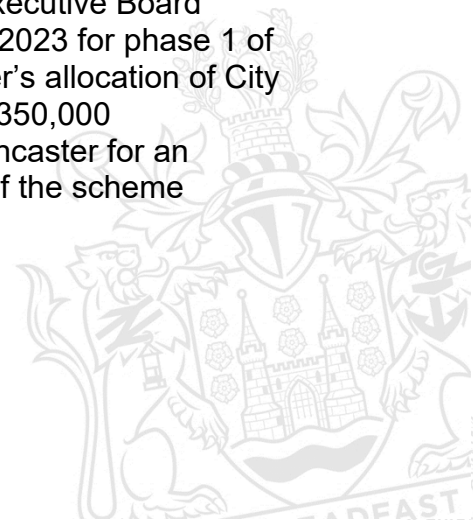
Date:11/10/2023

ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDING TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE TRANS PENNINE TRAIL BETWEEN YORK ROAD AND MELTON ROAD.

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision?
Councillor Joe Blackham	Sprotbrough, Roman Ridge and Bentley	Yes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In March 2019 Sustrans were awarded £22,000,000 in Department for Transport grant funding for National Cycle Network activation projects outside of London.
2. In April 2022 South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority was awarded over £570m from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement. Of the £570m, the allocation for Doncaster is £72m plus the Highways Capital Maintenance and Integrated Transport Block. Within this bid 12m has been allocated to Local Centre Accessibility improvements and Trans Pennine Trail upgrades
3. In January 2023 Sustrans invited bids from Local Authorities for grant funding to improve sections of National Cycle Network (Trans Pennine Trail) that needed improvement works.
4. This report seeks approval to enter into funding agreements with both Sustrans and South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority and subsequently accept 100% grant funding to make improvements along the Trans Pennine Trail in Doncaster.
5. The total value of the grant award is £1,004,024
6. South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Transport Executive Board approved a Business Justification Case on the 21st March 2023 for phase 1 of the Trans Pennine Trail improvements as part of Doncaster's allocation of City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement to the value of £350,000
7. A change request has been submitted to SYMCA from Doncaster for an additional £200,000 to accommodate an increase in cost of the scheme



EXEMPT REPORT

8. Not Exempt

RECOMMENDATIONS

9. That Cabinet approve the following:
 - 1) the acceptance of £1,004,024 grant funding and adding to Doncaster Council's capital programme.
 - 2) Agree to enter funding agreements with;
 - Sustrans to receive funds to improve the section of the Trans Pennine Trail between York Road and Melton Road.
 - South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority to receive funds to improve the section of the Trans Pennine Trail between York Road and Melton Road; and
 - 3) delegate the decision to accept and enter into the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority funding agreement to the Director of Place and Chief Finance Officer.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

10. The project has the potential to improve connectivity for Doncaster residents to areas of employment and green, open spaces on bike and by foot. It will make walking and cycling a more attractive option by installing a sealed surface along the routes specified.
11. The delivery of the project contains elements which is linked to key themes in the success of 'Get Doncaster Moving', 'Get Doncaster Cycling' and 'Get Doncaster Walking' strategies.
12. The improvements would help realise ambitions set out in both Doncaster's cycling and walking strategies. These include;
 - Cycling is embedded in all future infrastructure schemes, ensuring a well-connected and safe cycle network that supports a variety of journeys, for work or for pleasure." (Doncaster Cycle Strategy, 2020)
 - Develop and enhance recreational walking opportunities in Borough In line with the Doncaster Rights of Way Improvement Plan, explore opportunities to develop and improve recreational walking routes and the Rights of Way network by improving existing routes and creating new routes where appropriate and where the opportunities arise. (Doncaster Walking Strategy, 2018)
 - Explore opportunities to increase access to the Trans Pennine Trail (TPT) Work with partners to investigate and pursue opportunities to develop new links to the TPT in Doncaster and increase accessibility. This includes opportunities to link Thorne to the TPT. (Doncaster Walking Strategy,

2018)

- Ensure appropriate signage and wayfinding along key walking routes
Review signage provision along and to key walking routes in Borough such as the Trans Pennine Trail. (Doncaster Walking Strategy, 2018)

13. Potential interventions funded by the project ensures that residents have access to high quality, safe traffic free routes. The interventions also ensure that we are complicit with the Equality Act by adapting barriers to LTN 1/20 compliance ensuring appropriate access for residents with specific needs in regard to mobility aids.

BACKGROUND

14. The Department for Transport Grant was awarded to Sustrans to improve significant on and off-road stretches of National Cycle Network to improve conditions for walking and cycling around the country.

The route that is proposed to receive improvements in Doncaster is;

- Trans Pennine Trail, York Road to Melton Road

15. The route was selected for improvements following consultation in 2021 with the public that identified this section as the most in need of surfacing repairs in the Borough.



16. The works would be delivered in a section with existing high levels of usage and therefore provide high quality, traffic free cycling and walking infrastructure to the communities that need it the most. The potential improvements in the active travel network could also lead to modal shift resulting in better air quality and a reduction in levels of congestion.

17. Automatic traffic counters along this route show a decline in usage over winter months. One of the reasons for this is due to the trails condition over the

wetter months which leave this section of trail with standing pools of water. The works proposed would alleviate these issues making the route useable all year round.



18. The funding comes after Sustrans produced their "Paths for All" report in 2018 which indicated a cycling network of intermittent quality. There are 25 miles of National Cycle Network which runs through Doncaster, all of which is Route 62. Much of the Trans Pennine Trail in Doncaster was categorised as being Good (18 Miles), with the on road sections scoring Very Poor (7 Miles).
19. Although the location proposed scored 'Good', due to their level of off-road segregation, the condition of the route needs investment to bring them up to be 'Very Good' in order to facilitate more active travel journeys.

Scheme Detail:

20. The scheme will deliver 1.6km of surfacing improvements between York Road and Melton Road. This includes a 4 meter wide sealed surface installed between York Road and Anchorage lane and a 3 meter wide sealed surface installed between Anchorage Lane and Melton Road. The improvements proposed also include adaptations to 6 access controls along the route. Included within the scope of the project is the installation of 3 new benches, improved wayfinding along the route, installation of a new automatic pedestrian and cycle traffic counter and biodiversity improvements in line with the ecology report recommendations.

Access Controls:

21. A number of barriers are in need of repair and adaptation which currently do not comply with the Equality Act 2010. Local authorities are bound by the Equality Act 2010, which requires public sector authorities to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty in carrying out their functions. This includes making reasonable adjustments to the built environment to ensure infrastructure is accessible to all. Adaptions will be made in line with the approved Structures on Public Rights of Way – Policy and Procedure Document. Below is a detailed breakdown of individual access controls and what is proposed at each location.

Access Control and Location	Issues	Example of what is proposed
<p data-bbox="85 331 450 360">York Road 1 – East to Bentley</p> 	<p data-bbox="763 296 1216 469">The current width between metal barriers (89cm) is not compliant with Equality Act 2010 and restricts some legitimate users in wheelchairs, mobility scooters and adapted cycles.</p> <p data-bbox="763 512 1216 826">It is proposed that the metal barriers be removed to create a gap of 1.6 meters as this is an equestrian route. It is also recommended that the path be splayed to ensure pedestrians and cycles have an easier approach into the access. Give way markings will be included to ensure that pedestrians have priority.</p>	 <p data-bbox="1258 847 2101 948">Access control widened to leave a gap of 1.6 meters ensuring compliant gap for Equestrian users, cycles and pedestrians. Path width 2 meters following access</p>

York Road 2 – West to River Don



Current width (109cm) is not compliant with Equality Act 2010 and restricts legitimate users in wheelchairs, mobility scooters and adapted cycles.

The new access proposed will see the removal of the broken horse stile and replaced with bollards spaced at 1.6 meters wide, again due to this being an equestrian facility.

The path from York Road will be splayed to allow easier access for pedestrians and cycles accessing the Trans Pennine Trail with clear give way indicators instructing pedestrian priority



Access control widened to leave two gaps of 1.6 meters ensuring compliant gap for Equestrian users, cycles and pedestrians. Path width 4 meters following access

Laurel Avenue



Current A Frame width (Top Width - 36cm Bottom Width -100cm) is not compliant with Equality Act 2010 and restricts some legitimate users in wheelchairs, mobility scooters and adapted cycles.

The proposals include removal of the A frame opening the gap to 1.4 meters. This will remain a pedestrian access.



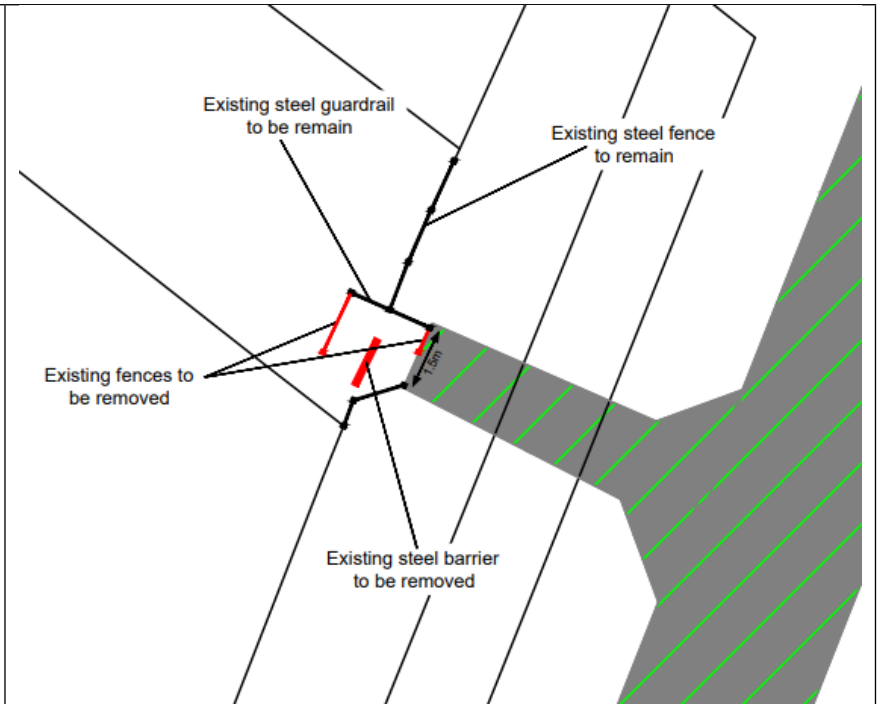
Access control widened to leave a gap of 1.4 meters ensuring compliant gap for Pedestrians.

Ferndale View



Current width (100cm) is not compliant with Equality Act 2010 and restricts legitimate users in wheelchairs, mobility scooters and adapted cycles.

The proposals at this location include surfacing the path to the access as currently this section is unmade. Removal of a section of guard rail and low barrier retaining a minimum width of 1.5 meters. Guard rail is retained either side to assist users down the slope to the trail



Access control widened to leave a gap of 1.5 meters ensuring compliant gap for Pedestrians and Cycles.

Anchorage Lane



The A frame (Top Width -36cm, Bottom Width -100cm) is not compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and restricts legitimate users in wheelchairs, mobility scooters and adapted cycles.

The equestrian access is damaged which has left a gap next to the A



Frame wider than 1.5 meters which is used predominantly by pedestrians and cycles bypassing the A Frame. The desire line shows where this gap is being used by pedestrians and cycles bypassing the A Frame

The proposed works include removal of A frame to leave a gap of 1.6 meters as this is an equestrian access point

Access control widened to leave a gap of 1.6 meters ensuring compliant gap for Equestrian Users, Cycles and Pedestrians.

Shelley Grove



Current A frame width (Top Width - 36cm Bottom Width -100cm) is not compliant with Equality Act 2010 and restricts some legitimate users in wheelchairs, mobility scooters and adapted cycles.

Currently the fence is damaged which has meant the A Frame is redundant with the gap exceeding 1.5 meters currently.

The proposals will formalise a desire line from Shelley Grove to the Trans Pennine Trail. A new 3 meter wide, shared use path is to be installed from Shelley Grove to the Trans Pennine Trail creating a cycle and pedestrian connection. This would be controlled by a row of bollards at 1.5 meters spacing to comply with LTN 1/20 but restricting wider vehicles that could access this site now.



Access control widened to leave a gap of 1.5 meters ensuring compliant gap for Pedestrians and Cycles.

Enforcement of Anti-Social Behaviour and Off-Road Bikes:

22. As part of the scheme new signage will be installed instructing the public on how to report illegal use of motorised vehicles such as motor bikes and quad bikes on the Trans Pennine Trail. The new signage will be installed at each entrance to the trail. The signage will advertise a QR code which can be scanned by the public to easily report anti social behaviour. This will enable South Yorkshire Police to target enforcement action to areas with high reports of misuse. A copy of this can be seen attached to the supporting papers.

Evidence:

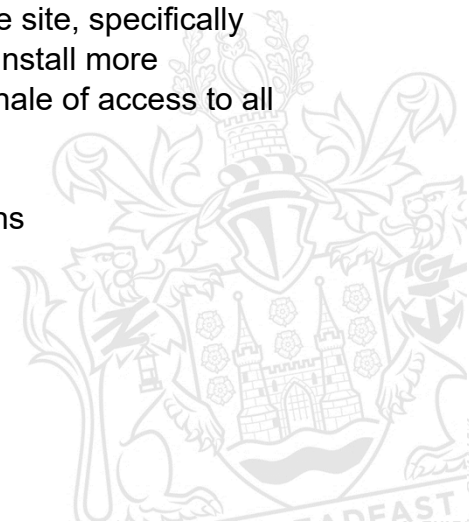
23. Evidence from previous surfacing and access improvements of sections of the Trans Pennie Trail in Doncaster have recorded high levels of uplift since their installation. This can be seen in the table below:

Scheme	Baseline	Post Improvements (1 Year)	% Increase in usage
Bentley Park to Toll Bar	35,000 users	55,000 users	57% increase
Pastures Road to Boat Inn	38,785 users	65,166 users	68% increase

Consultation:

24. Consultation concluded on the 1st of September 2023, over 90 members of the public have engaged with the Council regarding this subject. Public consultation is due to conclude on 1st September 2023. A drop in session was held at the Goldsmith Centre on the 9th august which was attended by 65 people. Issues raised in the consultation included:

- signage installed along the route asking for cyclists to be mindful of pedestrians.
- A request to investigate if CCTV could be installed at the access points, particularly at Anchorage Lane and Shelly Grove.
- The possibility of having the full route at 4m wide instead of having some at 3m wide.
- To take consideration of quads/motorcycles entering the site, specifically at the Ferndale Road access. Many asked if we could install more barriers/bollards etc. However, most accepted the rationale of access to all legitimate users
- Include public artwork or 'themed' benches installed.
- More seating along the entire section, but simple designs



- More bins that are emptied on a regular basis
- Tree management – Overgrown trees are causing issues along the route growing into and overhanging the gardens of residents.
- To consider improving the access to the trail from Crusader Drive as this is currently not built to a good standard and has not been included in the proposals.
- Drainage issues, specifically around Shelly Grove, where there is an underground stream/drain that blows through the inspection cover in heavy rain and also the area around Anchorage Lane.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

25. Two options have been considered:


Do something- Accept the grant funds and enter into funding agreements with Sustrans and South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority to improve sections of the Trans Pennine Trail in Doncaster







Do nothing- Failure to accept the grant funds will result in Doncaster not benefiting from potential investment.


REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

26. Accepting the grant funds will allow Doncaster to improve sections of the Trans Pennine Trail, enabling communities and residents to consider other options for travel, improving their health and wellbeing.

27. IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

Great 8 Priority	Positive Overall	Mix of Positive & Negative	Trade-offs to consider – Negative overall	Neutral or No implications
 Tackling Climate Change	✓			
Comments: Works will enable users to consider active travel for shorter journeys creating a modal shift from private vehicle usage to sustainable modes				

 Developing the skills to thrive in life and in work				✓
Comments:				
 Making Doncaster the best place to do business and create good jobs	✓			
Comments: <p>The Trans Pennine Trail is a long distance cross country walking and cycling route that brings significant numbers of people into the City</p>				
 Building opportunities for healthier, happier and longer lives for all	✓			
Comments: <p>Greater levels of active travel will lead to more minutes of physical activity per week resulting in healthier residents. Access to green space is important to residents mental health and the works associated with this report make accessing green space much easier to residents in wheelchairs, mobility aids and adapted cycles.</p>				
 Creating safer, stronger, greener and cleaner communities where everyone belongs	✓			
Comments: <p>Greater levels of Active Travel will reduce vehicle emissions in this corridor. Greater levels of usage will have a natural effect on deterring levels of anti-social behaviour on the route.</p>				
 Nurturing a child and family-friendly borough				✓
Comments:				
 Building Transport and digital connections fit for the future	✓			

Comments:				
Development of the Trans Pennine Trail (NCN) will bring this section up to a very good status with a sealed surface ensuring that the route is useable all year round.				
 Promoting the borough and its cultural, sporting, and heritage opportunities	✓			
Comments:				
Delivery of the scheme would allow more residents to access a safe off road facility and enable users to access cycling and walking as a sport/leisure activity. The route connects users to Cusworth Hall enabling greater levels of active travel to a tourist attraction in Doncaster.				
Fair & Inclusive	✓			
Comments:				
The design guidance (LTN 1/20) applied to this section of Trans Pennine Trail ensures that the most vulnerable users are catered for with adaptations to access controls to enable wheelchair and adapted cycle access. This also means that users with pushchairs and mobility aids can access the route with ease.				

Legal Implications [Officer Initials: SRF | Date 09.08.23]

28. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a general power of competence to do anything that individuals may generally do.
29. The Council will be required to sign a funding agreement in relation to this scheme, which is most likely to set out a number of obligations. Failure to comply with these obligation may lead to claw back of funding.
30. The procurement of any goods and services must be carried out in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules. Further legal advice and assistance may be required when the funding agreement is received.

Financial Implications [Officer Initials: JC | Date: 30/08/23]

31. The report seeks approval to accept and enter into two separate funding agreements for which £804k of funding has been approved (£454k from Sustrans and £350k from SYMCA as part of the CRSTS funding allocation), the scheme is expected to cost £1.004m leaving a £200k funding shortfall, a request has been made to SYMCA to increase the £350k allocation to £550k this is still subject to confirmation. If SYMCA did not approve the additional

funding there would be a £200k shortfall on the scheme for which additional capital funds would need to be identified.

32. The Sustrans funding agreement is for £454k the agreement originally asked for the scheme to be completed by the 30th September 2023 a change control request has been submitted to Sustrans which asks for the deadline to be changed to 31st of May 2024 confirmation of the change is expected in September and is required before the funding agreement is signed.. The funding agreement includes the following paragraph which does gives reassurance that an extension will be agreed:

“If the Recipient is unable to deliver the Project to agreed timescales or within the Grant, the Recipient shall inform Sustrans as soon as possible and provide Sustrans with a reasonable explanation and satisfactory evidence that the Recipient shall complete the Project within a reasonable time”.

33. The Sustrans grant payment schedule is:

Amount of Grant Payable	Date of or Stage for Payment
up to 10%*	on production of satisfactory and design compliant drawings
up to 35%*	on commencement of construction project works
up to 50%*	on practical completion of the works
up to 5%*	on final report completion

* *Must not exceed actual costs incurred to date*

34. In case of any scheme overspend no additional funding would be available from Sustrans. The funding agreement requires evidence of grant expenditure to be kept for 6 years and requires a financial and operational report to be provided within 3 months of the end of each quarter. And requires any unused grant to be repaid at the end of the grant term.

35. The SYMCA current funding allocation is £350k, although a project variation to request an additional £200k to cover the project shortfall has been requested and is still subject to confirmation. The Scheme Business Case received approval on 17th March 2023 at the SYMCA – Transport and Environment Board The funding agreement has not been received and requires the following two conditions to be met before the agreement will be issued:

- Business justification case to be signed by SRO
- Appendix B Social Value Tool to be submitted

36. As Appendix B cannot be submitted until after the contractor has been appointed the SYMCA funding agreement will not be received until after this report has been approved, therefore as per the delegation included within the recommendations a further ODR will be required to approve and enter into the SYMCA funding agreement.
37. On approval the scheme will need adding into the Place capital programme.
38. The service area will need to ensure compliance with the grant terms and conditions issued. The following financial procedure rules should be considered and followed in respect of the grant funding:
39. E.11 Directors are responsible for ensuring that action plans are in place (including exit strategies and match funding arrangements) for all external funding within the Directorate.
40. E.12 The CFO, in consultation with the respective Director, is responsible for ensuring that all funding notified by external bodies is received and properly recorded in the Council's accounts. Directors are responsible for promptly informing the CFO about such funding and of any subsequent modifications to timing and amounts of anticipated funding.
41. E.13 Where the income is receivable against a grant claim, the respective Director is responsible for producing the grant claim and shall provide sufficient information to enable the claim to be signed by the Chief Executive, CFO or any other relevant person where appropriate.

Human Resources Implications [Officer Initials: KJ | Date: 10/08/2023]

42. There are no direct HR Imps in relation to this ODR, but if in future staff are affected or additional specialist resources are required then further consultation will need to take place with HR.

Technology Implications [Officer Initials: PW Date: 10/08/23]

43. There are no technology implications in relation to this report.

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

44. The main risk is that works need to be completed by 31/03/2024. To ensure this milestone is met, a detailed delivery program has been developed.

CONSULTATION

45. An online meeting was arranged with Ward Members from the three wards effected on Tuesday 20th June, 2023 to discuss the proposals. Following this a site visit has been conducted with Councillor Jane Nightingale and Councillor Glenn Bluff on Tuesday 11th July. Ward Members were supportive of the proposals put forward. Full public consultation is to take place through August 2023 with residents effected sent a letter notifying them of the public consultation and how to feedback any comments. Public consultation is ongoing and due to finish on the 1st September 2023.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

46. South Yorkshire Police off Road Bike Team Signage

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

47. None

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