

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Capital Programme
DATE	9 February 2022
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	South College Street Junction Improvements (Phase 1) Project Progress Report
REPORT NUMBER	RES/22/016
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TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is to update the Committee on the progress of the South College Street Junction Improvements project.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Note the updates to the programme milestones and the associated financial implications.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The purpose of the Project is to support the City Centre Masterplan aims to improve the public realm in the city centre. It will do this by providing additional road capacity to accommodate the rerouting of vehicular traffic arising from the implementation of public realm, bus priority and active travel enhancements along Guild Street, Market Street, Bridge Street and Union Street. The corridor's improved capacity and operation will also complement its position in the new roads hierarchy. In tandem the Project will enhance infrastructure for walking and cycling along its length. Making these improvements is the next step towards providing a transport network to meet Aberdeen's needs and city centre aspirations.

Progress

- 3.2 Further to the project progress reported to Capital Programme Committee on the 18th November 2020 the following progress of note has been made.
- 3.3 Design

Detailed design work is now substantially complete, work continues to finalise agreements with 3rd parties on accommodation works, apparatus diversion/ protection solutions and asset protection.

3.4 Compulsory Purchase Order

The land vesting process is now complete with all land required for the project under Council ownership or control.

3.5 Redetermination Order

The consultation on the required redetermination order, limiting access over side roads and establishing the changes in the right of passage associated with pedestrian and bicycle facilities, has concluded. The order will be made in February 2022.

3.6 Traffic Regulation Order

The consultation on the required traffic regulation order (TRO), restricting turning movements, parking and loading along the project roads, has concluded. A number of objections were received regarding the proposals to regulate waiting and loading on South College Street south of Palmerston Place. Further consultation was undertaken with objectors over the summer 2021. This engagement has now concluded and following the decision of Operational Delivery Committee of 18th November 2021 the orders will be made in February 2022.

3.7 Off Street Car Parking

Due to feedback received from objectors to the TRO, the project is progressing designs, agreements, permissions and orders to enable the formation of a public off street car park opposite the arches businesses south of Bank Street. If viable the establishment of this car park will be included within the main works.

3.8 Advanced Works

During winter 2020/21, works to clear the site of trees and undergrowth were completed, avoiding impacts to nesting birds and programme risk had this remained part of the main works contract. Over the course of Spring 2021 measures were put in place on site to secure areas of ground required for the works, preventing access by motor vehicle. The removal of abandoned vehicles is now complete.

3.9 Main Works Procurement

Procurement of the main works contractor commenced in October 2021 with tenderer selection concluded in November and the tender issued in December.

Programme Milestones

3.10 The project has progress to programme with the Design & Prep milestone achieved on time and the Tender Award on target.

3.11 At the time of OBC approval it was considered likely that the diversion of below ground fibre optic telecom apparatus belonging to statutory undertakers would be required. Sufficient allowances have been made within the project budget to enable these works to be undertaken. However, detailed investigations by

undertakers have revealed the number of cables to be diverted to be significant. Due to the network critical nature of many of the cables, the estimated duration for these diversionary works extends beyond the current works programme duration. While the project team continue to work with undertakers to identify opportunities to compress the durations of these diversionary works, it is unlikely any gains will be sufficient to allow the current planned Full Opening (Autumn 2022) milestone to be met. Therefore this milestone has been amended to Spring 2023 and Project Close to Summer 2024 to reflect the current realities. Notwithstanding this extended works duration the majority of the new additional network capacity will be available in advance of this milestone.

3.12 Updated indicative programme milestones are as shown in the table below:-

MILESTONES	Target Period
Design and Prep	Complete
Tender Award	Winter 2021/22
Full Opening	Spring 2023
Project Close	Summer 2024

3.13 It should be noted that the timescales above do not take any account of any future uncertainties relating to COVID-19 restrictions.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The financial implications are continuing to be managed through detailed budget monitoring.

4.2 The current spend for the project is as follows;

Budget	Spend to date
£10.7m	£0.83m

4.3 As reported to City Growth and Resources Committee on 25th August 2021 the North East Bus Alliance Bid to the Scottish Government Bus Partnership Fund has been successful. The associated grant award includes funding of £10m towards the South College Street Junction Improvements Project (Phase 1) for costs incurred progressing the project. This has allowed current capital funding to be reallocated towards other projects within the Transportation programme and this will be incorporated in the updated General Fund Capital Programme to be presented to the Council's Budget meeting in March 2022.

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk	Until land required for the project is secured it cannot proceed to construction. The Project is a key dependency of phase 2 of the CCMP and aspects of the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan. Any delay to the project will impact on these wider programmes.	L	All land required has now been secured voluntarily or via compulsory purchase order.
Compliance	Failure to follow statutory procedures or Scottish Government grant funding guidance.	L	This will be mitigated through ensuring sufficient time is given to checking documents and eradicating any potential errors.
Operational	There is a risk associated with not providing an improved transport network which does not reflect the needs of the economy and society.	H	This will be mitigated by progressing the project.
Financial	Market volatility may lead to main works tenders significantly exceeding current estimates.	M	Tender return values will be utilised within the final business case, with value for money and available funding assess prior to contract award.
Reputational	There is a risk that Aberdeen City Council will experience reputational damage from supporters of the Project and the CCMP if it does not proceed.	H	This will be mitigated by progressing the Project.

	There is a risk that Aberdeen City Council will experience reputational damage from objectors to the Project if it proceeds.	M	This will be mitigated by trying to address issues raised by objectors but this may not be achievable in all instances.
Environment / Climate	It is likely that the proposals will lead to some detrimental impacts in the locality of the corridor while providing the opportunity for improvement along other routes.	L	Impacts are likely to be acceptable against the relevant standards and commensurate wider area improvements.

7. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	<p>Economy Policy Statement 1. Increase city centre footfall through delivery of the City Centre Masterplan...</p> <p>The proposals within this report form a key enabler for phase 2 of the CCMP. Principally the project will enable the removal of cars on Guild Street and sections of Carmelite Street creating the opportunity to expand pedestrian footways and Union Square as a pedestrian friendly space and form a seamless pedestrian route through the Merchant Quarter. The Project's associated capacity improvements are essential to the success of the east-west routes interventions namely Guild St & Union St.</p>
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Successful delivery of the project will provide a safer road network for all users. Enabling the removal of cars on Guild Street creating the

	<p>opportunity to implement public realm, bus priority and active travel enhancements along Guild Street, Market Street, Bridge Street and Union Street. The Project will also provide additional pedestrian and cycling facilities along the project roads for these more vulnerable road users.</p> <p>Stretch Outcome 11 – Healthy life expectancy is five years longer by 2026.</p>
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	<p>Successful delivery of the project will provide an improved road network for all users. Enabling the removal of cars on Guild Street creating the opportunity to implement public realm, bus priority and active travel enhancements along Guild Street, Market Street, Bridge Street and Union Street. The Project will also provide additional pedestrian and cycling facilities along the project roads.</p> <p>Stretch Outcome 13 - Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions...</p> <p>Stretch Outcome 14 - Increase sustainable travel: 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026.</p>
<p>Regional and City Strategies</p> <p>The Local Transport Strategy and City Centre Masterplan form parts of the Council Delivery Plan Strategy Framework.</p>	<p>The proposals within this report form a key enabler for phase 2 of the CCMP and directly contribute to meeting the LTS's objective to implement a Programme of Road Improvement Schemes, building on the opening of the Third Don crossing, the Airport Link Road and ongoing work for the Berryden Corridor Improvement project.</p>
<p>UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes</p>	
Scottish Government	Bus Partnership Fund Programme (Transport (Scotland) Act 2019)

	The project is now funded by the Scottish Government's Bus Partnership Fund Programme.
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8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	EHRIA required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

RES/19/271 - City Growth and Resources Committee - South College Street Junction Improvements Business Case Update – 26th September 2019

RES/20/090 – Urgent Business Committee – South College Street Junction Improvements (Phase 1) – Compulsory Purchase Order – 6th May 2020

RES/20/195 - South College Street Junction Improvements Project Progress Report – 18th November 2020

10. APPENDICES

There are no appendices to this report.

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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