

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 10 JULY 2007

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MERSEY WATERFRONT REGIONAL PARK BOARD

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report seeks approval of two Mersey Waterfront Regional Park (MWRP) projects which have been approved by the MWRP Board.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Seacombe-New Brighton Promenade

2.1.1 This project is a priority project within Mersey Waterfront's Pride in our Proms programme. I reported the detailed proposals to Cabinet on the 7th June, when a 10 Year Management Plan, and the resources to implement it, were approved, to satisfy conditions attached to the preliminary funding approvals.

2.1.2 The project will undertake environmental improvements to the length of the Promenade, concentrating in particular on the Seacombe Gateway, the Seacombe Embankments and Vale Park. A start on site is scheduled for later this summer, with completion in time for the return of the Tall Ships to the Mersey in July next year.

2.1.3 Wirral Council will manage the project, through the appointed landscape designers The Environment Partnership (TEP). The Council has requested £500,000 from Mersey Waterfront's Succession programme towards this project. This funding will be matched by an ERDF grant of £500,000 from the Merseyside Objective One programme. On this basis MWRP will fund 50% of the total project cost.

2.1.4 The MWRP Board has approved a capital contribution of £500,000 towards the costs of this project, subject to NWDA and approval as a non-delegated project and the following conditions being satisfied:

1. WMBC to confirm Detailed Planning Consent for the elements of the project requiring permission, prior to start on site.
2. WMBC to approve the Management Plan produced by TEP, and commit to provide the necessary resource to fund its implementation for a ten year period, prior to start on site (agreed by Cabinet on 7 June 2007).
3. WMBC to undertake a full sustainable development appraisal of the project in accordance with the 'Integrated Appraisal Tool' prepared by Action for Sustainability, by 31 May 2007.

2.2 Liverpool Riverlands

2.2.1 This project is a fundamental element of the mixed use redevelopment proposals for the derelict former International Garden Festival site which for the last few years has been a major eyesore at a key gateway into Liverpool city centre. The proposed MWRP funding will enable Liverpool City Council (LCC) to deliver an enhanced waterfront park for public use through an innovative partnership with a private developer and the Land Restoration Trust (LRT). The project incorporates an innovative long-term management arrangement with LRT in order to ensure a high level of maintenance of the completed park funded through an endowment paid for by the private sector developer. If successful this management arrangement could become a blue print for the management and maintenance of other sites on the Mersey Waterfront.

2.2.2 The MWRP grant funding will allow additional capital works to be undertaken, including:

- Restoration of the Japanese and Chinese gardens
- Construction of the Grand Axis
- Creation of a linkage through to the promenade
- Restoration of the Southern Grasslands (linking to Otterspool Promenade)
- Improvements to Priory Wood

2.2.3 The total project cost is £3,763,573. Liverpool City Council has requested a MWRP grant of £1,534,650 towards these costs. The remaining funding is coming from the private sector partner. MWRP funding represents 40% of the total project cost.

2.2.4 The MWRP Board approved £1,534,650 of capital funding to Liverpool City Council subject to the following conditions:

1. LCC/LRT to ensure that all required legal agreement/amendments to existing agreements are in place, which as a minimum requires the developer to provide £2,232,923 which includes a contingency contribution towards the appraised total project costs (£3,763,573) and a £2,946,750 contribution towards the endowment.
2. MWRP to approve the final detailed Management Plan for the park.
3. MWRP to approve the appointment of the Managing Partner for the Park.
4. LCC/LRT commit to achieve and maintain Green Flag Award Status for the park.
5. LCC/LRT to commission an independent formal evaluation of the project using consultants from the NWDA's Appraisal and Evaluation Panel at an appropriate time agreed by MW.
6. LCC/LRT to agree a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan with MWRP.
7. LCC/LRT to develop agree communications plan, with input and final endorsement from MWRP.

3.0 FINANCIAL & STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

3.1 This project is funded by Mersey Waterfront, a financial resource which is made available by the North West Regional Development Agency to Wirral Council who are the Accountable Body for the MWRP.

4.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Mersey Waterfront promotes equal opportunities for all

5.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 All the projects will be implemented in keeping with the principles of Agenda 21. In particular, they will seek to address:

- Efficient use of resources and energy
- Minimisation of waste
- Reduction of pollution
- Promotion of accessibility and sustainable transport
- Enrichment of local identity

6.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

6.1 This report will be of interest to all members of the council

7.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no Human Rights implications arising directly from this report

8.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no known Community Safety implications arising directly from this report.

9.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no known Planning implications arising directly from this report.

10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Mersey Waterfront papers were used in the preparation of this report and these are held in the Regeneration Department at Wallasey Town Hall.

11.0 RECOMMENDATION

11.1 That a MWRP grant of £500,000 be approved to part fund the Seacombe-New Brighton Promenade project and that a MWRP grant of £1,534,650 be approved to part fund the Liverpool Riverlands proposal.

Alan Stennard
Director of Regeneration