

## NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

### EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT TO THE CABINET

DATE: 22 May 2013

TITLE: Newcastle Greenway  
Links to Communities Bid

Submitted by: Roger Tait – Head of Operations

Portfolio: Culture and Active Communities

Works Affected: Knutton & Silverdale, Silverdale & Parksite, Town, and Cross Heath

#### Purpose of the Report

- To inform Cabinet of a proposed project, led by Staffordshire County Council to improve the cycle route along the Newcastle Greenway (former mineral line).
- To seek the approval of the Cabinet for the scheme where it is located on Borough Council owned land

#### Recommendations

- That the information be received
- That the scheme be approved and landowner consent be granted to Staffordshire County Council (and their agents) to undertake the work and thereby adopt the Greenway as Highway upon completion of the works.

#### Reasons

- To improve infrastructure which facilitates and encourages walking and cycling in Newcastle

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity, working on practical projects so that people can choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment. Sustrans has been delivering safe walking and cycling routes with funding from the Department of Transport. Through their grant programmes, the Government is seeking to reduce the proportion of journeys by private car use in order to cut congestion and pollution, and allow many more people the choice to take regular exercise and gain a sense of independence.
- 1.2 Staffordshire County Council has produced the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan 2011 which demonstrates how walking and cycling will

play an important role in achieving the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 long term vision which is:

- A transport system that supports Staffordshire's economy and safely and conveniently connects people and services within Staffordshire and beyond; it provides opportunities for services and jobs to be accessed in a sustainable way, and makes sure that the adverse effects of transport on Staffordshire's rich environment and on residents' quality of life is minimised.

The County Council's commitment to walking and cycling is demonstrated in current draft cycling and walking strategies. The Cycling Strategy's long term vision is to create a culture where people of all ages and abilities chose to cycle, especially for a proportion of their shorter journeys because it is safe, healthy, attractive, environmentally friendly and an enjoyable alternative to the car. The Walking Strategy's vision is to create an environment where people walk more often and for longer distances.

1.3 Staffordshire County Council has also produced the Newcastle-under-Lyme (urban) Transport and Development Strategy (NTADS) for the period 2008/09 to 2012/13 (Extended to April 2014). The overall aim of the strategy is to help:

- Reduce congestion, accessibility and safety problems currently experienced with the Newcastle urban area.
- Reduce pressures that new developments are placing on local infrastructure.
- Increase the opportunities to travel by sustainable modes of transport.
- Support the regeneration of the area.

Since 2008, around £2 million of Local Transport Plan resources have been well used to deliver NTADS projects, including cycling facilities and safer routes to schools projects. The Newcastle Greenway will link to the Lyme Valley (North) Cycle Route and also a proposal to improve North / South cycle routes in the A34 corridor.

## **2. Issues**

2.1 Your officers have worked in partnership with Staffordshire County Council for a number of years to identify opportunities to improve the cycle and footpath network in the Borough and to deliver projects which meet the strategic objectives of both authorities.

A project has been identified along the Newcastle Greenway (former Silverdale mineral line). The existing footpath/cycle route would be upgraded to improve the traffic free shared footpath and cycleway from Brampton Sidings to the rear of Newcastle Street, Silverdale linking up with the recently created section of the Newcastle Greenway adjacent to the Former Silverdale Colliery and also the Lyme Valley (North) Cycle Route.

This route will provide links to 4 local schools (St. Mary's Primary School on Silverdale Road, St. Giles and St. George's Primary School

on Orme Road, St. John Fisher High School on Ashfields New Road and Knutton, St Mary's Primary School) and increase opportunities for pupils to cycle to school. The proposed works would include aspects such as hard surfacing, lighting, signage and access control.

- 2.2 Staffordshire County Council has secured a funding package of £660,000 for the scheme, comprised of Local Transport Plan funds (£110,000), Newcastle under Lyme (urban) Transport and Development Strategy (NTADS) (£100,000) and Sustrans/DfT Links to Communities fund (£450,000).

The County Council will deliver the project using its partner contractor for highway maintenance and construction (Enterprise plc). It is proposed to commence construction work in early June 2013 and complete the scheme by Christmas 2013.

The County Council will adopt the route as highway post – completion and maintain it from then on.

- 2.3 Parts of the proposed route are on land, which the Borough Council owns:

- Brampton Sidings to A34 underpass
- A34 underpass to Church Lane
- Church Lane to end of Newcastle Street, Silverdale

It is therefore necessary for the Borough Council to grant consent as landowner to the County Council to allow the project to be implemented.

- 2.4 A copy of the Links to Communities Bid document, which includes plans of the proposals, is attached to this report as Appendix A.

### **3. Options Considered**

- 3.1 The most beneficial option is to support the project and enable the project to be delivered.

### **4. Proposal**

- 4.1 It is proposed to approve the scheme and grant landowner consent to Staffordshire County Council to implement the project.

### **5. Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 5.1 To improve infrastructure which facilitates and encourages walking and cycling in Newcastle.

### **6. Outcomes linked to Corporate Priorities**

- 6.1 A Clean, Safe and Sustainable Borough  
6.2 A Healthy and Active Community  
6.3 Becoming a co-operative Council which delivers high quality, community-driven services.

**7. Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 7.1 The Council is empowered to provide recreational facilities by a number of statutes relating to open space, public health, miscellaneous praising and well-being.

**8. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 8.1 It is considered that there would be a positive differential impact resulting from the project as it would provide access to improved opportunities for walking and cycling where these are currently limited.

**9. Financial and Resource Implications**

- 9.1 There are no capital financial implications for the Council arising from this report as the project is to be entirely funded by Staffordshire County Council with the funding package detailed in Section 2.2 of this report.
- 9.2 Staffordshire County Council will adopt the route as highway post - completion and maintain the infrastructure from then on. Therefore there are no revenue implications for the council associated with the project.

**10. Major Risks**

- 10.1 There are no major risks associated with the project currently identified.  
Should risks arise, they will be reported to Cabinet at the appropriate time.

**11. Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

- 11.1 It is considered that the project will have a positive impact on sustainability and climate change by reducing traffic congestion and pollution and by providing greater opportunities for walking and cycling.

**12. Key Decision Information**

- 12.1 The proposal does not involve significant expenditure or saving of Council resources.
- 12.2 It impacts directly on 4 wards and has been included in the forward plan.

**13. List of Appendices**

- 13.1 Appendix A: Newcastle Greenway ~ Links to Communities Bid) – February 2013