

APPENDIX 1 NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Exempt / Confidential under Rule 10.4 (3) Financial and Business Affairs

Report of Director of City Development Directorate

To Executive Board

Date: 8 February 2008

Subject: DESIGN AND COST REPORT

**Scheme Title : Albion Place Refurbishment
Capital Scheme Number 14147 / 000 / 000**

Electoral Wards Affected:

City and Hunslet

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)

Executive Summary

This report seeks approval for the refurbishment of Albion Place. The scope and the quality of the scheme has been reviewed following the refurbishment of Briggate, King Edward Street and Mid-Albion Street and it is proposed that the refurbishment of Albion Place should be of a comparably high standard and use similar high quality traditional materials. This report contains confidential information in appendix 1.

1.0 Purpose of this Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek:

a) approval for the scheme design outlined in this report;

b) authority to spend monies from Leeds City Council Capital funding for the refurbishment scheme outlined in this report and detailed in appendix 1.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 The image and environment of the city centre are important in terms of attracting investors, employers, employees, residents, shoppers, visitors and tourists to the city and ensuring they return. The quality of the public realm is therefore fundamental to the city centre's ability to compete successfully with other cities.
- 2.2 Albion Place is in a key city centre location and it is home to high profile retailers, numerous street cafes and some of the city's most ornate listed buildings. The street was refurbished in 1991/92 as part of the Landmark Leeds project. It's surface has now noticeably deteriorated and it has become increasingly difficult to maintain the street in a safe condition. The refurbishment of Albion Place is intended to create an attractive, high quality shopping environment befitting a major national retail centre. The scheme will make an important contribution to sustaining and improving the vitality and viability of Leeds city centre and ensuring that it continues to make a significant contribution to the economic and social well being of the region.
- 2.3 The 'Landmark Scheme' report to Executive Board in February 2004 suggested that a phased replacement of Landmark was required over the next few years. This has begun: Briggate, King Edward Street and Mid-Albion Street have been completely refurbished to a high standard with funding from Yorkshire Forward and Leeds City Council. The schemes are well regarded by retailers, other businesses and users.
- 2.4 As was noted in the "City Centre Pedestrian Area" report to Executive Board, dated 5 September 2004, the city centre benefits the rest of the city and the region as a whole in terms of the jobs, investment, amenities and facilities which it provides.
- 2.5 There are numerous private sector developments, both planned and in progress within the retail quarter such as Eastgate Quarters, Trinity Leeds, and the former Allders site. These developments present opportunities and challenges with the creation of commercial space and in the development of large areas of private-public realm. In most cases this will be privately maintained. Therefore, it is imperative there is a high standard in Leeds City Council maintained public realm across the city centre connecting these high quality private developments. This will ensure a useable, viable, attractive and cohesive city centre environment for businesses and the general public.
- 2.6 The refurbishment of Briggate, King Edward Street and Mid-Albion Street in high quality natural materials with the reduction of street clutter have set the standard for Leeds City Centre. The use of high quality natural materials (Yorkstone), the innovative use of street furniture and building mounted lighting reduces street clutter giving streets and squares a sense of openness and space.
- 2.7 The scheme is included in the 'Leeds City Centre Strategic Plan 2006 to 2010'.
- 2.8 The Capital Programme Monitoring Update report approved at Executive Board on 22nd August 2007 approved the 'City Centre Upgrade Programme'(13328). Albion Place is the first street to be delivered in this programme.
- 2.9 The report 'Proposed Refurbishment Of The City Centre Public Realm' (agreed at Executive Board on 11th September 2007) highlighted the need for improving the Landmark and associated areas of the city centre. The recommendation was to 'agree the principle of a co-ordinated programme of maintenance and improvements of street and public space refurbishment in the city centre pedestrianised area'

- 2.10 It should be noted that the refurbishment of the Public Transport Box (PTB), i.e. those streets which are boxed by The Headrow, Vicar Lane, Boar Lane and Park Row and other connector streets will cost around £22 million of which £5 million has previously been injected into the capital programme. Further funding is currently being sought from public and private sources external to Leeds City Council.
- 2.11 The cost of repaving Albion Place in Yorkstone, with granite inset and installing building mounted lighting, bollards, benches and trees is detailed in appendix 1 v). Discussions are underway with external stakeholders, including businesses and property owners on Albion Place, regarding potential opportunities for external contributions towards the cost of the scheme.
- 2.12 Appendix 1 details the financial implications for Leeds City Council in progressing with the Albion Place improvements. Publication of this information could prejudice the City Council's negotiations with external parties.
- 2.13 The first section of Albion Place has already been refurbished under the 100% Yorkshire Forward funded refurbishment of Mid-Albion Street. The proposed Albion Place refurbishment will carry on the Yorkstone paving from the perimeter of the Mid-Albion Street works to the perimeter of the Briggate works.
- 2.14 The refurbishment of Albion Place will be tendered as a standard ICE contract. The remainder of the work within the PTB/pedestrian core will be tendered under a single contractor framework contract, with the next street starting on site early 2009. Works will be phased depending on funding (internal and external), other developments on site (eg Trinity Leeds) and maximising other works such as the 278 works for the Eastgate Quarters.

3.0 Main Issues

3.1 Design Proposals / Scheme Description

- 3.1.1 The extent of the works on Albion Place will run west to east from the boundary of the Mid-Albion Street works to the boundary of the Briggate works. The scheme will cut north into Lands Lane to the edge of La Senza and run south into Central Square on the corner of WH Smith.
- 3.1.2 The scheme proposes the use of high quality, slip resistant 200mm x 150mm Yorkstone setts as the principal material to create a single, level surface between building frontages. Yorkstone not only provides greater durability and longevity in maintenance terms but also, as Briggate demonstrates, provides the quality of appearance appropriate within the city centre conservation area. The type of construction proposed is appropriate to deal with the vehicular traffic and loading that is experienced on Albion Place.
- 3.1.3 However, the new Yorkstone paving is lighter and has a higher porosity than the previous dark Landmark surfacing. As a result staining, from chewing gum etc, is more visible than on the existing Landmark clay blocks. To mitigate against this Cleansing Services in conjunction with City Centre Management are undertaking on-going trials to find a suitable surface coating for the Yorkstone to protect from gum and staining.

- 3.1.4 The street furniture in the scheme will be a mix of Leeds City Council Standard items, with the use of bespoke 'accent' pieces. All items will be subject to agreement by the relevant maintaining Directorate or Service.
- 3.1.5 It has already been agreed at City Centre Public Realm Project Board on the 6th November 2007 that the scheme bins will be the new large capacity BROXAP BX45 2550-S, as opposed to the more costly stainless steel Benchmark bin, to minimise the revenue implications for Cleansing Services, who will be responsible for the cleansing and maintenance of the bins.
- 3.1.6 The bollards within the scheme will be stainless steel as on Mid- Albion Street, Briggate and King Edward Street.
- 3.1.7 There will be seating on the portion of Albion Place running from Carphone Warehouse to La Senza, this will be high quality seating funded through the scheme or an art commission paid for by the Albion Place stakeholder group.
- 3.1.8 The number of trees on Albion Place will be reduced to around ten. The trees are appropriate for the city centre environment, having a narrow trunk, high canopy and a relatively narrow foliage. The existing tree planters will be removed, subject to site investigations, and replaced by trees which are planted at ground level, to further reduce street clutter.
- 3.1.9 Albion Place street lighting is subject to a separate Design and Cost Report (DCR) approved by the Chief Highways Officer on 21st January 2008; the works will be funded from the Albion Place capital scheme 14147. Total cost of building mounted street lighting is £22,000. The street lighting proposals will add value to proposed PFI upgrade. A separate DCR allows way-leave work to immediately commence to establish if works are feasible with building owners. This is building on the experience from other refurbishment schemes where the way-leave process can prove to be lengthy. The lighting up-grade scheme, adding value to the planned PFI works, will continue as a separate scheme even if the paving work for Albion Place is not approved.

3.2 Consultations

- 3.2.1 The concept and detailed design of the Albion Place refurbishment scheme has been developed by a multi-disciplinary Project Team comprising officers from the City Council's City Development Directorate and City Services. The City Centre Manager has regular meetings with the owners/tenants from the westerly portion of Albion Place.
- 3.2.2 The concept design, cost estimate and proposed phasing for this scheme has been endorsed by City Centre Public Realm Board, Chaired by Paul Stephens, Chief Economic Services Officer.
- 3.2.3 Representatives from each of the traders and businesses located on Mid-Albion Street and other interested parties, including Ward Members, property owners and the Civic Trust have been sent plans and drawings detailing the refurbishment scheme. The proposals were supported. A number of property owners have indicated that they will now be more willing to invest in their properties to ensure they complement the improved environment.

- 3.2.4 Building on the success of the public perception survey for Mid-Albion Street, a co-ordinated approach will be taken to gauging public perception of the whole of the pedestrian core/PTB area over the next 5 years. This will include footfall monitoring cameras, installed at key locations across the pedestrian core.

3.3 Programme

- 3.3.1 The following proposed programme is subject to approval of this report at today's Executive Board. Any delays would result in a conflict with the City Centre's peak Christmas shopping period and may necessitate a delay until 2009.

Tenders Out	12 March 2008
Tenders In	9 April 2008
Start on Site	6 May 2008 (24 week contract)
Completion	21 October 2008

3.4 Implications for Council Policy and Governance

- 3.4.1 Appendix 1 is confidential under Access to Information Rule 10.4.3 because publication could prejudice the City Council's commercial interests. Sensitive negotiations are currently underway with private sector investors and Yorkshire Forward to secure a contribution to the Albion Place improvement works. In these circumstances it is considered that the public interest in not disclosing this financial information outweighs the interests of disclosure.

4.1 Compliance with Council Policies

- 4.1.1 The proposals to upgrade the city centre streets and spaces, accord with a number of key Council policies and strategies, which stress the need to improve the city centre public realm and the overall appeal and attractiveness of the city centre. These include the Council Plan, Unitary Development Plan, City Centre Urban Design Strategy and the Economic Development Strategy. The proposals accord with the Council's Green Strategy to help secure sustainable economic development by promoting the city centre and enhancing the local environment.
- 4.1.2 The proposals also accord with the 'Vision for Leeds 2004 to 2020' key objectives and with the aims and objectives of the 'Leeds City Centre Strategic Plan 2006 to 2010'.
- 4.1.3 The proposals are in line with the Council's core values to put customers first, look after Leeds and treat people fairly. The work to minimise obstructions and to improve the quality of the finished surface will increase the accessibility of the street for all users.

4.2 Council Constitution

- 4.2.1 There are no reasons for this report to be exempt from the call in procedure.

4.3 Community Safety

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

4.3.2 The proposed improvements will help improve people's perceptions of safety in the city centre, and help reduce fear of crime.

5.0 Legal and Resource Implications

5.1 Scheme Design Estimate
See Appendix 1

5.2 Capital Funding and Cash Flow
See Appendix 1

5.2.1 Revenue Effects

5.2.1 a) Following completion of the refurbishment Albion Place project, Environment and Neighbourhoods Directorate will continue to cleanse the street and maintain the bins. City Development will maintain the highway, and bollards, agreement of the design of these items is through the Project Team and City Centre Public Realm Project Board. Any items commissioned as public art pieces will need to be reviewed on a case by case basis. It should be noted that the existing city centre cleansing regime will not have as much impact on the light coloured, porous Yorkstone compared with the dark coloured, less porous landmark clay blocks. However, Yorkstone is much more robust and hard wearing.

5.2.1 b) The removal of the complicated, bespoke, pink granite and varnished wood seating and its replacement with high quality free standing benches should not incur any additional costs over and above those associated with maintaining the pink granite and varnished wood. It would be expected that maintaining new high quality items would have lower revenue implications.

5.2.1 c) The trees will require ongoing maintenance although it is not envisaged that the cost of this will exceed that previously spent on the trees on Albion Place. Maintenance is currently undertaken by Parks and Countryside. As part of the replacement tree provision under the Albion Place contract an initial period of maintenance will be included to ensure the trees thrive and are viable prior to Parks and Countryside continuing to maintain the trees.

5.2.1 d) The materials and design of this scheme have been selected for their robust nature, high quality, durability and long life span consequently, the initial capital costs for the material is higher but will result in items lasting longer than inferior and lower quality materials. However, this does not mitigate the occasional one off cost due to accidental damage, such as vehicle collision, this single cost should be off set against the lower cost of on-going maintenance.

5.3 Risk Assessments

5.3.1 Financial Risk – There is a financial risk that the cost of implementing the scheme will exceed the funding available.

Response – This risk will be minimised through the tendering process.

5.3.2 Operational Risk -There is an operational risk that there might be slippage in the construction programme or overspend on the project.

Response – These risks will be minimised by ensuring that only contractors on Leeds City Council’s approved list will be invited to tender and by appropriate on-site project management and supervision of the contract by the Engineering Services section of the City Development Directorate.

- 5.3.3 Programme Issues – There are risks, as with any project of this nature, of delays in supply of materials or due to exceptionally adverse weather conditions.

Response – The appointed contractor will be experienced in securing materials and will be aware of the specified timescales. The contract timetable is flexible enough to accommodate a reasonable amount of exceptional weather.

- 5.3.4 General Risk Management – In addition to specialised management of the contract by staff from the Engineering Services section of the City Development Directorate, the project will also have a dedicated project manager from City Centre Management, to apply general project management techniques. The project manager will draw together the project multi-disciplinary team to deal with design, operational, financial issues which may arise through the life of the project. The project manager will report to the City Centre Public Realm Project Board.

- 5.3.5 City Centre Public Realm Project Board oversee the project with regard to the quality of the scheme, timescales and funding. A risk register will be prepared and reported to the Board to allow risks to be properly managed. The contractors will also be invited to meetings of the Board, as and when necessary, to discuss and seek agreement on any outstanding issues.

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 Executive Board is recommended to :-

- Approve the scheme design as outlined in this report.
- Authorise the release of scheme expenditure as outlined in appendix 1 shown in table vi) at lines CPRH (3) and CPRH (6).