

GREATER CAMBRIDGE GREENWAYS

To: Economy and Environment Committee

Meeting Date: 9th March 2017

From: Graham Hughes, Executive Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

Electoral division: Burwell, Cottenham, Histon & Impington, Duxford, Fulbourn, Gamlingay, Hardwick, Linton, Melbourn, Papworth & Swavesey, Sawston, St Ives, The Hemingfords & Fenstanton, Waterbeach, Willingham and Woodditton

Forward Plan ref: Not applicable **Key decision:** No

Purpose: To seek support for establishing a high quality network of non-motorised user (NMU) routes between South Cambridgeshire villages and Cambridge, primarily to encourage commuting by sustainable modes.

Recommendation: Committee are asked to:

- a) Support the proposal for a network of Greenways to be established.
- b) Support the process of community engagement.
- c) Note the work undertaken to date and the next steps.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Whilst Cambridge enjoys the highest levels of residents commuting to work by bike in the UK, there has also been significant growth in levels of cycle commuting in South Cambridgeshire. Despite its' rural nature, the levels of cycle commuting put it fourth for the UK as a whole.
- 1.2 Creating safe, direct and attractive routes would have an impact to increase the levels of cycle commuting further in South Cambridgeshire, and officers are aware from consultations on specific projects and on transport strategies that there is much demand to provide new routes and to improve existing ones.
- 1.3 There is support for new Non-Motorised User (NMU) routes too from businesses. Marshalls have commissioned their own studies in the past, and have helped with funding, land and general delivery of projects. Babraham Research Campus funded £200,000 towards a new cycle route on the A1307, and have worked in partnership to bring about a new route through their site which opened recently.
- 1.4 More people choosing to cycle each day into the city would help to reduce congestion and demand for parking as the city grows.
- 1.5 A better network of NMU routes would also support improved countryside access, leisure, tourism and improved public health, allowing families for instance to get out and about at weekends without being dependent upon access to a car.
- 1.6 The vision of Greenways also potentially encompasses measures to make the routes more attractive and to link into Parish Council led projects and aspirations including planting, public art, habitat creation, seating, signage and information boards, very much in the spirit of the Sustrans National Cycle Network.
- 1.7 From a road safety perspective encouraging cyclists away from the main roads into Cambridge and onto NMU routes would improve safety and perceived safety, and remove some of the barriers for some people who would like to cycle but consider mixing with traffic to be dangerous.

2. PROGRESS TO DATE

- 2.1 With the availability of some City Deal scheme development funds, an initial study into new and improved NMU routes was commissioned, with the name 'Greenways' being applied to the routes and the project as a whole. A plan of the routes reviewed and the proposed network of Greenways can be seen in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.2 Routes to the west and north west of the city are not included, as new NMU routes are to be included in the A14 project, and it is expected that the Greater Cambridge City Deal Cambourne to Cambridge project will include improved facilities for NMUs.
- 2.3 The Greenways study was undertaken by Nigel Brigham, former Regional Director of Sustrans, who actively developed much of the National Cycle Network routes in East Anglia.

- 2.4 The study report and appendices can be viewed on the County Council's website at this link: <http://tinyurl.com/z7m2cxu> . Some initial thoughts have been offered by stakeholders and individuals. The British Horse Society would like to ensure that all of the routes include better provision and full access for equestrians. Cambridge Cycling Campaign feel that the level of ambition shown is not high enough and that proposed routes should be wider – a view contrasting with those offered by some residents and a District Councillor who have concerns about urbanising the countryside.
- 2.5 An officer steering group has been formed to ensure joined up thinking and maximisation of opportunities across City, County and District Councils, as well as County service areas and teams.

3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 To date the project has had no formal political approval. Adopting the concept and aspiration of an improved network of routes would increase the likelihood of obtaining S106 developer funds from developments impacted by the Greenways routes. Should further Department for Transport funds become available then having an initial approval for the project in place will speed up the delivery of the project. There is also the possibility of City Deal or Combined Authority funding.
- 3.2 As and when funding becomes available for each Greenway it is proposed to undertake 'planning for real' exercises with local communities, to identify issues and opportunities, and to determine the preferred route for each Greenway, thus very much a community led 'bottom up' approach to planning the routes.
- 3.3 Once preferred routes are identified it may be necessary to seek to procure private land or access agreements. Planning permission and other statutory processes may also be required.
- 3.4 As the routes begin to be delivered, some form of unique signage and branding will be considered in a bid to promote the network and broaden usage and interest. Promotional materials can also be produced.
- 3.5 Maintenance of routes is an issue that also requires further work. A number of models including the payment of commuted sums and the use of volunteer rangers is under investigation.
- 3.6 Initial Cost:Benefit analysis is being undertaken by transport economists to give some indication of the economic benefits of each route to be improved.
- 3.7 A network of Greenways would bring a broad range of benefits including reduced traffic congestion and improved public health, as well as providing better access to employment and training. The project importantly seeks to actively work with local communities and stakeholders to develop each Greenway, and to maximise the opportunities to realise local aspirations and countryside access and leisure.

4. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

4.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

More people cycling contributes to a healthier population, improved productivity, reduced traffic congestion, reliability of journey times and adds capacity into an already constrained road network, all of which contributes to economic wellbeing.

4.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

Currently many people feel unsafe cycling, although cycling is potentially a form of economic, reliable transport that allows them to access employment or training and hence independence, and the opportunity to incorporate active travel into their lives. The proposed network will go some way address to address concerns that cycling is unsafe.

4.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

Wider, shared use paths should make for less conflict with elderly and disabled people.

5. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Resource Implications

The scheme would be wholly funded by external capital funding such as S106 developer funding, Department for Transport and Greater Cambridge City Deal.

5.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

5.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

5.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

A key part of the project is to work with local communities and stakeholders to develop the Greenways in a 'bottom up' fashion.

5.5 Localism and local member engagement

To date the member involvement has been confined to discussions at Spokes.

5.6 Public Health Implications

More people cycling and walking undoubtedly contributes to improved public health. Cycling is a physical activity that can prevent ill health and improve health. It is important that people are supported and encouraged to be physically active by the provision of infrastructure that encourages active transport and leisure opportunities.

Source Documents	Location
Greenways Review by Nigel Brigham	http://tinyurl.com/z7m2cxu

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: D Parcell
Has the impact on Statutory, Legal and Risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?	Yes Name of Legal Officer: F McMillan
Are there any Equality and Diversity implications?	No Name of Officer: T Oviatt-Ham
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Name of Officer: M Miller
Are there any Localism and Local Member involvement issues?	Yes Name of Officer: T Oviatt-Ham
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Name of Officer: T Campbell

APPENDIX 1 – PROPOSED GREENWAYS NETWORK

Greenways plan

