

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

PORTFOLIO AREA: ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

Date of Meeting: 23rd April 2007

Public

Key Decision: Yes

Recorded in Forward Plan:

Yes

Inside Policy Framework

Title: CONNECT 2 - MAJOR CYCLE ROUTE IMPROVEMENTS

Report of: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

Report reference: CS 23/07

Summary:

This report provides some background on the potential to develop off road cycle routes within the City. The opportunity to progress a major north/south link through funding contribution through the Sustrans Living Landmarks Connect 2 lottery bid are set out.

Recommendations:

It is RECOMMENDED that the Executive authorise the development of detailed feasibility study for the Kingmoor - Currock cycle route for consideration as part of the Sustrans lottery bid and the Director of Community Services reports this back to a future meeting of the Executive.

Contact Officer: Michael Battersby

Ext: 7325

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS

- 1.1 As part of the Council's Three Rivers Strategy to improve access to and alongside the main rivers in Carlisle a series of pedestrian and cycle routes are being developed. These 'off-road' cycle routes have been considered and endorsed by the Area Transport Advisory Group together with the appropriate links into the highway network and existing routes.
- 1.2 The emerging Carlisle Renaissance Movement Strategy clearly identifies the need to create sustainable transport choices and the benefits of increasing pedestrian and cycle use throughout the City. Within the Carlisle Renaissance draft Policy Statement supported by the Executive at its meeting on 26 March there is a clear statement to support measures which:-
- “Utilise river and other green corridors to improve pedestrian and cycle access into the City Centre from residential areas”
- 1.3 The development of improved walking and cycling networks and their increased use would also contribute to the Council's “Cleaner, Greener, Safer” priority.
- 1.4 A number of opportunities to deliver these improvements are already being pursued. The current flood defence projects being progressed by the Environment Agency provide an ideal opportunity and indeed the Council has contributed £25,000 towards cycling/pedestrian improvements in Melbourne Park. Another project is being developed in conjunction with the Environment Agency and led by the County Council for a cycle/pedestrian route along the River Petteril from Melbourne Park to Gillford Park/St Ninians Road. This project has an estimated cost of £300,000 and is being funded by the North West Development Agency.
- 1.5 A key element of the cycle network is to strengthen the north/south links through the City. Working with local cycling groups and the national cycling charity, Sustrans, a route has been developed with links into the existing network, Hadrian's Wall route etc. The route is shown on the appended plan and extends from Currock onto the existing Caldew cycleway, via a new bridge over the River Caldew (built as part of the flood defence project). It then extends across the Sheepmount, crosses on or adjacent to the River Eden railway bridge and through the Kingmoor Nature Reserve and beyond to Kingmoor Park and north.

1.6 This route offers a range of benefits:-

- Access from residential areas to employment areas both sides of the river
- A safer access from residential areas to educational social and retail facilities in the City Centre
- Creates an alternative route to provide the potential for air quality improvements on Scotland Road
- Opens up access to the rivers in the urban area and links other green spaces

1.7 An opportunity to progress this scheme has arisen through the Living Landmarks Big Lottery Programme. Sustrans have developed a 'Connect 2' project incorporating approx. 80 cycle schemes across the Country and hopefully the Carlisle scheme will be included in the schemes shortlisted for consideration. The winning project will be selected by a public vote around Christmas 2007. The cycle route in Carlisle has been 'long-listed' by Sustrans and a final decision on inclusion will be made at the end of April. Further details can be accessed from their website at www.sustransconnect2.org.uk.

1.8 If the national bid of £50m is successful the Carlisle scheme would be awarded approx. £0.9 – 1.0m which would need to be spent over the subsequent 5 years. A very preliminary estimate for the cycle route is approx £1.5-2.0m although more detailed work would be required for more detailed cost estimates would be needed, particularly regarding the river and rail crossings.

1.9 The cost of developing a detailed feasibility study and cost estimates is up to £5000. This could be funded from a revenue budget currently set aside for the Three Rivers Strategy.

2. CONSULTATION

2.1 Consultation to Date

Sustrans, Area Transport Advisory Group, Cumbria County Council, Carlisle Cycle Campaign.

2.2 Consultation proposed.

As above, together with Network Rail and Environment Agency

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is RECOMMENDED that the Executive authorise the development of detailed feasibility study for the Kingmoor – Currock cycle route for consideration as part of the Sustrans lottery bid and the Director of Community services reports this back to a future meeting of the Executive.

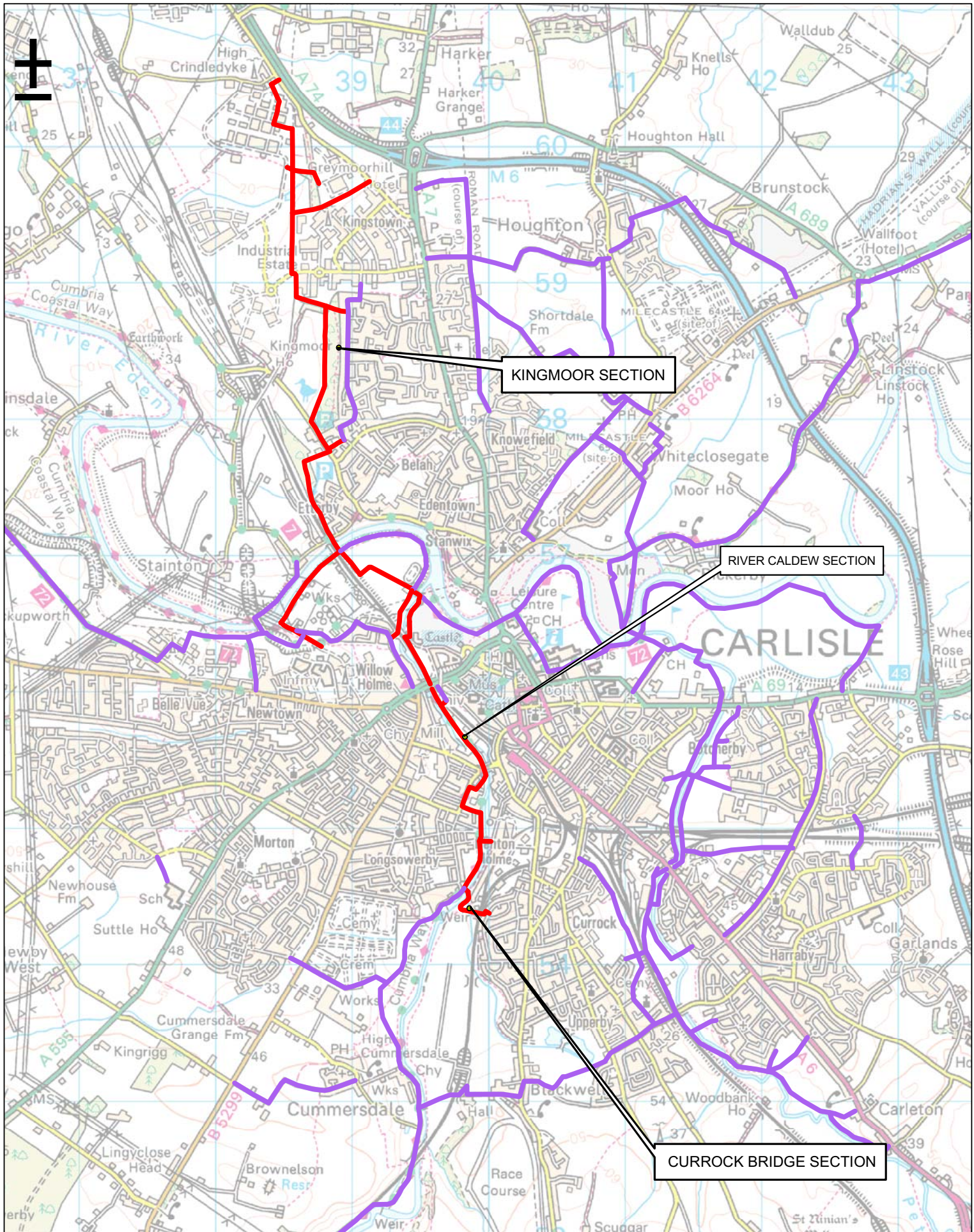
4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

This project has the potential to make a significant contribution to key corporate priorities of the Council.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- Staffing/Resources – The development of detailed, costed proposals will require temporary additional external resources
- Financial – The estimated feasibility study costs of up to £5000 can be met from existing revenue budgets. Any financial commitment (both revenue and capital) to the implementation of the project will need to be identified as part of the study following the preparation of a full business case
- Legal – At the present, preliminary stage, there are no specific implications. Should funding become available through the Sustrans bid the associated agreement and conditions will need to be carefully considered
- Corporate – This report has been considered and supported in principle by the Senior Management Team
- Risk Management – Should the Executive support a detailed feasibility study the cost of this would be at risk until such time as the inclusion of the scheme in the Sustrans project and the success of the Lottery bid is known. The cost of the feasibility study needs to be balanced against the benefits that the project would deliver.
The Executive would need to fully consider any liability it may incur should the project progress, prior to any final approval
- Equality Issues – None at this stage, would be considered as part of the feasibility study

- Environmental – The diversion of current car journeys to cycling and walking on this route would provide a positive benefit. The environmental impact of the project would be assessed as part of the Planning process
- Crime and Disorder – This would be addressed should the scheme proceed to detailed design and planning
- Impact on Customers – N/A



KINGMOOR & CALDEW CYCLEWAY (OVERVIEW) MARCH 2007

Scale: 1:25,000

This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Carlisle City Council LA 0100024459. 2005.

- Proposed Route & Links
- Other Adjoining Routes & Links (Existing & Proposed)

CARLISLE
CITY COUNCIL



www.carlisle.gov.uk