

# Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

## Bermuda Connectivity - Update

21 September 2022

### Recommendation(s)

1. That the Committee considers the report, which provides an update on the Bermuda Connectivity scheme.

### 1. Executive Summary

#### Overview

- 1.1 Bermuda Connectivity is a highway scheme, focused on opening the existing bridge to two-way traffic, delivering additional highway capacity and improved connectivity between West Nuneaton and Griff roundabout. The scheme will deliver a range of benefits, including improved pedestrian and cycling facilities, for the local community in the wider West Nuneaton area.
- 1.2 The scheme design was led by Atkins on behalf of WCC. Commercial consultants Faithful and Gould (F&G) were appointed at the start of the construction works to act as Project Manager and lead on commercial matters for the construction contract. WCC have retained a client-side Project Manager to oversee the project.
- 1.3 Funding of £10.759 million has been allocated to the project and construction work commenced in April 2021.
- 1.4 Progress has been made in delivering significant improvements on St Georges Way with new shared use cycleway/footways, junction works and carriageway resurfacing now in place. This part of the scheme is now largely complete and challenges have been overcome around the impact of shift worker traffic to the new Hello Fresh depot, and an unexpected hard dig adjacent to the railway line.
- 1.5 The next part of the work, to open Bermuda Bridge has also seen significant progress. The bridge deck has been jacked up (the whole deck raised by a small amount) allowing the original bridge bearings, which had been in place since the 1960's, to be replaced. This replacement required demolition of part of the bearing shelf, reconstruction and replacement of the bearing. This is a key element of ensuring that the bridge can be opened to traffic. Significant earthworks have also been undertaken on the approaches to the bridge with existing unsuitable material being removed and replaced with material that will provide appropriate support for the new road. The contractor is now planning

to carry out surfacing on the eastern approach to the bridge in September 2022.

1.6 Significant investigation work on site has been carried out to determine the location and construction type of a gas barrier that was installed by a developer in 2006 to protect a new housing development. Monitoring over a period of time has determined that the barrier is functioning correctly and now the design of how this can be extended to accommodate the new road alignment can be concluded and work on the barrier started on site in late September/early October 2022.

1.7 Some elements of the work have taken longer than originally planned as a number of issues have had to be overcome during the construction phase. Those delay matters agreed with the contractor to date include:

- Contractor delays and reprogramming after the initial review of sequencing and durations allowed in programme - circa 2.5 months
- The deployment of the traffic management on the A444 to allow access under the bridge was postponed by WCC to avoid disruption over the Christmas period – circa 1 month
- Securing road space and permits to work on network rail land to construct gabion baskets on St Georges Way and more broadly to commence works on site - circa 1 month
- Encountering unanticipated hard rock in areas of excavation whilst installing the gabion baskets - extra time taken to complete the works - circa 2 months
- Approval/agreement of method to replace bridge bearings – circa 1 month

1.8 Those matters still under discussion with the contractor to agree on delay implications include, amongst others :

- Unexpected utility diversions required, not identified in the design
- Resolving issues with the existing gas barrier
- Land ownership issues requiring land swaps to be agreed pushing back when a utility company could have access to carry their required diversion
- Delays in providing approved designs for, amongst other matters, the replacement of Vehicle Restraint Systems.

These issues mean a likely works end date of summer 2023. However, negotiations are ongoing between WCC and the contractor to find ways the programme can be shortened.

1.9 Whilst the elements of work that have taken longer than planned and exceptionally high levels of inflation are putting pressure on the project

budget, it is expected the indicative BCR will continue to show that the scheme remains very high value for money.

## **2. Financial Implications**

- 2.1 The Bermuda Connectivity scheme has a budget allocation of £10.759 million.
- 2.2 A number of factors, including exceptionally high levels of inflation, are putting pressure on the scheme budget. The impact of these factors is being reviewed with the contractor and WCC's commercial consultant.

## **3. Environmental Implications**

- 3.1 The Scheme was tested in the 2017 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Wide Area Traffic Model, which projected a number of benefits should arise from delivery including a reduction in journey times on a number of routes in West Nuneaton and reduced congestion in parts of the town centre, hence, improving links onto the A444 in other parts of the town.
- 3.2 The environmental impact review of the Scheme found that it would not have a significant adverse effect on air quality even on the roads experiencing an increase in traffic, but it is projected that residential properties at certain locations will be adversely impacted by increased noise levels.

### ***Project Environmental Concerns***

- 3.3 **Gas Barrier** - A gas barrier implemented by developers in 2006 to provide protection to new build properties providing gas venting protection for a land fill site, which sits to the west of Bermuda Bridge has been subject to monitoring over a number of months. This monitoring was required to determine whether the gas barrier was functioning correctly and to confirm a suitable design where it will be extended to allow for the new road levels. The design of the gas barrier is nearing completion and a monetary allowance has been included in the scheme budget to complete the remedial works. This includes a Construction Quality Assurance (CQA) Engineer to assist with the design and implementation of the gas barrier.
- 3.4 **Japanese Knotweed** – was found during exploratory works for the project located on the Bermuda Bridge and an area on the Bridleway. Further to this in 2018 WCC procured remediation through a specialist contract to remove the contaminated soils from site and manage ongoing treatments to destroy and contain this invasive plant.

## 4. Next Steps

- 4.1 Continuing work to reduce costs and to manage the budget to within the allocated funds.
- 4.1 The Project Team are working with the contractor to explore ways the programme duration can be reduced.
- 4.2 The Project Team continue to work with the Lead Designer (Atkins) to resolve issues that occur as quickly as possible.
- 4.3 The current project milestones are:

<b>Works Description</b>	<b>Completion</b>
Works on Gas Barrier improvements	Winter 2022/23
Bermuda Bridge Works – preparation works to create required ground levels for the new road currently ongoing.	Winter 22/23
Highway works on the Bridleway	Spring/Summer 23

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Report Author	Tristan Hall	<a href="mailto:tristanhall@warwickshire.gov.uk">tristanhall@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Assistant Director	Scott Tompkins	<a href="mailto:scotttompkins@warwickshire.gov.uk">scotttompkins@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Strategic Director	Mark Ryder	<a href="mailto:markryder@warwickshire.gov.uk">markryder@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Portfolio Holder	Wallace Redford	<a href="mailto:wallaceredford@warwickshire.gov.uk">wallaceredford@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>