

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6

To: PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE		Subject: GARTLEA ROAD RAILWAY BRIDGE REPLACEMENT
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT		
Date: 18 October 2004	Ref: D/TM/62/12/AMcA	

1. **Purpose of Report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the project to replace and improve the Gartlea Road Railway Bridge, Airdrie.

2. **Background**

2.1 On 22 January 2003, Committee agreed that the project be procured using a design and construction contract issued by Railtrack (now Network Rail). Prior to this the project had already been delayed because of the time taken by Railtrack (from January to December 2002) to carry out their assessment of the existing structure and draw up cost sharing clauses. This resulted in the completion date being revised from 2003/04 to Autumn 2004. Committee was advised that the Council had asked Railtrack to reserve railway possessions to achieve a construction date of autumn 2004 but that Railtrack could not agree to book the possession dates in advance of the feasibility design. This feasibility design has recently been completed and a revised programme of design and build including possession times is now enclosed.

2.2 The target date of autumn 2004 has not been met because the feasibility design stage has incurred delays and the remaining programme will require to be extended due to factors which are detailed below.

2.3 The **transformation of Railtrack into Network Rail** is estimated to have resulted in a delay of 3 months. Reviews of working practices since this reorganisation include the requirement for legal agreements and expenditure to be approved by the national headquarters in London. This in itself has added 3 months to the programme.

2.4 **Airdrie to Bathgate Extension** – the scope of the feasibility design work had to be extended to take account of any implications arising from restoring the single-track layout to a twin track layout. This resulted in a delay of 7 months because the full implications could not be assessed until the feasibility study for the proposed Airdrie to Bathgate Link had been sufficiently developed. However, the bridge strengthening design width and height clearances have been shown to be sufficient to accommodate the Airdrie to Bathgate Link. The bridge deck replacement can therefore proceed independently of the Airdrie to Bathgate rail proposals with no change to the original design solution.

2.5 The design work and site investigations carried out to date have shown that the existing abutments can be used and extended. Extensions to two of the four wing walls will be required. A geotechnical study and general site investigation into ground and abutment backfill conditions has revealed that old mine workings are present north and south of the bridge. Further specialist site investigation will now be carried out in the vicinity of the proposed extended wall to ascertain if there are shafts requiring remedial measures. An additional 3 months has had to be built into the design/construction phase of the project to allow for this.

- 2.6 The earliest that Network Rail can have their contractor on site following authorisation would be December 2005. This would cause extensive disruption to road and rail commuters over the festive period. The most disruptive phase of the project involving both road and rail closures is therefore being postponed to coincide with the Easter holiday Monday. Works would commence on site approximately 6 weeks prior to this, giving rise to a March 2006 start date.
- 2.7 At present heavy vehicles and buses are being diverted from Gartlea Road onto Hogg Street and Cairnhill Road. This is causing disruption to local residents and Alexandra Primary School. The area is also affected by parking and taxis associated with Airdrie Station. Temporary waiting and loading restrictions are in place to mitigate the effects of the diverted traffic and Strathclyde Police have been asked to enforce the restrictions. However it is desirable to have this diverted traffic removed at the earliest opportunity and we will request Network rail to take every opportunity of accelerating the project, subject to ascertaining associated costs as being acceptable.
- 2.8 The cost for the project based on the feasibility design is £1.25m to be funded from the capital budget.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 Members are asked to:-
- a) note the up to date cost estimate and programme and approve continuation of the procurement process.
  - b) note that the feasibility study has been completed; that a programme for implementation of the project has now been drawn up; and that the detailed design phase will commence as soon as the Bridge Agreement has been concluded.
  - c) note that the Bridge Agreement will be subject to separate Committee approval.
  - d) authorise the Director of Planning and Environment to negotiate with Network Rail to determine if there are options for accelerating the project and to determine the extent of associated costs.

*1 A Lawson*

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**DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT**  
(06/10/04)

Local Government Access to Information Act: for further information about this report, please contact Alex McAuley, Senior Engineer on 01236 616259.

# Gartlea Road Railway Bridge Replacement - Programme

