
To: Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board

On: 21 March 2022

Report by: Lead Officer

Heading: Linking the National Cycle Route 7 with Howwood Review

1 Summary

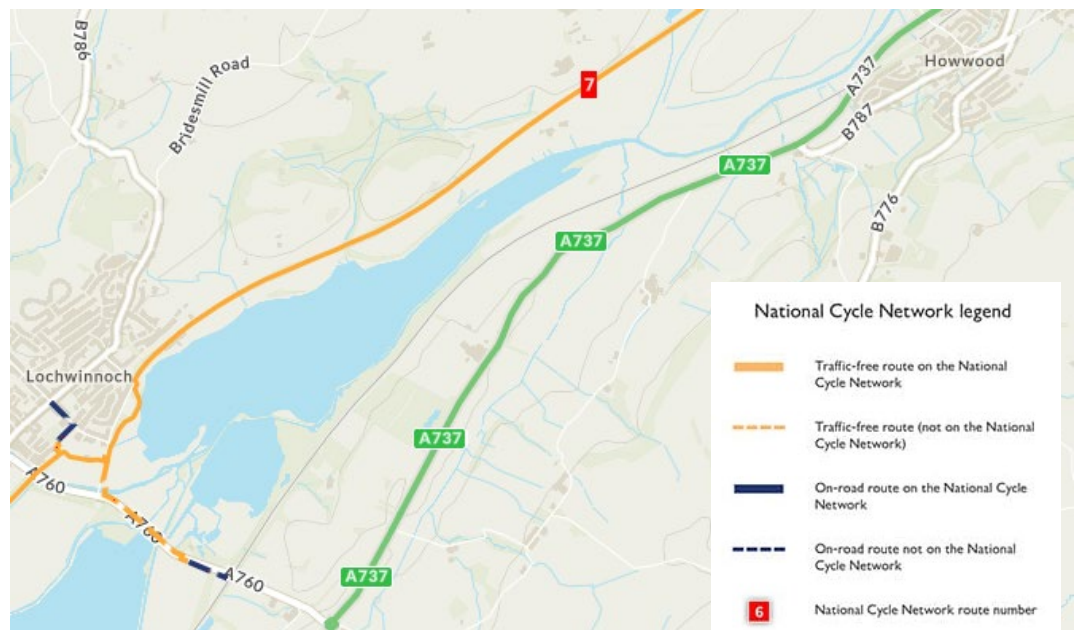
- 1.1 At its meeting on 15 November 2021, members of the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board agreed to a request to include a review which would look into linking the National Cycle Route 7 to Howwood was included in the annual programme of activity for the Board for 2021/2022.
- 1.2 At its meeting on 24 January 2022, members of the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board agreed the purpose, scope and timescales of this review.
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2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Board is asked to:
- Note the contents of this report which includes an update on progress of the review since the last board meeting on 24 January 2022.
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3 Background

- 3.1 **National Cycle Network Route 7** connects Balloch on the southern banks of Loch Lomond with Aberfoyle, Strathyre, Callander, Lochearnhead and Killin. It forms the southern section of the long-distance Lochs and Glens Way route.
- 3.2 The route is described by Sustrans as having a mixture of traffic-free paths and quiet road sections and being reachable throughout the route via traffic-free paths and also by regular train connections.
- 3.3 From Lochwinnoch it is accessible from an on-road route (not part of the National Cycle Network) from the Main Street (via Church Street / Lochhead Avenue) on the east and also from a mixture of traffic-free route and on road route (not part of the National Cycle Network) from Lochwinnoch Train Station on the west.



- 3.4 **The Whithorn Way** is a newly mapped 143-mile walking and cycling route, which follows much of the westerly pilgrimage route to Whithorn, which was travelled by pilgrims over centuries.
- 3.5 The route follows established paths and cycleways where possible, including extensive use of the National Cycle & Path Route 7.
- 3.6 To aid users, the route is split into several sections in available guides. Lochwinnoch connects two sections; Paisley to Lochwinnoch and Lochwinnoch to Kilwinning.
- 3.7 There are currently no published dedicated active travel (pedestrian and cycling) routes from **Howwood** to Lochwinnoch.

4 Update on the Review

- 4.1 As set out in the Scoping paper (which was approved by the Board on 24 January 2022, the scope of the review into linking walking and cycling from the National Cycle Route 7 at Lochwinnoch to and from Howwood was to:
 - 4.1.1 understand the demand;
 - 4.1.2 set out the current provision; and
 - 4.1.3 identify any other mitigations.

- 4.2 Progress on the review since the last report to Board includes;
 - 4.2.1 Contacting all elected members from affected ward (Ward 9) and adjacent ward (Ward 8) and Howwood Community Council to make them aware of the review and to ask for any additional information that could be considered as part of the review.
 - 4.2.2 Initial discussions with officers from relevant services across the Council to ascertain current and planned provisions to help inform the review.
 - 4.2.3 Initial discussions with representatives from the RSPB regarding similar proposals at their site nearby in Lochwinnoch.
 - 4.2.4 Initial familiarisation site visit to the National Cycle Route 7 at the locale, the existing core path connecting Station Road to the NCR 7 and the route into Howwood from Station Road. Photographs were also taken at this site visit.
 - 4.2.5 These early discussions, which will continue as required throughout the review have proved valuable with early learnings which will help inform this review. The Lead Officer will also liaise with relevant officers and services responsible for other works / reviews to ensure that the scope of this review is considered in other items of work to maximise outputs for the relevant review, including this review whilst also minimising duplicate work and costs. These include;
 - 4.2.6 Awareness that the new Core Paths Plan was approved at Board in January and identifies an aspirational route between NCR7 and Howwood (HOW16).

- 4.2.7 Awareness that a feasibility study has been commissioned to investigate options for possible Traffic Calming in Kilbarchan, Howwood and Houston.
- 4.2.8 Aspirations to make a funding application for a feasibility study for walking and cycling from the National Cycle Route 7 at Lochwinnoch to and from Howwood.
- 4.3 Activity planned for the next reporting periods includes;
 - 4.3.1 Making the Local Partnership aware of the review and to ask for any additional items that they wished to be considered as part of the review.
 - 4.3.2 Making other stakeholders aware of the review including making contact with representatives of the Whithorn Way.
 - 4.3.3 Continuing discussions and site visits with colleagues and stakeholders as required including those noted in section 4.2 above.
 - 4.3.4 Following the elections in May, contacting all new and existing elected members from affected ward (Ward 9) and adjacent ward (Ward 8) to make them aware of the review and to ask for any additional information that could be considered as part of the review.

Implications of the Report

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| 1. | Financial | - none |
| 2. | HR & Organisational Development | - none |
| 3. | Community Planning | - none |
| 4. | Legal | - none |
| 5. | Property/Assets | - none |
| 6. | Information Technology | - none |
| 7. | Equality & Human Rights | - none |

(a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

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| 8. | Health & Safety | - none |
| 9. | Procurement | - none |
| 10. | Risk | - none |
| 11. | Privacy Impact | - none |
| 12. | COSLA Policy Position | - not applicable |

13. **Climate Risk**
Supporting and enhancing opportunities for active travel is an area being explored as part of Renfrewshire's planning for net zero.

List of Background Papers

- (a) Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board Annual Programme approved 23/08/2021

The foregoing background papers will be retained within Finance and Resources for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting.

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Appendix 1

Timetable for Linking the National Cycle Route 7 with Howwood Review

| Date of Board Meeting | Stage of Review |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Monday 24 January 2022 | Commencement of review - Complete |
| Monday 21 March 2022 | Continuation of review – this paper |
| Monday 13 May 2022 | Continuation of review |
| Monday 22 August 2022 | Continuation of review |
| Tuesday 27 September 2022 | Draft report to Board |
| Thursday 29 September 2022 | Final report to Council |