

Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 15 June 2023

Potential Extension of Tram to Newbridge

Executive Wards Council Commitments	Routine 1 - Almond
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1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee note this update on the potential to extend the tram to Newbridge.

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Potential Extension of Tram to Newbridge

2. Executive Summary

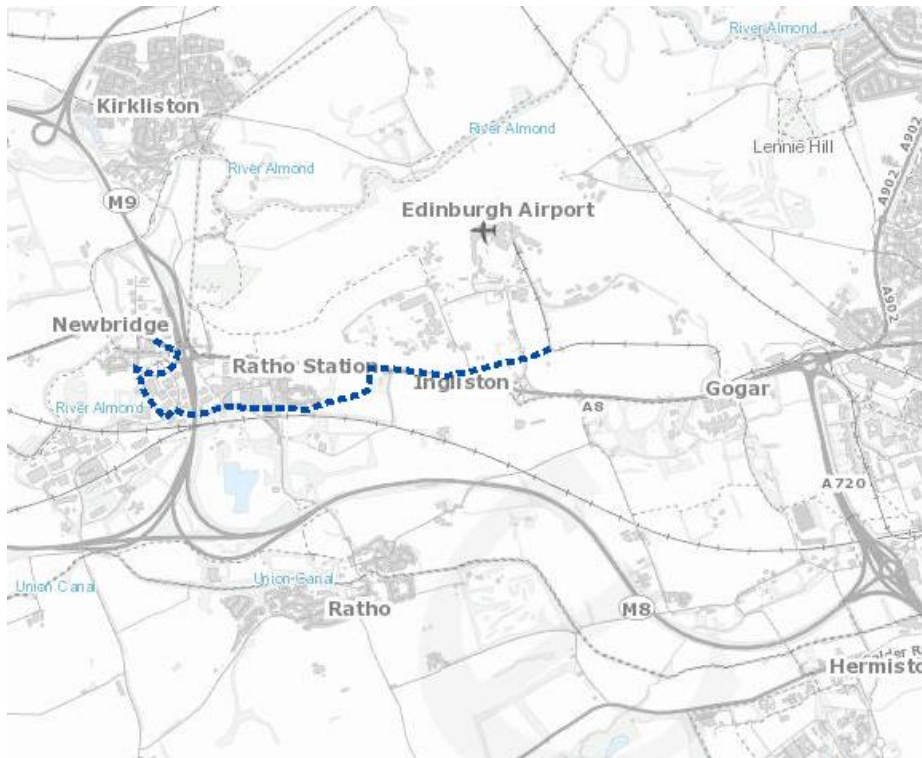
- 2.1 This report responds to a request from the Council, on 9 February 2023, on the potential to extend the Tram westwards to Newbridge and beyond.

3. Background

- 3.1 On [9 February 2023](#), the Council considered a report on the potential to extend the city's tram route and requested a scoping report in three cycles to Transport and Environment Committee on the issues and options that would need to be considered around the relatively short western extension to Newbridge and beyond with a view to establishing the Council's support in principle for this. However, the Council also noted that there is no funding available to proceed with a tram extension at this time.

Tram Development 2000s-2019

- 3.2 The proposition of a tram for Edinburgh was developed in the 2000s and was conceived as a network with potential routes serving the Waterfront, South East Edinburgh, and West Edinburgh (including the Airport and Newbridge). Subsequently, these routes have been safeguarded within the Council's Local Development Plan (2016); and remain safeguarded in City Plan 2030.
- 3.3 Funding was secured for the section between the Airport and Newhaven in 2006, with the initial section (Airport to York Place) opening in 2014. Construction for the remaining section to Newhaven commenced in 2019 and will open in 2023.
- 3.4 The route alignment extending to Newbridge envisaged under the Edinburgh Tram (Line Two) Act 2006 was via Station Road, to Harvest Road under the M9 motorway, along Cliftonhall Road to Newbridge Industrial Estate Road and terminating at a point west of the Newbridge Roundabout (as outlined below in Figure 3.1).



**Figure 3.1. Existing Safeguarded Transit Alignment to Newbridge
Edinburgh Strategic Sustainable Transport Study Phases 1 and 2 (2019 & 2020)**

- 3.5 In 2019, to support the development the [City Mobility Plan](#) and [City Plan](#), the Council commissioned a strategic study to revisit the potential role of tram and wider mass transit. This study was conducted in two phases.
- 3.6 Phase 1 of the Edinburgh Strategic Sustainable Transport Study (ESSTS) was reported to Committee on [16 January 2022](#). The study evaluated ten corridors and considered a range of attributes including:
 - 3.6.1 Level of existing demand;
 - 3.6.2 Ability to serve new development (as identified through the LDP);
 - 3.6.3 Sustainable access to new areas of development;
 - 3.6.4 Serving areas of inequality and deprivation;
 - 3.6.5 Comparative journey time between bus and other alternatives;
 - 3.6.6 Ability to attract significant mode shift; and
 - 3.6.7 Route feasibility and cost.
- 3.7 The four corridors were identified as having the highest potential for Mass Transit were:
 - 3.7.1 City Centre to Granton;
 - 3.7.2 City Centre to South East via BioQuarter;
 - 3.7.3 Ingliston to Newbridge; and

3.7.4 Hermiston Gait to West of Hermiston.

- 3.8 Of these four corridors, Newbridge and West of Hermiston were assessed as having lower base demand. However, both corridors did score well in terms of route alignment feasibility.
- 3.9 The development of the Granton Waterfront to the Edinburgh BioQuarter Strategic Business Case (SBC) is underway and is helping inform the development of both the Circulation Plan and Public Transport Action Plan.

Second Strategic Transport Projects Review (known as STPR2)

- 3.10 In 2019, Transport Scotland commenced the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (known as STPR2), following publication of the first review in 2008.
- 3.11 STPR2 will help deliver the vision, priorities and outcomes that are set out in the second National Transport Strategy (NTS2).
- 3.12 STPR2 informs transport investment in Scotland for the next 20 years (2022-2042) by providing evidence-based recommendations to Scottish Ministers.
- 3.13 STPR2 aligns with other plans such as the national Climate Change Plan and the [Fourth National Planning Framework](#) (NPF4), the [Regional Transport Strategy](#), [Regional Prosperity Framework](#) and is a strong fit with the Council's City Mobility Plan and West Edinburgh Spatial Strategy for Inclusive Growth (WE-SSIG).
- 3.14 As noted in February's report, the most significant recommendation within the report for Edinburgh, is as follows:
- 3.14.1 *"Transport Scotland works with regional partners to develop and enhance the cross-boundary public transport system for the Edinburgh and South East Scotland region, potentially comprising tram and bus-based transit modes including bus rapid transit (BRT) and bus priority measures. This would complement and integrate with the region's current bus, tram and heavy rail networks, to provide improved connectivity between Edinburgh and the surrounding communities in the region, as well as more direct connections between communities outside Edinburgh".*

4. Main report

Edinburgh Strategic Sustainable Transport Study

- 4.1 The [proposed City Plan](#) confirms West Edinburgh as a location for major development. Improving sustainable transport accessibility through active travel and public transit provision, in lockstep with new development, will be critical to realising the potential for West Edinburgh.
- 4.2 With the growth potential of West Edinburgh being recognised for many years, in the early 2000s an indicative tram route along the Newbridge corridor was developed. This has been safeguarded through the Local Development Plan 1 and is set to remain safeguarded in the City Plan. The Local Plan Route is presented above in Figure 3.1.

- 4.3 As noted in paragraphs 3.5 – 3.8, the ESSTS study assessed the potential for mass rapid transit solutions in the Newbridge corridor.
- 4.4 The study noted that the corridor scored well against criteria of deliverability and identified that a new strategic Park and Ride facility near Newbridge, served by tram, could also help promote significant modal shift.
- 4.5 However, the study also noted that Bus Rapid Transit options could potentially be more suitable for this corridor, implemented quicker and provide a more direct routing to Newbridge.
- 4.6 Consideration was also given to the overall tram network capacity constraints, and it was determined that only one tram extension in west of the city could be supported (either an extension to Newbridge or an extension to west of Hermiston, but not both).
- 4.7 Any extension to the tram network would be subject to a full UK Treasury Green Book Business Case assessment to consider a range of strategic, economic, financial, commercial and deliverability impacts. Furthermore, the construction of an extension to Newbridge would be coordinated and sequenced in terms of wider expansion prioritisation and needs.
- 4.8 To inform all aspects of any business case, the current and future expected passenger capacity and constraints on the network (i.e. sufficient headway running between tram sets, additional vehicle numbers required, depot and stabling options) would also need to be considered.
- 4.9 As with all potential extensions, each need to be evaluated for their benefits in the context of the wider city. ESSTS indicated that an extension to west of Hermiston would likely have a stronger business case when compared to the Newbridge option; although further work would need to be undertaken to confirm this.

STPR2

- 4.10 Within STPR2, the A8 corridor is recognised as a candidate to enhance the public transport system potentially comprising tram and/or bus-based rapid transit modes (as indicated in Appendix 1).
- 4.11 Discussions are on-going between the Council (along with West Lothian Council and regional partners) with Transport Scotland on the commitment within STPR2 to develop a Mass Transit proposal for Edinburgh and the South East of Scotland.
- 4.12 Once the STPR2 Delivery Plan is published later this year, an update report outlining the next steps will be provided to Committee at the earliest opportunity, noting that the commencement of any future technical assessment work would include exploring route options in the west of the city.

WETIP

- 4.13 In parallel to STPR2, the West Edinburgh Transport Improvements Programme (WETIP) is developing a series of bus priority (and active travel measures) between Broxburn, Newbridge and Maybury along the A89/A8 corridor. Potential

interventions include a Mobility Hub(s)/ Park and Ride site located in the Broxburn area.

- 4.14 WETIP proposals are also in line with the City Plan and will help contribute towards shared policy targets (including those related to the Climate Emergency and efforts to reduce the number of kilometres travelled by car). It is hoped that the sustainable transportation measures delivered through WETIP will provide long term resilience, support strong connectivity between neighbouring authorities and encourage a model shift from car onto bus and active travel.
- 4.15 As outlined in paragraph 4.13, WETIP targets the section of A8/A89 between Broxburn and Maybury. Outwith this section, the Bus Partnership Fund has been coordinated to also identify a range of bus priority interventions along the wider the A8 corridor (e.g. eastwards from Maybury towards City Centre and westwards beyond Broxburn towards Livingston). The Bus Partnership Fund SBC was considered by Committee on [18 May 2023](#) which outlined these proposals.
- 4.16 The current activities being progressed as part of WETIP include the development of preliminary designs and material for public consultation (which is scheduled to commence during summer 2023). The outputs from the design activities and the feedback from the public consultation will help inform the completion of the Outline Business Case (a draft of which will be submitted to Transport Scotland later this year). A WETIP update will be provided to Committee later this year.
- 4.17 Any future mass transit proposal along the A8, developed through STPR2, would be designed to complement the measures currently being proposed in WETIP and the Bus Partnership Fund. For example, the safeguarded tram route running south of the A8 from Ingliston to Newbridge, and potentially beyond towards Broxburn, would augment and strengthen the public transport offer along that corridor.
- 4.18 Furthermore, works to develop a city wide composite multimodal network are also being progressed through the Council's draft [Circulation Plan](#).

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The Council, along with Regional Partners, will continue to engage with Transport Scotland to help develop the STPR2 Delivery Plan and future governance arrangements for the progression of the Mass Transit recommendation.
- 5.2 The STPR2 Delivery Plan is expected to be published later in 2023, but in the interim period, the Council will continue to develop:
 - 5.2.1 Proposals for Bus and Active Travel along the A8/A89 corridor (through the BPF and WETIP), and;
 - 5.2.2 The Strategic Business Case for a tramline between Granton Waterfront to Shawfair.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 As noted by the Council in February 2023, there is no funding available to proceed with a tram extension at this time.
- 6.2 Transport Scotland are expected to publish their STPR2 Delivery Plan later in 2023, and this will confirm the immediate investment priorities.
- 6.3 The Council will continue to work with Transport Scotland to help inform the future Delivery Plan in an attempt to secure funding for the development of the Mass Transit recommendation.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

Bus Partnership Fund

- 7.1 The input of stakeholders (including local residents, key stakeholder groups, businesses, interest groups, people with protected characteristics and the general public) will be critical in delivering the Bus Priority proposals.
- 7.2 The Council website and social media are kept updated with progress and social media and will be maintained during the next stage of the Bus Partnership Fund and an extensive and detailed public consultation will be conducted as part of the Outline Business Case (OBC).
- 7.3 The public consultation will be publicised on the Council's Consultation Hub to garner detailed feedback on the scheme.
- 7.4 An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) is being developed as part of the SBC process and will be maintained throughout the design process.

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [Public Transport Action Plan](#)

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Indicative extent of Mass Rapid Transit Recommendation

Appendix 1 – Indicative extent of Mass Transit Recommendation

