

Item: 15

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee: 15 November 2023.

Weyland Bay Coastal Path.

Report by Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider a Stage 1 Capital Project Appraisal in respect of the proposed development of a walking and cycling path through the Weyland Bay green space.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is invited to note:

2.1.

That the Weyland Bay Coastal path project is part of the Your Kirkwall Place Plan 2018.

2.2.

The Stage 1 Capital Project Appraisal in respect of the proposed development of a walking and cycling path through the Weyland Bay green space, attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

2.3.

That the cost of developing the Stage 2 Capital Project Appraisal, estimated at £10,000, can be funded from the remaining balance of an allocation from HITRANS granted in 2022/23 in respect of the design and preparation of the project.

It is recommended:

2.4.

That, as an exception to the Capital Project Appraisal process, in order to maximise time limited external funding, the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, should submit, to the Policy and Resources Committee, a Stage 2 Capital Project Appraisal in respect of the proposed development of a walking and cycling path through the Weyland Bay green space.

3. Background

3.1.

The Weyland Bay Coastal Path project originates from the Your Kirkwall Place Plan 2018 and forms the Town to Carness section of the wider Kirkwall Bay Coastal Path project.

3.2.

The purpose of the Town Wide Active Travel Path Network, of which this project forms part of, was to address Strategic Town Wide Objective 4 – to reduce demand for short journeys by car and manage visitor numbers sustainably within Kirkwall. It sought to do so through a gap analysis of Kirkwall's active travel network.

3.3.

The project was included in the Council's Sustainable Transport Project Development Plan and subsequently included in the approved 'Footpaths, Core Path and Cycleway Improvements' Project List.

3.4.

Options 1 and 2, as detailed in the Stage 1 Capital Project Appraisal attached as Appendix 1 to this report, have been designed to result in the creation of a section of off-road active travel infrastructure and connections to the wider network to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists travelling along Carness Road:

- From the homes, campervan site and farm at Carness towards the town centre and Papdale Primary School (which is outwith the school bus catchment area).
- As part of the established circular recreational route encompassing Craigiefield Road (used by residents and tourists).

3.5.

The project is being progressed with a view to making an application to Transport Scotland's Active Travel Transformation Fund, which, if successful, would enable delivery of the construction stage during 2024/25.

4. Options

4.1.

The Stage 1 Capital Project Appraisal, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, considers three options:

- Enhanced Scheme – at a cost of £505,000.
- Core Scheme – at a cost of £285,000.
- Do nothing.

4.2.

Option 2 is recommended as the preferred option on the basis that this delivers a continuous footpath and cycle link along Carness Road as far as Craigiefield Road and makes use of existing footpaths already constructed as far as Enzie Road. This delivers on the objectives of the 'Your Kirkwall Place Plan 2018' to create safe, attractive and easy to use travel links to connect key local areas together, and to key local destinations such as schools and leisure facilities.

5. Links to Council Plan

5.1.

The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan strategic priority theme of Developing our Infrastructure.

5.2.

The proposals in this report relate directly to Priority I3 to Integrate our transport networks to improve operational connectivity and reduce vulnerabilities, of the Council Plan.

6. Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan

The proposals in this report support and contribute to the improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priority of Local Equality.

7. Financial Implications

7.1.

A Stage 1 Capital Project Appraisal is attached at Appendix 1 to this report with an overview of estimated costs to complete the Stage 2 Capital Project Appraisal phase.

7.2.

The estimated cost of developing the Stage 2 Capital Project Appraisal is £10,000. This would be funded from the unspent grant award allocation from HITRANS towards design and preparation of the Carness paths project made in 2022/23 carried forward into 2023/24.

7.3.

The preferred option is to build Option 2 – Core Scheme at an estimated cost of £285,000.

7.4.

Subject to the successful outcome of the grant funding application, the proposed project at an estimated total cost of £285,000 would be funded by £200,000 from the Active Travel Transformation Fund and £85,000 from the Council's Footpaths, Core Path and Cycleway Improvements Fund.

7.5.

The Council's Footpaths, Core Path and Cycleway Improvements Fund was established in December 2021 as part of an allocation of one-off funding towards a series of projects considered to provide excellent recovery prospects from the COVID-19 pandemic. It was initially set aside at £500,000 but was subsequently reduced to £400,000 as part of the budget setting process for financial year 2023/24.

7.6.

A commitment of £155,000 has already been made against the £400,000 set aside for Footpaths, Core Paths and Cycleways, however, this does leave sufficient headroom within this allocation to allow the Weyland Bay Coastal Path project, subject to a successful funding application to the Active Travel Transformation Fund.

8. Legal Aspects

The Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003 provides the Local Authority with the powers to advance and promote well-being. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 imposes a duty on local authorities to promote community planning.

9. Contact Officers

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10. Appendix

Appendix 1: Stage 1 Capital Project Appraisal - Proposed Weyland Bay Coastal Path.

Orkney Islands Council - Capital Project Appraisal Process

Stage 1 Capital Project Appraisal

Capital Programme: General Fund

Client Service: Education, Leisure and Housing

Project Name: Weyland Bay Coastal Path Project

1. Background

The Weyland Bay coastal path project is part of one of the projects in the 'Your Kirkwall Place Plan', a vision originating from the community, through an extensive programme of engagement in 2018. This part of the path will form part of a longer-term ambition for a route that will ultimately stretch from Hatston in the west, to Carness in the east, creating a continuous and accessible route.

The project area green space extends from just north of the Weyland Bay/Carness Road junction to the south, to the Craigiefield/Carness Road junction in the north; and from Carness Road to the east, and the shoreline to the west. The aim is to design and implement an active travel route linking Carness to Kirkwall town centre along the coast but should also seek to improve the space in terms of access and ecology.

The aim (purpose) of the project is to:

- Improve the walking, wheeling and cycling routes and environment through the Weyland Bay green space.
- As part of the above, include biodiversity and community space where possible.

The objectives:

- Create a safe, attractive and easy to use active travel links to connect key local areas together, and to key local destinations such as schools, leisure facilities and places of work thus reducing reliance on and priority of private vehicles and increasing independent physical activity.
- Seek to develop ideas collaboratively: engage as many stakeholders, members of the local community and key interest groups in the design process as possible, to ensure that the proposals are suitable for all.
- Review local habitat types with a view to improvement, but also supporting the community/active travel uses for the space, adding comfort as well as usability to the space.
- The design work will ensure that the proposals fit the site, context and users.

The intended outcomes (benefits of the project when completed):

- Increase the knowledge and uptake of active travel modes in the local area.
- Improve physical and mental wellbeing by providing safe and easy to use active travel routes.

- Improve biodiversity in the green space, including adding shelter and forage for local target species.
- As a further outcome, to identify an 'islands-specific' design approach to active travel design, which can help to inform future projects.

2. Community Engagement

Community engagement was carried out in 2022, and pedestrian, cycle and traffic data was collected in advance to inform this process. A further period of data collection followed in September to account for seasonal variation. The activities carried out are described below.

Pedestrian, cycle and traffic data was collected in May 2022. The data was summarised for use within the community engagement as evidence and talking points, and has been used to feed into the design process.

The engagement phase commenced in August 2022, and took three forms:

- Project website:
 - Website with site and project information, including some thematic ideas (see the Appendix for full boards) – and ending with a digital survey. This went live on Wednesday 24 August and the survey ran from then until Thursday 1st September.
- Stakeholder Session:
 - Friday 26 August: stakeholder session from 11am-1pm in south-west Kirkwall with local stakeholders, testing existing walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure, including with borrowed e-bikes and mobility bikes.
 - This session was intended to invite more directed feedback in terms of physical and mental health challenges through the testing of existing designed spaces in Kirkwall. Feedback from this has been fed into the design work.
- In Person On Site Engagement:
 - Friday 26 August: on-site in-person engagement session on the Weyland Bay greenspace between 3-6pm. Notes were taken of conversations, and all attendees encouraged to fill in the online survey, or use the dedicated email address to return comments and ideas.

A week-long online community survey was carried out between 24 August and 1 September 2022. The survey was completed by 63 respondents.

- 79% of respondents supported the proposal to improve walking, wheeling and cycling through the green space at Weyland Bay.
- 75% of respondents live, work or own a business nearby, while only 8% travel actively through the area to make a purposeful journey.
- 0% of respondents currently travel through the area to get to school.
- Most respondents travelled to/through the area in a vehicle as a driver.

- Children's safety when cycling to or through the green space at Weyland Bay was considered to be either 'fairly bad' or 'very bad' by almost 2 out of 3 of respondents.
- 22% had dependents under the age of 16 within their household and only 14% of these said they did not travel with children.
- 44% of respondents said they felt exposed/vulnerable to other road users.
- 37% said that a lack of cycle paths was a key barrier to walking, wheeling and cycling to and through the green space at Weyland Bay.
- 19% said a lack of street lighting was a key barrier.
- 13% of respondents said that accessibility issues were a barrier to walking, wheeling and cycling to and through the green space at Weyland Bay.
- 10% of respondents described suffering from a physical health condition or illness expected to last for 12 months or more.
- 8% described suffering from a mental health condition or illness expected to last for 12 months or more.
- 39% said that their mental health condition was improved by outdoor activity.
- 31% said they used a mobility aid.
- 8% said they used a walking stick or frame.

The above data and stakeholder and community feedback has been used to inform the design proposals so that they are both responsive to local context and cater for the needs of people of all ages and abilities.

3. Options Appraisal

The following options are available:

3.1. Option 1 – Enhanced Scheme

This option is to construct a 495m long asphalt paved 2.5m wide cycle path within the green space running roughly parallel to Carness Road in a north/south orientation. The cycle path widens to 3.5m and meets the road at an oblique angle at the entrance points, the northern entrance being located at Craigiefield Road and the southern entrance at Weyland Bay. A number of short connections will also be made from the cycle path to existing layby areas, repairs to the surfacing of these laybys would be made. A 128m long 1.0m wide footpath loop will be constructed at the northern end of the green space from the northern entrance point out towards the shore and back towards the cycle path. A layout drawing for Option 1 is included in Annex 1.

This option will retain most of the existing mown grass area but add areas of native shrubs and wildflower where they can help provide shelter to the cycle path. Ornamental species will also be added at the park entrances to provide texture and colour.

Three 12m long, 1m high, stone-faced masonry feature walls will be constructed at various locations. Four new benches and associated plinths will be added to the green space along with an interpretation panel and other related small signage.

Cycle path lighting will be constructed and will consist of column light fixtures along the length of the path with illuminated bollards at the entrances.

The estimated cost of this option is ££505,000 incl. fees and contingency (20%).

3.2. Option 2 – Core Scheme

This option is to construct a 318m long asphalt paved 2.5m wide cycle path within the green space running roughly parallel to Carness Road in a north/south orientation. The cycle path widens to 3.5m and meets the road at an oblique angle at the entrance points, the northern entrance being located at Craigiefield Road and the southern entrance at Enzie Road, where a footway provides onwards access towards town. A number of short connections will also be made from the cycle path to existing layby areas. A layout drawing for Option 2 is included in Annex 1. This option will retain most of the existing mown grass area but add areas of native shrubs and wildflower where they can help provide shelter to the cycle path.

Two 12m long, 1m high, stone-faced masonry feature walls will be constructed at various locations. Three new benches and associated plinths will be added to the green space along with an interpretation panel and other related small signage. Cycle path lighting will be constructed and will consist of column light fixtures along the length of the path with illuminated bollards at the entrances.

The estimated cost of this option is £285,000 incl. fees and contingency (20%).

3.3. Option 3 – Do Nothing

This option would be to construct no cycle path or associated works. Cyclists and pedestrians would therefore continue to use Carness Road and the desire line shoreline grass path for their travel needs. This does not effectively promote or enhance active travel.

4. Financial Implications

The estimated cost of developing the Stage 2 Capital Project Appraisal is £10,000 and will be funded from the unspent grant award allocation from HITRANS towards design and preparation of the Carness paths project made in 2022/23 carried forward into 2023/24.

The preferred option is to build Option 2 – Core Scheme at an estimated gross cost of £285,000, with grant funding of £200,000 and a contribution of £85,000 from the Footpaths, Core Path and Cycleway Improvements Fund.

The preferred option, subject to a successful grant application, leaves a nil net cost to OIC, with no requirement to borrow from the Loans Fund, as follows:

	Total	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Capital Expenditure						
Design/preparation of CPA2.						
Construction costs			245			
Fees						
Engineering design			20			
Landscape design			20			
Less: Anticipated Grants			(200)			
Less: Contributions			(85)			
Net Cost to OIC			0			
Revenue Implications						
Financing/Loan Charges						
Estimated cost of detailed Stage 2 CPA			10			

5. Policy Aspects

The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan strategic priority theme of Developing our Infrastructure.

6. Statutory Responsibility

There are no statutory responsibilities that apply to this project. However the Council should continue to look at opportunities to improve active travel where feasible particularly those that promote safer walking and cycling routes to schools.

7. Land Purchase Requirement

None of the three options being considered require the purchase of additional land.

8. Impact on Local Business, Employment and the Economy

Given the type and scale of construction it is likely that a local contractor will construct the works should one of the two build options move forward which would have a direct employment benefit to the contractor. Additionally, through the contractor the construction work will result in financial benefits for local businesses in the supply chain and the wider local economy.

9. Risk Assessment

Risks of Proceeding

- Planning permission would be required for Option 1 but it is anticipated that Option 2 could be constructed under permitted development.
- The project is being developed with the intention to submit it to Transport Scotland's Active Travel Transformation Fund (ATTF) It is anticipated that the fund will open in December 2023. The fund is for construction ready projects and the requirement for planning consent would therefore provide a risk to the provision of funding.
- ATTF funding would be on basis of delivery during FY 24/25.
- Lighting design will be required to establish a lighting scheme that is suitable to meet OIC Roads adoptable standards.
- Landscape design will require to consider suitability of planting types in coastal environment.

Risk of Not Proceeding

- Council fails to deliver one of key projects from 'Your Kirkwall Place Plan' 2018.
- Active travel routes are not enhanced or developed.
- Potential loss of confidence from partners and funders including Transport Scotland, Sustrans and Hitrans.
- Cyclists and pedestrians using the Weyland and Carness route are required to continue using the Carness Road which currently does not have continuous footpath provision and therefore are required to share space with motor vehicles on an unlit section of road subject to national speed limit.

10. Accountable Officers

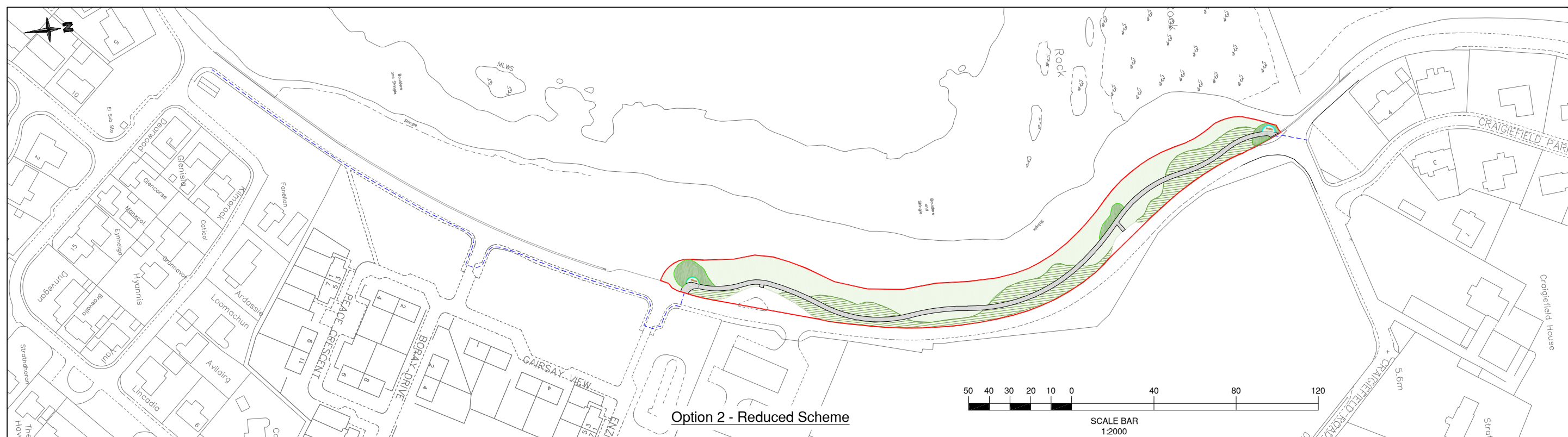
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11. Annex

Annex 1 – Layout Plan Options 1 and 2.



A	Appendix to document	13/10/23	SG	MH	DC
Rev	Desc	Date	By	Chk	App

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Revision A			
Drawn SG	Checked MH	Approved DC	
Date 12/10/23	Scale 1:2000	Original drawing size 420mm x 297mm (A3)	

Weyland Bay Coastal Path

Options 1 and 2

ENGINEERING

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