

Subject:	Lanes car park – access arrangements		
Date of Meeting:	14 January 2010		
Report of:	Director of Environment		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Austen Hunter	Tel: 29-2245
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Key Decision:	Yes	Forward Plan No: CAB13859	
Wards Affected:	Regency; St Peter's & North Laine		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the positive reaction to improvements at London Road and The Lanes car parks:
- Both sites have attained the Safer Parking Award
 - On-site Police offices have been agreed for both car parks
 - Higher than expected usage has been recorded at London Road Car Park, which was completed earlier in the year
 - Improvements to the Little East Street entry / exit at The Lanes Car Park have been well received
- 1.2 To seek approval to go ahead and complete the reconfiguration of the pedestrian access arrangements at The Lanes Car Park in line with the Council's commitments and obligations under:
- Equalities & Inclusion Policy 2008 – 2011
 - Community Safety, Crime Reduction & Drugs Strategy 2008 – 2011
 - Disabled discrimination guidance defined within Approved Document M to the Building Regulations and BS8300
 - Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
 - Tourism Strategy 2008
- 1.3 To preserve and enhance the Council's important car park assets and protect their income generating potential. To support local businesses and the local tourist industry by creating a safer environment, encouraging more users and delivering an excellent end-to-end customer service experience in the city centre.
- 1.4 To inform Cabinet of revised costs due to increased and necessary expenditure on essential health and safety requirements in the car parks.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet to approve the allocation of £0.588m for the reconfiguration of pedestrian access and lift renovation to create a safer environment, meet modern standards, the councils regulatory obligations and policy commitments.
- 2.2 That Cabinet retrospectively approves additional expenditure incurred of £0.440m, including the provision of six additional parking spaces (valued at circa £24k per annum).
- 2.3 That authority be delegated to the Director of Environment to approve the appointment of a contractor to carry out works referred to in 2.1 above.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 On 29 November 2007, Policy and Resources Committee approved an invest to save proposal of up to £1m to enhance the physical environment, increase public safety and protect income at The Lanes and London Road car parks. The £1m allocated was based upon a visual dilapidations survey intended to provide a summary overview when the Council was considering tendering out the car parks back in 2005. Income from these two car parks was falling over a number of years and there was considerable evidence that the public were discouraged from using the facilities by the anti-social activity, poor lighting and general look of neglect. For many years, very little money was invested into these car parks.
- 3.2 On 18 September 2008, Cabinet approved the allocation of a further £1.01m funding for high quality improvements at The Lanes Car Park and minor improvements at London Road Car Park, to be funded by additional revenue generated as a result of a higher quality finish and contribution from the Car Parks Maintenance Reserve.
- 3.3 The original cost estimates were based upon a survey carried out at the time of preparing the contract and tender. The works were procured through a re-measurement contract. As the project proceeded, the actual works were re-measured to calculate the true cost of the works. Additional, unforeseen costs were encountered, principally as a result of more extensive concrete repairs to what are ageing civic structures and the work required to renew and upgrade life expired mechanical and electrical systems. Overall, unforeseen (additional) costs amount to £0.440m, although this additional sum has resulted in an additional six car parking spaces and cycle facilities in Brighton Town Hall.
- 3.4 The Lanes Car Park is currently rated "3" by an Access Audit for the purposes of Best Value Performance Indicator 156. During the redevelopment it was established that significant renovation work and expenditure was required to replace the existing lift - which has been out of use for some time - and to meet the requirements of Part M of the DDA Regulations and BS8300.
- 3.5 In the course of detailed design work it was also established that modern fire safety standards could not be achieved by retaining the existing configuration.
- 3.6 Furthermore, it became apparent that a root cause of the appalling antisocial behaviour regularly witnessed in the car park is the fundamentally flawed access design and an inability to secure the facility, as well as the dilapidated appearance.

- 3.7 A review was undertaken of the options for improving pedestrian access to the car park to see if a suitable alternative proposal was available that would meet modern regulations and guidance and meet the council's own policy commitments to allow easier access, particularly for mobility impaired users, those with children and shopping; to make it easier and safer for members of the public to escape in an emergency and for the Fire Service to tackle an emergency; and to reduce the incidence of anti-social behaviour. Ultimately, this review has resulted in the following recommendation:
- Installation of a new entry and exit via a new staircase in Bartholomew Square
 - Upgrading the existing lift area to make it secure and meet current good practice guidance under DDA requirements
 - Installation of new fire fighting lobbies on floors 1 and 3
 - Retention of entry and exit via ramp access at Little East Street
 - Fire exit only via staircase near Bartholomew House
 - Fire exit only via staircase near Black Lion Street
- 3.8 The cost of this recommendation is estimated at £0.588m and it is proposed to let a further contract for these works to be carried out.
- 3.9 The new access configuration would significantly enhance the safety and security of the car park. The resultant enhanced service levels and appeal is likely to generate additional demand. Since the initial works finished, usage of the car park has increased to levels above those experienced before the works, it is expected that the improved access arrangements will improve patronage still further.
- 3.10 The fact that the Police will use offices at both sites will be an added comfort to users of the car parks.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Representatives for the following interest groups were consulted:
- Mobility impaired people
 - Equalities and Inclusion Team
 - Technical Access Team
 - Fire safety (The Fire Service)
 - Public Safety (The Police)
 - Local traders
 - Tourist office
 - Bartholomew House redevelopment design team

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The combined cost of the additional works that (1) have been carried out under the existing contract and (2) are to be carried out under a new contract is £1.028m. Sources of funding have been identified, including a contribution from the adjoining hotel (£0.260m) and the Asset Management Plan. In combination with unsupported borrowing against improved income streams at the car park a 10-year payback period is likely.

Finance Officer Consulted: Patrick Rice

Date: 07/12/09

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The proposed new works valued at £0.588m fall below the relevant threshold for the purposes of EU procurement law and UK Public Contract Regulations. The Council is nevertheless required to comply with EU Treaty objectives of non-discrimination and openness in procurement, as well as comply with its statutory obligation to seek Value for Money. Contracts over £75,000 must be prepared in a form approved by the Head of Law. The Council must take the Human Rights Act into account in respect of its actions but it is not considered that any individual's Human Rights Act rights would be adversely affected by the recommendations in this report.

Lawyer consulted:

Sonia Likhari

Date: 21/12/09

Planning and Conservation implications:

- 5.3 Planning permission has been granted for the access reconfiguration proposals.

Equalities Implications:

- 5.4 The equalities impact implications are discussed above as a central theme of the recommendation and the Equalities and Inclusion Team have been consulted.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.5 The main contractor for the works has been assessed against a range of quality design criteria, including sustainability considerations and measures.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.6 The crime & disorder implications are discussed above as a central theme of the recommendation and the Police have been consulted.

Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.7 The risk of not reconfiguring the access arrangements as described is that refurbishment of the existing access and lift may not fall within requirements prescribed under the respective DDA and Fire Regulations.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 The Lanes and London Road improvement projects have set a new standard for the provision of car parking services with the city as a whole. As and when budgetary constraints permit other car parks within the council's portfolio may also be upgraded as part of a citywide parking strategy.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 An alternative option was considered:

6.2 Relocation of the lift was considered. This alternative was rejected, as it was more expensive (+£0.29m) and the detailed design and aesthetics were still to be determined.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The recommended access reconfiguration will meet the council's regulatory obligations and offer a cost saving over the option mentioned at 6.2.

7.2 The existing lift will be brought back to service and improved to meet modern standards.

7.3 The new access reconfiguration will deliver easier and safer access for car park users, a safer proposition for the Fire Service and will help to resolve the serious anti social issues associated with the site.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

None

Documents in Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

1. Agenda Item 117, Policy and Resources Committee Report, 29 Nov 20.
2. Agenda Item 68, Cabinet Report, 18 Sept 2008
3. Agenda Item 112, Cabinet Report, 20 Nov 2008

