

Capital Plan List C - Leisure Services Evaluations

TONBRIDGE TO PENSURST CYCLE ROUTE – ADDITIONAL SECTION TO AVOID USE OF LOWER HAYSDEN LANE			
1. Specification			
	(i)	Purpose of the scheme	The Tonbridge to Penshurst Cycle route is a 7-km leisure cycle route running along the Medway valley between Tonbridge and Penshurst Place. The major part of the route is off-road, but one section uses approximately 1km of Lower Haysden Lane, which is a public highway. The purpose of this scheme is to create a further off-road section of cycle route to avoid the need for cyclists to use this public highway, thereby providing a safer and more attractive route by segregating cyclist from motorists.
	(ii)	Relevance to National / Council's Strategic Objectives	<p>(a) <u>National</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>1996 National Cycling Strategy</u> – Quadrupling the number of cycling journeys in the next decade. - <u>1998 Government White paper</u> – promotion of walking cycling etc. - <u>National themes</u> being promoted by government for Healthy Living, Social Inclusion, Wellbeing and The Environment. - <u>National Cycle Network</u> - The route is part of the National Cycle Network (Route 12). <p>(b) <u>Council</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Corporate Key Priorities</u> -Assists with meeting one of the Council's Key Priorities – ‘Promote, encourage and provide opportunities for “Healthy Living” ‘. - <u>Community Strategy</u> – Protective of the Local environment. Promotes sustainable public access to, and recreational use of, the borough’s countryside and natural heritage. - <u>Cultural Strategy</u> – development of the route is one performance targets under the ‘Encouraging Healthy Lifestyles Theme’. - <u>Borough Leisure Strategy</u> – Identified as a Key Issue. - <u>Outdoor Leisure Performance Plan 2005/06</u> – Evaluation identified as an Improvement Action.
	(iii)	Targets for Judging Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of users of the cycle route. - Positive public feedback. - Views of Penshurst Place on increased visitors arriving by bicycle.

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2.	<p>Design Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft costing feasibility scheme produced by Consultants. - Much of route is on council owned land, but does require purchase of additional land from adjoining land owner. - Owner has indicated a willingness to do a land swap plus compensation payment. Details to be agreed. - Liaison required with EA as route skirts the base of the Leigh Flood Relief Barrier at one point. EA agreed subject to appropriate fencing. - The Director of Planning and Transportation advises that planning consent will be required, but it is possible that the council will be able to proceed with the development under its permitted development rights, once all of the land required is owned by the council. This issue will be reconsidered when the land is acquired.
3	<p>Consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DP&T – see design issues above. - Penshurst Place – supportive - Sustrans – supportive. Considers Tonbridge to Penshurst cycle route will be one of the best leisure cycling routes in the South East, and this will enhance the route further. - Tonbridge Civic Society – supportive. - Cycle-ops - supportive.
4.	<p>Capital Cost</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Total estimated cost of scheme inclusive of construction, Signing, land purchase and fees. - £74,000 reduced to £42,000 by other contributions. (See Partnership Funding). - The corporate provision for fast track schemes has a balance of £60,000 after allowing for the schemes so far approved against the original £250,000 provision in the 2005/06 capital plan for fast track schemes. There is, therefore, sufficient balance in hand to cover the £42,000 cost to T&MBC.
5.	<p>Revenue Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintenance costs. - Periodic cutting back of side growth, repairs to stock fencing, redressing of surface of path with stone dust as required and repairs to signing. Estimated cost £1,000 p.a. - Loss of Interest - As the loss of interest on the £250,000 provision for fast track schemes has already been taken into account in budget forecasting, the only additional impact on the budget forecast is the £1,000 per annum estimated maintenance expenditure.
6.	<p>Partnership Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interreg funding confirmed - £26,000. - Wayleave payment from EDF for route of new cables - Tonbridge to Leigh Powder Mills. £6,500

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7.	<p>Post Implementation Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Casual Monitoring of route over first 12 months following opening, including enquiries to the TIC, and casual observation by staff.- Web page hits.- Entrance figures of those arriving by bicycle to Penshurst Place.- Survey of users, as part of Haysden Country Park user surveys (approx. every 3 years).
8.	<p>Recommendation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- It is considered that the scheme is feasible and will provide a significant improvement to the route as currently proposed, and will contribute to the delivery of an important key priority of the Borough Council. It is therefore Recommended that, subject to the land acquisition being concluded satisfactorily, the scheme be included in the List A schemes for progressing during the current financial year.