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| Title of Report: | Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme - Armoy Cycle Path Project |
| Committee Report Submitted To: | Leisure & Development Committee |
| Date of Meeting: | 20 February 2024 |
| For Decision or For Information | For Decision |
| To be discussed In Committee | NO |

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| Linkage to Council Strategy (2021 -2025) | |
| Strategic Theme | A Thriving Economy |
| Outcome | Council facilitates towns and villages in the borough to continue to provide quality environments which evolve to meet the needs of their citizens, businesses, and visitors to them |
| Lead Officer | Head of Prosperity & Place/ Town & Village Manager |

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| Budgetary Considerations | |
| Cost of Proposal | N/A |
| Included in Current Year Estimates | N/A |
| Capital/Revenue | N/A |
| Code | N/A |
| Staffing Costs | N/A |

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| Legal Considerations | |
| Input of Legal Services Required | NO |
| Legal Opinion Obtained | N/A |

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| Screening Requirements | Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals. | | |
| Section 75 Screening | Screening Completed: | Yes/ | Date to be completed |
| | EQIA Required and Completed: | Yes/No | Date: |
| Rural Needs Assessment (RNA) | Screening Completed | Yes/ | Date: to be completed |
| | RNA Required and Completed: | Yes/No | Date: |
| Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) | Screening Completed: | Yes/No | Date: to be completed |
| | DPIA Required and Completed: | Yes/No | Date: |

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to seek a decision from Members regards the proposed Armoy Cycle Path project as part of the Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme (CRSSRP)

2.0 Background

The CRSSRP is funded through the Department for Communities [DfC], the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs [DAERA], and the Department for Infrastructure [DfI] and an agreed contribution from Council.

In January 2022 Council approved the three-strand approach for the CRSSRP which was submitted to the funding body for approval and a Letter of Offer was accepted in March 2022.

The CRSSRP aims to deliver the following projects under each theme:

- **Project A - 14** regeneration projects across 10 villages.
- **Project B - 6** buildings brought back to economic use through Restore & Reactivate Programme.
- **Project C - 3** active travel projects.

The proposed Armoy Cycle Path falls under Project A.

3.0 Current Position

CRSSRP has delivered a very successful project in Armoy by way of an extensive upgrade to the Church Road Playpark. This project was completed in October 2023 and involved upgrades to existing equipment and the introduction of new accessible play equipment. The project was funded via a cocktail of funding (DAERA - £64,000, DfC - £5,018, Council - £50,104) and has been well received by the local community.

Also, under Project A it was proposed to enhance the current path from the village to link to Lime Park and encourage Active Travel and to create a safe cycle route between the two locations. However, despite strenuous efforts by specialist technical consultants, there is no scheme design achievable that will satisfy current Department for Infrastructure [DfI] regulations in relation to crossing from the cycle path (across a 60 MPH road) into Lime Park. Objections have also been raised by DfI through the Planning process. Current DfI regulations dictate that a controlled crossing will need to be designed into the scheme if it is to receive DfI approval. Both **Annex A** and **Annex B** provides further supporting correspondence from the independent technical consultants and DfI officials.

This matter was discussed in detail at the January 2024 SSRP Steering Group (including representatives of the project funders DfI and DfC) and the outcome was that due to time and budget restrictions on the CRSSRP, the preferred course of action was to recommend withdrawal of the project from the CRSSRP and to re-allocate the associated DfI funding to other projects that could be delivered within the parameters of the Programme.

Officers therefore recommend that the Planning application is withdrawn, and that the proposal be removed from the CRSSRP. This will allow DfI's funding of £109K, to be transferred to other Project A proposals that can be delivered within this Programme following agreement with the funder.

4.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure and Development Committee accepts the recommendation to withdraw the Planning application for the Armoy Active Travel Path and remove the project from the CRSSRP. This funding will be reallocated to other Project A proposals that can be delivered on agreement with the funders. In addition, the Armoy Active Travel Path will be retained on the Capital Programme long list of projects.

Annex A– Armoy Footpath Letter of Correspondence



6th of November 2023

Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council
Riada House
14 Charles St
Ballymoney
BT53 6DZ

CONSULTING ENGINEERS

Civil Engineering
Structural Engineering
Traffic & Transportation
Project Management
CDM Services

Small settlements capital programme - Armoy footpath upgrade

Dear Sirs/Madams,

Further to our discussions regarding the Armoy Footpath Scheme at the online meeting on the 25th of October 2023, Doran Consulting confirm that they have undertaken a review of the RIBA Stage 3 design proposals that have been submitted for planning approval on behalf of Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council. Further to this review, we consider that the proposals including an at-grade pedestrian crossing on the Drones Road Armoy, are not supported by the relevant design standards; DMRB CD 195 and LTN 1/20.

Additionally, Doran Consulting, having liaised with Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council appointed traffic consultant, AECOM, cannot accept any design responsibility or risk for the project through a departure from standard approval process involving DfI Roads due to our concerns that a safe and acceptable solution cannot be provided.

We therefore advise the Causeway Coast & Glens Borough Council that the Armoy Footpath upgrade scheme is not a viable project per the current proposals due to the above concerns.

Yours sincerely,



Ciara M Lappin
Technical Director
Doran Consulting

Annex B – Dfl Correspondence

From: Coulter, Ian (Roads)

Dfl Roads met with their consultancy partners (and active travel experts) Atkins to discuss the proposed scheme in Armoy. The main issue with the scheme is the crossing point to the former Rugby Club site.

Dfl currently use the Department of Transport guidance note LTN1/20 guidance note which is the definitive national standard for cycling infrastructure design in the UK. This guidance states that the only appropriate type of crossing for a 60mph road is a grade separated crossing. The next step down is a signal controlled junction which is deemed suitable for 40mph and 50mph roads.

Unfortunately on a 60mph rural road a signal controlled junction is not permitted by the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges which provide standards, advice notes and other documents relating to the design, assessment and operation of roads, in the United Kingdom.

The next type of crossing is an uncontrolled crossing which is only deemed suitable for 30mph single lane roads with low traffic volumes in LTN1/20.

When discussing the scheme and crossing additional points were considered such as if Dfl intended to extend the path and the possibility of extending the 30mph limits which were both ruled out for different reasons.

The conclusion which was reached was that it would be too big a departure from best practice to implement an uncontrolled crossing on a 60mph road environment. The default view with these decisions should always be the management of safety and viewing that in the context of the active travel vision we are trying to work within. Ultimately, we need to be satisfied that the crossing is suitable for use by those aged 8-80 with a mix of user types – as a shared use route this could include elderly pedestrians, school children, those in wheelchairs and potentially equestrians as well as a range of cyclists.

LTN 1/20 does not really cover the rural context that well but the overarching design principles would suggest an uncontrolled crossing is not ideal/appropriate in this case. We are expecting some further rural guidance to be released but I doubt the crossing selection criteria will change that much.