

Acquisition of land for the A637 / A6120 Dawson's Corner Junction Improvement Scheme

Date: 23 June 2021

Report of: Director of City Development

Report to: Executive Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- Highways improvements are needed at A647 / A6120 Dawson's Corner as is it a strategic location on the transport network. It is the junction between the Leeds – Bradford corridor and the Outer Ring Road, as well as being located on the Bradford to Leeds CityConnect Cycle Superhighway and facilitates access to the New Pudsey railway station. The improvements to the junction will improve pedestrian and cycling safety and connectivity. It will also provide a dedicated bus lane and reduce congestion for all traffic through the junction.
- The highways improvements at A647 / A6120 Dawson's Corner contributes towards the Best Council's Plans objectives to improve the city's transport infrastructure and tackling climate change risks. This is achieved through improved safety for all road users, providing new crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists to improve accessibility, improve journey times or buses via the implementation of designated bus lanes through the junction and bus priority traffic signals, and reducing traffic congestion which will lead to better environment in terms of improved air quality.
- There is insufficient land within the highway boundary to accommodate the junction improvements. Leeds City Council therefore needs to acquire both permanent and temporary land interests from a third party (as shown in the plan in Appendix 1) located directly to the southwest (A), northeast and north west of the junction (B, C and D).
- One of the parcels of land (A) is owned by The Calverley Charity for which Leeds City Council is the sole trustee. Therefore elsewhere in the agenda to this meeting is a report from the Director of City Development entitled "Disposal of land at Dawson's Corner by The Calverley Charity – The Workhouse Allotment" outlining recommendations for the disposal of the land.

Recommendations

Executive Board is requested to:

- a) Approve the principle of acquiring third party land to enable the A647 / A6120 Dawson's Corner junction improvements;
- b) Give approval to the terms agreed for parcel A as detailed in appendix 2 and B and C as detailed in the confidential appendix 3; and
- c) Note that should there be any changes to the agreed terms for A, B and C these to be approved by the Director of City Development under delegated powers.
- d) Give authority for officers to negotiate acquisition terms for parcel D and for these terms to be approved by the Director of City Development under delegated powers.
- e) Note that the timescales for the implementation are for third party land to be acquired by the end of 2021 and, subject to funding, junction improvement works starting in either spring 2022 or spring 2023 with the construction period due to last around 12-18 months.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 Highways improvements are needed at A647 / A6120 Dawson's Corner as is it a strategic location on the transport network. It is the junction between the Leeds – Bradford corridor and the Outer Ring Road, as well as being located on the Bradford to Leeds CityConnect Cycle Superhighway and facilitates access to the New Pudsey railway station.
- 2 The improvements to the junction will improve pedestrian and cycling safety and connectivity. It will also provide a dedicated bus lane and reduce congestion for all traffic through the junction.
- 3 There is insufficient land within the highway boundary to accommodate the junction improvements. Therefore, Leeds City Council (LCC) need to acquire third party land located directly to the southwest, northeast and northwest of the junction.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards Affected: Calverley & Farsley

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 4 Improvements to the A647 /A6120 Dawson's Corner junction will improve connectivity between Leeds and Bradford.
- 5 Traffic congestion at the junction results in delays, especially at peak times, when journey times can take three time as long. The improvements to the junction layout will make the junction more efficient for traffic at this critical intersection, supporting and promoting economic growth across Leeds and Bradford. The reduction in congestion will lead to a better environment in terms of improving air quality.
- 6 The improved junction incorporates new bus lanes which will improve journey time, reliability and make public transport more attractive.
- 7 Cyclists and pedestrians will have improved connectivity and increased safety when crossing the junction.
- 8 Consideration has been given to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration for the A647 / A6120 Dawson's Corner as part of the consultation and engagement process. The design considers all road users and looks to achieve a balanced proposal benefiting all road users.

The new pedestrian / cycle facilities would provide positive impact towards the protected characteristics such as disabled, elderly and/or children.

- 9 There has been an Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening (EDCI) completed at Outline Business Case (OBC) as part of the West Yorkshire Plus Transport Fund (WY+TF) Corridor Improvement Programme (CIP) which gained Executive Board approval in September 2017. Refer to link below:
<https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=44822>
- 10 An updated EDCI Screening has been prepared for the A647 / A6120 Dawson's Corner scheme at this stage to support the Full Business Case (FBC) which can be found in Appendix 5.
- 11 The parcel of acquired land will be used for the construction of highways improvements as well as landscaping mitigation works which can be seen in appendix 4. The scheme is required as part of planning policy to replace every tree removed with three new trees. The increase in trees will help improve air quality in the area.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 12 As part of the Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme (LPTIP), an initial round of public consultation on the identified issues and potential opportunities was undertaken between February and March 2018, to allow the public to express their views as pedestrians, cyclists, bus users, motorists, business owners or local residents. Over 3,700 contributions to the public consultation were received.
- 13 A second programme of public and stakeholder engagement was undertaken in November to December 2018 to obtain feedback on more detailed plans and ideas on specific sections of the A647 corridor, which included the A647 / A6120 Dawson's Corner. 188 people provided feedback to the proposals for the A647 / A6120 Dawson's Corner, which consisted of widening the junction, creating a bus lane, installing Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation (MOVA) controlled traffic signals and enhancing the pedestrian/cyclist facilities. 51% of respondents felt positive or slightly positive about the proposals, 30% of the respondents felt negative or slightly negative and 19% of the respondents felt neutral.
- 14 An update has been provided to ward members for Calverley & Farsley on the changes made to the scheme since the consultation. Ward members felt that the changes made were positive. Furthermore, the scheme has been presented to the Executive Board Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development who is satisfied with the scheme. Following feedback from the ward members, it is proposed to undertake the landscape appraisal earlier in the design stage to develop a landscape mitigation strategy.
- 15 A further update has been provided to the ward members for Calverley & Farsley regarding the requirement to purchase third party land on 27 April 2021. No comments were received.
- 16 A report was previously taken to Executive Board on the 20 September 2017 regarding the Key junction Improvements (CIP phase1). The resolve of the report relevant to the acquisition was as follows:
 - a) The report received support for the principle of development of junction improvement scheme at Dawson's Corner, Dyneley Arms and Fink Hill, together with land acquisition where required, with it being noted that the West Yorkshire Combined Authority has approved in principle sufficient capital to substantially fund the implementation under the Corridor Improvement Programme (CIP)

- b) That 'authority to spend' £1.525M, which is funded from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority CIP grant be approved in order to enable Phase 1 of the scheme development, in advance of signing the grant funding agreements, if required. Further to this the funding agreement has since been revised to reflect the WYCA approval on 13th December 2019 for the progression of the schemes to Full Business Case. The authority to spend for Dawsosn's Corner has been revised to £2.598 Million.

What are the resource implications?

- 17 The junction improvements will be funded by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) through the WY+TF. The current cost estimate for the A647 / A6120 Dawson's Corner scheme is £18.8m.
- 18 The junction improvements are part of the CIP. This is a WYCA funded West Yorkshire wide programme of highway interventions on strategic highway corridors which aims to improve connectivity and accessibility to support economic growth. In order to achieve this, the programme aims to deliver a reduction in journey times for all traffic, with a higher reduction in journey times for buses.
- 19 LCC have secured £14.48m via the WY+TF with the remainder unsecured. LCC are pursuing options to secure full funding for the scheme.
- 20 There has been a separate funding bid submitted as part of the Transport for the North Major Roads Network (MRN) for the A647 / A6120 Dawson's Corner and Stanningley Bypass (combined scheme). The MRN bid is mitigation to bridge the funding gap for Dawson's Corner and at the same time to deliver the Stanningley Bypass maintenance works, which are currently unfunded. Both elements will be packaged as one coherent scheme. The OBC is in development and will be submitted by the end of 2021.
- 21 The land acquisitions, which will enable the junction improvements, will be funded via the above mentioned funds.
- 22 A valuation for the larger parcel of land detailed as (A) in appendix 1 has been undertaken by an independent accredited RICS Registered Valuer on behalf of the third party land owner. This valuation has been reviewed by Land and Property Officers and is considered to represent a fair opinion of market value in accordance with Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors - Valuation (RICS) Global Standards 2019 (Effective from 31 January 2020). The other parcels of land have been valued by Land and Property internally and due to the level of value an external valuation was not necessary.

What are the legal implications?

- 23 The Deputy Head of Land and Property recommends the terms as set out in appendix 2 and 3 as being acceptable and representing a fair market value for the land parcels involved.
- 24 The information contained in Appendix 3, 3b and 3c are exempt under Access to Information Rule 10.4(3) as it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular organisation and of the Council. This information is not publicly available from the statutory registers of information kept in respect of certain companies and charities. It is considered that since this information was obtained through one to one negotiations for the proposed land exchange then it is not in the public interest to disclose this information at this point in time. Also it is considered that the release of such information would or would be likely to prejudice the Council's commercial interests in relation to other similar transactions in that prospective transacting parties for other similar sites would have access to information about the nature and level of consideration which

may prove acceptable to the Council. It is considered that whilst there may be a public interest in disclosure, much of this information will be publicly available from the Land Registry following completion of this transaction and consequently the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing this information at this point in time.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 25 The delivery of the A647 / A6120 Dawson's Corner scheme is essential to the Council's ambitions to encourage people to walk and cycle. The proposed scheme complements the LPTIP improvements on the A647 corridor with the aim to improve bus journey time reliability and make public transport more attractive to travellers which would have a beneficial effect towards contributing in reducing the risk of climate change. The improvements aim to reduce delays and enable the junction to operate more efficiently leading to better environment in terms of air quality and enhance the key objective of all road user safety.
- 26 If the third party land is not purchased the junction improvements will not be feasible. This has been managed through early engagement and regular communication with the various land owners.
- 27 The scheme is reported at WYCA CIP board and LCC Programme Board. Risks are actively managed through these Boards.

Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth Health and Wellbeing Climate Emergency

- 28 The improvements to the junction will allow cyclist and pedestrian to cross the junction more safely. This will encourage people to walk and cycle more consequently helping benefit their health and wellbeing.
- 29 The junction improvements complements the LPTIP improvements on the A647 corridor with the aim to improve bus journey time reliability and make public transport more attractive to travellers which would have a beneficial effect towards contributing in reducing the risk of climate change.
- 30 The landscape mitigation works on the acquired land will help to improve air quality and help reduce the risk of climate change.
- 31 Also the improvements to the junction will help improve access to jobs in the City which in turn will help promote inclusive Growth.

Options, timescales and measuring success

a) What other options were considered?

- 32 Four options concepts were considered in early development:
 - i. Option A: Do minimum, minor interventions to add lanes or improve the geometry of the existing roundabout.
 - ii. Option B: Removal of U-turners (especially from the south) considering both at-grade and grade separated options north of the railway (requires 3rd party land take).
 - iii. Option C: At grade improvement with or without widening of the existing railway bridge (requires 3rd party land take).
 - iv. Option D: Grade-separated improvement, focussing particularly on a west-to-south Bradford to Leeds (requires 3rd party land take).

- 33 Following a technical review in 2017 it was concluded that Option C would have capacity to accommodate the 2028 flows. Further technical options and analysis was undertaken in 2018, with a recommendation to develop an improvement at Dawson's Corner as a signalised gyratory without a flyover.
- 34 The junction improvements were modelled without the third party land, however the benefits from a reduced scheme were not economically viable.

b) How will success be measured?

- 35 The plan for Dawson's Corner is proportionate, consistent and appropriate at a CIP and project level. The main measure of success for the scheme will be freer flowing traffic during peak periods, reduced journey times and greater reliability of journey times for all users when compared to the situation with no improvement to this section of the ring road. The focus of monitoring and evaluation for the scheme includes (in a before and after situation):
- Delays for buses
 - Delays for general traffic
 - Air quality
 - Level of road traffic collisions and near misses, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists
 - Perceived improvements experienced by users (including buses users and general traffic) and local residents/businesses
- 36 The land acquisitions will be legally completed in a timely manner and within approved budget parameters as set by Highways.

c) What is the timetable for implementation?

- 37 Planning application for the junction improvements is to be submitted by summer 2021.
- 38 Third party land is to be acquired by the end of 2021.
- 39 Junction improvement works start on the ground by:
- Spring 2022 if the June levelling up fund bid is successful (£14.48m is currently secured from the WY+TF) or
 - Spring 2023 if the MRN Dawson's Corner Junction & Stanningley Bypass bid is successful.
- 40 The construction period is expected to take between 12-18 months. The completion date is dependent on the successful funding route.

Appendices

- 41 Appendix 1: Plan
- 42 Appendix 2: Outlining the main heads of terms for parcel A.
- 42.1 Appendix 2a: Plan of parcel A
- 43 Appendix 3: Confidential appendix outlining main heads of terms for Parcel B & C
Exemption from Access to Information Procedure Rule applies under rule 10.4(3)
- 43.1 Appendix 3b: Confidential Exemption from Access to Information Procedure Rule
applies under rule 10.4(3)

43.2 Appendix 3c: Confidential Exemption from Access to Information Procedure Rule applies under rule 10.4(3)

44 Appendix 4: Landscape mitigation plan

45 Appendix 5: Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening

Background papers

46 No.