

To: PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE		Subject: Extension of Greenlink Project to Strathclyde Park
From: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT		
Date: 28 March 2007	Ref: PL/EPT/00/03/DT	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Committee of the benefits of an extension to the Greenlink project that will connect the existing route into Strathclyde Park, and to seek authorisation to progress the project and issue tender documents to identified contractors to undertake the capital works contract.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council previously approved the Ravenscraig Greenlink planning application in May 2004 and the expenditure of £1.1 million to deliver the project in January 2005. The Greenlink Project has sought to encourage the positive use of the area, provide training, promote passive policing and assist with the physical decline socially deprived communities and create a comprehensive and sustainable means for residents to access the re-developed the Ravenscraig site.
- 2.2 The original concept of this project was to link Strathclyde Park with the Ravenscraig site at an envisaged cost of £4 million. This changed over time to become the project that ends adjacent to Bellshill Golf course, and was implemented costing £1,763,750 with a council contribution £1.1 million.
- 2.3 A partnership has been established since the early stages of the project to steer and support the regeneration of the area. The key partners in the process have been; North Lanarkshire Council, Scottish Enterprise Lanarkshire, Central Scotland Forest Trust (CSFT) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). In addition, there was substantial consultation with the local communities, this has continued since the completion of the capital works.

3. Greenlink Extension

- 3.1 It has always been an aspiration to extend the Greenlink from its existing finishing point at Bellshill Golf Club into Strathclyde Country Park. The aim of the proposed project is to do this by using the route of a current track that goes through Bellshill Golf course into Strathclyde Park. Undertaking this project will show the Councils continued commitment and support to the Greenlink initiative and its considered value to the area.
- 3.2 The project will be managed and delivered by CSFT who successfully undertook the management of the original Greenlink project. CSFT are a partner with the Council and are actively involved in the project through the steering group and their employment of the Greenlink development officers. Cannon Design has been appointed to act as consultant by CSFT and funded by NLC to design and cost the project to improve the existing linkages.
- 3.3 The project will comprise of 2 key elements;
- Creating a bespoke cycle way with a formal surface along the existing Orbiston Road which has fallen into disrepair, thus bringing it back into effective use. The Traffic and Transportation Section of this Department consider that the same maintenance regime as

has already been agreed for the previous section of the Greenlink should be adopted for this section.

- The up-grading/regarding of an existing red ash track path running southwards from Orbiston Road through Bellshill Golf course to form a useable footpath/cycle path to a standard that enables users to safely and easily use the route. Additional elements include:
 - clearing/reinstatement of swales/ditches.
 - reducing the width of the route near the railway bridge
 - introduction of fencing on the tight turns introduce
 - cross fall drainage to manage surface water

3.4 This track is owned and maintained by NLC, and will be improved in a manor considered to be fit for purpose for potential users. A hard wearing surface will be used which is in-keeping with the existing surface so as not to result in excessive costs. Measures to slow users at suitable locations to ensure the safety of all. The result will be the creation of a safer environment for walkers and cyclists using the route.

3.5 The Council's Community Services Department who maintain the track and Bellshill Golf Club have been fully involved and consulted during the project development process and both support the proposal. Due to the increased usage of the route drivers of maintenance vehicles associated with the golf course will be required to act in a responsible manor when they use the route.

3.6 Where the track enters Strathclyde Park it is aimed to enhance an existing entrance. An access control mechanism will be introduced at this location to prevent inappropriate vehicular use of the path.

3.7 The project is envisaged to cost £167,000 and will be implemented with funds both from North Lanarkshire Council's Planning and Environment Department through the Environmental Regeneration budget line and Scottish National Heritage. The Council's contribution will be £112,000, this will be supplemented by an SNH contribution of £55,000. SNH have agreed to pay this sum subject to commitment from the Council commitment to implementation of the project.

4. Greenlink Extension Implementation

4.1 It is intended that the following contractors will be invited to tender to undertake the works for the Greenlink extension:

- AEL Enterprises Ltd
- CBC Lands Division
- Coltart Contracts
- Fountains Support Services
- Land Engineering

5. Corporate Considerations

5.1 The result of implementing the project will deliver on the corporate aims of improving the quality of the environment and improving access to greenspace. The project also acts as a delivery mechanism for other corporate documents such as the Public Access Strategy.

5.2 There are financial implications associated with the project delivery, in regards to appointing a contractor to undertake the proposed works. The Council contribution of £112,000 will be met from the 2007/08 capital programme under the heading of Environmental Regeneration. This is supplemented to by the SNH contribution of £55,000 which CSFT have been successful in securing.

6. Sustainable Development Implications

- 6.1 It is widely recognised that promoting more sustainable methods of travel has environmental, social and health benefits. This project can make a significant contribution towards securing better quality lives for the people of North Motherwell and Orbiston, and contribute too many of the Council's corporate priorities, particularly the need to ensure that people have a pleasant safe environment.
- 6.2 The proposed extension can assist in lifting the image of the area as well as deliver on the creation of well-connected, inclusive and accessible communities.

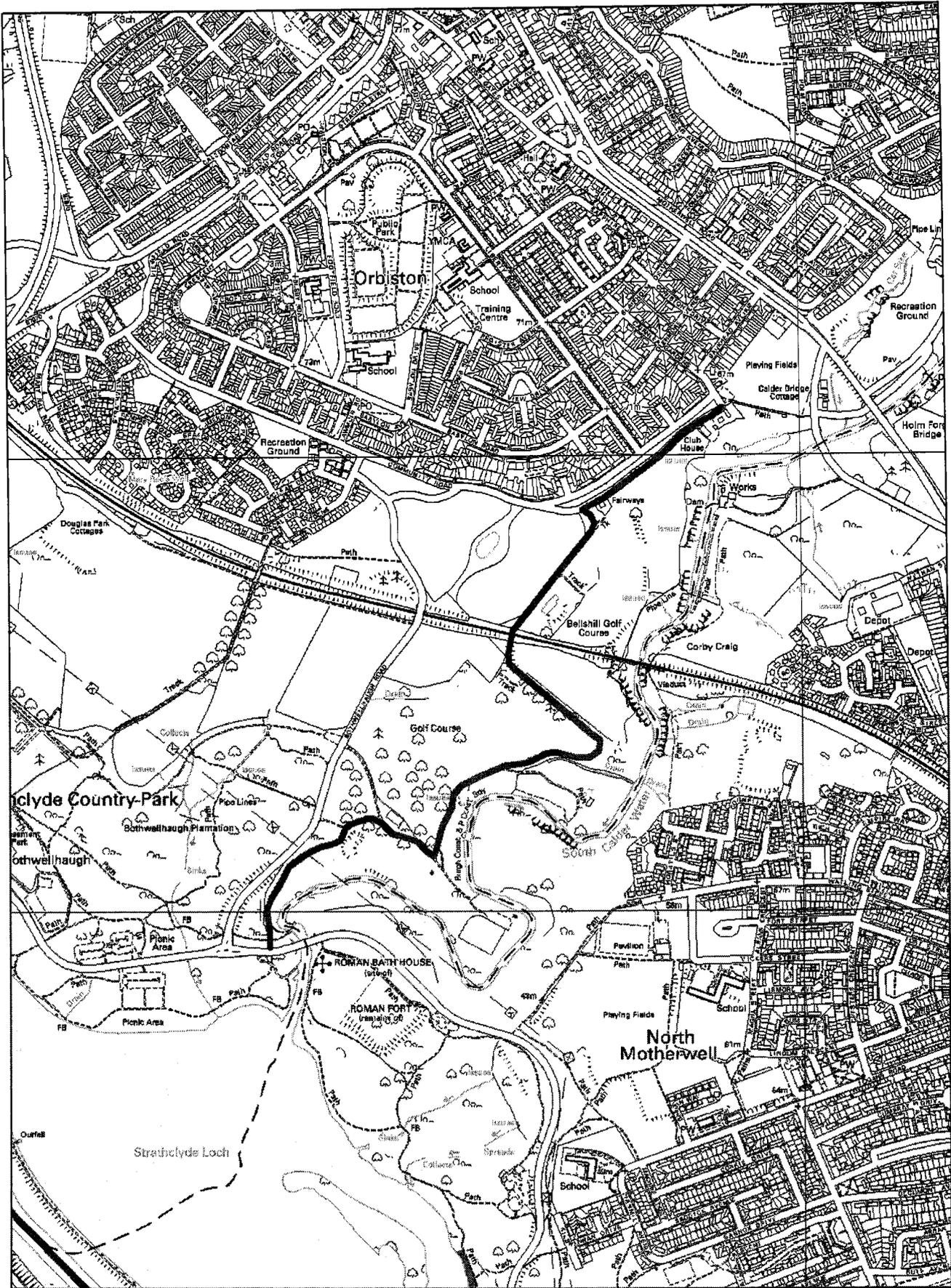
7. Recommendation

- 7.1 It is recommended that the Committee agrees:
- a) To acknowledge the benefits of extension to the Greenlink to Strathclyde Park;
 - b) To authorise the expenditure of up to £112,000 for the implementation of the project.
 - c) To approve the request to invite contractors (identified in paragraph 4.1) to tender for the works.



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Proposed Extension to the Greenlink

1:10,000

