

Report to Cabinet

6 December 2023

Subject:	Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension (Sustainable Access Measures) – Initial scheme approval
Cabinet Member:	Cabinet Member for Regeneration & WMCA, Councillor Peter Hughes
Director:	Director- Regeneration & Growth, Tony McGovern
Key Decision:	Yes
Contact Officer:	Andy Miller Strategic Planning & Transportation Manager andy_miller@sandwell.gov.uk Talvinder Sandhu Transportation Team Leader talvinder_sandhu@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 1.1 Approve in principle the proposed package of improvements that make up the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension (Sustainable Access Measures) as shown on the drawings contained at Appendix A.
- 1.2 Delegate authority to carry out public consultation to the Director Regeneration & Growth in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment & Highways.
- 1.3 Delegate authority for consideration and determination of objections to the Cabinet Member for Environment & Highways at a future Decision Making Session.







- 1.4 Delegate authority to the Director Regeneration & Growth to submit an Outline Business Case to the West Midlands Combined Authority.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 The Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension (Sustainable Access Measures) project forms part of the West Midlands City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement Programme approved by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Board on 14th January 2022. The Sandwell elements of this programme were approved by Cabinet in July 2022.
- 2.2 The project is now at the stage where specific approvals are required to enable it to progress through the WMCA Single Assurance Framework Process, be consulted on with the public and stakeholders, and then be taken to the next stages of design and business case preparation.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p><i>People live well and age well:</i> Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension (Sustainable Access Measures) package of works includes extensive measures designed to encourage walking and cycling thus contributing to the health benefits of sustainable active travel.</p>
	<p><i>Strong resilient communities:</i> Successful communities need access to jobs, services and facilities to enable them to remain healthy and vibrant. The transport network is an important enabler of this.</p>
	<p><i>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods:</i> New and existing residential developments rely on good quality access and links to shops, services and leisure facilities in order for them to be successful. The proposals will make a significant contribution to this objective.</p>
	<p><i>A strong and inclusive economy:</i> The provision of a high-quality transport network will reduce journey times and improve journey reliability for Sandwell business who rely on it to connect to their suppliers and customers.</p>





A connected and accessible Sandwell: The provision of a high-quality, sustainable transport network catering for all modes is vital to enable Sandwell residents to access jobs, education and services both within and beyond the Borough's boundaries.

4 Context and Key Issues

Background

4.1 The WBHE Sustainable Access Measures scheme is aimed at ensuring the soon to be delivered Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Extension is linked up effectively with the surrounding community, ensuring that users can access the metro from their homes and nearby amenities via sustainable modes. The scheme aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Improve the walk and cycle routes to/from the new tram stops on the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill metro extension
- Improve wayfinding to assist in the use of walk and cycle access to metro
- Improve the opportunities for bus/metro interchange
- Reduce the likelihood of increased on-street parking around metro stops.

4.2 The scheme includes a variety of interventions including:

- High-quality cycle tracks and shared use areas to facilitate cycling
- Resurfacing of pedestrian areas and adding tactile paving for visually impaired residents
- Traffic calming to allow on-road cycling
- New crossing points
- Allowing active travel through previously blocked off roads
- Wayfinding signage



4.3 Measures are planned in the following locations:

- Richmond street
- New Road, Great Bridge
- Fred Perry Walk
- Tame Road
- Napier Drive/Broad Croft
- Clarkes Grove/Cinquefoil Leasow
- Horseley Road/Alexandra Road
- Puppy Green
- Park Lane East
- Park Lane West/Sedgley Road East and Tipton Road
- Coneygree Road
- Groveland Road
- Baker Street
- A4037

4.4 Together, and linked to the A461, this will create an entire network of areas where people can travel in sustainable ways, reducing the need for them to use their private car for short journeys, and maximising their ability to use the upcoming metro extension without creating the opportunity for unmanageable unofficial parking around the metro stops

Funding and Timescales

4.5 This scheme has £16 million City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement funding to deliver a range of interventions across the entire metro extension corridor by 2027, including elements in Dudley borough who share the allocation.

4.6 The entire collection of interventions is expected to cost in excess of the £16 million allocated. Therefore, a prioritisation exercise has taken place as part of the Outline Business Case development to ensure that the elements of most benefit to the community will be delivered by 2027, with delivery of the remaining elements following receipt of additional funding after 2027.



Consultation

- 4.7 The scheme has not yet been subject to public consultation. A comprehensive public consultation exercise is planned in early 2024 to ascertain local sentiment around the proposed interventions.
- 4.8 Stakeholder agreement to the scheme has been sought previously through the assurance and appraisal process at the WMCA who have approved a previous Business Case. This Business Case has since been updated and following this cabinet review, it is anticipated that the updated Business Case will be resubmitted to the WMCA for approval, allowing for the release of funding for the final development stage, and some funding for early delivery of some elements. Early delivery of some elements is necessary if we are to deliver the full range of schemes by 2027.

5 Alternative Options

- 5.1 One alternative option is to not continue with the scheme and reallocate the funding back to the WMCA for spending on a different scheme. This is not recommended, as it would leave the WBHE without essential connections to nearby communities and amenities. There is no guarantee that Sandwell Council would be able to retain the funding for a different scheme, and therefore Sandwell residents may be disadvantaged against other areas in the region.
- 5.2 Another alternative is to make significant changes to the scheme as it is drawn currently. This is not recommended as it would make it difficult to deliver by 2027 and would risk the funding being reclaimed.

6 Implications

Resources:	The project will be funded through devolved allocations to the West Midlands Combined Authority as part of its City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement. All fees, including SMBC staff time recharges, are including the estimated scheme cost.
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Legal and Governance:	The scheme involves the Council carrying out works in its capacity as Local Highway Authority. The delegations described in this report are in accordance with paragraph 1.3 of Part 4 (Executive Procedure Rules) of the Constitution.
Risk:	A full Risk Assessment will accompany the Outline Business Case. This is a precondition of funding.
Equality:	An Equality impact Assessment will accompany the Outline Business Case. This is a precondition of funding.
Health and Wellbeing:	The project includes measures aimed to encourage the use of sustainable, non-car, modes. This will contribute towards improved air quality. In addition, the emphasis on active travel will have direct benefits for the health and wellbeing of residents using the facilities.
Social Value:	There are no social value implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report. When the scheme moves to the delivery stage, the appointed contractor(s) will be required to adhere to the Council's Social Value policies.
Climate Change:	Decarbonisation of the transport system is central to the government's aims and objectives for CRSTS. It is also a principle theme within the West Midlands Local Transport Plan. All projects within the programme need to demonstrate how they address climate change and contribute to decarbonisation through their business cases. The project includes measures aimed to encourage the use of sustainable, non-car, modes.
Corporate Parenting:	There are no implications for Corporate Parenting responsibilities arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

7. Appendices

Appendix A – Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-GB-DR-CH-003
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-GB-DR-CH-004
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-GB-DR-CH-005
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-GB-DR-CH-006
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-GB-DR-CH-007
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-GB-DR-CH-008
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-GB-DR-CH-009



Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-GB-DR-CH-010
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-GB-DR-CH-011
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-DP-DR-CH-002
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-DP-DR-CH-003
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-DP-DR-CH-004
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-DP-DR-CH-005
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-DP-DR-CH-006
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-DP-DR-CH-007
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-DP-DR-CH-008
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-HH-DR-CH-002
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Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-SR-DR-CH-003
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-SR-DR-CH- 004
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-SR-DR-CH- 005
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-SR-DR-CH-006
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-SR-DR-CH-007
Drg. No. COMHA1SBC001-AMEY-HGN-SR-DR-CH-008

8. Background Papers

West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan: Movement for Growth (2016)
Report to WMCA Board 14:01:22
Report to WMCA Board 18:03:22
Report to Cabinet 23:03:22
Report to WMCA Board 13:01:23
Report to Cabinet 15:02:23

