

## Harehills Road Greening Project

Date: 16 November 2021

Report of: Senior Traffic Engineer

Report to: Chief Officer of Highways & Transportation and Chief Officer of Asset Management & Regeneration

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**

- 1) The purpose of the report is to inform the Chief Officer of Highways and Transportation and the Chief Officer of Asset Management & Regeneration of a project to introduce a highway improvement project on Harehills Road and to seek approval from both Chief Officers for this proposal.
- 2) Being a historical inner city area, there is limited greenspace or green infrastructure in the area and as such, there is a strong desire to change the overall aesthetic from red brick, black tarmac and grey concrete for the well being of local residents and to promote Harehills Road as the local centre.
- 3) The Best Council Plan 2020-2025 outlines how Leeds City Council will achieve the vision to become the best city in the UK. The proposals contained in this report contribute to the Leeds vision, particularly introducing Sustainable Infrastructure, promoting Health and Wellbeing as well as being a Child Friendly and Age Friendly City. The proposals promote Inclusive Economic Growth and support the local community and businesses through increased and improved public realm and visual aspects for this area of Harehills.

### **Recommendations**

- 4) The Chief Officer of Highways & Transportation is requested to:
  - i) Give approval to undertake the detailed design of a package of measures on Harehills Road, as summarised within this report; and
  - ii) Note the required expenditure of £150,000, comprising £120,000 works costs and £30,000 staff fees, to be funded from the Regeneration Local Centres Capital Programme;
- 5) The Chief Officer of Asset Management & Regeneration is requested to:
  - i) Note the contents of this report, and;
  - ii) Give authority to spend £150,000 funded from the Regeneration Local Centres Capital Programme.

## Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 7) In 2017 the Executive Board agreed to establish a £5m capital fund to improve town and district centres across the city, known as the Local Centres Programme (LCP) for support and intervention to increase the vitality and viability of local and neighbourhood centres.
- 8) Between 2017 and 2018 a road safety scheme was part-delivered along Harehills Road, to reduce the ongoing high rate of injury collisions. The scheme introduced a central reservation and a number of junction layout amendments, but completion of the full scheme was ultimately postponed due to the emergence of local opposition.
- 9) Gipton & Harehills Ward Members as part of the LCP process identified the introduction of green infrastructure and improved street furniture on Harehills Road as the priority for their allocation of funding. The Ward Members wished to see aesthetic improvements along the route to complement the road safety project that had been installed as noted in paragraph 8.
- 10) This project seeks to introduce green infrastructure and street furniture at points that are agreed between officers and Ward Members, to provide the changes and benefits desired.

## What impact will this proposal have?

### Wards Affected: Gipton & Harehills

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 11) The proposals contained within this report will benefit residents and visitors to Harehills Road, through enhanced public realm. As a core aim of the Local Centres Programme, by focussing investment into this local centre, resulting in a more pleasant area to use and to spend time in, an uplift in visitors is anticipated therefore further supporting the vitality and viability of this local centre and the commercial properties within.
- 12) This report seeks permission to undertake the detailed design of the proposals outlined. The detailed design will take the form of discussions with Ward Members and other local stakeholders to determine the type of feature desired on Harehills Road and in what locations. Along with Parks & Countryside Officers, these specific requirements will be investigated and designed accordingly and a final scheme design produced.
- 13) Examples of the type of green infrastructure feature to be considered may include tree planting, grass verge provision, provision and installation of planter boxes and hanging baskets. Visual examples of the types of provision can be seen in Appendix 2.
- 14) Examples of improved street furniture provision may be benches, litter bins and improvements over existing street furniture such as replacing bollards with benches or planters to retain the highway infrastructure requirement, but with more useable or pleasant features.
- 15) The final proposed scheme will be reported back to both Chief Officers for final approval, before commencement on site.
- 16) An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening has been completed as attached in Appendix 1.

The positive impacts of the scheme have been identified as follows:

- i) The scheme will provide a more attractive street aesthetic focussed more to the needs of pedestrians on Harehills Road, benefitting the local community and visitors through prioritisation of pedestrian needs over vehicular;

- ii) The rationalisation of street furniture in the area may remove narrow sections of footway, allowing improved ease of use for those using pushchairs, wheelchairs or mobility scooters;
- iii) The provision of benches may provide additional rest areas for those with limited mobility, allowing them to make more use of the local centre.

The negative impacts of the scheme have been identified as follows:

- i) There are no specific negative impacts noted by this scheme, however feedback shall be welcomed via the area-wide consultation to be undertaken by Connecting Leeds surrounding this and the road safety project and any negative aspects shall be investigated and actioned as required.

### **What consultation and engagement has taken place?**

- 17) Consultation on the overall proposals shall be undertaken as best practice and will inform the overall scheme that is to be taken forward. Initial discussions have been undertaken with a working group for the Greener Gipton & Harehills Campaign which have helped focus initial considerations. A consultation process is due to be undertaken by Connecting Leeds with regards to the previously referred road safety scheme and recipients will be asked about their views on what green infrastructure and street furniture they would wish to see along Harehills Road.
- 18) Ward Members have not yet been directly consulted on any firm proposals and to date one Ward Member has actively engaged with Officers as part of the Greener Gipton & Harehills Campaign. Upon securing approval from the Chief Officers via this report, Ward Members will be engaged on design considerations as highlighted earlier in this report.
- 19) Consultation with the Emergency Services and West Yorkshire Combined Authority (on behalf of bus operators) local residents and businesses, will take place upon agreement with Ward Members on the final scheme that is to be taken forward.

### **What are the resource implications?**

- 20) The total estimated cost of the scheme is £150,000, comprising £120,000 works costs and £30,000 staff fees to be funded from the Regeneration Local Centres Capital Programme.

21) **Capital Funding and Cash Flow**

	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
LAND (1)	0.0						
CONSTRUCTION (3)	0.0		0.0				
FURN & EQPT (5)	0.0						
DESIGN FEES (6)	0.0		0.0				
OTHER COSTS (7)	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>
<b>Authority to Spend required for this Approval</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>TO MARCH</b>	<b>FORECAST</b>				
	£000's	2021	2021/22	2022/23	2020/21	2023/24	2024 on
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
LAND (1)	0.0						
CONSTRUCTION (3)	120.0		120.0				
FURN & EQPT (5)	0.0						
DESIGN FEES (6)	30.0		30.0				
OTHER COSTS (7)	0.0						
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>150.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>150.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Total overall Funding (As per latest Capital Programme)</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>TO MARCH</b>	<b>FORECAST</b>				
	£000's	2021	2021/22	2022/23	2020/21	2023/24	2024 on
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
Local Centres Capital Prog	150.0		150.0				
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>150.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>150.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<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>

**What are the legal implications?**

22) There are no specific legal implications as a result of these proposals, nor are the proposals to Call-In. All works shall be contained within the publically adopted highway and are being delivered under Section 62 Highways Act 1980, for the improvement of the Highway.

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

23) Construction risks are limited to those normally encountered when working in the public highway and no significant risks have been identified which relate to this project.

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

- Inclusive Growth       Health and Wellbeing       Climate Emergency

24) The proposal is in line with The Best Council Plan 2020-2025 of promoting Inclusive Growth, by directly seeking to uplift a designated local centre, making it more attractive to visitors and safer for all to use. The proposals promote pedestrians walking around Harehills Road thus promoting Health and Wellbeing. By choosing to introduce green infrastructure that may include tree planting or other foliage types, this will work towards the Council's Climate Emergency ambitions.

**Options, timescales and measuring success**

a) **What other options were considered?**

25) The proposals that are to be introduced as part of this project will be robustly investigated to ensure that which considered is appropriate for the location, does not negatively impact any individual or stakeholder and meets the aims of the project.

**b) How will success be measured?**

26) A consultation event shall be held to determine the design of the project, in which consultees will be asked to rate the aesthetic of Harehills Road. Once the scheme has been introduced, a further consultation will be held where the same question will be asked and the subsequent scores cross-referenced against the earlier results, to determine any change in local residents perception of this area. Other general feedback related to the project will also be welcomed and any points raised in that, duly considered when considering the success of the project and any future measures that may be desired in this area.

**c) What is the timetable for implementation?**

27) It is intended, subject to the approval of this report and the successful conclusion of further consultations, to begin construction of the scheme on site early in the 2022 calendar year with a view to completion prior to the end of the 2021/22 financial year.

**Appendices**

28) Appendix 1 – Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening Form.

29) Appendix 2 - Visual examples of green infrastructure and street furniture.

**Background papers**

30) None.