

Report for Information

Report to	Sustainable Development Panel	Item
	25 January 2012	7
Report of	Head of city development	
Subject	Norwich Connect 2	

Purpose

To inform members of new cycling / pedestrian infrastructure delivered through external funding.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the information in this report.

Financial Consequences

The financial consequences of this report are a commitment to deliver a project using £311,000 external funding. Funding is to be drawn down following project completion; therefore project management includes strict tolerances and use of break points within the programme.

Strategic Priority and Outcome/Service Priorities

The report helps to meet the strategic priority “Strong and prosperous city – working to improve quality of life for residents, visitors and those who work in the city now and in the future”

Contact Officers

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Background Documents

None.

Background

1. In 2007, £900,000 of Big Lottery Funding was earmarked for Norwich, as part of the Sustrans Connect2 initiative to introduce more dedicated foot and cycle routes to the UK's towns and cities. The Norwich route was to link the city centre to Whitlingham Country Park via Riverside and included a new bridge across the River Wensum, linking the city's Utilities site and Deal Ground. One of the conditions of funding was that the whole route needed to be completed by the end of March 2013.
2. A major part of this route is due to be delivered by developers as they bring forward the regeneration of their sites. However, due to the recession it is unlikely that this will take place before the Sustrans deadline. The council has therefore negotiated to draw down £260,000 from Sustrans' original £900,000 allocation (on the basis that major components of the route e.g. Lady Julian bridge have already been constructed).
3. This funding has been banked (with no time limitation) so that it can be used to complement the part of the route to be provided by developers when this is delivered. Developers at the Utilities and Deal Ground sites have confirmed that new footpaths and cycleways are integral to their plans, which they expect to deliver over the next few years. The original route will therefore be delivered without the need for any further financial support from the public sector.

The revised Connect 2 route

4. Officers have negotiated with Sustrans over the past few months and secured a further £311,000 for Norwich to deliver cycle / footpath improvements to expand the cycle network to include Mousehold Heath. This involves improving Valley Drive and connecting it with existing traffic-free facilities on Gilman Road via Gurney Road, where proposals to improve cyclists' safety are currently under development. The route will link the Open Academy with Sewell Park College, who are developing shared sixth-form arrangements. This will provide a safe route linking the east of the city with existing routes including the traffic-free routes of Marriott's and Lakenham Way.

Timescales

5. Initial work on this additional route is due to start during January 2012, with construction taking place during summer and autumn and completion by March 2013. A map of the route is supplied.

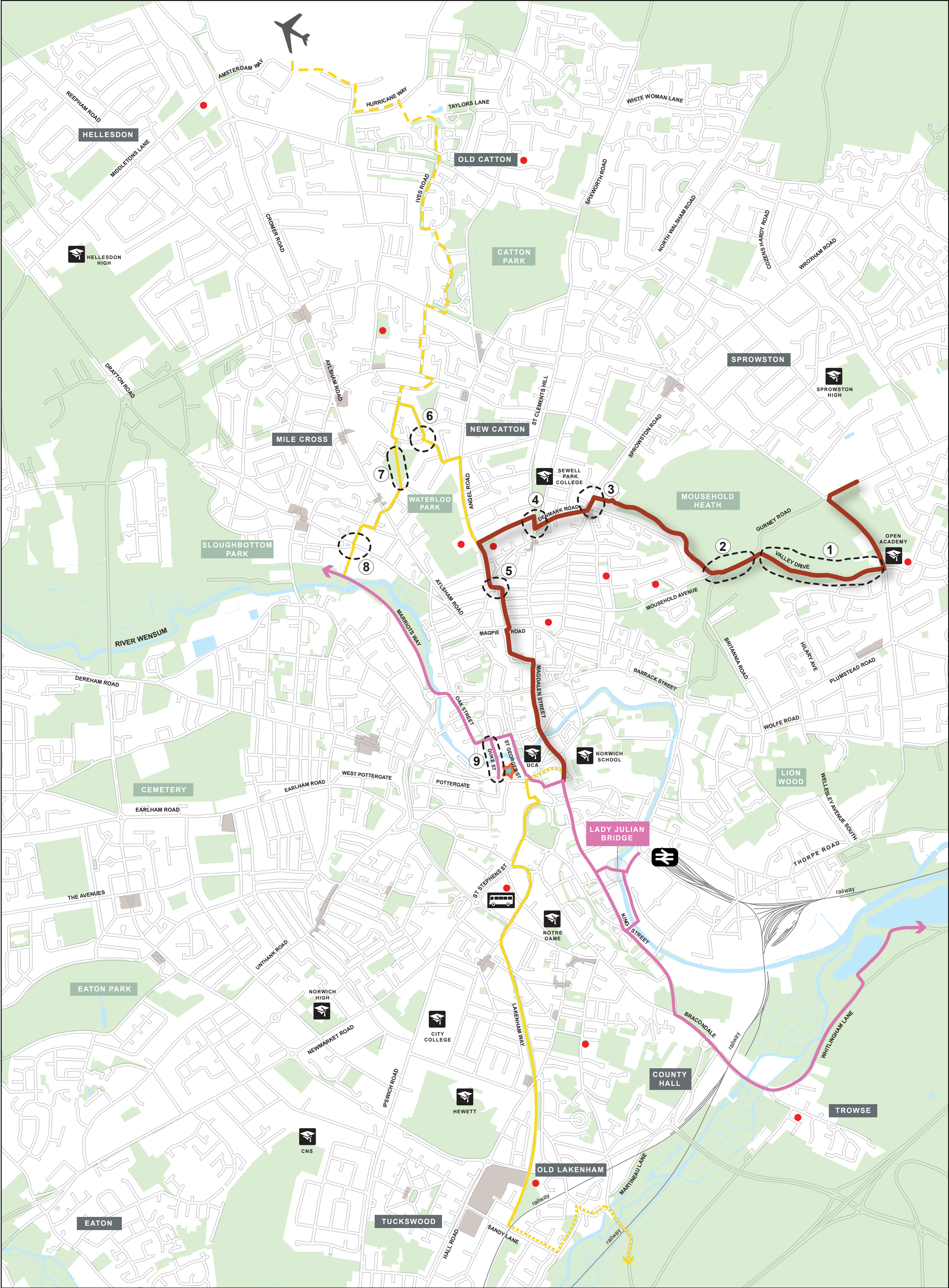
Stakeholder involvement

6. A stakeholder group has been convened including representatives from Norwich Cycling Campaign, Open Academy, Sewell Park College, Angel Junior School and others. Mousehold Heath Conservators are actively involved in developing proposals for Valley Drive and Gurney Road. Where appropriate, discrete elements of the route will be subject to public consultation. The selection of areas for improvement has been influenced by the consultation recently undertaken with stakeholders in relation to the development of a coherent cycle network for the whole city.

Project delivery arrangements

7. Norwich Connect 2 is subject to the scrutiny of a project team and to the city council's Capital Programme Board. On-highway elements will be delivered through existing contractual arrangements with the county council partnership; off-highway elements through a competitive tendering process.
8. Sustrans funding is to be drawn down following completion of the route. Financial risk to the council will be minimised through identifying 'break points' at which the project can be stopped if timely delivery cannot be achieved.

Plan appended to this report.



Norwich Connect 2 - alternative network

05 December 2011

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KEY

- Proposed Mousehold Heath route (Connect 2 funded)
- Existing Sustrans routes (NCN Route 1)

- To be delivered 2011 - 13 (NCC funded)
- To be delivered 2013 - 14 (NCC funded)
- Aspiration

- Proposed measures on network
See Delivery Schedule for details
- Secure cycle parking (in St Andrews Car Park)

- Education (post - 11)
- First schools (pre - 11) within 500m of route

0 250 500 1,000 Metres

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