

Report of the Director of City Development

Report to Executive Board

Date: 27 July 2016

Subject: Whitehall Road / Northern Street Junction Improvement

Capital Scheme Number : 32227

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): City and Hunslet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. The Best Council Plan 2015-20 outlines how Leeds will achieve its ambition to become the Best City in the UK and Leeds City Council the best local authority. For 2016/17, the Best Council Plan contains priorities to support economic growth and access to economic opportunities and to provide an inclusive, accessible range of transport options, which this scheme directly contributes to.
2. Whitehall Road is an area seeing significant development. Development sites adjacent to this road junction have planning obligations or conditions to provide improvements to the Whitehall Road junction to provide pedestrian facilities which are currently not available or achievable and also to widen the Whitehall Road corridor to provide cycling facilities.
3. Contributions have been pooled to deliver a comprehensive scheme at the Whitehall Road junction to provide pedestrian crossing facilities, segregated cycling infrastructure and some additional road capacity aiding bus movements and easing traffic congestion. This additional road capacity allows for development growth and is compatible with future aspiration for the closure of City Square to general traffic.
4. To enable this scheme to be introduced now to coincide with development being constructed on the ground a top up contribution towards the £2.61m scheme is

needed. This top up funding has been identified from S106 Public Transport Developer Contributions pooled from other development sites and totals £571,000.

Recommendations

5. The Executive Board is requested to:
 - i) Approve the junction improvement works as described in this report and authorise the detailed design and implementation of the scheme as shown on drawing EP/732227/MIS/25;
 - ii) Give authority to inject a further £2,103,200 into the Capital Programme (£506,800 is already included in the Capital Programme);
 - iii) Give authority to incur expenditure of £2,610,000 to implement the approved scheme, fully funded from private developer section 106 receipts;
 - iv) Note that all remaining decisions relating to detailed design including the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders and the designation of cycle tracks on the public highway will be reported to the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) using existing powers under the Officer Delegation Scheme (Part 3, Council Constitution) and sub-delegated by the Director of City Development.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the detailed design and implementation of a junction improvement scheme as set out in Section 3 and indicated on the drawing EP/732227/MIS/25 at a cost of £2.61m. These costs will be funded wholly by developer contributions, of which £2.039m is funded by directly related development contributions from three local development sites and the remaining £571,000 is funded from S106 contributions obtained through the Public Transport Developer Contributions SPD.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The Wellington Place Development (MEPC site) was granted outline planning permission in 2008, proposing an intensive mixed-use office / residential / hotel development with 1700 car parking spaces. Improvements to Northern Street and Whitehall Road were developed to accommodate the proposals.
- 2.2 In the future, it is expected that the role of Northern Street will be one of a key access / egress route to the city centre following the closure of City Square. It is currently predicted that traffic levels will rise on Northern Street by 200 to 350 vehicles in the peak hours.
- 2.3 The developments that have now come forward on the MEPC site (which commenced on site in 2013) are less intensive in scale and car parking provision than originally proposed. The Developer of Wellington Place is obliged to make payments for highway improvements through the associated S106 Agreement, triggered by the vehicular traffic generated by the developments. The reduced scale of development has lowered the anticipated levels of traffic generation to such an extent that not all the triggers will be reached, reducing the payments that can be demanded.
- 2.4 As continued expansion of the city centre progresses, a significant increase in pedestrian footfall is expected at and around the junction of the MEPC development of office, residential, hotel and ancillary retail food & drink uses takes place. It is recognised that the current lack of pedestrian crossing facilities is a significant barrier to safe pedestrian movement between the site and wider development area, the railway station and the established city centre. As a result, discussions with the Developer, led by the Chief Planning Officer, took place that focussed on the lack of a formal pedestrian crossing facility at the junction of Northern Street and Whitehall Road.
- 2.5 A Deed of Variation (DoV) to the S106 Agreement attached to the original consent was subsequently agreed and permitted funding towards a highways scheme to provide a formal pedestrian crossing to be brought forward to a maximum contribution from the developer of £670,000. The Council has currently received £400,000 of the S106 money from the Wellington Place developer and design work has commenced on the junction improvement with a number of options reviewed.
- 2.6 An alternative scheme was identified which would have provided road widening on Whitehall Road to accommodate a pedestrian phase on Northern Street in the traffic signals. With the very high costs associated with statutory undertaker diversions

and culvert strengthening requirements this scheme was estimated to cost £1.46m which could have been fully funded by the three adjacent Developers contributions. However this scheme was not supported by the MEPC developers as it did not provide any cycle facilities on Whitehall Road or Northern Street and did not provide any road capacity benefits to accommodate their development growth or future anticipated growth. It also meant that there would have needed to be a further scheme implemented once the MEPC development was all occupied to implement the bigger scheme at an overall significantly increased price. This option was therefore discounted.

- 2.7 In 2013 the Central Square office consent (13/05506/FU) agreed a contribution of £69,000 towards the junction works which has been received.
- 2.8 The Whitehall Riverside Development has also come forward on the southern side of Whitehall Road. Part of the highway improvements proposed are captured within the planning consent for this development and funded directly by them.
- 2.9 Further negotiations have taken place with the MEPC site owners to redirect additional monies towards the highway improvement scheme and these are subject of a further deed of variation.
- 2.10 The anticipated income from the three developments to fund highway improvements is now £2.039 million. A shortfall in funding of £571,000 is being made up from Section 106 Public Transport Developer Contributions.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 Development of this part of the city centre is ongoing with the MEPC development on site with the first block opening in February 2016 and the next block due to open in July / August 2016. On the Whitehall Riverside site the Premier Inn Hotel consent is also well advanced on site. It is expected that the junction improvement scheme will start on site in January 2017 with a 48 week construction period.
- 3.2 There are a number of large city centre schemes due to be constructed in the next two years including Bridgewater Place Baffles, City Connect 2, potential quick win schemes, therefore there will be some significant traffic management coordination issues and potential for traffic congestion during the construction periods.
- 3.3 The detailed proposals are summarised in the list below and shown on the appended drawing EP/732227/MIS/25 (Appendix 1).
 - Widening of Whitehall Road to the north and south sides to provide segregated cycling facilities.
 - Widening of the junction of Whitehall Road / Northern Street to accommodate central islands to facilitate provision of pedestrian crossing facilities and re-staging of the traffic lights to give road capacity improvements including a right turn ban from Whitehall Road onto Northern Street.
 - Widening of Northern Street to provide segregated cycling facilities.

- Widening within adopted highway at the Northern Street arm of the junction with Wellington Street to provide additional junction capacity and accommodate tie in to cycling infrastructure.
- Note the layby on Northern Street is not part of this scheme but is approved under a planning permission on the MEPC site and will be delivered by others on private land.
- Introduction of a series of Traffic Regulation Orders to support the design are proposed in the form of Movement, Waiting and Loading restrictions.

- 3.4 The junction improvement scheme is estimated to cost £2.61m which includes significant works to divert statutory undertakers equipment and works to strengthen an existing service culvert beneath Northern Street.
- 3.5 The scheme is fully developer funded with £2.039 million directly identified from Section 106 agreements and S278 Highways requirements from three adjacent development sites. The shortfall in funding of £571,000 is being made up from Section 106 Public Transport Developer Contributions which are related to the city centre or to the Whitehall Road or Wellington Street road corridors and have been identified as being available to spend on this infrastructure.
- 3.6 The scheme is designed to enhance the public realm by extending the city centre paving palette of materials out to this developing business area. This will make the area more attractive for walking and cycling and feel part of the city centre rather than an access to the city centre.
- 3.7 It is likely that strategic proposals to close City Square to through traffic will change the level and pattern of traffic flow through the Whitehall Road / Northern Street junction, however early modelling analysis has shown reductions in outbound traffic on Wellington Street and increases in traffic on Whitehall Road. Any future changes to traffic flows and junction designs are accommodated by this proposed junction improvement which takes care of statutory undertaker diversions and acquires third party land to give maximum flexibility within the highway.
- 3.8 All remaining decisions following detailed design relating to the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders, Speed Limit Order, Movement Order, Section 90c Notices and the designation of cycle tracks on the public highway will be reported to the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) using existing powers under the Officer Delegation Scheme (Part 3, Council Constitution) and sub-delegated by the Director of City Development.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 City and Hunslet Ward Members have been consulted on the proposals in an e-mail dated 29 June 2016. One ward member responded with a detailed query regarding the design which will be incorporated at detailed design stage.
- 4.1.2 The Emergency Services and WYCA were consulted via email dated 29 June 2016.

4.1.3 The scheme has been considered by City Development Management team on 22 June 2016 the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) and senior officers, and has approval in principle within the service.

4.1.4 Internal consultation has been undertaken with Transport Policy, UTMC, Major Projects, Cycling, Bridges and Asset Management with the proposed scheme being supported.

4.2 **Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

4.2.1 An EDCI screening document has been prepared (Appendix 2) which shows that a full impact assessment is not required for this scheme. The main findings of the screening process are summarised below.

4.2.2 Positive Impacts;

The scheme will improve the safety of all road users in particular pedestrians and cyclists and will support safer movements including journeys to the railway station. By providing facilities for crossing the road the accessibility of the area is improved. By providing segregated cycling facilities all users are catered for in a safe manner.

4.2.3 Negative Impacts;

Increased road width may impact on the ability for pedestrians to cross away from designated pedestrian crossing points.

4.2.4 Any negative aspects of the scheme will be mitigated as far as possible during the detailed design stage and discussion with key stakeholders. What will be achieved is a safer more inclusive environment for more vulnerable pedestrians.

4.3 **Council policies and Best Council Plan**

4.3.1 The Best Council Plan sets out a vision for Leeds to be a compassionate, caring city that helps all its residents benefit from the effects of the city's economic growth. Creating the right conditions for the economy in Leeds to prosper and grow, whilst ensuring that a consequence of growth of a reduction in inequalities, is a key focus. This proposal improves pedestrian and cyclist accessibility and accommodates economic growth. The proposals therefore contribute to delivery of the Best Council Plan outcomes for everyone in Leeds to 'be safe and feel safe' and 'move around a well-planned city easily' and the Best Council Plan 16/17 priorities on improving road safety and helping deliver a well-connected transport system.

4.3.2 Environmental Policy; the proposals contained in this report are in accordance with Aims 6 and 7 of the Policy in that the proposals will aid to "reduce the impact of traffic in the city by changes to the road system" and "develop a safe, healthy local environment which provides the best quality of life for Leeds residents.

4.3.3 The proposal contributes to the policies in the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 2011-26 as follows:

Transport Assets: P2. Maintain to a suitable and sufficient standard.

Travel Choices: P10. Promote the benefits of active travel.

- Connectivity:**
- P18. Improve safety and security
 - P22. Develop networks and facilities to encourage cycling and walking.

4.3.4 **Disabled/Mobility:** The provision of improved pedestrian crossing facilities will provide a positive aid to all pedestrians, especially disabled people. The segregation of cycle facilities is the preferred design option for visually impaired people.

4.4 **Resources and value for money**

4.4.1 **Full scheme estimate:** The total estimated cost of the required highway works is £2,610,000 to be fully funded by developer contributions of £2.039m from directly obtained contributions and £571,000 from pooled Section 106 PT Developer Contributions.

4.4.2 It is anticipated, subject to approval that the scheme will commence on site January 2017 and will be completed in the 2017 – 18 financial year.

Capital Funding and cash flow :

Funding Approval :	Capital Section Reference Number :-						
Previous total Authority to Spend on this scheme	TOTAL	TO MARCH	FORECAST				
	£000's	2016 £000's	2016/17 £000's	2017/18 £000's	2018/19 £000's	2019/20 £000's	2020 on £000's
LAND (1)	0.0						
CONSTRUCTION (3)	0.0						
FURN & EQPT (5)	0.0						
DESIGN FEES (6)	0.0						
OTHER COSTS (7)	0.0						
TOTALS	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Authority to Spend required for this Approval	TOTAL	TO MARCH	FORECAST				
	£000's	2016 £000's	2016/17 £000's	2017/18 £000's	2018/19 £000's	2019/20 £000's	2020 on £000's
LAND (1)	0.0						
CONSTRUCTION (3)	0.0						
FURN & EQPT (5)	0.0						
DESIGN FEES (6)	0.0						
OTHER COSTS (7)	0.0						
TOTALS	2610.0	226.5	280.3	2103.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total overall Funding (As per latest Capital Programme)	TOTAL	TO MARCH	FORECAST				
	£000's	2016 £000's	2016/17 £000's	2017/18 £000's	2018/19 £000's	2019/20 £000's	2020 on £000's
LCC Supported Borrowing	0.0						
Revenue Contribution	0.0						
Capital Receipt	0.0						
Insurance Receipt	0.0						
Lottery	0.0						
Gifts / Bequests / Trusts	0.0						
European Grant	0.0						
Health Authority	0.0						
School Fundraising	0.0						
Private Sector	0.0						
Section 106 / 278	2610.0	226.5	280.3	2103.2			
Government Grant- LTP	0.0						
SCE (C)	0.0						
SCE (R)	0.0						
Departmental USB	0.0						
Corporate USB	0.0						
Any Other Income (Specify)	0.0						
Total Funding	2610.0	226.5	280.3	2103.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Balance / Shortfall =	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Parent Scheme Number :

Title :

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 There are no specific Legal implications included within this report, nor is any information contained within the report to be deemed confidential.
- 4.5.2 The decision was placed on the list of forthcoming Key Decisions on 28 June 2016 and will be subject to Call-In.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 There is a lot of new development being built in this part of the city centre and this scheme is supported by adjacent land owners to improve the transport accessibility of this part of town.
- 4.6.2 If the scheme is not approved there is a risk that the lack of a pedestrian crossing facility will lead to pedestrian accidents from the increased level of pedestrian use in the area.
- 4.6.3 The S106 Public Transport Developer Contributions have been obtained to fund public transport infrastructure within Leeds. This scheme has no specific bus priority but public transport will benefit from reduced congestion and more reliable journey times. Improved pedestrian and cycle accessibility to the Rail Station also assists in the wider public transport journey by rail. However there is a limited risk of challenge of spend of pooled S106 monies for this purpose. Finance have advised that this risk is low and that the funds can be spent for the reasons obtained. The scheme has been put forward for inclusion in the Public Transport Improvements and Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document Appendix 1 list of schemes to be formally updated at date of next review. This documents can be found via the following link - <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/council/Pages/Public-transport-improvements-and-developer-contributions-SPD.aspx>.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 This scheme delivers significant benefits for pedestrians, cyclists and general traffic including buses. The scheme caters for growth in transport demand associated with cumulative development in the local area. The public realm will be enhanced by extending the city centre quality paving materials out to this area. Initial consultation indicates the proposals are supported by key stakeholders and will be refined during the final design process.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Executive Board is requested to:
 - i) Approve the junction improvement works as described in this report and authorise the detailed design and implementation of the scheme as shown on drawing EP/732227/MIS/25;
 - ii) Give authority to inject a further £2,103,200 into the Capital Programme (£506,800 is already included in the Capital Programme);

- iii) Give authority to incur expenditure of £2,610,000 to implement the approved scheme, fully funded from private developer section 106 receipts.
- iv) Note that all remaining decisions relating to detailed design including the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders and the designation of cycle tracks on the public highway will be reported to the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) using existing powers under the Officer Delegation Scheme (Part 3, Council Constitution) and sub-delegated by the Director of City Development.

7 Background documents¹

7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.