

**South Ayrshire Council**

**Report by Director of Housing, Operations and Development  
to Cabinet  
of 29 April 2025**

---

**Subject:        Accessible Ayr Active Travel**

---

**1.        Purpose**

- 1.1        The purpose of this report is to provide the Cabinet with an update on the progress of the Accessible Ayr project and to seek approval for officers to complete Stage 4 technical design work on a phased basis in line with current funding scenarios.

**2.        Recommendation**

**2.1        It is recommended that the Cabinet:**

- 2.1.1        notes that funding of £778,780 has been granted by Sustrans to South Ayrshire Council to progress with Stage 4 technical design Phase 1 in 2024/25;
- 2.1.2        notes that further funding applications have been submitted as detailed in paragraph 6.6 Table 1;
- 2.1.3        requests that officers engage with all funding partners to explore the possibility of amalgamating the two projects (Accessible Ayr and the Burns Statue Regeneration) with a view to reducing the Council's financial contribution; and
- 2.1.4        approves this report and continues to commit to supporting Accessible Ayr Active Travel project.

**3.        Background**

- 3.1        Accessible Ayr is an ambitious project which is seeking to make significant improvements to the infrastructure and public realm in Ayr Town Centre and key surrounding areas. This project provides the opportunity for investment in the town Centre, making it a vibrant and more attractive place for people to visit and enjoy, as well as make it easier to access by pedestrians and cyclists. The aim is that public investment within the town will support private investment, leading to economic growth and a greater quality of life for those in and around the town of Ayr.
- 3.2        Accessible Ayr has been a project in development since 2019 and has grown from an initial public realm improvement project to a wider accessibility project. By adopting this approach, as opposed to focusing solely on public realm improvements, new avenues of funding have been committed to the project, in this case Sustrans Places for Everyone funding.

- 3.3 The project is progressing in coordination with the development of the Ayr Town Centre Framework and is highlighted as one of the 10 key projects for driving transformational change.
- 3.4 Route 1 Phase 1 ([Appendix 1](#)) is progressing and will be completed in October 2025. Cabinet approved a preferred design option in terms of alignment and level of provision, subject to further optioneering of New Bridge, River Street, John Street and Station Road, (phase 2 – [Appendix 2](#)).

#### **4. Proposals**

- 4.1 Stage 4 funding secured in 2024/25 has focused on an area broadly to the South of the River Ayr – phase 1 (see [Appendix 1](#)), which would enable delivery of priority town centre infrastructure and regeneration works whilst also linking to wider active travel networks. This approach is consistent with feedback received through consultation, whereby there has been consistent support for investment in the town centre's public realm.
- 4.2 Funding applications have been submitted to complete both phase 1 and 2 in 2025/26, a decision on these applications is expected early April.
- 4.3 Accessible Ayr was transferred to Ayrshire Roads Alliance for delivery from August 2024, the existing Design Team has been retained for the duration of this project.
- 4.4 The Accessible Ayr project and the Burns Statue project are interlinked, amalgamation of both projects should be explored with the aim of reducing Councils match-funding requirements, reduced delivery timeframes and co-ordination of works to reduce impact to the public.

#### **5. Legal and Procurement Implications**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report. Though any future works identified would be subject to tender rules and procedures and subject to approval.
- 5.3 To progress the project timely Ayrshire Roads Alliance is considering for early contractor engagement during the design stage but would be subjected to procurement rules.

#### **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 In 2024 the Scottish Government (SG) delayed the award of Active Travel funding to both partners and council's due to a range of factors, the overall Active Travel Budget from SG was then reduced significantly which resulted in projects being delayed or not funded at all.
- 6.2 South Ayrshire Council were successful in securing 50% of the required funding to carry out RIBA Stage 4, Accessible Ayr Route 1 in 2024/25, a verbal commitment has been given to provide further funding in 2025/26 to complete phase 1 to detailed design stage.

- 6.3 A further funding application has been submitted to the Active Travel Infrastructure Fund to complete RIBA Stage 4 Detailed Design of phase 2.
- 6.4 Accessible Ayr has a dependency on the Burns Statue Square project, and it is the Ayrshire Roads Alliance intention to engage with all funding partners to explore the possibility of amalgamating the two projects to accelerate delivery and reduce the Council's financial contribution.
- 6.5 Guidance provided on the ATIF by Scottish Government notes that high spec material such as Cobbles and Granite is currently out with the scope of funding, costs for such materials will need to be met by the Council and it is recommended that alternative sustainable materials be explored.
- 6.6 Several Active Travel funding applications have been submitted to both Sustrans and Active Travel Infrastructure Funding (ATIF), these are detailed in a separate paper. Table 1 below is an extract from this paper and details the Accessible Ayr funding applications:

**Table 1**

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>RIBA Stages</b>	<b>2024/25 Award (£)</b>	<b>Further 2025/26 funding applications submitted</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Accessible Ayr</b>	4	778,780 (Sustrans)	799,000 Route 1 (Sustrans) 827,775 Route 2 (Sustrans)	Route 1 currently being progress through detail design stage, application to complete Route 1 and to progress Route 2 submitted to ATIF

## **7. Human Resources Implications**

- 7.1 Not applicable.

## **8. Risk**

### **8.1 *Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations***

- 8.1.1 There are no risks associated with adopting the recommendations.

### **8.2 *Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations***

- 8.2.1 The risk associated with rejecting the recommendations is the missed opportunity to obtain substantial external funding to deliver economic, social and environmental benefits associated with significant investment in the town centre.
- 8.2.2 The risk associated with rejecting the recommendations is that future applications to ATIF for both design and construction funding (Tier 2) may not be successful without Council approval and affect other Active Travel projects

## **9. Integrated Impact Assessment (incorporating Equalities)**

9.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment has been carried out on the proposals contained in this report, which identifies potential positive and/ or negative impacts and/ or areas that require further consideration. The IIA Summary Report is attached as [Appendix 3](#) which includes information on any mitigating or follow-up action required.

9.2 A copy of the fully completed IIA can be accessed [here](#).

## **10. Sustainable Development Implications**

10.1 ***Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)*** - The Scottish Government Gateway will be contacted during the detailed design phases, at which point potential environmental impacts can be properly quantified and requirement for SEA considered.

## **11. Options Appraisal**

11.1 An option appraisal has been carried over stage 3 of this project and aligns with key areas within Ayr – for example, Ayr Town Centre Framework currently in development.

## **12. Link to Council Plan**

12.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to Priority 3 of the Council Plan: Civic and Community Pride/ Pride in South Ayrshire (Outcome 1).

## **13. Link to Shaping Our Future Council** Yes ☐ No ☒

13.1 Not applicable.

## **14. Results of Consultation**

14.1 There has been significant public consultation over the course of the Accessible Ayr project and has been previously reported, most recently summarised in the 14 February 2024 Cabinet Report. Further consultation will be undertaken as part of both phase 1 and phase 2 Detailed Design.

14.2 Consultation has taken place with Councillor Bob Pollock, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

## **15. Next Steps for Decision Tracking Purposes**

15.1 If the recommendations above are approved by Members, the Director of Director Housing, Operation and Development will ensure that all necessary steps are taken to ensure full implementation of the decision within the following timescales, with the completion status reported to the Cabinet in the 'Council and Cabinet Decision Log' at each of its meetings until such time as the decision is fully implemented:

Implementation	Due date	Managed by
Implement the recommendations within this report and continue with relevant data gathering and engagement exercises to allow the finalisation of the Stage 4 detailed designs	November 2025	Head of Roads, Ayrshire Roads Alliance
Prepare Construction Package, including completion of a detailed construction cost estimate to inform contractor procurement and future funding	March 2026	Head Of Roads, Ayrshire Roads Alliance
Report to the Cabinet with an update on completion of the design work and advising on the steps to complete the project	Jan 2026	Head of Roads, Ayrshire Roads Alliance

**Background Papers**    **Report to Cabinet of 20 June 2023 – [Accessible Ayr Update](#)**

**Report to Cabinet of 14 February 2024 – [Accessible Ayr Update](#)**

**Report to Cabinet of 27 August 2024 – [Accessible Ayr Phasing](#)**

**Person to Contact**    **Jane Corrie, Head of Roads – Ayrshire Roads Alliance**  
**Opera House, 8 John Finnie Street, Kilmarnock KA1 1DD or**  
**County Buildings, Wellington Square, Ayr KA7 1DR**  
**Phone 01563 503164**  
**Email [Jane.Corrie@ayrshireroadsalliance.org](mailto:Jane.Corrie@ayrshireroadsalliance.org)**

**Date:**    **17 April 2025**



## Appendix 1: Proposed Phase 1





## Appendix 2: Proposed Phase 2



## Integrated Impact Assessment Summary Report

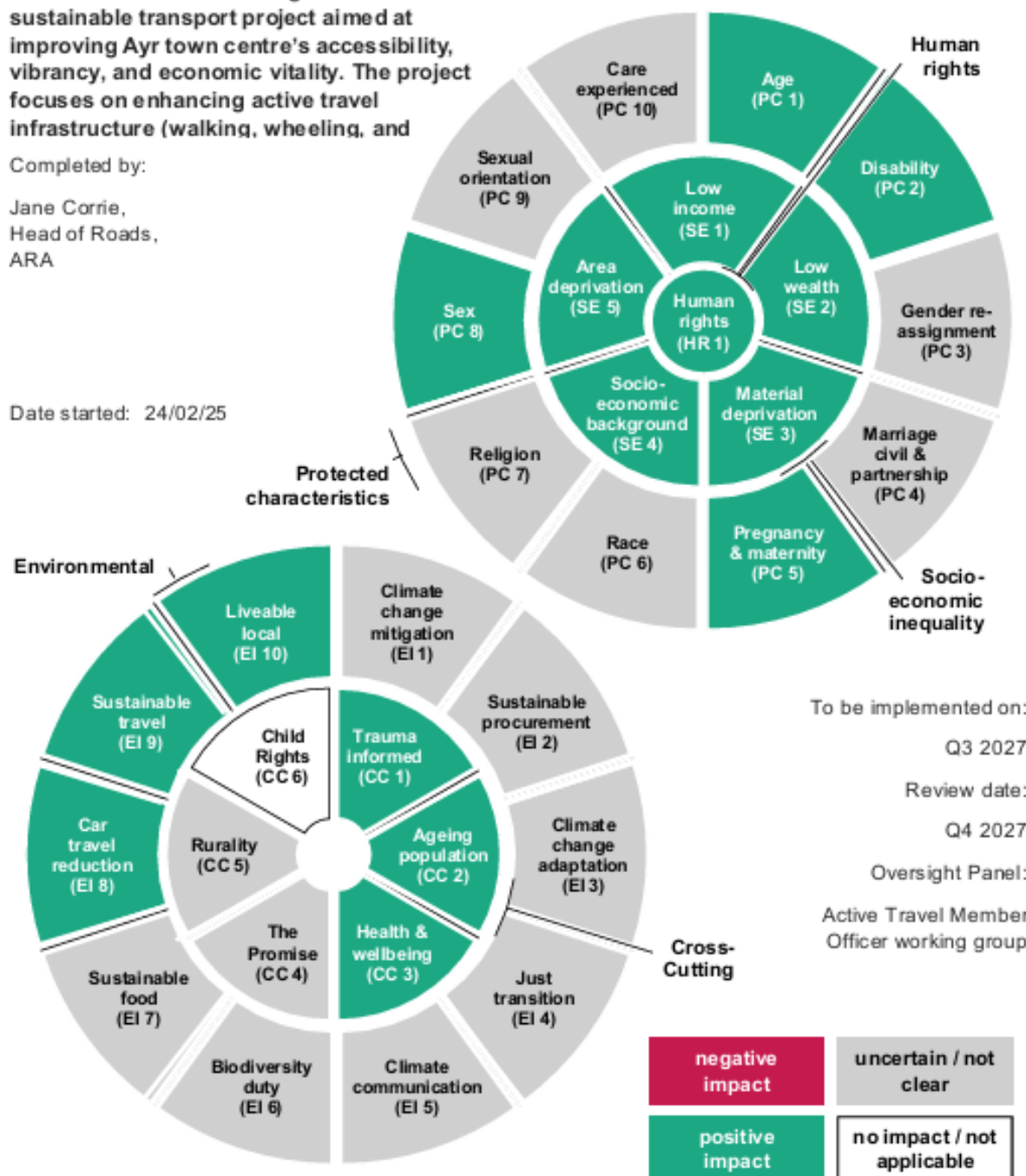


The Accessible Ayr project is being assessed. It is an urban regeneration and sustainable transport project aimed at improving Ayr town centre's accessibility, vibrancy, and economic vitality. The project focuses on enhancing active travel infrastructure (walking, wheeling, and

Completed by:

Jane Corrie,  
Head of Roads,  
ARA

Date started: 24/02/25





**Public sector equality duty**

Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation?

The Accessible Ayr project actively supports the Council's duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation by creating a more inclusive and accessible environment for all residents and visitors. By improving pedestrian infrastructure, accessibility features, and public realm enhancements, the project ensures that disabled individuals, older adults, and those with mobility challenges can navigate the town centre without facing physical barriers that could otherwise exclude or disadvantage them. Additionally, the enhanced public lighting, increased footfall, and improved visibility of public spaces contribute to a safer urban environment, reducing the risk of harassment and victimisation, particularly for women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and ethnic minority groups.

Advancing equality of opportunity?

The project significantly advances equality of opportunity by removing accessibility barriers and improving transport equity. The introduction of wider footpaths, additional Blue Badge parking, better crossings, and cycling infrastructure ensures that people with disabilities, older people, and those from lower-income backgrounds can move freely and access services, employment opportunities, and leisure spaces. By reducing transport and mobility barriers, the project enables individuals who lack access to private vehicles or face financial constraints to participate more fully in economic and social activities. Furthermore, the improvements to public spaces and infrastructure enhance the experience of individuals from different backgrounds, making Ayr town centre a place where everyone can feel included and welcome.

Fostering good relations?

The Accessible Ayr project fosters good relations within the community by creating a more connected, welcoming, and inclusive town centre where people of different ages, backgrounds, and abilities can interact and engage in public life. The improvements to public spaces, seating areas, and pedestrian zones encourage greater social interaction, reducing social isolation and creating a more vibrant, cohesive environment. By making the town centre safer and more accessible, the project also promotes a shared sense of belonging, ensuring that people from different socio-economic and protected characteristic groups feel equally valued and able to participate in their community. Through continued public engagement and consultation, the project has actively listened to diverse voices, ensuring that it reflects the needs of all.

**Consultation declaration**

We confirm consultation has been carried out as part of this process.

**Mitigating Actions Required (re negative / unclear impacts)****EQUALITIES: impact on protected characteristics**

<b>PC 3</b>	Gender Reassignment	Further engagement with LGBTQ+ organisations and individuals in Ayr could help assess whether additional measures, such as gender-neutral restroom facilities or inclusive wayfinding signage, would further improve inclusivity. Public safety enhancements, such as better lighting and visibility, indirectly contribute to reducing risks of harassment, but more targeted consultation is needed to fully understand potential
<b>PC 4</b>	Marriage and Civil Partnership	N/A

<b>Mitigating Actions Required (re negative / unclear impacts)</b>		
<b>PC 6</b>	Race (including Gypsy Travellers)	Further engagement with ethnic minority communities in Ayr could help identify whether any cultural or language barriers exist regarding signage, accessibility, or wayfinding. Ensuring that public spaces reflect Ayr's diverse community through culturally inclusive designs or community-led artwork could help make the town centre feel more welcoming.
<b>PC 7</b>	Religion or Belief	Efforts have already been made to increase Blue Badge parking and consider alternative transport arrangements. Continued dialogue with faith communities will be necessary to monitor whether access issues persist and whether further accommodations, such as designated drop-off areas, should be introduced.
<b>PC 9</b>	Sexual Orientation	To ensure the project is inclusive for all, consideration could be given to engaging with LGBTQ+ groups in Ayr to assess whether any additional safety concerns or accessibility issues exist for this community. Representation through inclusive public messaging, events, or artwork in newly designed public spaces could also help foster a more inclusive atmosphere.
<b>PC 10</b>	Care Experienced (SAC-specific)	Further engagement with care-experienced individuals or youth support organisations could help identify specific needs related to safety, accessibility, and social inclusion. Ensuring that public spaces feel welcoming and provide seating, gathering spaces, and wayfinding support could enhance the experience for young people navigating the town independently.

## ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

<b>EI 1</b>	Climate change mitigation	Further monitoring and data collection will be necessary to assess changes in travel behaviour post-implementation. The Council could consider incorporating low-carbon construction practices and sustainable materials to minimise emissions during delivery.
<b>EI 2</b>	Sustainable procurement	The project should ensure that procurement prioritises sustainable, recycled, or locally sourced materials to reduce environmental impact. Waste management strategies should be included to minimise landfill use and encourage recycling during construction.
<b>EI 3</b>	Climate change adaptation	Consideration should be given to climate resilience measures, including drainage improvements, flood prevention strategies, and heat mitigation (e.g., urban tree planting and shading areas).
Does this proposal require a Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)?		no