

# Birmingham City Council

## Report to Cabinet

11 November 2025



<b>Title:</b>	<b>A38 CYCLE ROUTE EXTENSION – SELLY OAK TO LONGBRIDGE – OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE</b>
<b>Lead Member:</b>	Councillor Majid Mahmood, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport
<b>Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee:</b>	Sustainability and Transport
<b>Has this report been shared with the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair?</b>	Yes
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<b>Authorised by:</b>	Richard Lawrence – Executive Director of Place, Prosperity and Sustainability Richard.lawrence@birmingham.gov.uk
<b>Is this a Key Decision?</b>	Yes Forward Plan Reference: <b>015517/2025</b>
<b>Reason(s) why not included on the Forward Plan and confirm who has authorised it to be considered:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Is this a Late Report?</b>	No
<b>Reason(s) why Late and confirm who has authorised it to be considered:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Is this decision eligible for ‘call in?’</b>	Yes
<b>If ‘call-in’ has been dis-applied, please provide reason(s) and confirm who has authorised:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Wards:</b>	Weoley & Selly Oak, Bournville & Cotteridge, Allens Cross, Northfield, Longbridge & West Heath
<b>Does this report contain exempt or confidential information?</b>	No

## **1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to the Outline Business Case (OBC) for the A38 Cycle Route Extension – Selly Oak to Longbridge project, in order to proceed to Full Business Case (FBC).
- 1.2 The project which is estimated at a total capital cost of £22.5m, extends the cycle link along the A38 corridor that was delivered in 2019 between city centre and Selly Oak by another 6km to Longbridge. The full project plans are shown in Appendix E.
- 1.3 This report summarises the options considered for delivery, consultation and engagement carried out, and funding strategy of the project.

## **2 COMMISSIONERS' REVIEW**

- 2.1 The Commissioners support the recommendations.

## **3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **That Cabinet:**

- 3.1 Approves the Outline Business Case as detailed in Appendix A for the A38 Cycle Route Extension – Selly Oak to Longbridge project, estimated at a total capital cost of £22.5m, funded from £14.5m of City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) grant funding and £8.0m of local match funding. The match funding is to be made of £4.0m of Clean Air Zone (CAZ) and £4.0m of Bus Lane Enforcement net revenue surplus.
- 3.2 Approves the release of £2.0m in order to develop the Full Business Case, which is to be funded from £0.900m of CRSTS grant subject to approval of the West Midlands Combined Authority's Single Assurance Framework Outline Business Case, and £1.1m of CAZ net revenue surplus money as local match funding.
- 3.3 Delegates authority to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, for approval of the subsequent Full Business Case including revised financial appraisals, in consultation with the Executive Director of Place, Prosperity & Sustainability and the Executive Director of Finance and S151 Officer (or their delegate).
- 3.4 Authorises the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport to submit an external Full Business Case to the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) at an estimated cost of £13.0m as part of their Single Assurance Framework to release CRSTS grant for delivery and, subject to the WMCA granting approval accept the funding.
- 3.5 Authorises the City Solicitor (or their delegate) to negotiate, execute, seal and complete all necessary documents in connection with the above recommendations/approvals.

- 3.6 Notes that a strategy for the procurement activity of services and works required to support the delivery of the project will be submitted as a separate standalone document for Cabinet approval.
- 3.7 Notes the requirement at Full Business Case, to dedicate a small parcel of land as Highway Maintainable at Public Expense currently within the City Council Leisure Services holding.

## **4 KEY INFORMATION**

### **Context**

- 4.1 In 2019, the Council delivered a segregated cycle track from the city centre to the northern end of Selly Oak local centre as part of the Birmingham Cycle Revolution programme. At that time there was no sufficient funding to continue the route to the south of Selly Oak, and further expansion remained an aspiration.
- 4.2 A further section of cycle route was completed in 2021 in the vicinity of Harborne Lane as part of the Selly Oak Phase 1B project. Subsequently, temporary 'pop-up' cycle measures were introduced through the Selly Oak local centre under the Emergency Active Travel Fund Tranche 1 programme in 2020. These temporary measures are due to be made permanent later in 2026/27 as part of the Bristol Road Enhancement project. There have also been some new cycling measures in Longbridge as part of the Longbridge Connectivity project, and the off-road Merritts Brook and Rea Valley route also across the corridor.
- 4.3 The proposed cycle route as part of this project will extend along the A38 Bristol Road corridor from Selly Oak to Longbridge, a distance of approximately 6.0km, linking the existing cycle facilities listed above.
- 4.4 Transforming the city's transport is fundamental to meeting the challenges of the next decade and beyond. Economic, population and housing growth will create additional demand for travel, which cannot be accommodated via ongoing car dependence. The current transport system does not meet the needs of citizens, with those in the greatest need unable to access jobs, education and other essential services, whilst at the same time suffering the negative effects of the operation of the current system, being exposed to poor air quality, high risk of road harm and the health impacts of low levels of physical activity. Responding to the climate emergency requires significant reductions in carbon emissions from transport, which cannot be achieved without a wholesale shift towards public transport and active modes.
- 4.5 The vision for Birmingham's transport is set out in the Birmingham Transport Plan (BTP) adopted in October 2021. One of its objectives is to reduce transport's damaging impact on the environment, supporting Birmingham's commitment to becoming a carbon neutral city by 2030.
- 4.6 The A38 Cycle Route Extension – Selly Oak to Longbridge project, aligns with the social, economic and environmental objectives of the BTP by focusing on

reducing the dependency on private car usage, providing safer and attractive active transport infrastructure and therefore contributing towards better air quality and promoting the health and wellbeing of people in Birmingham.

- 4.7 The project is contained within the CRSTS Programme Governance report approved by Cabinet on 16 May 2023, which delegates the subsequent full business case of named CRSTS schemes to the relevant Cabinet Members in consultation with executive officers.
- 4.8 The project is also contained within the Transportation and Highways Delivery Programme (THDP) 2024/25 to 2029/30 – Annual Programme Update report approved at Cabinet on 25 June 2024.

### **Proposal and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.9 Following on from the work carried out at Strategic Outline Case, five options were considered including 'Do Nothing' (Option 1), Do Minimum (Option 2) and three alternative route layouts (Option 3 to 5). These are described below and in Appendix A. Option 5 is the preferred option recommended to proceed to Full Business Case and delivery.

#### Option 5 - Segregated two-way cycle route on the central reservation (£22.5m)

- 4.10 This option continues with the previously adopted standards along the corridor, based on using the available centre space of the carriageway to provide cyclists with a comfortable and largely segregated link between Selly Oak and Longbridge, allowing a seamless journey along an attractive green space with safer interaction with vehicular traffic and other road users. Plans showing the proposed general arrangements are provided in Appendix E.

### **Other Options Considered**

#### Option 1 - 'Do nothing' (£0.6m)

- 4.11 The standard of the cycling infrastructure from Selly Oak to Longbridge is below the current national guidance that would be regarded as desirable in order to adequately promote active travel and meet the aspirations of the BTP. It is therefore, not taken forward as an option. While a 'Do Nothing' option would not involve future costs, it would still include the £0.6m of capital expenditure incurred to develop options and complete OBC stage.

#### Option2 - 'Do minimum' (£5.0m)

- 4.12 This option considers localised resurfacing only, in order to provide a more attractive cycling experience than currently available. Whilst the cheapest option considered to bring some improvements, this solution would not deliver the desired level of changes deemed necessary to promote a substantial modal shift along this section of the corridor. It was therefore, not taken forward as an option.

### Option 3 - Segregated two-way cycle route on the western side of the A38 Corridor (£21.0m)

- 4.13 This option provides a two-way segregated cycle route along most of the western footways of the corridor. Whilst the cheapest option considered to deliver substantial level of improvements needed to meet the Council's objectives, the possible impact on existing homes and businesses as well as the likely local opposition results in the recommendation to abandon this option.

### Option 4 – Segregated with-flow cycle route (£28.9m)

- 4.14 This option proposes a variant on Option 3, with a one-way segregated cycle route on footways either side of the carriageway. Whilst this option meets the Council's objectives, it is the most expensive and also retains the similar likely impacts of Option 3. It is therefore, not taken forward as an option.

## **5 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 5.1 A Risk Register is included in Appendix C. The main risks if the scheme is not delivered are:

Financial risk for the Council if the scheme is not delivered. The CRSTS external grant used to fund the cost of the project development is a Department for Transport external grant managed by Transport for West Midlands. Non-delivery could result in financial pressure to the project due to the possible clawback of funding allocated towards spend already incurred, including Council officers time, therefore an alternative budget would need to be found to cover the spend to date and the forecasted costs. This could also place future funding at risk.

- 5.2 The main risks and mitigations if the project is delivered are:

Risk: Delay in necessary approvals may lead to increase in project costs and an extension to the programme.

Mitigation: Robust reports will be produced to ensure smooth and timely approvals. Continued engagement with finance will take place to establish revenue implications and sources of funding. Estimated capital costs have been produced to provide a robust construction estimate for the works.

Risk: Delays to the approval of the Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) if a high number of objections are received.

Mitigation: Constraints arising from the initial public consultation will be reviewed and where possible, adjustments made to the proposals in order to remove potential objections ahead of the TRO statutory consultation at FBC stage and thus mitigate impact on delivery.

Risk: Delays to construction works and associated costs as the works are spread over a wide area.

Mitigation: Extensive project controls are in place including a dedicated Project Manager, supported by commercial, scheduling and contract management processes. A range of surveys and investigations will take place prior to construction starting, to fully understand the site conditions and allow necessary mitigations to be put in place.

## **6 CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 A public consultation including key stakeholder groups was undertaken via the Council's 'Be Heard' consultation platform between 23 June 2025 and 28 July 2025. In addition, within that period, four in-person public events were organised at several locations along the corridor as well as one, in-person meeting with key businesses and stakeholders. Further details are provided in Appendix A and D.

## **7 MEMBER ENGAGEMENT**

### **Ward Councillor(s)**

- 7.1 Early online engagement meetings with Ward Councillors were carried out in February 2025 during the design development process, where scheme concepts and proposals were presented and discussed.
- 7.2 The Ward Councillors and MPs were then provided with details of the proposals in June 2025 as part of the public consultation exercise.
- 7.3 No objections to the proposals were received from Ward Councillors and MPs.

### **Overview and Scrutiny**

- 7.4 The project as presented meets the policy objectives as stated. It has been approved previously by Cabinet within the 'Corridors' section of the Transportation and Highways Delivery Programme 2024/25 to 2029/30 – Annual Programme Update report approved at Cabinet on 25 June 2024.
- 7.5 The report has been shared with the Sustainability and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair, who confirmed support to the project.

### **Other**

- 7.6 Not Applicable.

## **8 IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS**

### **Finance and Best Value**

- 8.1 The total estimated capital cost of the project is £22.5m, which is to be funded from £14.5m of CRSTS external grant (of which £1.5m is to develop to FBC stage) and £8.0m of local match funding as approved by Cabinet on 16 May 2023 within the CRSTS Programme Governance Report.

- 8.2 The local match funding is to be made of £4.0m of CAZ and £4.0m of Bus Lane Enforcement (BLE) net revenue surplus as approved by Cabinet on 25 June 2024 in the THDP 2024/25 to 29/30 – Annual Programme Update report.
- 8.3 The current estimated net highway maintenance cost for the newly created assets from the proposals is £0.094m per annum which is to be funded from provision held within the Highways Inventory Change revenue budget.
- 8.4 The proposals include the introduction of a BLE camera at the junction of A38 Bristol Road and Weoley Park Road, which is expected to be operational in 2028/29 for five years before further review and potential decommissioning. The estimated income from penalty charge notices in that period, is estimated at £0.250m with operational and other costs estimated at £0.188m, creating a ring-fenced surplus of £0.062m.
- 8.5 To date £0.600m of CRSTS external grant funding was released on August 2024 to complete the Outline Business Case following approval of the Strategic Outline Case (SOC).
- 8.6 It should be noted that £0.135m was allocated through CRSTS Capacity Fund revenue budget in June 2022 to complete the SOC. This £0.135m funding however was additional and separate from the £14.5m of CRSTS capital funding for the delivery of the scheme and not included in the overall capital cost figures detailed within this report.
- 8.7 This report seeks to release a further £2.0m of capital expenditure for the development of the FBC, which is to be funded from £0.900m of CRSTS external grant and £1.1m of local match funding from CAZ net revenue surplus. The release of the CRSTS external grant is subject to approval of the West Midlands Combined Authority's Single Assurance Framework Outline Business Case.
- 8.8 Spend control approval (ID: 18601) was obtained from Directorate Spend Control on 23 September 2025. Section 151 Spend Control Board on 25 September 2025.
- 8.9 Further funding and financial details are contained within Appendix A.

### **Legal**

- 8.10 The Council, in carrying out transportation, highway and infrastructure related work will do so under the relevant primary legislation comprising the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Highways Act 1980, Road Traffic Act 1974, Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, Traffic Management Act 2004, Transport Act 2000, and other related regulations, instructions, directives, and general guidance.
- 8.11 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 contains the Council's general power of competence and Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 contains the Council's ancillary financial and expenditure powers in relation to the discharge of its functions.
- 8.12 Under the general power of competence per Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, the Council has the power to enter the arrangements set out in this report.

### **Equalities**

- 8.13 An Equality Analysis (ref EIA001121) has been undertaken as part of the development of the design, and is included in Appendix B. The decision to carry out procedures in relation to this project are not considered to result in any adverse impacts on persons with protected characteristics pursuant to the Council's public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Analysis will be reviewed during the development of the FBC, including any outcomes from the public consultation.

### **Procurement**

- 8.14 A strategy for the procurement activity of services and works, assessing the most appropriate and compliant route to market required to support the delivery of the project, will be submitted as a separate standalone document for Cabinet approval.

### **People Services**

- 8.15 There are no implications for People Services. The project is being managed by the Council utilising existing internal resources with the support of technical professional services. The works will be delivered by contractors.

### **Climate Change, Nature and Net Zero**

- 8.16 An environment and sustainability assessment has been carried out and is included in Appendix F. It is anticipated that there are no adverse climate change, nature and net zero carbon implications arising from the recommendations in this report. By making the area more conducive to active travel and encouraging reduced reliance on private vehicle, this project is expected to deliver a net benefit to emissions and climate change in line with the BTP and Route to Zero programme. Whilst the proposals will impact on existing trees within the central reservation along the corridor, landscape measures will be developed within the next phases of the design to mitigate for the loss of trees resulting from the introduction of the proposed cycle route.

### **Corporate Parenting**

- 8.17 There are no implications or opportunities in relation to the Corporate Parenting responsibility arising from the recommendations in this report.

### **Other**

- 8.18 There are no other implications arising from the recommendations in this report.



## **9 APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Outline Business Case (OBC)

Appendix B – Equality Impact Analysis (EIA)

Appendix C – Risk Assessment

Appendix D – Consultation Report

Appendix E – Project Drawings

Appendix F – Environment and Sustainability Assessment

## **10 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Strategic Outline Case approved by West Midlands Combined Authority on 5 April 2024.

Transportation and Highways Delivery Programme 2024/25 to 2029/30 – Annual Programme Update report approved at Cabinet on 25 June 2024.

City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement Programme Governance report approved at Cabinet on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023.