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**Report of The Director Of City Development**

**To Executive Board**

**Date: 19 December 2007**

**Subject: Design & Cost Report**

**Scheme Title: Re-opening Sweet Street Bridge**

**Capital Scheme Number: 14143**

**Electoral Wards Affected:**

City & Hunslet  
Beeston & Holbeck

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In  
(Details contained in the report)

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**Executive Summary**

The report informs members of the Executive Board of progress to date on re-opening Sweet Street Bridge and describes how this project is a key scheme for Holbeck Urban Village. It will improve overall access to Holbeck Urban Village, provide a key southern gateway, improve access and strengthen links with Beeston Hill and Holbeck and will demonstrate commitment by the public sector to address major infrastructure problems for the area. Improvements to this area are required as a matter of priority in order to allow this part of the urban village to achieve its full development potential and improve the public realm, therefore contributing to reducing crime and antisocial behavior.

The report seeks authority to incur expenditure of £636,000, all of which is funded from third party sources, to re-open Sweet Street Bridge to traffic.

If approved this would allow the project to be tendered and construction works to begin on site in June 2008.

**1.0 Purpose of this Report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek:

- a) Approval to the scheme design proposals and 'freeze' the brief.
- b) Approval to the scheme estimates and cash flows.
- c) Authority to incur expenditure of £636,000.

## **2.0 Background Information**

- 2.1 Holbeck, although on the fringe of the city centre is quite separated and isolated from the prosperous retail and business quarters of Leeds. The area is characterised and contained by the strong barriers of the railways, major roads and canal/river. As such it is severed from surrounding areas and particularly from the City Centre.
- 2.2 The area is generally in decline with areas of derelict and under used land. The public realm is in places poor with minimal public space, poor conditions for pedestrians and no facilities for cyclists. The perception of crime in the area, particularly around Sweet Street West, is relatively high, which is hampering redevelopment interest, preventing the local community from using the area as a through route to the City and is making recruitment by existing and potential employers problematic.
- 2.3 The Holbeck Urban Village (HUV) vision is to create a mixed use sustainable living and working community with improved connections to the city centre and surrounding communities of Beeston Hill, Holbeck, and West Leeds; the establishment of a new Digital/Creative Quarter and the preservation of the area's unique character whilst creating a sense of place on the edge of the city centre. This area, therefore, represents a strategic opportunity for Leeds to not only create a new and unique quarter of the city but to strengthen investment in, and links to the adjacent communities in Holbeck and West Leeds.
- 2.4 Re-establishing strong positive linkages and improving perceptions of the area are vital if the private sector is to be persuaded to invest in the area. Consequently, there is a key role for the public sector to intervene by the reconnection of the city centre, HUV and local communities through public realm and infrastructure improvements. In order to achieve this, a number of improvement scheme 'priorities' have been identified by the HUV Planning Framework (which has undergone significant public consultation) and endorsed by the Renaissance Strategy.
- 2.5 Eight schemes have been identified as 'priorities' for implementation. The schemes have all undergone feasibility work and were fully funded by Yorkshire Forward in the 05/06/07 Sub Regional Investment Plan (£3,000,000), up to the point of detailed design and planning permission / approvals. It is estimated that the total cost of the priority public realm works will be in the region of £31,500,000. The re-opening of Sweet Street Bridge is one of the most advanced of the prioritised schemes identified in the HUV Planning Framework.
- 2.6 The main railway line from Leeds to Wakefield crosses Sweet Street West on a bridge. Sweet Street Bridge is a "Rail Over" type bridge constructed of traditional stone with steel girders forming the deck. The bridge is owned and maintained by Network Rail. The road beneath has substandard headroom, carriageway width and footways and on a number of occasions the bridge has been struck by vehicles too high to pass beneath. On three occasions within 8 months in 1979, double decker buses hit the span of the bridge resulting in injuries to passengers. Subsequently, the road was closed to through vehicular traffic by means of a point closure at the bridge.
- 2.7 Sweet Street Bridge is located on the limits of the Holbeck Urban Village development area, a short distance to the south of Leeds city centre. Large concrete blocks currently prohibit vehicular access under or through the bridge. Turning heads have been constructed on either side of the bridge to allow traffic to return in the opposite direction should they fail to heed the warning signs that indicate the current status of the bridge.

- 2.8 Currently the most westerly area of Sweet Street is somewhat run down and exhibits evidence of illegal tipping. Lighting columns have been damaged and the road and pavements are in a state of disrepair, ultimately making a rather unpleasant environment, especially for the pedestrian and cyclist traffic that is currently able to transit the route under consideration. There is also evidence to suggest that the drainage system for the area has failed.
- 2.9 The re-opening of the Sweet Street Bridge is a key element to the success of Holbeck Urban Village and it would be extremely beneficial to the companies in the immediate vicinity. In re-opening Sweet Street to all traffic, the potential for further development would also be fully realised, as all areas would become open to regeneration. Linkages between the new developments would benefit by improved access to the proposed multi-storey car park and overall access to and from the Holbeck Urban Village would be improved.
- 2.10 As a result of identifying the need for improvements to this area, detailed proposals, up to and including RIBA Stage D, have now been prepared, resulting in the following approvals being achieved to date:
- a) Holbeck Urban Village Partnership Board on 20 July 2006 who supported progression to the next stage of detailed design and production drawings.
  - b) The Director of City Development approval to the detailed design proposals and specification for re-opening Sweet Street Bridge
  - c) The Director of City Services approval to request the Assistant Chief Executive (Corporate Governance) to advertise the necessary Traffic Regulation Orders.
- 2.11 Building control, planning and listed building approvals are not required.
- 2.12 On 25 February 2004 the Project Justification Form, Parent Scheme No. 01194 for re-opening of Sweet Street Bridge was approved and £800,000 included within the Capital Plan. Subsequently, a new Scheme No. has now been set up for re-opening of Sweet Street Bridge (14143).

### **3.0 Main Issues**

#### **Design Proposals / Scheme Description**

- 3.1 The project aims and objectives are:
- To improve overall access to Holbeck Urban Village.
  - To provide a key southern gateway, including improved access to Leeds City Council sites.
  - To improve access from Beeston Hill and Holbeck.
  - Allow all parts of the urban village to achieve their full development potential and improve access to premises in the immediate vicinity.
  - To demonstrate commitment by the public sector to address major infrastructure problems for the area. This confidence is vital to ensure the momentum of investor interest is maintained and good relations with stakeholders, residents and investors continue and are built on.
- 3.2 The proposal is to re-open Sweet Street West to operate one-way in an easterly direction from the western side of the bridge to the junction with Bath Road. Two-way will remain between the junction with Bridge Road to the western side of the bridge. The proposed works have been developed in close consultation with Highways, City Services and Network Rail to ensure that the technical constraints are fully met.
- 3.3 Please refer to the following attached drawing: General Layout, drawing number 760389/100/002/A2a.

### 3.4 The design proposals comprise:

- a) A two-way carriageway from Bridge Road through to the western side of the railway bridge and a one-way carriageway in an eastern direction from the railway bridge through to Bath Road;
- b) Advanced warning signs on Bridge Road highlighting the width and height restrictions on Sweet Street West;
- c) Vehicle activated signs (VAS) located on Sweet Street West. From the west, over-height vehicles would be detected by infra-red beams which would trip 2 sets of advance warning signs the second set on a delay from the first set. This will reduce the possibility of over-height vehicles reaching the pinch points beneath the bridge;
- d) A turning circle on the western approach to the bridge is proposed to be located to the north side of the street allowing large goods vehicles to turn around. A turning head/circle is not proposed on the east approach as vehicles would not approach the bridge from the east because of one-way system and the amendments to the Bath Road junction;
- e) Carriageway reduction to 2.2m wide between high containment kerbs at the western and eastern sides of the bridge, but signed as 2.0m. Under the bridge between these pinch-points the carriageway will be widened to 3.0m;
- f) A footway designated cycle path from Bath Road through to the western side of the railway bridge, turning into a 'with flow on carriageway' cycle lane for the remainder of Sweet Street West through to Bridge Road;
- g) Between Bridge Road and Bath Road highway resurfacing with bitumen macadam combined with a basalt sett gutter detail, bitumen macadam cycle path surfacing, yorkstone flags footway resurfacing, granite kerbs, new and restored highway drainage and replacement street lighting;
- h) Kerb realignments including a build-out on the south side of Sweet Street West at the newly formed junction with Bath Road to deflect westbound vehicles from the prohibited straight ahead path. The priority traffic movement at the junction of Sweet Street West and Bath Road would be changed from the existing east-west priority to north-east priority;
- i) The scheme is signed and lined in accordance with the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD) 2002; and
- j) Street lighting has been designed by Southern Electric Contracting (SEC) in accordance with the agreed specification for the Holbeck Urban Village and satisfies the lighting requirements for adopted highway.

### Consultations

- 3.5 Numerous consultations have taken place to date which include the Holbeck Urban Village Partnership Board, Yorkshire Forward, Ward Members, the development sector, key stakeholders, the local communities, the general public and Leeds' Civic Trust. All are supportive of the proposals. In particular, the local communities and general public were consulted as part of the 'What Kind of Place' event in April 2006. The event included an exhibition of the project for two weeks in the Round Foundry.
- 3.6 Specific to the design proposals the Highway Technical Client Team, Emergency Services, Network Rail, Metro and Statutory Authorities have been consulted. No objections to the scheme were received. No response was received from either the Ambulance Service or Fire Brigade.
- 3.7 Highway Board Have approved the detailed design proposals and specification for re-opening Sweet Street Bridge.
- 3.8 Leeds City Council's Bridges Manager has been consulted on the scheme and has no objections to the proposals.

- 3.9 It will be necessary to appropriate existing Council land from Environment and Neighbourhoods to City Development. The land in question is required for the widening of Bath Road and Sweet Street West. Initial discussions have been held with Environment and Neighbourhoods and there are no objections. A Land Evaluation Development Appraisal (LEDA) item has been circulated and there are no objections.
- 3.10 Network Rail Asset Management has been fully consulted throughout the design process. They have approved the proposals including the level of protection for their structure and the method of sign attachment to the bridge itself.

### **Programme**

- 3.11 The programme of works is as follows:

Final Proposals (ICE Stage 5)	Complete
Production Information (ICE Stage 6)	Complete
Tender Documentation (ICE Stage 7)	To 20 January 2008
Tenders Out (ICE Stage 7)	21 January 2008
Tenders In (ICE Stage 7)	27 February 2008
Start on Site (ICE Stage 8)	16 June 2008
Practical Completion (ICE Stage 8)	05 October 2008

## **4.0 Implications for Council Policy and Governance**

### **Compliance with Council Policies**

- 4.1 The project forms the second phase of public realm work that is essential to the delivery of HUV. Yorkshire Forward and Leeds City Council share a vision for a new urban village within the area to form a central part of the continuing renaissance of Leeds as a City Region.
- 4.2 The Renaissance Leeds framework provides the city-wide strategic context for the Re-opening of Sweet Street Bridge as a key project for Holbeck Urban Village. The Renaissance Strategy specifically identifies that Holbeck Urban Village needs to ensure that; 'Every opportunity should be taken to establish new connections and strengthen existing connections (especially pedestrian connections) to all adjacent conditions.'
- 4.3 HUV and Beeston Hill and Holbeck renewal areas are physically cut off from the city centre by the railway viaduct and both need to re-establish connections if they are to harness the economic drive emanating from the centre.
- 4.4 The Re-opening of Sweet Street Bridge scheme contributes to all three aims of The Vision for Leeds (Going up a league as a city; Narrow the gap between the most disadvantaged people and communities and the rest of the city; Develop Leeds' role as the regional capital).
- 4.5 This will be achieved by contribution to the following strategic objectives in the Corporate Plan:
- All neighbourhoods are safe, clean, green and well maintained.
  - All communities are thriving and harmonious places where people are happy to live.
  - Leeds is a highly competitive, international city.

### **Council Constitution**

- 4.6 This report is not exempt from the Call-In of Key and / or Major Decisions.

## Community Safety

- 4.7 The proposals contained in the report do have implications under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and these are as follows:

By enhancing the environment, community safety will be improved through better lighting and wider footpaths.

By improving the environment, pedestrian movement will be encouraged and activity increased in the area and therefore will be less likely to attract anti-social behavior.

- 4.8 The Stage 1 and 2 Safety Audit has been carried out and all the issues raised have been addressed.

## 5.0 Legal and Resource Implications

### Scheme Design Estimate

- 5.1 Estimated costs are as follows:

Construction Costs	525,500
Professional Fees	88,500
Site Investigations, Engineering Services & Legal Fees	7,700
Project Reserve	14,300
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>636,000</b>

- 5.2 Exclusions and qualifications are as follows:

VAT

Costs are estimated using approximate quantities and are based upon a start on site of June 2008. Increased costs incurred by any delay have not been included for.

Feasibility fees, professional fees up to and including RIBA Stage D and planning fees have been separately funded.

Planning, building control and listed building approvals are not required.

Land acquisition and site development costs are not required.

The project will be tendered using the Leeds City Council procurement process. Six contractors will be selected from the approved list.

## Capital Funding and Cash Flow

Previous total Authority to Spend on this scheme	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2007 £000's	FORECAST				
			2007/08 £000's	2008/09 £000's	2009/10 £000's	2010/11 £000's	2011 on £000's
LAND (1)	0.0	0.0					
CONSTRUCTION (3)	0.0	0.0					
FURN & EQPT (5)	0.0	0.0					
DESIGN FEES (6)	0.0	0.0					
OTHER COSTS (7)	0.0	0.0					
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Authority to Spend required for this Approval	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2007 £000's	FORECAST				
			2007/08 £000's	2008/09 £000's	2009/10 £000's	2010/11 £000's	2011 on £000's
LAND (1)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
CONSTRUCTION (3)	539.8	0.0	0.0	526.3	13.5	0.0	0.0
FURN & EQPT (5)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
DESIGN FEES (6)	96.2	0.0	52.0	39.8	4.4	0.0	0.0
OTHER COSTS (7)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>636.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>52.0</b>	<b>566.1</b>	<b>17.9</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Total overall Funding (As per latest Capital Programme)	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2007 £000's	FORECAST				
			2007/08 £000's	2008/09 £000's	2009/10 £000's	2010/11 £000's	2011 on £000's
Yorkshire Forward SRIP	60.0	0.0	52.0	8.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Yorkshire Forward Single Pot	576.0	0.0	0.0	558.1	17.9	0.0	0.0
Total Funding	636.0	0.0	52.0	566.1	17.9	0.0	0.0
<b>Balance / Shortfall =</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

**Parent Scheme Number: 01194**

**Scheme Number: 14143**

**Title: Re-opening Sweet Street Bridge**

5.3 The secured funding for the project is:

Yorkshire Forward SRIP funding for the continuation of the design work (£60,000).

Yorkshire Forward Single Pot & European Structural Funds (£576,000).

### Revenue Effects

- 5.4 City Development is currently responsible for maintaining the highway and SEC the highway lighting in Sweet Street West. Network Rail is responsible for maintaining the bridge structure. Therefore, any additional revenue costs will be covered by normal budget provision.
- 5.5 However, the new VAS signage will require a revenue budget for maintenance. An HUV management and maintenance strategy is currently being prepared but it is unlikely that the strategy will be implemented within the next 2 or 3 years. Therefore, it is proposed that future maintenance of the VAS signage is funded from within existing City Development revenue budgets as and when maintenance works are required. It is proposed that Highways Service take on the responsibility for managing the maintenance regime.

## **Risk Assessments**

- 5.6 The key risks that have been identified for the scheme are as follows:
- a) Delays to the programme due to objections received to the TROs. Full consultation has been carried out with all interested parties with regards the proposed TROs and to date no objections have been expressed.
  - b) Cost of works exceed expectations. A cost plan has been prepared and adequate contingencies and project reserve included. If tenders exceed the budget a value engineering exercise will be undertaken.
  - c) Unforeseen ground conditions on site, including setts within the carriageway and contaminated land. Trial holes have been carried out and soil samples taken. Ground contamination was found on site and setts were also present. Despite this exploratory work unforeseen ground conditions are still possible with affects on programme and cost.
  - d) Damage to the railway bridge during construction through strikes by plant. Plant movements beneath the bridge will be restricted by mast system and restrictors placed on plant.
  - e) Failure of VAS. The technology and materials involved in the proposal are considered to be tried and tested. Also a commuted sum is to be received to fund the future maintenance of the VAS signage. The VAS signs and detectors will be linked to UTC through mobile phone technology so that any faults with the system are flagged up.
  - f) Damage to the railway bridge post construction. It is considered that the chance of a vehicle which could pass the width restriction being higher than the headroom of the bridge is very small. The chance of such a vehicle being driven past the advance warning signs and arriving at the bridge would be significantly less likely. In addition, the chance of any such vehicle carrying multiple occupants is less likely still. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed scheme presents insignificant risk to vehicles, their occupants, other individuals and an extremely small risk of a collision with the bridge.

## **6.0 Conclusions**

- 6.1 The re-opening Sweet Street Bridge project has been identified as a key scheme for Holbeck Urban Village. It will improve overall access to Holbeck Urban Village, provide a key southern gateway, improve access and strengthen links with Beeston Hill and Holbeck and will demonstrate commitment by the public sector to address major infrastructure problems for the area. Improvements to this area are required as a matter of priority in order to allow this part of the urban village to achieve it's full development potential and improve the public realm, therefore contributing to reducing crime and antisocial behavior.
- 6.2 The project is fully supported by the HUV Partnership Board, Yorkshire Forward, developers and the local communities.

## **7.0 Recommendations**

- 7.1 The Executive Board is requested to:
- a) Approve the scheme design proposals and brief as presented.
  - b) Approve the scheme estimates and cash flows as presented.
  - c) Authorise scheme expenditure of £636,000.