Teignbridge District Council
Committee name: Executive Committee
Meeting date: 4th April 2023
Part i

Report Title

National Cycle Network Route 2 (NCN2) improvements project & parking modification, Future High Street Fund

Purpose of Report

Provision of a high-quality bi-directional bicycle route through the spur of Cricketfield car park, forming part of the highly acclaimed National Cycle Network Route 2 (NCN2), alongside realignment of car parking with a reduction of up to 23-spaces, from the existing 341 spaces.

Recommendation(s)

The Council approval for the following:

(1) To approve the delivery of a high-quality bi-directional bicycle route through the spur of Cricketfield car park (as in Appendix 1); and

(2) To delegate the authority to the Head of Place & Commercial Services to oversee the proper delivery of the NCN2 improvements project as part of the wider Newton Abbot Future High Street Fund package.

Financial Implications

The financial implications are detailed in section 3.1 below with alternative options in section 4.

Martin Flitcroft
Head of Corporate Services
Email: martin.flitcroft@teignbridge.gov.uk

Legal Implications

See section 3.3

Paul Woodhead
Head of Legal Service & Monitoring Officer
Email: paul.woodhead@teignbridge.gov.uk

Risk Assessment

See section 3.4.1 below

Also see Equality Impact Assessment summary (paragraph 3.4.2).

Estelle Skinner
Green Infrastructure Officer
Email: estelle.skinner@teignbridge.gov.uk

Environmental/ Climate Change Implications

See section 3.5 below.

William Elliot
Climate Change Officer
Email: William.elliot@teignbridge.gov.uk

Report Author

Estelle Skinner, Green Infrastructure Officer (Spatial Planning)
Email: estelle.skinner@teignbridge.gov.uk

Executive Member

Cllr Nina Jeffries

Appendices/Background Papers

Appendix 1 – indicative plan for NCN2 improvements, Cricketfield section
Appendix 2 – recent photographs of NCN2 in Cricketfield car park
Appendix 3 – Equality Impact Assessment

1. Introduction/Background

1.1 The National Cycle Network Route 2 (NCN2) improvements project is part of the Newton Abbot Future High Street Fund package. The NCN2 is a highly acclaimed route that spans from Dover to Cornwall, providing for active travel and recreation for bicycle riding, walking and wheeling (a term used by Sustrans to better represent wheelchair and mobility scooter users). Teignbridge is noted on the Sustrans website as boasting a stretch of excellent NCN2 provision - Exe Estuary Trail – but is also noted as lacking quality connections in and around Newton Abbot.

1.2 The design of the NCN2 improvements project has been strongly influenced by the Teignbridge Cycle Forum which consists of many local stakeholders. The objective is to highlight the benefits of this National Cycle Network route that serves our main town, and also offers links into the wider network. Improvements in quality, legibility and junction safety will encourage a greater volume of users and provide a wider range of users with confidence to use the route.

1.3 In 2019, the Council declared a Climate Change Emergency, became a key stakeholder in the Devon Climate Emergency work, and has produced a Teignbridge Carbon Action Plan. The delivery of active and sustainable travel is recognised as one

of the important responses to the Climate Emergency, with transport being the largest sector of greenhouse gas emissions.

1.4 Supporting of high-quality active journeys also aligns with core Council strategic objectives:

- Moving up a Gear
- Out and About and Active
- Action on Climate
- Great Places to Live & Work

1.5 The Future High Street Fund bid package was approved by Teignbridge's Executive Council in early April 2021 and Full Council later in April 2021. This included the NCN2 improvements project and indicative design plan showing parking modification. There was also approval attained from Devon County Council Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (Teignbridge area) in November 2021. This report is to highlight the localised change to parking via the NCN2 improvements project and to present this alongside a wider parking context.

2. Report Detail

2.1 **Design details (via Cricketfield car park spur)**

2.1.1 The section of the NCN2 improvement project that passes through the spur of Cricketfield car park is shown in Appendix 1 (pink is existing and purple is proposed). The current provision is a single-directional width lane that is unprotected from traffic. Car park vehicles regularly interact with the lane including overhanging the lane when parked. See the two recent photographs of the route in Appendix 2. The NCN2 design is to widen the lane to a bi-directional width, to better accommodate an increased volume of users which is expected following the overall NCN2 improvements and other related projects such as the Ogwell – Newton Abbot bicycle riding, walking and wheeling route. The NCN2 design also includes protection of the lane via successional kerbstones to prevent vehicle interaction while retaining drainage capacity.

2.2 **Local Input**

2.2.1 The Teignbridge Cycle Forum is held biannually and includes a broad range of stakeholders including those with local interest in cycling, walking, accessibility and sustainable transport. Feedback from the Forum strongly influenced the design proposals for NCN2 improvements and was also utilised as part of the local stakeholder and public input for the Heart of Teignbridge Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) production. The public consultation held in spring 2021 (66 respondents) received positive feedback on the NCN2 designs, with almost 70% in support of the improvements via the Cricketfield car park spur (and on Cricketfield Road).

2.3 **Parking Modification**

2.3.1 The parking modification can be seen via the overlay in the design plan in Appendix 1. There is a reduction of up to 23 regular parking spaces in the spur of Cricketfield car

park. This spur is a linear extension to the east of the main Cricketfield car park. The NCN2 route does not pass through the main area of the Cricketfield car park.

2.4 **Town Centre Parking Capacity & Future Strategy**

2.4.1 Based on ticket sales data and recent physical count and drone data that targeted peak usage there is a very significant volume of spare capacity across town centre car parks in Newton Abbot. There were at least 550 spare spaces recorded across our Newton Abbot town centre car parks via physical and drone count data targeting peak times of use, including at least 119 spare spaces in Crickefield car park. Wider information is on the Newton Abbot and Kingsteignton Garden Community website. The NCN2 improvement project will not put any significant pressure on sufficient availability of spaces, due to the scale of spare capacity. There is a possible project for redevelopment of Elm Road car park that would affect in the region of 35 – 40 parking spaces but collectively this would still not put any significant pressure on sufficient availability of spaces.

2.4.2 There are other possible redevelopment projects that may affect car parking capacity in the future in Newton Abbot town centre, most notably within the proposed Local Plan 2020 – 2040 submission for which the final public consultation has recently closed. This includes proposed allocations for Cattlemarket car park, Newfoundland Way car park and Wolborough Way car park (current capacity across all three car parks is 496 spaces).

2.4.3 There is an emerging Parking and Redevelopment Strategy that will include a collective review of prospective town centre redevelopment proposals in relation to town centre car parking capacity and demand. The modelling of a range of the most likely future scenarios will provide recommendations to support the provision of good-quality town centre parking at a suitable capacity over the next 20-years. The Strategy will be useful in supporting Local Plan delivery.

3. Implications, Risk Management and Climate Change Impact

3.1 Financial

3.1.1 The future potential income for a parking space in Cricketfield car park (or other town centre car parks) is difficult to define as it would depend on capacity against demand and would be affected by many variables such as operational and maintenance requirements. However, a broad estimate of £1,360 net income per space for a full capacity scenario can be reached by doubling the latest (2021/22) ‘per space’ net income for this car park which ran at an approximate average capacity of 55%.

3.1.2 However, the high volume of spare capacity of parking spaces in the town centre means that there is unlikely to be a significant commercial loss in relation to the reduction of up to 23-spaces in the Cricketfield car park spur (and there is also unlikely to be a significant commercial loss alongside the possible Elm Road car park redevelopment).

3.1.3 The potential for larger-scale collective reduction of town centre parking capacity and demand will be an important consideration of planning applications, if any are submitted in future, for the redevelopment of existing town centre car parks included in

the proposed 2020 – 2040 Local Plan submission. There need to be measures to ensure capacity will continue to meet parking needs into the future, as this would otherwise affect an important source of revenue and economic sustainability. The Parking and Redevelopment Strategy will consider likely future scenarios and provide targeted recommendations, which can inform decisions as/when any prospective schemes are put forward for consideration in future. This will include consideration of uplift potential for the multi-story carpark that currently has low appeal and low usage but high-running costs.

3.2 Economic opportunities

3.2.1 There are economic benefits that can be generated from provision of high-quality active travel provision, in particular goods and services demand from high-quality multi-user trails, which can benefit the towns and villages linked to those trails. The NCN2 project will deliver improved quality, safety and legibility of the stretch of Nationally recognised route that serves Newton Abbot, which supports connectivity into the popular Stover Trail (National Cycle Network Route 28) to Bovey Tracey that also links onward to the Wray Valley Trail within the heart of Dartmoor. https://www.northdevonbiosphere.org.uk/uploads/1/5/4/4/15448192/sqw_devon_cycling_and_walking_trails_economic_impact_report.pdf

3.2.2 In the public consultation held on the NCN2 project (66-respondents), almost 70% of respondents felt the improvements to the NCN2 via Cricketfield car park (and on Cricketfield Road) are needed. Just shy of 25% of respondents already use their bicycle for shopping trips in town, and a total of 60% of respondents said they would use their bicycle for shopping trips in town if the improvements to NCN2 were carried out. Shopping by bicycle typically encourages a higher volume of overall shopping trips that could notably support spend in town within local shops and the market. National Cycle Network Route proposals - feedback - Teignbridge District Council

3.3 Legal

3.3.1 There are not any prominent legal considerations. The car parking (off-street spaces) Order would need to be updated if the scheme goes ahead, to reflect the change in car parking provision. This can be timed to be included in the annual update to this Order so there would be time and cost efficiencies. Confirmation of text will follow from Paul Woodhead.

3.4 Risks

3.4.1 The provision enables improved safety and legibility for users. Furthermore, dedicated off-road routes that provide logical and well-considered connectivity and quality design will typically improve local uptake and encourage a wider range and diversity of users. As with any public provision, consideration and respect of other users is a natural expectation. Feedback will be requested from the biannual Teignbridge Cycle Forum and other available means, and monitoring of success will be carried out via cycle counter data and consideration of the feedback received.

3.4.2 An Equality Impact Assessment form has been completed and is in Appendix 3. A brief summary of this is below:

Summary of significant negative impacts and how they can be mitigated or justified:

None identified
Summary of positive impacts / opportunities to promote the Public Sector Equality Duty:
The National Cycle Network Route 2 improvement project delivery should encourage more users and a wider diversity of users, in particular those who are less confident, enabling more local people to benefit from associated wellbeing and environmental outcomes.

3.5 Environmental/Climate Change Impact

3.5.1 The project aligns with T9 of the Carbon Plan (to support active travel at junctions). A cohesive active travel network can support a significant improvement in health and wellbeing for the individuals taking part in active travel and for the wider local community via environmental benefits. There is a certain amount of embedded carbon at any scale of new or improved provision but this minimal as the stretch is already hard-surfaced and should not require resurfacing. The kerbstones will not be a continuous line, but will be spaced out at intervals, to reduce materials needed and to facilitate drainage while also providing the protection and segregation for users.

4. Alternative Options

4.1 Partially re-line the main Cricketfield car park area to create an additional 29-spaces at a cost of £87,000 plus inflation costs from February 2022. This would result in the loss of x1 tree, and further budget would be needed to replace this with x2 trees in the surrounding urban environment. The NCN2 improvement project does not have budget for this delivery and so a budget source would need to be identified. The NCN2 delivery is expected this financial year. This option is not feasible via the NCN2 improvement project and so if this is expected as part of this delivery then the bi-directional route via Cricketfield car park will most likely be removed from the NCN2 improvements project, meaning a notably less transformational outcome. Resurfacing is not required at Cricketfield car park presently but when it is required then relining could be tied in as part of that process, for efficiency, separately to the NCN2 improvement project.

4.2 Fully re-line the main Cricketfield car park area to create an additional 43-spaces at a cost of £128,000 plus inflation costs from February 2022. The relining would result in the loss of x2 trees, and further budget would be needed to replace this with x4 trees in the surrounding urban environment. There would be potential to consider a new, combined access and exit junction alongside relining, which may affect the number of spaces gained. The NCN2 improvement project does not have budget for this delivery and so a budget source would need to be identified. The NCN2 delivery is expected this financial year. This option is not feasible via the NCN2 improvement project and so if this is expected as part of this delivery then the bi-directional route via Cricketfield car park will most likely be removed from the NCN2 improvements project, meaning a notably less transformational outcome. Resurfacing is not required at Cricketfield car park presently but when it is required then relining could be tied in as part of that process, for efficiency, separately to the NCN2 improvement project.

5. Conclusion

5.1 There are notable benefits available for local communities via supporting safe, cohesive and effective active travel in Newton Abbot. There are no significant revenue implications in relation to the NCN2 improvements project, even when a reduction of 23 car parking spaces is taken into account.

5.2 The Parking and Redevelopment Strategy will take account of likely future scenarios based on much more significant potential reduction of town centre car parking availability (as proposed through the Local Plan) and will provide targeted recommendations to support planning decisions over the next two decades.

5.3 Options for relining Cricket Field car park have been identified. They are not required at this stage and are unfunded. Unless a more pressing need arises, it would be more efficient to wait until the car park requires resurfacing before relining and reconfiguring the spaces available to increase the car park's capacity.