



Report of the Director of City Development

Executive Board

Date: 6 January 2010

Subject: DESIGN AND COST REPORT

Scheme Title: Legible Leeds - City Centre Wayfinding scheme
Capital Scheme Number: 15588

<p>Electoral Wards Affected:</p> <p>City & Hunslet</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ward Members consulted (referred to in report)</p>	<p>Specific Implications For:</p> <p>Equality and Diversity <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Community Cohesion <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Narrowing the Gap <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Eligible for Call In <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Not Eligible for Call In (Details contained in the report) <input type="checkbox"/></p>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report seeks approval of the Legible Leeds city centre wayfinding scheme, following the development of:
 - a new pedestrian focused 'Walk it' map for the city centre;
 - concept designs for the proposed new on-street pedestrian wayfinding units, which will house the maps and directional information, and;
 - the initial placement plan of where these wayfinding units should be placed to best direct visitors to destinations and around the city centre generally.
2. In December 2009, Applied Information Group (AIG) was appointed to refine the concept designs and the placement plan that has been developed so far. This work will produce final agreed designs for the production and phased installation of the wayfinding units, which will house the on-street maps and directional information.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek:

- a) approval of the scheme as outlined in this report, and;
- b) authority to spend the secured budget of £1,200,000 (£600,000 Leeds City Council and £600,000 Yorkshire Forward) on the proposed works outlined in this report.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 Attractions and opportunities within the city centre draw a significant level of footfall from shoppers, visitors, workers and residents alike. Currently over 112,000 pedestrians enter the retail area weekdays and 139,00 on a Saturday. The current wayfinding signage is not making the most of the large volume of people moving around the city centre at any one time.
- 2.2 The importance of good legibility is not unique to Leeds city centre. Other key cities such as Bristol, Sheffield, Glasgow, Liverpool and Southampton have already invested in legibility and it is vital that Leeds does too. Gaining a reputation for a successful legibility scheme is invaluable for raising Leeds' profile to go up a league as a city and become internationally competitive.
- 2.3 It was first recognised in 2007 that there was a need to improve the 'legibility' of Leeds city centre. This means providing information that makes it easy to get into *and* out of the city centre, and once there, easy to find your way around.
- 2.4 Aims identified for the Legibility project include:
- new large retail developments, particularly Trinity Leeds and Eastgate Quarters, become an integral part of the city centre so that the core retail offer expands rather than shifts;
 - the city centre has increased visitor numbers and a good rate of repeat visits;
 - awareness of and numbers of visitors to attractions, particularly Kirkgate Market, the new City Museum and the Royal Armouries, are increased;
 - benefits of the forthcoming Arena being located in the city centre are maximised;
 - continued investment in the city centre to secure further growth in employment is encouraged and supported.
- 2.5 Under the guidance of a inter-disciplinary officer steering group independent wayfinding experts, AIG Lacock Gullam, were commissioned to carry out a three Phase project. Phase one was to produce an Audit of the current wayfinding information in Leeds city centre. The focus of the research was primarily on the existing and proposed city centre retail area, and also included transport interchanges, car parks, the Civic quarter and the waterfront. This informed the development of Phase two, the Legible Leeds Wayfinding Strategy (LLWS). The

LLWS recommends the ways in which the city centre could improve access, perception, and wayfinding information to become more legible.

2.6 Phase three has started to put recommendations from the LLWS in to practice. This phase has seen the development of a new city centre walking map 'Walk it', initial concept designs for the on-street wayfinding units and a placement plan of where these units should be placed .

2.7 **'Leeds Live it Love it Walk it' Map**

2.7.1 The 'Walk it' map (to be displayed at the meeting) is a printed walking map for Leeds city centre and is the first product for visitors arising out of the Legible Leeds project.

2.7.2 'Walk it' has been designed to provide the level of detail needed to find your way around the city centre on foot. The new design highlights walking routes throughout the retail area, including those within the many shopping centres and covered arcades. Prominent and attractive buildings have been drawn so that they are highlighted as landmarks for visitors to locate where they are by. Each grid on the city centre side of the map represents an average 5 minutes walk time showing just how compact and easy to walk the city centre is.

2.7.3 The walking map has been very well received by the private sector, the general public, equality groups, the Civic Trust and LCC officers from a wide range of disciplines. Comments include that people did not know the city centre had so many cultural facilities and that things were much closer than they had realised. A number of companies have asked for the maps to be available at their offices and displayed in their empty shop windows.

2.7.4 Such is the popularity of the map that officers are producing it in a variety of formats, including tailored versions to appear in city event brochures, such as Light Night and Festive Leeds, downloadable versions and simple A3 tear off pads for use in hotels.

2.8 **Wayfinding Unit Product Concept Designs and Placement Plans**

2.8.1 Product concept designs for a group of wayfinding unit types (to be tabled at the meeting) have been developed. They have been designed to reflect Leeds city centre's character and directional information requirements. The proposed design has a curved edge to one side, which allows for the integration of public art.

2.8.2 An initial placement plan of where the on-street wayfinding system should be installed for best use by visitors has also been developed. This identifies the most popular pedestrian routes and, within these, the most appropriate locations for the signs and maps to be positioned (to be tabled at the meeting).

2.8.3 Sign clutter and street clutter exists on many pedestrian routes in Leeds city centre. Clutter creates 'visual noise' that reduces the effectiveness of on-street information, and affects the overall perception and enjoyment of the area. Therefore prior to putting in further pedestrian signage, a de-cluttering process will be undertaken to remove unnecessary street clutter.

3.0 Main Considerations

3.1 Design Proposals/ Scheme Description

- 3.1.1 The city centre's existing uncoordinated fingerpost and map system will start to be removed in 2010, to be replaced by bespoke location specific mapping units, with integrated directional information. Stand alone fingerposts will also be installed where necessary.
- 3.1.2 The production of the 'Walk it' map has established the look and design style for the Legible Leeds project as it now progresses to the on-street installation stage.
- 3.1.3 Further to the initial concept design work that has already taken place, a number of influential factors regarding the design of the future on-street wayfinding units have yet to be decided. These will determine what can feasibly be implemented within the specified budget. These details include:
- confirming through trial hole exploration, the number and final locations of on-street maps and directional signage required;
 - the type of signage installed on-street depending on the position within the wayfinding system;
 - quality of materials used, options include vitreous enamel (baked glass), stainless steel and/or glass, which will depend on the likelihood of the sign requiring change due to development in the area that the sign is positioned;
 - flexibility of the design to allow the easy future change of information.
- 3.1.4 Applied Information Group (AIG) was appointed in December 2009 to carry out the work required to refine and detail the existing concepts designs. The work to be carried out in the new year will see the product concepts agreed and specified to a level of detail that will allow production and installation on-street.
- 3.1.5 Installation will be carried out in a number of phases. The actual number of phases will be determined once this further work has been carried out on the specific 'Leeds' design and associated costings. The likely timescales for the installation of Phase 1 arrival points to commence in April 2010, with other phases following throughout the year.
- 3.1.6 Street name plate upgrading and co-ordination and modifications to highway signage are considered to be part of the overall project, and will primarily be funded through existing annual maintenance budgets.

3.2 Consultations

- 3.2.1 Internal and external partners have been consulted throughout the development and delivery of Legible Leeds wayfinding project and this will continue to be the case as the project progresses.
- 3.2.2 Consultation will be conducted via dedicated group workshops and presentations, project team meetings and the Public Realm Project Board. Consultees will include external partners from Marketing Leeds, the University of Leeds, Aire Action Leeds, the Waterfront Association, Leeds Civic Trust, property owners, retail developers, shopping centre managers, key retailers, hoteliers and city centre residents and relevant officers from Leeds City Council.

4.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance

- 4.1 The intention to improve the legibility of Leeds city centre through, in the first instance, the installation of a contemporary up-to-date on-street wayfinding system supports a number of strategies for the city. These include the Council Plan, the Vision for Leeds 2004 to 2020, the Leeds City Centre Strategic Plan 2006 to 2010, Renaissance Leeds Delivery Plan 2007-2009 and the Leeds City Centre 2020 Vision Prospectus.
- 4.2 The project supports the Council's Green Strategy and the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Plan as it will encourage and promote walking over using transport.
- 4.3 The proposals are in line with the Council's core values to put customers first, looking after Leeds and treat people fairly. The design will consider, and address where appropriate, the needs of the disabled so improving accessibility for all in the city centre.

5.0 Resource Implications

- 5.1 The estimated cost of the implementation of the bespoke wayfinding system for Leeds city centre is £1,200,000 and can be met from the scheme 15588 within the approved capital programme and will be 50% funded by Yorkshire Forward (YF) and 50% funded by Leeds City Council (LCC).
- 5.2 £600,000 LCC funding was approved in February 2009 by Executive Board and Full Council. This will be spent by March 2011.
- 5.3 In September 2009 YF approved the contribution of £600,000 to match fund the above LCC commitment for the financial year 2009/10.
- 5.4 Investment for future phases will have to be sought and secured from further sources, including future LCC capital programme, the regional development agency, the private sector and large city centre developers.
- 5.5 The maintenance of the way finding system, including managing map data content over time and the physical condition of the units, will be met from existing City Centre budgets.

6.0 Capital Funding and Cash Flow

Previous total Authority to Spend on this scheme	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2009 £000's	FORECAST				
			2009/10 £000's	2010/11 £000's	2011/12 £000's	2012/13 £000's	2013 on £000's
LAND (1)	0.0						
CONSTRUCTION (3)	0.0						
FURN & EQPT (5)	0.0						
DESIGN FEES (6)	0.0						
OTHER COSTS (7)	0.0						
TOTALS	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Authority to Spend required for this Approval	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2009 £000's	FORECAST				
			2009/10 £000's	2010/11 £000's	2011/12 £000's	2012/13 £000's	2013 on £000's
LAND (1)	0.0						
CONSTRUCTION (3)	1045.0		470.0	575.0			
FURN & EQPT (5)	0.0						
DESIGN FEES (6)	155.0		130.0	25.0			
OTHER COSTS (7)	0.0						
TOTALS	1200.0	0.0	600.0	600.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Total overall Funding (As per latest Capital Programme)	TOTAL £000's	TO MARCH 2009 £000's	FORECAST				
			2009/10 £000's	2010/11 £000's	2011/12 £000's	2012/13 £000's	2013 on £000's
LCC Funding	600.0		0.0	600.0			
Yorkshire Forward	600.0		600.0	0.0			
Total Funding	1200.0	0.0	600.0	600.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Balance / Shortfall =	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Executive Board is requested to:-

- i. note the current position of the Legible Leeds project;
- ii. approve the scheme as outlined in this report;
- iii. give authority to incur expenditure of £1,200,000 on the proposed works as outlined in the report.

7.0 Background Papers

- 7.1 Executive Board report "Proposed Refurbishment Of The City Centre Public Realm" dated 11th September 2007
- 7.2 Executive Board report "Legible Leeds Project" dated 4th March 2009.
- 7.3 Leeds City Centre Strategic Plan 2006 to 2010
- 7.4 Vision for Leeds 2004 to 2020
- 7.5 Renaissance Leeds Delivery Plan 2007-2009
- 7.6 The Council's Green Strategy
- 7.7 Leeds Strategic Plan 2008 to 2011
- 7.8 Leeds City Centre 2020 Vision Prospectus
- 7.9 Legible Leeds Audit Findings, Observations and Insights May 2009

7.10 Legible Leeds Wayfinding Strategy August 2008