

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET 20<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2007

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MERSEY WATERFRONT REGIONAL PARK (MWRP) BOARD**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 This report seeks approval of a recommendation of the MWRP Board to approve funding for the Pier Head Ferry Terminal Project.

**2.0 Pier Head Ferry Terminal**

2.1 It has long been the ambition of Mersey Ferries to build a new ferry terminal on the site of the existing terminal at the Pier Head in Liverpool. This new building will compliment the World Heritage Site by providing a high quality design coupled with a state of the art facility for passengers using the world famous Mersey Ferries.

2.2 As at Seacombe Ferry Terminal with Spaceport and soon at Woodside Ferry Terminal with the U-boat, Mersey Ferries want to combine the Pierhead Terminal with a major attraction which will bring life and vitality to this part of the waterfront complimenting the attractions currently available in the Albert Dock. Announcements on this attraction will be made when negotiations have been concluded.

2.3 The new terminal will also incorporate a restaurant which will capitalise on the magnificent views of the river and external improvement works will ensure that the new development aligns with the other Pier Head Public Realm Works.

2.4 Mersey Ferries are established as an important form of local transport within Merseyside and are recognised as a major player in the development of tourism in the region. Some 680,000 visits per annum are attracted as a result of its services. The Pier Head accommodates over 60% of all ferry commuter and leisure travellers and is a crucial part of an integrated and sustainable transport system. Moreover, it links the Pathways areas of Seacombe and Birkenhead to employment and leisure opportunities in Liverpool city centre.

2.5 The project has a very strong sub regional and local strategic fit and will help achieve a number of the Transformational Activities of the Regional Economic Strategy. The project will lever in over £9m of other public sector investment and offers very good value for money in terms of its outputs and wider benefits and outcomes.

2.6 A financial contribution of £925,486 is sought from MWRP towards the cost of the new Pier Head Ferry Terminal which totals £10,174,466. The remaining £9,249,000m is to be funded by ERDF (£3,783,520) and Merseytravel (£5,465,480).

2.7 The proposal has been independently appraised and recommended for approval by the MWRP Board.

2.8 As the proposed grant is over the delegated limit of £250,000 approval of the project by the North West Development Agency is required and this has now been received.

### **3.0 FINANCIAL & STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 Mersey Waterfront, is funded by the NWDA, Wirral Council is the Accountable Body for the funding.

### **4.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The project will be delivered and operated in accordance with Merseytravel's Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion policies which will ensure that the aims of the Regional Equality Strategy are delivered for this project. The projects professional team and the contractor will be required to adopt and adhere to these policies during the construction phase of the project. The building has been designed to encourage physical access in accordance with DDA and Universal access requirements and a detailed Access Statement has been produced by the project Architect. The needs of all members of the local community and key stakeholders have been taken into account as part of extensive consultations undertaken as part of the design development of the building.

4.2 Potential differential impacts of the scheme in terms of physical, financial and cultural barriers have been considered and proposals to minimise any potential adverse effects have been incorporated in the project proposals.

### **5.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

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

### **6.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The project has been developed and will be implemented in accordance with Merseytravel's Environmental Sustainability Strategy and their accredited Environmental Management system which commits Merseytravel to make continual environmental improvements in all areas of its activities. The design and specification of the building will result in a *very good* BREEAM rating being achieved.

### **7.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Planning approval has been obtained from Liverpool City Council.

### **8.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 None

### **9.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None

## **10.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 This report will be of interest to all members of the Council.

## **11.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **12.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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

## **13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

13.1 It is recommended that a MWRP grant of £925,486 is approved to the Mersey Passenger Transport Authority towards the costs of the Pier Head Ferry Terminal project subject to the following conditions:

(a) Mersey Passenger Transport Authority (Merseytravel) to provide confirmation that the capital contributions to the project from ERDF (£3,783,520) and Merseytravel (£5,465,480) have been formally approved on satisfactory terms and conditions.

(b) Merseytravel to provide a detailed Business Plan for the operation of the proposed attraction for MWRP approval by 30th September 2007 and confirm that the funding is in place to pay for any required fit out costs (currently estimated at £3m).

(c) Merseytravel to obtain the required agreements for the attraction by 30th November 2007

(d) Merseytravel to complete the fit out the Visitor Attraction by 31st December 2008.

(e) Merseytravel to complete an agreement with an operator for the restaurant by 31st December 2007 and ensure that fit out works are completed by 31st December 2008.

(f) Merseytravel to provide written confirmation from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs that all the VAT chargeable on the capital works costs can be reclaimed.

(g) Merseytravel to complete the lease with Liverpool City Council (LCC) for the site of the proposed building.

(h) Merseytravel to provide written confirmation that the District Valuer has certified that the lease rental and terms with LCC are at market rates.

(i) All NWDA standard property based Grant Funding Agreement conditions are included in the MWRP Offer Letter to Mersey Ferries and that a clause is included for MWRP to recover 100% of any cost savings on the landing stage fit out costs (£840,200), Mersey Ferries fit out costs (£415,000), first and second floor toilets (£210,000), Temporary Mersey Ferries Accommodation (£150,000) and other fees/costs of £115,000.

(j) Merseytravel to commission an independent formal evaluation of the project using consultants from the NWDA's Appraisal & Evaluation Panel at an appropriate time to be agreed with MWRP.

(k) Merseytravel to agree a Monitoring & Evaluation Plan with MWRP.

(l) Merseytravel to agree a Communications Plan with MWRP.

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