



AGENDA ITEM: 9
SUMMARY

Report for:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	24 June 2014
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Hemel Evolution: Marlowes Shopping Zone & Bank Court, Bus Interchange and Market Square, and Water Gardens projects
Contact:	<p>Cllr Andrew Williams, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration</p> <p>Author/Responsible Officers: James Doe, Assistant Director, Planning, Development and Regeneration</p> <p>Nathalie Bateman, Strategic Planning and Regeneration Team Leader for Hemel Evolution</p> <p>Claire Covington, Strategic Planning and Regeneration Officer</p> <p>Shalini Jayasinghe, Strategic Planning and Regeneration Officer</p> <p>Jo Deacon, Strategic Planning and Regeneration Officer</p>
Purpose of report:	<p>Marlowes Shopping Zone and Bank Court</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To outline and seek approval for the revised design proposals for the Marlowes Shopping Zone food court improvements including the provision of replacement toilet facilities and potential ticketing facility for the new Bus Interchange. 2. To delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Planning, Development and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Planning and Regeneration, to approve design, planning and implementation decisions on the matters noted in 1 above. 3. To approve an additional capital budget for the regeneration of Marlowes Shopping Zone and Bank Court. 4. To approve the virement of monies from the Bus

	<p>Interchange budget to the Marlowes Shopping Zone budget for providing replacement toilet facilities and a ticketing facility for the Bus Interchange as part of the Marlowes Shopping Zone improvement works.</p> <p>5. To approve the merging of Marlowes Shopping Zone and Bank Court cost centres (BP009 and BP027) as the project is being delivered by a single contractor.</p> <p>Water Gardens</p> <p>6. To update Members on projects relating to the Water Gardens car park.</p> <p>7. To seek Members approval to commence the Access and Movement Improvement project to the Water Gardens car park and for this to be delivered with planned capital works to the decked Water Gardens (North) car park.</p> <p>Bus Interchange and Market Square Project</p> <p>8. To update Members on the progress of the Bus Interchange & Market Square project.</p> <p>9. To provide Members with the results of the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) consultation and to seek approval to progress the project subject to advice from Hertfordshire County Council (HCC).</p>
<p>Recommendations</p>	<p>Marlowes Shopping Zone and Bank Court</p> <p>1. That Cabinet approves the revised design for the Marlowes Shopping Zone food court improvements including the provision of replacement toilet facilities with the option to deliver a ticketing facility for the Bus Interchange.</p> <p>2. That delegated authority is given to the Assistant Director for Planning, Development and Regeneration in consultation with Portfolio Holder, Planning and Regeneration, to approve further design, planning and implementation decisions on recommendation 1 above.</p> <p>3. That Cabinet recommends Council to approve £500,000 additional capital budget for the regeneration of Marlowes Shopping Zone and Bank Court.</p> <p>4. That Cabinet approves the virement of £120,000 from the Bus Interchange budget to the Marlowes Shopping Zone budget to provide replacement toilet facilities and a ticketing facility for the Bus Interchange as part of the Marlowes Shopping Zone improvement works.</p> <p>5. That Cabinet approves the merging of Marlowes Shopping Zone and Bank Court cost centres (BP009 and BP027) as</p>

the projects are being delivered as a single project by the same contractor.

Water Gardens

That Cabinet approve:

- 6 The commencement of the Access and Movement Improvement combined project as outlined in this report, with a feasibility study into the works.
- 7 The joint delivery of the Access and Movement Improvement Project with the planned capital works to the decked Water Gardens (North) car park, and recommend the.
- 8 The delegation of authority to the Portfolio Holder for Planning & Regeneration and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources to progress improvements to the Water Gardens car park combined project following completion of the feasibility work and development of options.
- 9 The delegation of authority to the Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration) and the Assistant Director (Finance and Resources) to appoint consultants to undertake feasibility work for the combined project and design to RIBA E, with the option of continuing through to delivery.
- 10 The improvement works be tendered with the procurement of the main contractor for the Water Gardens restoration (subject to the outcome of the Stage 2 bid), provided that this does not impede the delivery of the Water Gardens project.
- 11 A recommendation to Council for the budget for the Water Gardens (North) capital works to be brought forward from 17/18 to support feasibility work in 14/15 with construction to follow.

Bus Interchange and Market Square

- 12 That progress on the Bus Interchange and Market Square project be noted.
- 13 To delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Planning, Development and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Planning and Regeneration, to conclude matters regarding the TRO consultations and approve the completion of the TRO's noted in paragraph 43 of the Background to this report.
- 14 That following the completion of the TRO's consultation, as per recommendation 13, agree works on the project can progress.

<p>Corporate objectives:</p>	<p>The Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Masterplan supports the Council's vision and in particular the corporate objective of Regeneration.</p>
<p>Implications:</p>	<p><u>Financial</u> Marlowes Shopping Zone and Bank Court</p> <p>Additional budget for the Marlowes and Bank Court Improvements</p> <p>There is currently a combined budget of £3.38million (£2.84 million Marlowes Shopping Zone (BP009) and £539,000 Bank Court (BP027) available for the Marlowes Shopping Zone improvements including Bank Court.</p> <p>Approximately £270,000 of this budget is required for associated costs including design fees, fees for cost manager, employer's agent, solicitor fees, CDM Coordinator and Design Monitors fees, planning, licenses and other statutory consents and communications.</p> <p>Therefore the available overall budget for construction is approximately £3.11million.</p> <p>Following a two stage tender process (PQQ and ITT) for the appointment of the main construction contractor for the Marlowes Shopping Zone and Bank Court improvements, two tender responses were received both of which were significantly over the currently available budget.</p> <p>Whilst the Landscape Architects designed the scheme and monitored costs up to January 2014 with the advice of their Cost Managers to fit within our available budget , there has been a recent spike in construction costs linked to an increase in demand for contractors combined with a lack of supply of labour and materials.</p> <p>Officers in liaison with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration have considered and adopted a number of value engineering options to reduce the costs. By doing this we have reduced the cost of the tenders significantly to approximately £3.323million. However there is still a shortfall of £213,000 and any further value engineering is likely to compromise both the design and quality of the scheme significantly.</p> <p>There are likely to be unforeseen problems such as utility issues, sub-base issues etc. Therefore in addition to the above shortfall, we recommend the allocation of a contingency budget of 8% of the construction and associated cost (£287,000) towards this scheme. Members will note that the original budget included a contingency estimate, but that this amount has been fully utilised by the higher than expected tendered costs. The Council's appointed Cost Managers have advised that 8% is an appropriate level of contingency subject to the Client not making</p>

Value For Money Implications	<p>any changes to the scheme.</p> <p>A total additional budget of £500,000 (£213,000 towards construction and £287,000 towards a contingency budget) is sought for the Marlowes Shopping Zone and Bank Court improvement project. All figures have been rounded off to the nearest thousand.</p> <p>Budget for replacement toilets and replacement ticketing facility</p> <p>Due to the planned redevelopment of Market Square, the existing public toilets in Market Square will no longer be available. Similarly, the existing bus ticketing facility will no longer be available. Both facilities need to be provided close to the new Bus Interchange facility.</p> <p>Whilst these facilities will support the new Bus Interchange, their location falls within the Marlowes Shopping Zone. Therefore it is recommended that these works are undertaken with the Marlowes Shopping Zone improvements to minimise disruption and deliver value for money.</p> <p>We have received initial quotes which indicate that the cost of this facility will be £100,000. We also recommend a contingency of 20%, equating to £20,000. A contingency level level of higher than the norm is recommended for these works because plans for the toilets are at a very early stage and the quotes received are initial estimates. We therefore recommend a virement of £120,000 from the Bus Interchange budget to the Marlowes Shopping Zone budget to undertake these works as part of the Marlowes Shopping Zone improvements.</p> <p>Merging Marlowes Shopping Zone and Bank Court Cost Centres</p> <p>A budget of £539,000 was approved under the Capital Programme for the regeneration of Bank Court. This budget is currently held in its own cost centre BP027. Bank Court is being delivered as part of the Marlowes Shopping Zone improvements by the same contractor in order to deliver a seamless scheme and value for money. Therefore many of the costs incurred including fees, expenses and materials cover both projects and are invoiced together. In order to reduce administrative complications and additional staff time resolving such complications, it is recommended that the Marlowes Shopping Zone (BP009) and Bank Court (BP027) cost centres are merged.</p> <p><u>Value for Money</u></p> <p>Marlowes Shopping Zone, Bank Court</p> <p>The proposed designs for the Marlowes Shopping Zone reflects significant value for money by delivering improvements that will make a distinctive, creative, visual and practical improvement to</p>
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Hemel Hempstead town centre. The scheme has been value engineered and alternative options considered to reduce costs without impacting on the quality of the scheme.

We have strived to achieve further value for money by considering the installation of the public toilet and bus ticketing facility as part of the Marlowes Shopping Zone improvements to avoid additional costs and inconvenience that would be incurred if construction is done as part of the Bus Interchange works instead.

Further, savings are expected due to more efficient use of resources for the cleaning and maintenance of the new toilets.

Value for money has also been achieved through the procurement process for the Marlowes Shopping Zone with value engineering being part of the selection process.

The schemes are being delivered in conjunction with wider regeneration in the town centre to maximise the scope for economic growth and increased footfall.

Water Gardens

In October 2013 Capital Strategy Steering Group approved £560,000 to deliver the Access and Movement Improvement Project, which was considered by Cabinet as part of the draft capital programme in February 2014.

The capital programme also includes provision for a car park refurbishment programme, with funding of £280,000 in 2014/15 and £100,000 per annum for four years from 2015/16. A separate figure of £400,000 is allocated for improvement works to Water Gardens decked car park in 17/18, which will require bringing forward to support project delivery.

Combining the Access and Movement Improvement Project with the proposed capital works to the Water Gardens (North) car park would ensure a co-ordinated approach to all works associated with the car parks through the design process. In order to minimise disruption to visitors during the construction phase and benefit from any economies of scale, it is intended that these works be added to the Water Gardens contract, provided that this does not impede the delivery of the Water Gardens project.

Members will note that this work is entirely separate from the recent bid made to the Heritage Lottery Fund/Big Lottery Fund for the Water Gardens restoration.

Bus Interchange and Market Square

Following approval from Members and HCC that no Public Inquiry is required, savings will be made as the cost of the

	<p>Inquiry would have impacted on this projects' budget and delivery.</p> <p>As mentioned above we have strived to achieve further value for money by considering the installation of the public toilet and bus ticketing facility as part of the Marlowes Shopping Zone improvements to avoid additional costs and inconvenience that would be incurred if construction is done as part of the Bus Interchange works instead.</p>
Risk Implications	Risk Assessment included as part of the PID for Marlowes Shopping Zone, Market Square and Bus Station Regeneration and Water Gardens projects.
Equalities Implications	Equality Impact Assessment carried out as part of each design processes.
Health And Safety Implications	A CDM Coordinator will be appointed to undertake statutory Health and Safety assessments.
Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments	<p>Deputy Monitoring Officer:</p> <p>Comments have been incorporated into the report.</p> <p>Deputy S.151 Officer</p> <p>Marlowes Shopping Zone & Bank Court</p> <p>Following the submission of tenders, the projected cost of delivering this project has increased to £620k (18.5%) above the budget currently approved within the Capital Programme. It is proposed that this shortfall is funded through a combination of additional use of capital receipts (£500k) and a virement of £120k from the Bus Interchange Project. My comments on both sources of funding are dealt with separately, below.</p> <p><i>£500k additional funding</i></p> <p>The Council can allocate an additional £500k to this project from existing capital receipts without triggering the need to borrow. However, Members should note that the Capital Programme approved by Council in February 2014 demonstrates a need for the Council to enter into borrowing of around £20m in 2015/16 in order to fund the projects already approved within the programme. Based on current Public Works Loan Board rates, the annual interest cost associated with the £500k requested for this project is £15k per annum. This will be an additional revenue pressure for the Council.</p> <p><i>£120k virement from the Bus Interchange Project</i></p> <p>The £2.16m budget approved by Council in July 2013 for the Bus Interchange Project included an indicative £450k for the</p>

delivery of a ticket office and toilet facility. The detailed work undertaken to produce this report has identified that this facility can be provided more efficiently as part of the Shopping Zone project.

On this basis, the virement of £120k between projects will not affect the adequacy of the remaining Bus Interchange budget to deliver its remaining objectives. Members are asked to note the related S.151 Officer comments on the Bus Interchange, below.

Risks

Members should note that the complex nature of the works to be undertaken on this project could lead to further increases in the cost of delivery, over and above the 8% contingency currently recommended. If this risk is to be mitigated as effectively as possible, the contingency budget should be closely managed to ensure that it is retained exclusively for unforeseen costs rather than the funding of optional changes.

Water Gardens

The £400k budget for capital works to the Water Gardens car park currently scheduled for 2017/18 can be brought forward in the Capital Programme to 2014/15 in order to secure the benefits from a joint procurement exercise with the Water Gardens Access project.

Risks

In order to ensure that both projects achieve their objectives, Officers will need to guard against the blurring of budgets and the risk that one project will be delivered to a higher standard at the expense of the other.

Bus Interchange & Market Square

In April 2013, Members approved a budget of £2.16m for the delivery of this project. A significant component of this project was the toilet and ticket office facility which comprised £450k (20%) of the total budget. Recommendation 4 in this report requests approval for a virement which will enable this facility to be delivered as part of the Shopping Zone project at the much reduced cost of £120k.

Following the £120k virement, the remaining £2.04m budget for the Bus Interchange will include £330k to fund the delivery of a facility that it is not now required to deliver. The principles of robust financial management require that such a significant sum, £330k, should now be released from the Bus Interchange budget. This would reduce the approved budget to £1.71m, which is in line with the amount requested to deliver the project's remaining objectives.

Any subsequent requests to increase the budget should come

	<p>back before Members to ensure that Members have the opportunity to scrutinise the project before approving the budget.</p> <p><i>Risks</i></p> <p>The increasing costs in the construction industry that resulted in the request for further funds to deliver the Shopping Zone project are likely to have a similar impact on the Bus Interchange project. This will become apparent as the procurement exercise progresses.</p>
<p>Consultees:</p>	<p>James Stammers, Transformation Programme Manager for DBC, V4 Services</p> <p>James Deane, Assistant Director, Finance and Resources, DBC</p> <p>Yaqubul Islam, Senior Accountant, DBC</p> <p>Mike Evans, Group Manager Commercial Assets and Property Development, DBC</p> <p>Steven Barnes, Lead Officer Parking Policy, DBC</p>
<p>Background papers:</p>	<p>Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Master Plan</p> <p>Cabinet Report: Hemel Evolution: Marlowes Shopping Zone Pedestrian Area Designs, Bus Interchange Designs and PPO/TRO proposals, February 2014.</p> <p>Dacorum Core Strategy 2013 – 2013, adopted September 2013</p> <p>Appendix 1: Proposed new layout for the outdoor Food Court area in the Marlowes Shopping Zone including public toilets and bus ticketing facility.</p> <p>Appendix 2: Original layout for the outdoor Food Court area in the Marlowes Shopping Zone.</p> <p>Appendix 3: Indicative plans, designs and specifications for the proposed replacement public toilet and bus ticketing facility.</p> <p>Appendix 4: Water Gardens Masterplan</p> <p>Appendix 5: TRO notice of intention of consultation and consultation results analysis</p> <p>Appendix 6: DfT Guidance to Councils on Traffic Orders</p>
<p>Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations</p>	<p>CDM – Construction, Design and Management</p>

used in this report:	DfT – Department for Transport TRO – Traffic Regulation Order HCC – Hertfordshire County Council
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BACKGROUND

Marlowes Shopping Zone and Bank Court

Design modifications

1. As part of the implementation of the Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Masterplan, the design proposals aim to deliver a programme of public realm improvements to transform the Marlowes pedestrianised shopping area into a unique place that offers something for everyone and is vibrant during the day, evening and night attracting more visitors, business and investment and making it a place that people will want to visit over and over again to shop, work, live and enjoy.
2. Detailed designs for the Marlowes pedestrianised shopping area were endorsed by Cabinet at its meeting on 11 February 2014.
3. Subsequent developments in the Bus Interchange and Market Square project have required reconsideration of the designs of the outdoor food court which sits adjacent to the Bus Interchange.
4. The current bus station is served by public toilets located in Market Square. These public toilets will no longer be available for bus and coach users once the bus station is moved to the new Bus Interchange and Market Square is made available for redevelopment. Therefore there is a need to provide replacement facilities in an appropriate location.
5. A position close to the outdoor food court area in Marlowes has been identified as a suitable location for the replacement toilets as it is adjacent to the Bus Interchange and it serves the purpose of further providing the facilities for shoppers in the town centre. A possible location has been identified between the Roundhouse and two food Kiosks, with space being made by the removal of the existing planter. This location has been chosen as it is close to existing utilities (water, electricity and sewer) minimising the cost of ground preparation and due to its visually appropriate location, being visible but unobtrusive to minimise likelihood of vandalism and maximise usage (see Appendix 1).
6. The existing bus station is currently leased by Arriva. The lease is due to expire in 2017 but Dacorum Borough Council would like Arriva to relinquish the lease early to release Market Square for redevelopment. Arriva is agreeable to this subject to the provision of an alternative unit for their ticketing facility and six months' notice. Having looked at a number of options including siting the office within the Roundhouse or an existing shop unit, none of them have been suitable. The most viable option appears to be the provision of a small retail unit attached to the proposed public toilets. If this

facility is no longer required by Arriva in the future this space could be converted to an additional toilet, retail space or storage space as deemed appropriate at the time.

- 7 Given the significance of the outdoor food court to both the regenerated Marlowes and the adjacent Bus Interchange, an uncluttered, flexible area with sufficient space for seating and additional market stalls including street food stalls is important. Therefore we propose further decluttering of the space by removing the existing planter in the centre of the food court.
- 8 The proposed new layout is outlined in Appendix 1 and the old layout is outlined in Appendix 2 for comparison.

Marlowes and Bank Court improvements budget

- 9 Following a two stage tender process (PQQ and ITT) for the appointment of the Main Construction Contractor for the Marlowes Shopping Zone and Bank Court improvements, we received two tenders. Both of which were significantly over the currently available budget.
- 10 The Marlowes Shopping Zone and Bank Court has a combined budget of £3.38 million.
- 11 Approximately 10 per cent of this budget is required for associated costs including landscape architects design fees, fees for cost manager, employer's agent, solicitor, CDM Coordinator and Design Monitors fees, planning, licenses and other statutory consents and communications. Therefore the available overall budget for construction is approximately £3.11 million.
- 12 Whilst the Landscape Architects designed the scheme and monitored costs with the advice of their Cost Managers to fit within our available budget, there has been a recent spike in construction costs linked to an increase in demand for contractors together with a lack of supply of labour and materials. This has been evidenced by several recent articles and construction related news and advice from the Council's appointed Cost Manager.
- 13 We have considered and adopted a number of value engineering options to reduce the costs. By doing this we have reduced the cost of the tenders significantly. However we still have a shortfall of approximately £213,000 and any further value engineering is likely to compromise both the design and quality of the scheme significantly.
- 14 In addition, we recognise that due to the complex nature of both the site and active town centre location, there are likely to be unforeseen problems such as utility issues, sub-base issues etc. Therefore in addition to the above shortfall, we recommend the allocation of a contingency budget of £287,000 (8%) towards this scheme. Members will note that the original budget planned for a contingency level but this amount has been taken up through the higher than expected tendered costs.
- 15 Therefore the allocation of an additional £500,000 is recommended towards the regeneration of Marlowes Shopping Zone and Bank Court.

Public toilets and bus ticketing facility budget

- 16 As outlined in the section 'Design Modifications' above, there is a need to provide replacement public toilets with an option to include a replacement bus ticketing facility.
- 17 Whilst these facilities are yet to be designed, initial quotes obtained through bidders on the Marlowes Shopping Zone and Bank Court project and directly from a supplier indicate that the installation of these facilities will cost in the region of £120,000. An example plan and specification for these toilets/bus ticketing facility is included in Appendix 3. This is an indicative plan for illustrative purposes only as the final designs including cladding and supplier are yet to be determined.
- 18 In addition, savings are expected due to more efficient use of resources in the cleaning and maintenance of the proposed new toilets.
- 19 We have confirmed with the supplier that the bus ticketing facility could be retrofitted to another toilet/retail unit/storage space for the town centre in future should the need for a bus ticketing facility cease.

Combined Water Gardens' Car Park and Access and Movement Project

- 20 The development of the regeneration plans for Hemel Hempstead Town Centre has highlighted that the Jellicoe Water Gardens' Restoration Project, the Access and Movement Improvement Project and planned capital works to the Water Gardens (North) car park will all affect the Water Gardens car parks. In order to ensure that the requirements of each project are considered through the assessment and design process, it is proposed to combine the Access and Movement Improvement Project with the planned capital works to the Water Gardens (North) car park. Details on the objectives for each individual project are described below. The combined project will require feasibility work, including traffic flow modelling, to assess viability and to identify options for delivery. Detailed plans will then be prepared.

Jellicoe Water Gardens' Restoration Project

- 21 In February 2014 Dacorum Borough Council submitted a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund/Big Lottery Fund for a contribution of £2,465,700 towards a £3.61 million project to restore the Jellicoe Water Gardens.
- 22 The submitted masterplan is attached at Appendix 4. The key components of the restoration are as follows:
 - Restoration of the historic fabric within the Gardens including bridges, balconies, riverbank treatment and flower garden terrace widening
 - Environmental enhancements through the introduction of fish passes at each of the four weirs within the Gardens, removal of silt from the watercourse and wildfowl management
 - Provision of new community building in the northern section of the Gardens with a growing and display bed area
 - Relocation of play provision to the Water Gardens (South) car park through an extension to the flower garden area

- Re-planting of soft landscaped areas, to be in keeping with Susan Jellicoe's original design aesthetic through the flower garden and Lovers' Walk
 - Reducing the impact of later additions to the Gardens by felling of trees along eastern bank, removal of two islands from the lake and the addition of a greening system to the decked car park
- 23 The greening system is intended to reduce the impact of the decked Water Gardens (North) car park, which was constructed in the late 1980s. Ivy is typically used as the planted material to provide all year round cover. Concern has been raised at light levels within the Water Gardens (North) car park, and the addition of planting as a screen will further reduce daylight through the car park. The greening system is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund/Big Lottery Fund.

Access and Movement Improvement Project

- 24 The quality of the public realm adjacent to the Gardens and the ease of access visitors' experience travelling to the car parks, form part of the overall impression of the town centre. Within the area surrounding the Water Gardens, there are opportunities to introduce access and movement improvements, which would aid traffic flow, improve visitor experience and maximise the benefits of the restoration. These objectives are highlighted within the Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Masterplan and fall outside the scope of current regeneration projects.
- 25 Following Cabinet approval for access and movement improvements within the capital programme, a project concept form was prepared and considered by CMT. This identified a number of areas for investigation, which we would like to take forward as part of a feasibility study to identify options. These include:
- access routes into and out of the Water Gardens car parks (excluding Moor End Road car park) from Leighton Buzzard Road, Combe Street and Waterhouse Street
 - new landscaping and public realm improvements to the entrances
 - appropriate direction and information signage for visitors to the shopping area and users of the River Gade Walk and Cycle Way, and Taxi rank
- 26 Through the restoration project the site of the current play area in the northern section of the Gardens will become the focus for volunteering, learning and training with a new community building set within a working garden. The feasibility study will consider if it would be viable to close the entrance to the Water Gardens (North) car park from Combe Street, enabling the growing and display area to be expanded to provide more of these opportunities.
- 27 At Bridge Street the Gardens are physically and visually divided by the highway entrance into the Water Gardens' car parks. As part of the restoration project, dropped kerbs will be installed to improve access. The feasibility study will consider options for further pedestrian improvements, arising from options to change to the car park entrance from the western side of Bridge Street.

- 28 A feasibility study is required to investigate how the points raised in paragraphs 25 and 26 can be achieved, whilst minimising the impact on traffic flows, and strengthening east – west pedestrian and cycle links between the Cotterells and Bridge Street.

Water Gardens (North) Car Park Improvements

- 29 The decked Water Gardens (North) car park was constructed in the late 1980s on the site of an existing ground level car park, to increase parking provision within the town centre. The car park is constructed from reinforced concrete with brick cladding, and provides 650 short and long stay spaces. The car park has been awarded ParkMark, achieving the standards for safety and security in accordance with the criteria established under the Safer Parking Scheme.
- 30 The car park will require improvements over the medium term; a figure of £400k has been allocated in the Council's five year budget for the works, which will include a lighting upgrade, resurfacing and decoration.
- 31 The car park currently operates under capacity, however it is anticipated that demand will grow through the regeneration of Market Square and the Gade Zone, to include the new PSQ. The proposed development of Market Square for leisure uses, centred on a cinema with restaurants, will significantly increase the use of the Water Gardens' car parks and draw more people through the northern section of the Gardens.
- 32 Objectives of the improvement works are to ensure the asset is maintained in good order generating a sustainable income stream, to provide a well-appointed asset for the public to use, and to compliment the works undertaken on the Water Gardens and Market Square.

Benefits of joint project development and delivery

- 33 Combining the Access and Movement Improvement Project with the proposed capital works to the Water Gardens (North) car park would ensure a co-ordinated approach to all works associated with the car parks through the design process. It would also enable the impact of the Water Gardens' project and redevelopment of Market Square to form part of the feasibility assessment.
- 34 If the projects are developed separately there is the risk that the Water Gardens restoration, car park works and access and movement improvements will each cause disruption to the car park, potentially with an area being revisited several times for individual works to take place. A co-ordinated approach will be essential at delivery to ensure that all works to a particular area of the car park or surrounding highway are completed in one phase to minimise disruption to visitors. The delivery timescales of the regeneration works to the Marlowes Shopping Zone, Market Square and Bus Interchange will also be considered as these will also disrupt visitors to the town centre.
- 35 The timing of this project is critical for the Water Gardens. The outcome of the bid is expected in early July, with the development of the project to RIBA F and statutory consent process to be completed by November. The Water

Gardens proposals, such as the green screen, may impact on the structure, light levels and other aspects of the Water Gardens (North) car park. As a result it is proposed to develop the improvement scheme for the car park, responding to these aspects, to allow delivery to take place with the Water Gardens construction, expected to commence in spring 2015. Adding the car park improvement works to the Water Gardens contract may also deliver economies of scale benefits. Care will be taken to ensure that this will not impede the delivery of the Water Gardens project.

- 36 A phased approach to the combined project will be developed, to enable the feasibility assessment for the car park improvement works to commence. The involvement of Herts County Council will be key to the investigation of the entrances to the Water Gardens car parks. All works to the highway will be progressed in partnership with Herts County Council, and will follow at a later stage. Public consultation with local residents, car park users and stakeholders will be important to raise awareness of this aspect of the project and enable their views to inform the design of the scheme. A communication strategy will be prepared as part of the project programme.
- 37 The procurement process for the Water Gardens construction works has commenced ahead of the outcome of the bid, to ensure interest in the works from companies with the necessary specialisms and able to deliver within the required timescales. A Prior Information Notice was issued on 21 May 2014 to raise market awareness of the works, with the option to include the car park improvements and highway works identified through the combined project. Approval is sought to delegate authority to appoint a consultant to prepare the project to RIBA Stage E with the option of continuing through to delivery to the Assistant Directors of Planning Development and Regeneration and Finance and Resources.
- 38 Following completion of the feasibility assessment, it is proposed that agreement on the final options to go forward to tender be approved by the Portfolio Holders for Planning and Regeneration and Finance and Resources.

Bus Interchange and Market Square Project

- 39 The Bus Interchange is a key proposal in the adopted Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Masterplan.
- 40 Crucial to the successful redevelopment of Market Square is the replacement of the bus station with a new bus interchange on Marlowes and Bridge Street. Authority to proceed with this project was granted by Cabinet at its meeting on 30 April 2013.
- 41 There is an approved budget of £2.16 million (less the £120,000 proposed virement if agreed as outlined in this report) in the Capital Programme to provide the new Bus Interchange, including the relocation of taxis and the provision of ancillary services.
- 42 Waterhouse Street was identified as suitable location to re-site the taxi rank and formalise Blue Badge parking and allow for pick-up and drop of points for visitors to access long distance travel.
- 43 In order to deliver the scheme 7 separate TROs are required for Waterhouse Street, the new Bus Interchange and Marlowes. Approval to progress these

was obtained at February 2014 Cabinet. The following TRO's have been consulted upon:

- i. The Borough of Dacorum (Bridge Street and Marlowes, Hemel Hempstead) (Bus Interchange) (Prohibition of traffic) Order 2014
 - ii. The Borough of Dacorum (Marlowes and Moor End Road, Hemel Hempstead) (Pedestrian Zone) Order 2014
 - iii. The Borough of Dacorum (Waterhouse Street, Hemel Hempstead) (Prohibition of stopping and waiting except taxis) Order 2014
 - iv. The Borough of Dacorum (Waterhouse Street, Hemel Hempstead) (Parking bays) Order 2014
 - v. The Borough of Dacorum (Waterhouse Street, Hemel Hempstead) (Disabled persons parking bays) Order 2014
 - vi. The Borough of Dacorum (Bridge Street, Hemel Hempstead) (Prohibition of entry) Order 2014
 - vii. The Borough of Dacorum (Moor End Road, Hemel Hempstead) (Prohibition of entry) order 2014
- 44 A formal consultation was carried out between 7 May and 30 May 2014 by Dacorum Borough Council (promoter of the scheme) and with the support of the HCC's Traffic Regulation Department. The consultation received 1 formal objection (Appendix 5). The objection primarily raises an issue with the amount of blue-badge parking being provided along Waterhouse Street. A meeting is being arranged to discuss their concerns and to explain the aims and intentions of the town centre regeneration projects concerns. A small number of enquiries were received at the same time as this consultation and these are noted informally as they were not as a result of the consultation (Appendix 5). These enquiries have been responded to, to the satisfaction of the enquirer.
- 45 As part of any TRO consultation there are guidelines as to the Council's responsibility to responses received (Appendix 6). The Council's legal team is satisfied that appropriate consultation has been carried out and no consultations which necessitate a public inquiry remain outstanding. Accordingly, the TRO's can be made at the appropriate time by Hertfordshire County Council and works commence.
- 46 The guidelines state that a public inquiry could be held if a respondent objects formally, on the grounds of either a loading/unloading restrictions, or restrictions to public service vehicles or if a Bus Operator objects. The scheme is not including any new areas for loading and unloading but does restrict public service vehicles (including minibuses and limousines), however no Bus Operators have objected. It is therefore requested that officers aim to resolve the outstanding objection, but are clear that this cannot constitute as a reason for calling a public inquiry.
- 47 The final decision of a public inquiry falls with the County Council and the view of their legal team is that the remaining objection does not require a public inquiry and attempts can be made to resolve it locally. Officers have

requested a meeting with the objector to discuss their comments and are waiting for them to respond. Delegated authority is sought to the Assistant Director for Planning, Development and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Planning and Regeneration to seek to resolve the objection and decide if any amendments are required to the TRO's prior to proceeding with the TRO's.