



**From mountain to sea**

**MCDONALD PUBLIC PARK ENDOWMENT TRUSTEES**

**MONDAY 16 MARCH 2020**

**ITEM 4**

**CAROLINE'S WELL WOODS ELLON: ACCESS PATH TO TOWN CENTRE**

**BRIEFING REPORT SEPTEMBER 2019**

**1 Reason for Report / Summary**

This briefing report has been prepared to update trustees on the progress made to develop and ultimately deliver a DDA compliant shared use path linking the northern residential areas of Ellon to the town centre facilities as part of the Integrated Travel Town initiatives to support more active and sustainable travel within and across the town.

**2 Background**

A path linking the large residential area to the North of Ellon to the town centre has been under consideration for some time with initial proposals linked to developer planning consents to create a shared use resource extending through the area known as Caroline's Well Woods.

This report follows the update report which was prepared for Trustees at the end of 2019 which set out the context for the proposed route.

**3 Discussion**

Following the survey and design work, four potential options have been identified and costed, the details of which are included in the appended 'Options Report' prepared by AECOM.

The design options range from an option (option 1) which provides a connection to Golf Road to the west of the former academy site to a fourth option which links to the town ward side just north of the former academy site and utilises the former academy service access road. This alignment is most closely matched with the current informal path access and steps located to the north east of the former school site.

The path lengths vary from 330m to 206m and accordingly there is a cost window of £56k to £91k, directly related to route length. The paths are all designed to a limited gradient of 5% and full account has been taken of the existing trees to limit and negate the removal of large and mature trees.

The route summary extracted from the AECOM options report is provided below for reference from which it can be seen that option 4 is the most economically viable.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
<b>Path Width</b>	3m	3m	3m	3m
<b>Path Length</b>	329m	323m	252m	206m
<b>Maximum Gradient</b>	5%	5%	5%	5%
<b>Trees to be felled<sup>2</sup></b>	2	2	2	0
<b>Total Estimated Cost</b>	£91,272	£89,620	£70,074	£56,712

As the proposed path alignments are limited to a 5% gradient, the paths all have an element of 'switchback' however efforts have been made to limit this to continue as direct alignment as practically possible. It should be noted that steps could be provided at the 'return points' to allow more direct access for those who would prefer to use steps and are physically able to do so.

As agreed with trustees, the above route alignments were staked out by the contract surveyor to allow trustees the opportunity to review the above alignments on the ground to help visualise the routes. Officers from the Strategy Development Team were available to guide trustees on site, Cllr Davidson and Cllr Kloppert visited the site with Chris Menzies (Strategy) and Cllr Owen has been advised verbally of the options.

After considering the alignments and having discussed on site, the early consensus would be for support for the Option 4 alignment; this is the shortest routing option and is most economically viable. The Option 4 alignment is contained within land under Aberdeenshire Council ownership. The alignment does not affect any mature broadleaf trees however there are a small number of sycamore or elder trees (less than five) which may need to be removed, diameter less than 30cm.

## 4 Going Forward

With consensus from Trustees to move to the next stage, it is proposed that the AECOM design report is taken to area committee seeking approval to progress to a detailed design of route option 4 before the summer recess. An application for Capital funding to the value of £90k has been made for the FY20/21 budget.

Milestones below for 2020:

- Committee Paper for Formartine Area Committee members to consider
- Funding Approved
- Stage 2 Detailed design
- Public promotion
- Preparation of contract/tender documentation
- Tender period
- Construction.

Report prepared by Chris Menzies (Strategy Team Leader)  
13 March 2020







