

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee Warwick Area Committee

Date of Committee 27th July 2005

Report Title Parade, Victoria Terrace and Bath Street, Royal Leamington Spa – Mixed Priority Demonstration Safety Project

Summary The report outlines the current situation regarding the delays to the construction works in Leamington Town Centre and seeks Committee agreement for the proposal for completing the works.

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Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? Yes/No

Background Papers None

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:- *Details to be specified*

- Other Committees Warwick Area Committee – 23rd March 2005.
- Local Member(s) Councillor Mrs S Boad }
(With brief comments, if appropriate) Councillor C Davis } for information
Councillor Mrs E Goode }
Councillor T Naylor }
Councillor M Singh }
- Other Elected Members Councillor C K N Browne – for information
- Cabinet Member Councillor M Heatley – for information
(Reports to The Cabinet, to be cleared with appropriate Cabinet Member)
- Chief Executive
- Legal I Marriott – comments incorporated

- Finance C Holden – comments incorporated
- Other Chief Officers
- District Councils
- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals

FINAL DECISION **YES/NO** *(If 'No' complete Suggested Next Steps)*

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS :

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet For funding approval.
- To an O & S Committee
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

Warwick Area Committee – 27th July 2005

Parade, Victoria Terrace and Bath Street, Royal Leamington Spa – Mixed Priority Demonstration Safety Project

Report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy

Recommendation

1. That Area Committee agrees the proposal that construction works be completed from Clarendon Avenue to north of the River Leam Bridge by 21st October 2005 and informs Cabinet of the planned action.
2. That Area Committee asks Cabinet to agree that the remaining works are recommenced in May 2006 and completed over the summer 2006,
3. That Cabinet be informed of the financial position later in 2005 and be asked to allocate funding for the remaining works in 2006/2007.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This scheme will improve the look and safety of the town. The works include improvements to pedestrian crossings, new pavements, improved traffic light junctions and a new traffic signal junction at Clarendon Avenue. The works also allow for the replacement of the worn out carriageway along its entire length.
- 1.2 The project has been developed over a number of years in conjunction with stakeholders. Construction work on the project commenced on 11th April 2005 with completion programmed for 21st October 2005.
- 1.3 These works are programmed to be carried out in sections largely based around the areas between the junctions, in order to limit effects of the construction works on the Town Centre at any one time.
- 1.4 The road resurfacing along the Parade is to be carried out under 2 separate road closures, each of 2 weeks duration. The first road closure is programmed for 15th August 2005.
- 1.5 The construction works have been substantially delayed for the reasons given in this report. Proposals for completing the project are also explained in this report.

2. Construction Delays

- 2.1 In undertaking the initial works very shallow cellars were found which extend out into the Parade, quite often to the kerb line. Although the cellars were known to exist there was no knowledge of how shallow some cellars are and some of the services are even shallower as they go over the cellars. Some of the cellars have also been damaged by previous works and these repairs caused the initial delays to the progress of the works. Investigation of the cellars prior to commencing works on site was not carried out as to do so would have meant removing large areas of paving in order to find the many cellars, and it was considered that this would have been as disruptive as carrying out the works themselves. The long term effect on the programme for delivering the works is that a lot of the excavation now has to be carried out very slowly and carefully which is an ongoing delay to the works.
- 2.2 One of the main requirements in undertaking the works is that access to businesses and other property during business hours is to be maintained. This is proving very difficult to achieve because of variable opening hours and maintaining pedestrian access routes.
- 2.3 The Contractor had changed their working methods to 24 hour shift working during weekdays in order to overcome the problems highlighted above, as working in the evening and during the night were the only periods when parts of the work areas were available to the Contractor.
- 2.4 Shortly after the 24 hour working commenced, local residents complained about the overnight noise and the Environmental Health Officer (EHO) stopped the night working.
- 2.5 The Contractors re-evaluated their working hours and method of working, and a trial area utilising the new method was successful and has been adopted for the rest of the works.
- 2.6 The new method involved a complete change of workforce which allows for a number of smaller working areas, of about 30-40 metres length, to be worked on at the same time, each taking approximately a week to complete.

3. Town Centre Mitigation Measures

- 3.1 Regular meetings have been held with stakeholders which have identified a number of issues which we have tried to address.
- 3.2 A Newsletter explaining the problems, progress of the works and the programme for future works is mailed to local businesses and also sent to stakeholders to keep people and organisations informed.
- 3.3 One of the main concerns from businesses on the Parade was that the areas being worked on were too large and took a long period to complete such that shoppers could not see if shops were open for business. The new method of working in smaller areas, which are then completed in a shorter period, reduces

this problem. Additional signage advertising 'Shops Open for Business' has also been erected to advertise individual businesses.

- 3.4 In order to promote the Town Centre after the works have been completed the Council have given an undertaking to contribute £10,000 of match funding to carry out a public relations campaign to promote the Town Centre after the construction works.
- 3.5 The main concern from businesses within the Town Centre is that construction works must be avoided in the Town Centre during the pre-Christmas shopping period which runs from 21st October, although many businesses consider the Autumn Fayre on 2nd October to be the start of pre-Christmas shopping.

4. Proposal for Completing Works

- 4.1 The Construction works are about 8 weeks behind the original programme which is largely as a result of the reasons outlined above. The latest change to the method of working will enable works on the Parade to be completed by 21st October 2005 but the contractor will not be able to recover the lost time to complete the whole of the remaining works by the 21st October 2005.
- 4.2 Bearing in mind the implications for Town Centre businesses if the construction works extend past 21st October 2005, it is proposed to complete the works on the Parade from Clarendon Avenue down to the River Leam Bridge and delay the works South of the River Leam to High Street until next year.
- 4.3 It is proposed to recommence the works in May 2006 when the extra daylight hours are available during the evening period, which is the best time to carry out most of these works.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1.1 The current project cost approved by Cabinet is £2.2M. This cost is funded by £1.0M grant from Department for Transport (DfT) and developer contributions of £0.2M with the balance from the Local Transport Plan (LTP) Integrated transport allocation.
- 5.1.2 Given the circumstance outlined in this report it is difficult to quantify the likely final cost of the project at this stage. There is a possibility that the extra works required cannot be contained within the existing estimate. However, by delaying part of the works until May 2006 (paragraph 4.2 above) it should be possible to contain existing works within the funds available. Once these works are complete it will then be possible to more accurately estimate the final overall cost of the project.
- 5.2 Once the Clarendon Avenue to River Leam works are substantially complete Cabinet will be informed of the financial position and requested to allocate funds to complete the works next financial year.

6. Summary

- 6.1 The construction works on the Parade have been delayed by several weeks and it will not be possible to complete all the works by 21st October 2005.
- 6.2 With the new working method employed by the contractor, the works to the Parade from Clarendon Avenue to the River Leam Bridge are programmed to be completed by 21st October 2005.
- 6.3 The remaining works south of the River Leam are to be commenced in May 2006 subject to Cabinet consideration of funding.
- 6.4 A County Council contribution of £10,000 of match funding is to be made to carry out a public relations campaign to promote the Town Centre after the construction works are completed in October 2005.

JOHN DEEGAN
Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Strategy
Shire Hall
Warwick

20th July 2005