

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 12 APRIL 2012

SUBJECT:	HOYLAKE STATION GATEWAY – PHASE 2A SCHEME
WARD/S AFFECTED:	HOYLAKE & MEOLS
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION, HOUSING & PLANNING
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	REGENERATION AND PLANNING STRATEGY
KEY DECISION ?	YES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Following the decision by Council on 1st March 2012 to invest a further £1.2M in improvements in Hoylake [minute 131 refers], this report seeks endorsement for the proposed Outline Design and Key Principles described in this report.
- 1.2 In addition the report seeks authority to proceed with the necessary procurement process to secure a suitable tenderer to carry out the work and to negotiate with Network Rail and Merseytravel to formalise an agreement for the Council to adopt and maintain the completed highway improvement works.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 Following the successful hosting of the Open Golf Championships at Royal Liverpool in 2006, the Championships will return to Hoylake in July 2014. This represents a major opportunity for the borough and is expected to act as a catalyst for the continued regeneration of Hoylake and West Kirby.
- 2.2 Members will recall that between 2005 and 2007 a programme of high quality environmental and public realm improvements were introduced to Hoylake from Station Rd to Melrose Avenue. The scheme incorporated improvements to the delineation of the road, new paving, street lamps, street furniture, signage, landscaping works and distinctive public art features. Delivered in two separate phases; prior to, and immediately after, the Championships, the £2.7M of improvements had been made possible due to the Council securing external investment from Merseywaterfront Regional Park and The Merseyside Objective 1 Programme.
- 2.3 The Masterplan for the regeneration of Hoylake and West Kirby was produced by consultants Building Design Partnership (BDP) and approved by the Council's Cabinet in November 2004. It outlined the key principles for development and identified a number of key opportunities for investment including the key proposal identified below.

3.0 PROPOSED 'HOYLAKE STATION GATEWAY - PHASE 2A' SCHEME – OUTLINE DESIGN AND KEY PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 In light of the announcement of the return of the Open Golf Championships in 2014, the Hoylake Station Gateway proposal has taken on added significance and provides the impetus for Wirral to capitalise on the increased profile of the area that will result from this major sporting event.
- 3.2 Essentially the proposal seeks to build upon the earlier improvements (Market Street Phases 1A and 1B) that were undertaken either side of the Open between 2005 and 2007. They introduced high quality environmental improvements to the streetscene in Hoylake's main retail area.
- 3.3 The Hoylake Station Gateway (Phase 2A) project will continue these improvements by upgrading the public area in front of the Grade II listed station building, to create an attractive "town square" and semi pedestrianised environment and complement the mixed use environment along the adjacent highways of Market Street, Albert Road and Station Road. It is expected that the economic prospects for existing businesses will be enhanced and new private sector investment will be encouraged.
- 3.4 Using similar materials and products to those used in the Phase 1A and 1B schemes, these proposals will bring significant improvements in hard and soft landscaping with the introduction of high quality paving, bespoke street furniture, lighting and planting.
- 3.5 Members are reminded that in March 2007, Cabinet gave its approval for Officers to prepare a brief to facilitate outline design work and cost estimates in order to attract potential external investment – [minute 283 refers]. This work having subsequently been undertaken 'in house' by the Design Consultancy Division based within the Department of Technical Services at the time. The proposal has been surveyed and costed using actual costs from the earlier Phase 1A and 1B works and other comparable public realm schemes as a benchmark and costs are currently estimated at approximately £1,100,000.
- 3.6 Mindful that the target area for development is in mixed ownership, Officers shared the proposals with representatives from Merseytravel, Network Rail and Merseyrail Electric at the time and 'in principle' support was agreed, subject to the Council being able to secure the necessary level of resources.
- 3.7 Overall the project will require 1,125 m² of land currently in the ownership of the rail authorities to be transferred to the Council, by a tripartite Dedication Agreement under the Highways Act, which will thereafter be maintained by the Council at its expense. This would require a legal agreement prepared by the Council's Legal Services officers, which would be presented to the relevant rail authority or the Office of the Rail Regulator for approval.
- 3.8 The agreement could contain conditions allowing the rail authorities to retain access rights on the plan for their own property maintenance purposes. The

land concerned will also remain available to be utilised as required by the rail authorities during any high-profile public events (e.g. The Open Golf) by local agreement with the council and other parties or event management groups.

- 3.9 The scheme will be designed to be sympathetic with the appearance and listed status of the station frontage and Council officers will work closely with the rail authorities to agree all relevant details impacting on this, including lighting. A catering business housed in a former railway carriage and operating under a tenancy lease arrangement on the Merseyrail car park to the north of the station will also need to be considered as part of the proposal. Council officers and rail partners will enter into discussions with the owners of the business to examine alternative locations for this facility. This could include the relocation into a vacant unit within the station building or integrating the carriage within the wider development.
- 3.10 The proposal has already received 'in principle' support from the rail authorities, subject to a number of statutory rail processes being concluded:
- the issue of a Minor Modification Certificate (MMC) - in relation to surrendering the car parking spaces
 - Station Change – to cover the changed arrangements to the car parking and works to the car park itself
- 3.11 The MMC process has now been concluded, however the Station Change is still outstanding. Network Rail having been reluctant to progress this matter, until they had the surety of funding for the scheme being fully in place. There is some risk in that the Station Change could be vetoed by any of the key rail stakeholders that will be consulted, but this is generally mitigated by informal agreement prior to formal submission by the rail partners.
- 3.12 In order to move forward with the proposals, Officers will shortly reconvene a meeting with their rail counterparts to reaffirm their support and to agree a delivery plan and timetable for implementation of the proposals. With the Ricoh Women's Open Championships taking place at Royal Liverpool in September 2012, Officers are hopeful that the regulatory and legal processes have been addressed by then, in order that works could commence early in 2013.
- 3.13 A plan showing the proposed Outline Design is appended to this report and has been placed in the Members' Room.

4.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 4.1 The proposals are subject to Station Change to reflect the loss of parking spaces within the area. These processes are mandatory and the scheme is subject to failure if the proposals are not agreeable to the consultees.
- 4.2 Wirral Council will maintain the high quality surfacing materials to highway standards, but Network Rail will continue to own the land. Failure to produce a tripartite agreement / land dedication between Wirral, Network Rail & Merseyrail will lead to the scheme's cancellation.

- 4.3 Wirral Council has offered to gift the Carr Lane Park & Ride car park to Merseyrail as part of the tripartite agreement. However, this is unlikely to be accepted, as it would impose maintenance liabilities on Merseyrail.
- 4.4 Wirral Council are to submit the proposals via Merseyrail into Network Rail's technical approval process to obtain Landlord's Consent. Failure to gain Landlord's Consent will delay or cause the scheme to be abandoned.
- 4.5 The area in front of the station also provides 4 car parking spaces for residents of nos. 1 - 4 Station Road through an informal arrangement with Merseyrail and these parking arrangements will need to be considered as part of the scheme.
- 4.6 The timing of procurement, award or contract and commencement on site will be timed to avoid disruption to the Ricoh Women's Open Golf Championship in September 2012 and the Open Golf Championship in July 2014. Delays to the date of commencement on site could have a serious effect on visitors to the 2014 event, if works are still ongoing at that time.

5.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The only other option available would be to proceed with a lesser scheme. This has been discounted as it would reduce the impact of the proposals to such an extent that it would not provide an environment appropriate to the expectations for such a major sporting event and in creating a permanent high quality and bespoke street-scene. Furthermore it would in all likelihood have a detrimental effect on the ability to attract future inward investment to the town.

6.0 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Some initial informal consultation with Ward Members, local businesses and residents took place in April 2009 through a meeting of the Hoylake Regeneration Contact Group, where the outline designs were tabled.
- 6.2 Council Officers will undertake initial consultation with stakeholders in the area which will inform the detailed design of the scheme. Once the design has been agreed further consultation through a public display within Hoylake will take place. This consultation will be in addition to the statutory consultation process that will take place in relation to the planning application for the scheme.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 7.1 There are none specifically arising from this report.

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 8.1 A multi disciplinary team drawn from Officers from the Regeneration, Housing and Planning Department and the Department of Technical Services will be responsible for managing the project. The design and implementation of the

scheme and the procurement of the contract will be carried out by existing staff as part of their normal duties and the fees for this work funded from the approved costs.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There will be a number of Traffic Regulation Orders required as part of the proposals which will be prepared, advertised and implemented in the normal manner, to meet the timescales for the scheme. In addition, Legal Services will be expected to provide advice, guidance and representation as required, in terms of drawing up any agreements with the rail authorities to facilitate the process.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

(a) Yes and an impact review is attached – <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010/technical-services-0>.

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no direct carbon reduction implications arising from this report. Whilst the proposed scheme won't eliminate the use of vehicles completely, the design will be expected to encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport. Hence there will be a marginal decrease in carbon emissions as a result.

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Planning Consent for a change of use will be required.

13.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 Cabinet is requested to:

- (1) Endorse the Outline Design and Key Principles for the proposed scheme described in this report;
- (2) Authorise the Director of Technical Services to proceed with the necessary procurement process to secure a suitable tenderer to carry out the work;
- (3) Authorise the Director of Technical Services in conjunction with the Director of Law, HR & Asset Management to negotiate with Network Rail and Merseytravel to formalise an agreement for the Council to adopt and maintain the completed highway improvement works.

14.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 14.1 The outcome of this work will be the creation of an extremely attractive transport hub and focal point in Hoylake town centre, facilitating significant business and commercial opportunities and maximising the previous investment on the adjacent Market Street, through the Phase 1A and 1B schemes. Upon completion this will effectively conclude the essential regeneration of central Hoylake.
- 14.2 The upgrading of the public realm, creation of a “town square” and improvements at the station frontage will have a significant impact on the streetscene and enhance the existing transport infrastructure. In addition the project will bring about other major economic benefits and healthy lifestyle improvements.
- 14.3 The project will improve the existing built environment whilst preserving and enhancing the Hoylake Conservation Area.
- 14.4 The delivery of further high quality public realm improvements will attract significant investment and job opportunities making the town more attractive for visitors and residents alike.
- 14.5 As the public realm is in the ownership of the authority, upon completion of the environmental improvements, Wirral Council’s Department of Technical Services will take responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the additional areas of streetscene previously maintained by Mersey Rail and Network Rail, subject to agreement on land transfers with these parties.

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APPENDICES

Plan showing proposed Outline Design.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

Background papers and information used in the preparation of this report are held by the Regeneration Team within the Department of Regeneration, Housing and Planning and the Department of Technical Services.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet	21 st February 2012