

Open Report on behalf of Richard Wills, Executive Director for Environment and Economy

Report to:	Councillor M J Hill OBE, Leader of the Council and Executive Councillor for Governance, Communications, Commissioning, Finance and Property
Date:	Between 02 March – 17 March 2017
Subject:	Lincoln High Street Public Realm Enhancement Scheme: Tentercroft Street to south of the level crossing
Decision Reference:	I013053
Key decision?	Yes

Summary:

This report provides a proposal to bring forward a public realm enhancement scheme on the High Street in Lincoln, from Tentercroft Street to south of the Level Crossing. It considers the relationship with a number of interlinked projects within the city and seeks approval to progress the package of works described.

Recommendation(s):

That the Leader of the Council and Executive Councillor for Governance, Communications, Commissioning, Finance and Property

- 1) approves in principle drawing down of funds up to £804,000 from the DCLG Growth Point Pump Priming funds allocated to "help unlock growth in Lincoln" for the purposes of a public realm enhancement scheme on the High Street in Lincoln from Tentercroft Street to south of the level crossing.
- 2) delegates to the Executive Director for Environment and Economy in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Development and the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT, authority to conduct all necessary tender processes and approve the entering into of all legal documentation needed to carry out such scheme.

Alternatives Considered:

If the scheme is not funded and carried out, then the improvement works will not be delivered and the benefits will not be realised.

The positive impacts of public realm investment are typically apparent through increased property and rental values; increased footfall and spend; improved commercial confidence and visitor perception; and business diversification.

Without the intervention of the public sector, the scheme will not take place and such outcomes are unlikely to be realised.

Reasons for Recommendation:

It is recommended that the scheme is delivered because it will help improve economic activity, enhance the environment and improve connectivity at the location.

1. Background

In June 2016 as part of the East West Link major scheme, the High Street in Lincoln from Tentercroft Street to St Mary's Street was pedestrianised and became a restricted route with access only for service vehicles and car parks.

The area now only allows deliveries before 10am and after 4pm and permit holders can access the two private car parks located off this section of the street. The physical changes have so far been minimal and are aimed at emphasising the new traffic arrangements, using signage and features that reduce the carriageway width and removing the pedestrian crossing.

Strategic context

This project site occupies a high profile position between a number of schemes that have been implemented recently by both the public and private sector. These include:-

- The East West Link Road
- The Transport Hub and Tentercroft Street car park redevelopment
- The Network Rail High Street footbridge
- Wigford Yard and ongoing University developments
- Proposed redevelopment of St Mark's Retail Park
- Improvements to High Street (Portland Street to Dixon Street) and Brayford Wharf East
- Network Rail proposed footbridge on Brayford Wharf East

Project objectives and typical benefits of public realm investment

As a strategically important intersection that links the investment which has so far taken place, the project will deliver a legible, accessible and attractive space which knits together this retail and infrastructure network.

The project aims to have a transformational impact on the following key areas:

- Improved economic activity (restoring the street as a place to provide an improved trading environment for businesses).
- Enhanced accessibility (creating a legible streetscape).
- Enhanced connectivity (linking together surrounding regeneration activity); heritage appreciation.
- Better social interaction (facilitated by provision by attractive and inviting environment).

There is an evidence base to support the financial and social benefits of good urban design. Carefully designed, well-managed streets are an important driver of economic success. Government guidance in support of the National Planning Policy Framework underlies the importance of place-making to support locally driven growth, encourage business investment and promote economic development.

'The Pedestrian Pound: The Business Case for Better Streets and Places' by Living Streets includes case study evidence suggesting that well-planned improvements to public spaces can boost footfall and trading by up to 40%. Evaluations of pedestrian improvements in Coventry and Bristol have shown a 25% increase in footfall on Saturdays and predict £1.4million benefits respectively. The regeneration of Sheffield's Peace Gardens has resulted in a 35% uplift in number of visits for shopping and a net increase in spending of £4.2m.

Project Proposal

The proposed project is a public realm enhancement scheme that will considerably enhance the streetscape and character of this area through the provision of natural stone materials, high quality street furniture and a gateway feature.

The Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) project team is currently in the process of refining the proposals including the selection of paving materials and features, alongside consideration of operational requirements (to accommodate access, deliveries and street markets). The technical design and proposed materials take account of Heavy Goods Vehicles movements and delivery zones in relation to carriageway design.

It is intended that the surface will be flush (with no raised kerbs) to encourage more flexible use of the space and to make it easier for disabled users. This site is located within a Conservation Area so natural stone materials are proposed to reflect the heritage of this important area and provide a stronger link to the upper sections of the High Street.

The layout is intended to enable businesses to be serviced by deliveries during the same hours as the neighbouring section of the pedestrianised High Street; at other times it is envisaged that street markets and other activity can take place. Careful siting of furniture and features will encourage pedestrian dwell time whilst also guiding and slowing permitted vehicles through the street.

A 'gateway' feature is planned for the junction with Tentercroft Street to enhance the identity of the area and become a welcoming focal point. The feature is currently proposed to be mounted on a plinth. Themes being explored are those which link this part of the High Street with the historic quarter (the Cathedral is a prominent focal point from the site) and the Magna Carta.

It is proposed to complete the scheme from south of the level crossing only as the section north of the level crossing will be reviewed in conjunction the Transport Hub Works and with Wigford Way as a potential future scheme.

Outline Scheme Programme

It is intended that the contract will go out to tender in April 2017. Thereafter, critical milestones include:-

- Tenders returned and assessed - May 2017
- Approval for contract award - May 2017
- Tender awarded - May 2017
- Construction start date depending on materials order lead in periods – July 2017
- Construction Period – estimated 12 weeks' duration
- Completion Date – late October 2017

Management of the construction phase

Consideration has been given to the sequence of the works to minimise disruption and to maintain access to shops and premises during the construction phase. The approach taken by the County Council, particularly for town centre schemes of this nature, is to balance the progress of the works by the most practicable and timely method against carefully managed provision for pedestrian and vehicular access requirements.

In the case of Boston and Grantham Market Place schemes, good communication and cooperation was key; for instance to maintain access, the contractors worked closely with individual businesses to undertake work directly in front of shop doorways outside of opening hours, and assistance was made with deliveries where required.

A number of constraints and phasing arrangements will be incorporated into this contract and, once the contractor is appointed, the fine detail will be agreed and communicated.

Communications Strategy

A comprehensive strategy is currently being prepared in conjunction with LCC's Strategic Communications Team and Lincoln Business Improvement Group. The

plan will be based on the successful implementation of similar plans in Boston (market place) and Grantham (wide Westgate) and thus is likely to include:

- Informing key stakeholders and directly affected businesses of the design proposals and headline information
- Holding a meeting to introduce the appointed contractor to businesses and to discuss the construction phase and points of contact, prior to the start of the works
- Devising a regular, suitable forum for dialogue with businesses, to manage any issues and concerns during the works

Previous schemes – stakeholder engagement

The above approach to communications was used at Boston Market Place public realm scheme where a package of measures were employed: promotional tools such as banners, leaflets and social media were used to reinforce the message that businesses were 'open as usual'; and, to capture any specific operational issues raised by the businesses, group sessions were held as well as one-to-one opportunities at a staffed 'information centre' located on site.

Similarly for the Canwick Road scheme, a pre-meeting was held with the contractor to inform local businesses and residents about the upcoming works to provide an opportunity for questions and feedback. During the Boston online widening scheme liaison meetings were held regularly, where provision was made for members of the public to drop in and raise any queries. Such measures have helped to reduce complaints and contributed to the smoother progress of the schemes.

Scheme costs

The scheme costs are:

Design fees: £75,000 (Advanced Design Block)

Funds for approval:

- Works Costs - £754,000, estimated as follows:-

£36,500	Preliminaries/Site Clearance
£17,250	Drainage
£555,000	Surfacing/Kerbing/Paving
£9,950	Street Lighting/Signs/Markings
£28,000	Stats/Other Bodies
£38,450	Street Furniture
£68,850	Contingency
£754,000	TOTAL

- Site Supervision fees – £50,000

Total construction costs for approval – £804,000

Scheme funding

The scheme will be funded by Lincolnshire County Council which is currently holding approximately £2.7m that was granted to the authority by Central Government (via DCLG) as Growth Point Pump Priming funds to "help unlock growth in Lincoln".

There is an intention to seek private sector funding for the gateway / public art feature. The design fees are being funded by the Advanced Design Block.

2. Legal Issues:

Equality Act 2010

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- * Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- * Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- * Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The relevant protected characteristics are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- * Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic
- * Take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it
- * Encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low

The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to tackle prejudice, and promote understanding.

Compliance with the duties in section 149 may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.

The duty cannot be delegated and must be discharged by the decision-maker. To discharge the statutory duty the decision-maker must analyse all the relevant

material with the specific statutory obligations in mind. If a risk of adverse impact is identified consideration must be given to measures to avoid that impact as part of the decision making process.

Consideration has been given to the Equality Act 2010 and as indicated in the Report the design will take account of the needs of people with a protected characteristic such as people with a disability. An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the development of the Scheme to ensure all impacts are identified and mitigated where possible.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS)

The Council must have regard to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Joint Health & Well Being Strategy (JHWS) in coming to a decision.

Consideration has been given to the JSNA and the JHWS and the scheme has benefits for both the health and wellbeing of people in Lincoln due to the following reasons:

- The scheme provides enhanced connectivity by linking together surrounding areas and better access for disabled users;
- The scheme provides better social interaction through the provision of an attractive and a more inviting environment.

Crime and Disorder

Under section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Council must exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment), the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area and re-offending in its area.

Consideration has been given to section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the scheme will help to reduce crime and disorder at this area of the High Street in Lincoln because there will be enhanced connectivity, an enhanced environment which will provide better social interaction and furthermore the street lights are being replaced with LED lights that could enhance people's feelings of safety.

3. Conclusion

The scheme is well supported and there are no legal impediments to starting. It is recommended that the Leader of the Council and Executive Councillor for Governance, Communications, Commissioning, Finance and Property approves in principle the funding and the awarding of a contract for the works and delegates to the Executive Director for Environment and Economy in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Development and the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT, authority to conduct all necessary tender processes and approve the entering into of all legal documentation needed to carry out such scheme.

4. Legal Comments:

The Council has the power to undertake the scheme being proposed. The legal matters to be taken into consideration are set out and addressed in the Report.

The decision is consistent with the Policy Framework and within the remit of the Executive if it is within the Budget.

5. Resource Comments:

Costs for this scheme can be met through DCLG Growth Point funds.

6. Consultation

a) Has Local Member Been Consulted?

The local Members will be informed shortly of the scheme.

b) Has Executive Councillor Been Consulted?

The Executive Councillor for Development and the Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT have been consulted. They are supportive of the scheme.

c) Scrutiny Comments

As the budget sits in Economy, the scheme is being presented to the Economic Scrutiny Committee at its meeting scheduled to be held on 21 February 2017. Comments from the Committee will be presented to the Leader of the Council and Executive Councillor for Governance, Communications, Commissioning, Finance and Property.

d) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

The risks and impact analysis will be undertaken ahead of the scheme going to site.

e) Risks and Impact Analysis

As above.

7. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Lincoln High Street Schematic
Appendix B	Lincoln High Street project context: other proposed development

8. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Amanda Bond, who can be contacted on 01522 550605 or amanda.bond@lincolnshire.gov.uk

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