

Streets for People: The Recreations, Holbeck

Date: 17 November 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

- The West Yorkshire Transport Strategy aims to create high quality places for people, aiming to improve physical activity and air quality. The Streets for People initiative, where each district in the county is able to develop a demonstration project, aims to facilitate meeting these ambitions.
- Leeds City Council has selected the Recreations area of Holbeck for its Streets for People project, based on current levels of deprivation, low car ownership and the lack of reasonable opportunities to use the built environment for active lifestyles.
- The proposals in this report will make significant changes to the built environment to encourage active use of the streets, and to reduce the dominance of motorised traffic and enhance the green space. This will encourage the use of the streets for activity and sustainable transport, remove barriers to travel particularly to and from the city centre, and develop the basis for an improvement in health and wellbeing in the local community. This is in line with the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy which embraces the vision of Leeds as a city where you don't need a car and will help deliver the ambition for Leeds to be the best city in the UK: compassionate and caring with a strong economy; which tackles poverty and reduces inequalities; working towards being a net zero carbon city by 2030.
- The project aims to foster the sense of the community in the area by creating safe and attractive spaces on the doorstep where residents can meet and interact and where children can play and travel safely; this approach will help break the cycle of short term tenancies and transient residents, aid community cohesion and help build social capital needed to address wider issues in the area.

Recommendations

The Executive Board is requested to:

- a) Note the contents of this report and approve the selection of the Recreations as Leeds City Council's Streets for People project

- b) Approve expenditure of £900,000 to deliver the project, and to note that Highways & Transportation will be the lead service on this.
- c) Note that the Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation) will receive further reports to enact statutory powers and processes to deliver the proposals detailed in this report.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 The West Yorkshire Transport Strategy includes policies that promote the creation of high quality places for people through investments that enhance connectivity and also better manage the adverse impacts of traffic to improve personal safety, reduce air pollution, and provide better quality environments that are more conducive to social interaction and physical activity such as walking and cycling. The Streets for People approach provides a framework for putting people and their health at the heart of improving existing transport networks and places.
- 2 As a result the West Yorkshire Combined Authority have allocated £5m to deliver projects across the five districts in the county under the Healthy Streets banner. Leeds City Council has selected the Recreations area for their £1m investment as an opportunity to demonstrate how changes in the built environment can encourage activity in streets, contributing to a healthier lifestyle.
- 3 The 'Recreations' is a part of Holbeck which is ranked in the bottom 10% nationally for deprivation. The area is generally made up of terraced streets with few properties having access to a garden or other private outdoor space. Previously conducted street audits have highlighted the issue of these terraced streets having very narrow footways which make walking hard as a social activity and significantly impact accessibility of the local area. A significant proportion of properties have frequent turnover of occupants, either through short term leases or via re-housing schemes, and there are indications that this leads to a lack of ownership in the area.
- 4 To develop these proposals a comprehensive consultation exercise has been carried out to understand local issues and to develop proposals to improve the built environment for the active use of local residents.
- 5 Door to door surveys and drop in sessions conducted in 2019 demonstrated that many residents do not feel comfortable using the built environment for recreational purposes, with motor traffic being seen to dominate the streetscene and speeding and other antisocial behaviour mentioned frequently. This in turn leads to underuse of the streets for walking, cycling and other ambulant activity which is proven to contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Residents felt that the streets had pavements that were too narrow, lacked greenery and were not child friendly. The responses demonstrated a lot of support for improved walking environment, play streets and the introduction of greenery, as well as concerns around road safety and air pollution. Residents suggested the need for safer routes to school and improved crossing opportunities, points closures, areas to play and socialise and one-way systems to manage through traffic and improve the look, feel and use of local streets.
- 6 In recent years two major cycling and walking projects have been approved in the area, delivering major infrastructure improvements designed to encourage active travel. These are the CityConnect project on Elland Road and the Transforming Cities Fund cycle connection running along the Ingram Distributor. These two projects skirt the Recreations, allowing complementary infrastructure to be developed which dovetails to create safe, accessible and sustainable transportation opportunities into and out of the city centre with access to employment, education and recreational opportunities for this community. Appendix B shows these projects.

- 7 The proposals also support work undertaken in recent years to enhance the quality and appearance of local housing. In November 2016 Executive Board approved investment of £4.5m to repair and upgrade over 150 properties in the Recreations as part of Phase 1 of the Holbeck Group Repair, including improvements to property frontages including making properties thermally efficient with external wall insulation and providing new windows doors and roofs; the existing bin yards were also improved to cater for dedicated recycling provision for local residents with consequent improvements to the local streetscene.
- 8 Subsequent to the completion of this work a Phase 2 was approved by Executive Board in October 2020, with further investment of £3.9m into the Recreations for improvements to another 150 homes. This investment included a £2.65m government grant from the Get Building Fund and £1.25m contributions from private sector, Energy Company Obligation Funding and the Housing Revenue Account.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards Affected: Beeston and Holbeck

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 9 As noted above the proposal aims to introduce transformational changes to the street environment to encourage activity on the streets within the Recreations, and consequent improvements to health and wellbeing through increased levels of walking and cycling.
- 10 The proposals include point closures, greening of streets, tree planting and segregated cycle facilities linking to the recently delivered routes. These proposals are shown on attached drawing TM-05-464-01-03.
- 11 Dominance of motorised traffic will be reduced using traffic calming and closures, and by breaking up some of the established through routes in the area. This will also help realise residents' aspirations for greener streets and areas for play and social interaction that are vital to the sense of community and cohesion in the area. Extensive parking restrictions are not proposed, given the limited car ownership detailed in point 24 below, but the limited restrictions at junctions will be subject to further approvals by the Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation) and more detailed frontage consultation.
- 12 Delivery of these proposals is expected to create a safer, more welcoming street environment more suited to active travel - particularly to encourage walking and cycling. In turn this is expected to result in improvements to health and wellbeing for residents of the Recreations through increased uptake of sustainable travel and increased opportunities to use their local streets for socialising and informal recreation.
- 13 The proposals complement other infrastructure projects to create safe and sustainable transport opportunities to and from key employment and education opportunities in the city centre and it is expected that there will be consequent increases in employment and training amongst the local community as barriers to access are removed.
- 14 As noted above there has been over £7m of investment committed to improving the quality of the housing stock over the past 5 years, and the proposals in this report offer the complementary improvements to the surrounding built environment necessary to help achieve this transformational change in the Recreations and Holbeck at large.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 15 Consultation has been undertaken with local ward members to develop support for the project and to shape the draft proposals. This included demonstrating the coherence between the Streets for People scheme and the other connectivity projects and how these form foundations for further projects in Holbeck.
- 16 The Executive Member for Infrastructure and Climate has been briefed on the proposals and has offered strong support for the ambition and concept.
- 17 Initial consultation has been undertaken with emergency services and WYCA and further consultation will take place ahead of delivery. There are no specific or general concerns regarding the proposal and partners will be engaged with and updated on any detailed design issues that arise through the delivery phase.
- 18 An extensive programme of consultation has taken place with local residents and other key stakeholders. This included:
 - Door to door surveys in December 2019, including questionnaires about existing experiences of local residents. This was used to draw out how residents used their built environment and what barriers existed preventing active use of the streets. Key responses were:
 - Traffic speeds
 - Aggressive driving
 - Lack of green space
 - Through traffic volumes
 - Condition of the roads and footways, especially very narrow footways
 - Consultation events were held in January and February 2020 at St Matthews Community Centre, Slung Low and the Jamyang centre. These presented some concept ideas to local residents and asked attendees to suggest where these would be most effective. This exercise has been used to form the final design
- 19 In addition to the more formal consultation dialogue has been established and maintained with a number of voluntary community organisations in the area. This has been used as further input into the design and operation of the project and as a 'sense check' that the proposals will offer tangible benefits to the local community.
- 20 Subsequent to the above a series of further consultation events outlining the proposed designs were planned for mid 2020, but were postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic which prevented public gatherings. A written consultation is now planned to take place in November 2021 with any individual engagements adhering to current Government guidance.
- 21 Engagement with community organisations, businesses and residents groups will continue through development and delivery of this project, with the aim of creating lasting community relations which support successful long-term improvements in the area. This work is supported by services across the council to draw on existing relationships and specialisms.

What are the resource implications?

- 22 £1m funding has been secured for the project from the Healthy Streets fund. This funding will be used to make the alterations to the built environment detailed above.
- 23 The proposals detailed in this report are estimated at £900,000, comprising £800,000 works and £100,000 of development and delivery costs.
- 24 Maintenance of the new highway infrastructure will be undertaken as part of the general maintenance of the public highway. A commuted sum will be sought from the scheme budget for Parks & Countryside to maintain the new green spaces.

What are the legal implications?

- 25 The legal mechanisms required to deliver the infrastructure work falls within the statutory powers of the highway authority and can be exercised under existing the delegation scheme. As noted in the recommendations the Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation) will receive further reports detailing these necessary operations following approval of this report .
- 26 An EDCI screening was completed and included key findings:

“The improvements will have a positive impact on older people and people with disabilities by increasing confidence that their journeys can be completed safely and independently”

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

- 27 The delivery risks are restricted to those normally encountered when working on the public highway, and are being managed through risk assessments and methods of working.
- 28 There is a risk relating to project engagement, but the pre and post delivery survey work will draw out any area where the benefits are not being fully realised and allow services to target accordingly.

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

Inclusive Growth Health and Wellbeing Climate Emergency

Inclusive Growth.

- 29 The Receptions are one of the most deprived areas, both in Leeds (within the second most deprived quintile of Leeds) and nationally (in the bottom 10% of the most deprived areas in the country, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation – IMD), with 34% of the residents of experiencing employment deprivation and 40% experiencing income deprivation. The ward is more ethnically diverse than the Leeds average, with double the average percentage of Black African, Pakistani and Polish residents.
- 30 67% of households have no car, multiple car ownership is negligible. This means that the majority of population has no access to a private car to access jobs, education, recreation and shopping. At the same time, local bus services are limited and consultations have revealed dissatisfaction with public transport provision. Research demonstrates that around 9% of car owners nationally cannot really afford to run a car and are putting themselves into

debt and poverty because of the pressure to own a vehicle in order to access employment opportunities.

- 31 The area is geographically close to the city centre, but the significant highway infrastructure connecting Leeds Ring Road and linking into the motorway network was, until recently, a significant barrier. This is now being addressed by the City Connect and Transforming Cities fund schemes. Creating continuous access routes to and from the city centre, with the opportunities afforded in education and employment, supports inclusivity and ensures that these opportunities are realised by a community close to the economic growth of the thriving city centre. Removing barriers to this access delivers the Inclusive Growth agenda in a tangible and readily apparent manner.
- 32 The Health Check report for this priority neighbourhood describes the living environment as 'poor with noise pollution, high population density, poor housing and high crime rates'. Investment in the area reducing through traffic, improving streetscape and enabling people to make shorter journeys on foot or by bicycle, coupled with recent investment in housing stock, will help transform the living environment.

Health and Wellbeing.

- 33 Coronary Heart Disease, Diabetes, Obesity and COPD are more prevalent in this area than a Leeds overall average, but similar to areas of similar levels of disadvantage. Children specific data highlights a particular concern of childhood obesity, with 40% of children leaving primary school with excess weight.
- 34 Developing these proposals removes barriers to the use of the streets in the Receptions for active lifestyles. They encourage walking and cycling as part of a sustainable transport choice and as an alternative to the private car, helping prevent conditions such as coronary heart disease, Type II Diabetes and obesity, as well as tackling mental health issues, loneliness and isolation. This emphasises the role of the street as part of healthy living, with short to medium length journeys being able to contribute to improvements to personal health and wellbeing. Reducing the reliance on the private car offers opportunities to improve air quality in the area with associated health benefits.

Climate emergency

- 35 Whilst not all residents of the Receptions have access to a car they do experience many of the issues related to excessive levels of traffic, – noise, pollution, erosion of the social function of the streets and hazards from inappropriate driving. Research indicates that levels of active travel, mainly walking, are highest in the most deprived areas but this is also where they are suffering the sharpest decline as car ownership is seen as the means to accessing opportunities.
- 36 Leeds has an aspiration to be the city where you don't need to own a car; arresting the rise in car ownership particularly in the inner city areas by enabling residents to walk and cycle for short trips and to access transport hubs will help tackle the climate emergency. Making areas close to the city centre more liveable will also help reduce the distances travelled by private car, again contributing to the net zero carbon vision for the city.

Options, timescales and measuring success

a) What other options were considered?

37 Other locations across Leeds were considered, but given the existing social conditions in the area, the complementary infrastructure under development, and the proximity to the opportunities afforded by the city centre this option was considered to have the greatest change of transformational change through this project.

b) How will success be measured?

- 38 In the short term feedback will be sought from local residents and other stakeholders through direct engagement, likely to include a repeat of the door to door surveys previously undertaken.
- 39 In the medium to long term more definitive measures of the effects of the project on healthy lifestyles will be taken against baseline information previously gathered.

c) What is the timetable for implementation?

- 40 The works are expected to start on site in January 2022 with completion in spring 2022. The evaluation of the project will start on completion and will cover the 2022/23 financial year.

Appendices

- 41 Appendix A: Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening
- 42 Appendix B: Drawing TM-05-464-01-03
- 43 Appendix C: Drawing TM-00-611-01-02

Background papers

- 44 None.

Appendix A



Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provides a record of both the **process** and **decision**. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions. Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.
- whether or not equality, diversity, cohesion and integration is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

Directorate: City Development	Service area: Highways & Transportation
Lead person: Chris Way	Contact number: 0113 37 87493

1. Title: Healthy Streets – the Receptions

Is this a:

Strategy / Policy

Service / Function

Other

If other, please specify

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening

Delivery of a highway infrastructure project to make transformational changes to the built environment in the Receptions, designed to encourage street activity and sustainable transport and improve health and wellbeing.

3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

All the council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – city wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, carers, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Also those areas that impact on or relate to equality: tackling poverty and improving health and well-being.

Questions	Yes	No
Is there an existing or likely differential impact for the different equality characteristics?	X	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?	X	
Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?		X
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?		X
Does the proposal involve or will it have an impact on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment • Advancing equality of opportunity • Fostering good relations 	X	

If you have answered **no** to the questions above please complete **sections 6 and 7**

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above and;

- Believe you have already considered the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 4**.
- Are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 5**.

4. Considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration

If you can demonstrate you have considered how your proposals impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you have carried out an impact assessment.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below (use the prompts for guidance).

- **How have you considered equality, diversity, cohesion and integration?**

The project provides changes to the built environment including point closures, green space, traffic calming and segregated cycle infrastructure.

The project offers opportunities to make improvements to the current pedestrian provision, including to those with mobility or other impairments, and to remove barriers to active travel .

The project contributes to a number of corporate policies and targets aiming to improve equality and diversity, including the Inclusive Growth strategy, by promoting equality of access and opportunity.

- **Key findings**

The improvements to the built environment, and the deemphasis on the private car, open up opportunities to people with disabilities, older people and young people.

Reducing the reliance on private car use will help making the streets more accessible to residents of all backgrounds

The improvements will have a positive impact on older people and people with disabilities by increasing confidence that their journeys can be completed safely and independently.

Safe pedestrian and cycling facilities allow older and younger people, as well as those with mobility impairments, travel more freely and with confidence that they can do so without conflict from motor traffic and other road users.

- **Actions**

(think about how you will promote positive impact and remove/ reduce negative impact)

Removing some of the barriers of motorised traffic and improving street environment through enabling active travel has the potential to improve community integration through offering opportunities to mix and interact.

5. If you are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you will need to carry out an impact assessment .	
Date to scope and plan your impact assessment:	
Date to complete your impact assessment	
Lead person for your impact assessment (Include name and job title)	

6. Governance, ownership and approval		
Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening		
Name	Job title	Date
Nick Hunt	Traffic Engineering Manager	7 th October 2021
Date screening completed		7 th October 2021

7. Publishing	
Though all key decisions are required to give due regard to equality the council only publishes those related to Executive Board, Full Council, Key Delegated Decisions or a Significant Operational Decision .	
A copy of this equality screening should be attached as an appendix to the decision making report:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance Services will publish those relating to Executive Board and Full Council. • The appropriate directorate will publish those relating to Delegated Decisions and Significant Operational Decisions. • A copy of all other equality screenings that are not to be published should be sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk for record. 	
Complete the appropriate section below with the date the report and attached screening was sent:	
For Executive Board or Full Council – sent to Governance Services	Date sent:
For Delegated Decisions or Significant Operational Decisions – sent to appropriate Directorate	Date sent:

All other decisions – sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk	Date sent: