

Connected Leicester Hub and Spoke Plan

Transforming Cities Fund Full Business Case



Abbey Park Road Green Growth Corridor

September 2021

Background

During the period 2018 to 2019 Leicester City Council, supported by Leicestershire County Council, took part in a competitive process to bid for Transforming Cities Funds to improve transport in Central Leicestershire.

In 2019 DfT awarded £7.8M of Tranche 1 funding to deliver three walking and cycling schemes and a scheme to deliver electric buses on the Birstall Park and Ride service. Oversight and assurance of these schemes was undertaken by the DfT, and delivery began in 2020/21.

In 2020 an award of Tranche 2 funding of £32.5M was made to our local TCF board who are responsible for Governance including providing the oversight and assessing the final scheme packages through a Local Assurance Framework.

This award was made based on a programme Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC)¹ which was submitted to Department for Transport (DfT) in November 2019. This set-out how the delivery of our proposed schemes across four cross-cutting themes would improve sustainable transport in Central Leicestershire and meet both the TCF and Local objectives of strengthening the economy, supporting growth, reducing harmful emissions and carbon.

Since being awarded the funds the City Council has been developing and delivering a design and delivery programme that will meet the ambitious TCF delivery targets as well as ensuring that traffic is effectively managed during the construction phases with diversionary and alternative arrangements in place. Due to the COVID pandemic, this programme has had to include the additional pressures of delivering Emergency Active Travel schemes that support social distancing as well as accelerating some elements on the TCF schemes to provide improved infrastructure for walkers and cyclists.

Given the importance placed by Government in delivering infrastructure within the originally agreed funding window, it has been necessary to adjust the phasing of scheme delivery in order to minimise traffic management issues and bring forward schemes that were originally scheduled for later in the programme. This has resulted in certain elements being moved between schemes to make delivery more efficient. In addition, it has been necessary to split a number of the schemes into smaller work packages which are to be designed and delivered in phases. This allows us to complete the detailed final design and undertake the necessary consultations whilst following appropriate procurement processes. The programme is being effectively managed and tracked by the programme manager to ensure the programme is delivered to time and budget.

This Business Case presents the case for delivering the Cor4bcw Abbey Park Road scheme.

¹ *Connected Leicester – Hub and Spoke Plan, Submitted to DfT November 2019*

Declarations

Senior Responsible Owner Declaration

As Senior Responsible Owner for this scheme I hereby submit this request for approval to TCF Board on behalf of Leicester City Council and confirm that I have the necessary authority to do so.

The scheme has been developed in accordance with the TCF Local Assurance Framework.

I confirm that Leicester City Council will have all the necessary resources in place to manage the delivery of the programme and that statutory powers in place to ensure the planned timescales in the scheme can be realised.

That a Monitoring and Evaluation Programme has been approved in line with the requirements of the Local Assurance Framework and the TCF National Evaluation Programme.

Name: Andrew L Smith

Signed:

Position:

Director of Planning, Development and Transport



D2. Declaration of a Senior Finance Officer

I declare that the scheme cost estimates quoted in this bid are accurate to the best of my knowledge and that Leicester City Council

- has allocated sufficient budget to deliver this scheme on the basis of its proposed funding contribution;
- accepts responsibility for meeting any costs over and above the DfT contribution requested, including potential cost overruns and the underwriting of any funding contributions expected from third parties;
- accepts responsibility for meeting any ongoing revenue and capital requirements in relation to the scheme;
- accepts that no further increase in DfT funding will be considered beyond the maximum contribution requested and that no DfT funding will be provided after 2022/23;

Name: Amy Oliver

Signed:



31/8/2021

Executive Summary

Scheme Name Cor4bcw Abbey Park Road

Costs and Funding:

£	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	TOTAL
Total scheme cost:	£0.561M	£ 1,400M	£ 4,007M	£ 5.968M
DfT (TCF) funding contribution:	£0.561M	£ 1,400M	£ 4,007M	£ 5.968M
Local public sector contribution:				
private contribution:				

Project Description

The ambition of the TCF programme is to double the number of cyclists in the City and to increase bus use by between 5% City wide and 10% on demonstration bus (Green Growth) corridors.

To support this goal, this scheme will deliver improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure (including a new footbridge across the River Soar) and bus lanes along Abbey Park Road between the River Soar and Belgrave Road.

The scheme will deliver:

- Bus lanes inbound/eastbound (250m) and outbound/westbound (330m) on Abbey Park Road.
- Bus Lane enforcement cameras.
- Shared Pedestrian/Cycle way on the southern side of Abbey Park Road (total 616m in length) and North footway (total 90m in length). This includes widening to a minimum of 3.5m and the relocation of obstructive street furniture.
- Toucan Crossing (on Wolsey Island Way junction).
- Pelican Crossing (opposite bus depot site).
- Removal of parking bays and filter lane to the park from the eastbound carriageway.
- Structural works (waterproofing and joint works) to existing Canal Bridge to accommodate new highway arrangement.
- The provision of a public realm 'shared space' outside park entrance.
- New Pedestrian/Cycle bridge 3.5m wide² x 50m span (capacity 200 crossings per hour).
- New Pedestrian path on desire line to the City Centre at the junction with Belgrave Circle.
- Removal of vehicle entrance to derelict bus depot and resurfacing in order to only allow cycle and footway access to the regeneration site directly from Abbey Park Road.
 - All vehicle access to development land on Sock Island to be via Wolsey Island Way
- Bike Dock and electric bikes for the Bike Share to the West of the River bridge (24 electric bikes).

The Benefit Cost Ratio is estimated at 2.84. This is classified as High Value for Money and is expected to produce a benefit of £2.84 for every £1 invested.

The benefits of the scheme are:

- Health benefits from increased levels of exercise leading to increased health and reduced mortality rate.

² Between the handrails

- Reduced levels of absenteeism due to improved health of the workforce.
- Reduced levels of delay to bus passengers.
- Reduced levels of delay and congestion due to mode shift from car to sustainable modes.

Value for Money Statement

The scheme will provide an inbound and outbound bus lane on Abbey Park Road allowing buses to overtake slow moving and stationary vehicles approaching the junctions at Belgrave Circle and Wolsey Island Way. Walking and cycling will be enhanced by a new footbridge for pedestrians and cyclists across the River Soar and an improved and widened path alongside Abbey Park Road. The scheme will include public realm improvements outside the entrance to Abbey Park, new crossing facilities for cyclists and a bike share dock including 24 electric bikes.

The Central Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) is estimated at 2.84 with PVB at £12.5M, PVC at £4.4M and NPV at £8.1M in 2010 prices. This is classified as High Value for Money.

The BCR is determined from monetised benefits only and has not been adjusted to account for non-monetised benefits. These monetised benefits primarily relate to:

- Health benefits from increased levels of exercise leading to increased health and reduced mortality rate,
- Reduced levels of absenteeism due to increase health of the workforce,
- Reduced levels of delay to bus passengers,
- Reduced levels of delay and congestion due to mode shift from car to sustainable modes,

A series of sensitivity tests have been undertaken to determine the benefits of the scheme, including the situation in which the bus passenger numbers only return to 80% of their original level post-covid. This is the level to which bus operators are basing their business plans.

The analysis shows that in all cases the BCR remains above 2 and provides a high BCR.

- **Central case:** assumes a 123% increase in cycle trips and 48% increase in walking trips. Bus passengers save 23 seconds on each trip in the AM and PM peak periods.
- **Sensitivity test 1:** assumes that Cycling and Walking uplift was benchmarked against the lowest performing schemes resulting in a 90% increase in cycling and 35% increase in walking.
- **Sensitivity test 2:** assumes the same increase in active trips as the core scenario, however a smaller proportion of these trips were cycle trips.
- **Sensitivity test 3:** assumes that the benefits of the bus lane extend into the interpeak period.
- **High Optimism Bias test:** The core scenario is based upon an optimism bias of 4% representing a scheme that is well developed and greater confidence in the outputs. A test was undertaken where the optimism bias was equivalent to the uncertainty expected at the SOBC stage of scheme development (44%).
- **Bus services return to only 80% of Pre Covid levels.** This is the level that bus companies are planning for in the short term.