

Salisbury to Amesbury Cycle Route Project Update

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update to the Amesbury Area Board regarding the Salisbury to Amesbury Cycle Route project, and to earmark funding for Stage 1 (Ford to Hurdcott) of the route.

Recommendation

2. The Area Board is recommended to note this update and to earmark £7,000 from the board's discretionary grants budget 2010/11 for Stage 1 of the route.

Background

3. Creating more cycle routes through towns and villages in this community area has been a priority for over 5 years now. The recent review of local priorities carried out for the new Amesbury Area community plan demonstrates that this remains a priority for at least 8 of the 22 parishes in this area (Allington, Amesbury, Bulford, Durrington, Figcheldean, Idmiston, Steeple Langford, and Winterbourne).
4. In July 2010, the board received an update from transport planning officers regarding the specific ambition of a cycle route from Salisbury to Amesbury, via Porton. The update outlined both the high cost and lower cost options and illustrated what modifications would be required to make the route possible. This report provides an update regarding this particular cycle route project.
5. Work to secure a route connecting Amesbury to Bulford is also being progressed by transport planners, using S106 funding from the Amesbury Tesco Store development.

Salisbury to Amesbury Cycle Route Project Update (see map at appendix 1)

6. Since July 2010, work has been carried out to investigate the lower cost options for this route splitting the route into manageable stages, i.e.

Salisbury to Porton

Stage	Approx Cost	Approx Timetable
1. Ford - Hurdcott	£5 – 10k	4 months
2. Hurdcott – Tanners Lane	£5k	12 months
3. Tanners Lane – Figbury Rd	£7 – 12k	12 months
4. Figsbury Rd – East Gomeldon Rd	£10k	12 months

Porton to Amesbury

Stage	Approx Cost	Approx Timetable
1. Idmiston Arch – A338 junction	£7k	12 months
2. A338 junction to Porton Rd	£4k	12 months
3. Porton Rd – junction with A345	£2k	3 months
4. Junction with A345 – Archers Gate	£2k	3 months

7. Consultations have been carried out with parish councils, landowners and householders along stage 1 (Salisbury-Porton) over the past few months, with the objective of securing support for the Area Board to justifiably earmark £5-10,000 of its discretionary 2010/11 grants budget for this first stage.
8. All appear generally supportive of Stage 1, but a number have queried the rationale for the preferred option being that to the right of the River Bourne, as opposed to the option to the left of the river.
9. The main reasons for routing stage 1 to the right of the river through a private stretch of road and an existing footpath, is that this is likely to be the least expensive, involve less ground work and therefore be completed in a quicker timescale. The works would require signage, some clearance of vegetation, an upgrading of the footpath to a permissive path, and works to make the junction from Ford to the Roman Road safer for cyclists.
10. The alternative route to the left of the River would take cyclists along an existing bridleway. This would involve surface and drainage works, vegetation clearance and widening of the bridleway to accommodate the anticipated increase in use by cyclists. The widening works would also mean that the council would need to acquire some of the adjacent field, and install replacement fencing. The cost of upgrading this route would be substantially more than the cost of upgrading the route to the right of the river. Additionally, with the bridleway being a popular route for horseriders and walkers, the potential hazards of introducing additional cycle-traffic onto this route would need careful assessment and consideration. Current horseriders of this route would prefer that the bridleway is not altered to accommodate additional cycle traffic.

11. Technical Officer advice to the area board is to pursue the route to the right of the river. However, should members wish to further explore the possibilities of using the route to the left of the River, they could commission a basic options appraisal from Mouchel, at an approximate cost of £10,000.

Financial Implications

12. Subject to the outcome of the area board's consideration of items 9 and 11 on this agenda, £17,000 remains available in the board's discretionary grants budget 2010/11. Cabinet has confirmed that area boards are able to rollover underspends to 2011/12, but would prefer to see that, where possible, this funding is earmarked for local projects and priorities.
13. The recommendation is that the area board earmarks £7,000 for Stage 1 (Ford-Hurdcott) of the Salisbury – Porton cycle route, to cover the costs outlined in paragraph 9 of upgrading the route to the right of the River Bourne.

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