



<b>Report for:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>16th October 2018</b>
<b>Part:</b>	<b>1</b>
If Part II, reason:	

<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Parking, Access and Movement Strategy</b>
<b>Contact:</b>	<p>Cllr Graham Sutton, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure</p> <p><b>Responsible Officer:</b> James Doe, Assistant Director, Planning, Development &amp; Regeneration</p> <p><b>Authors:</b> Nathalie Bateman, Team Leader Strategic Planning and Regeneration – Infrastructure and Project Delivery Claire Covington, Strategic Planning and Regeneration Officer</p>
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To set out proposals for changing the access arrangements into and out of Water Gardens (South) car park, Hemel Hempstead.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cabinet approves the delivery of the parking, access and movement proposals for Hemel Hempstead town centre as set out in the report.</li> <li>2. That delegated authority is given to the Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration) to approve further design, planning and implementation decisions on recommendation 1 above.</li> <li>3. That delegated authority is given to the Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration) for the appointment of consultants and contractors to deliver the Parking, Access and Movement project as set out under recommendation 1 above.</li> <li>4. That delegated authority is given to the Assistant Director (Planning, Development and Regeneration) in consultation with the Assistant Director (Corporate and Contracted Services) for the approval of a legal agreement with</li> </ol>

	<p>Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) to enable the works to be undertaken on the public highway.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. That approval is given for the submission to HCC of the Traffic Regulation Order required to prevent blue badge parking along Bridge Street, west of Waterhouse Street and to seek delegated authority from HCC to enforce the Traffic Regulation Order.</li> <li>6. That Cabinet recommends to Council approval of a supplementary capital budget of £165k in financial year 2019/20 to enable the project to be delivered.</li> <li>7. That Cabinet approves the use of s106 income and income from sustainable transport funding from HCC to supplement existing budgets on this scheme; the virements brought in from these sources will increase the respective project budget.</li> <li>8. That Cabinet is asked to recommend to Council a supplementary one off reserve draw down of £25,000 in 2019/20 to support the delivery of the project, funded from the Planning and Regeneration Project Reserve.</li> </ol>
<p>Corporate objectives:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clean, safe and enjoyable environment</li> </ul> <p>The Parking, Access and Movement project will aid traffic flow, improve visitor experience and maximise the benefits of the Water Gardens restoration. It will create an attractive, safe and accessible route for pedestrians between the Leighton Buzzard Road/Water Gardens and the pedestrianised shopping area via Bridge Street.</p>
<p>Implications:</p> <p>'Value for money' implications</p>	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>The approved capital budget for this project is £560k, the estimated capital costs to deliver the project is now £725K. This paper seeks an additional supplementary budget of £165,000 in 2019/20 to address this budget shortfall.</p> <p>It is proposed to seek s106 contributions and sustainable transport funding from HCC to supplement the agreed capital allocation in order to complete any additional public realm or highway improvements required to support the scheme. However, the value of funding is unknown.</p> <p>For prudence an additional one off reserve draw down of £25,000 for 2019/20 is requested for project support and non-capital expenditure during the delivery phase funded from the Planning and Regeneration Project Reserve. This will avoid any unnecessary pressure on existing revenue budgets.</p> <p><u>Value for money</u></p> <p>Project development and management is being undertaken by</p>

	OPUS ARUP International Consultants (UK), awarded under the Herts Highways Framework Agreement.
Risk implications	Risk assessment reviewed in August 2018.
Community Impact Assessment	A Community Impact Assessment has been completed for the project. The main issue identified is that blue badge holders will no longer be able to park on single yellow lines along Bridge Street, however holders will still be able to park in the Water Gardens car parks in any bay without time restrictions.
Health and safety Implications	An initial road safety audit was undertaken as part of the project, further stage audits will be completed prior to Hertfordshire County Council's consideration of the scheme.
Consultees:	<p>Mark Gaynor, Corporate Director (Housing &amp; Regeneration)</p> <p>Ben Hosier, Group Manager (Commissioning, Procurement &amp; Compliance), DBC</p> <p>Steve Barnes, Parking Services Team Leader, DBC</p> <p>Simon Coultas, Operations Manager (Clean, Safe and Green)</p> <p>Luke Johnson, Team Leader, Trees and Woodlands</p> <p>Graham Patterson, Operations Manager (Waste)</p>
Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments	<p><b>Monitoring Officer:</b></p> <p>The Project Team will need work closely with the Legal Team to ensure that the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders and S.278 Highway Agreements are legally sound and protect the Council's legal position.</p> <p>The procurement for works will also require an EU compliant procurement process, and the contract for works must be drafted prior to commencement of the procurement to ensure that all bidders are aware of the terms which they are bidding on.</p> <p><b>Deputy S.151 Officer</b></p> <p>The development of this access project has resulted in an increase in the estimated capital costs of £165,000, that will require adding to the 2019/20 capital programme.</p> <p>The project estimates that up to £25k of reserves are required to cover one off revenue costs incurred to deliver this project, these reserves will be drawn down and approved through cabinet in 2019/20 as these costs are realised.</p>
Background papers:	Cabinet Report: Hemel Evolution: Marlowes Shopping Zone & Bank Court, Bus Interchange and Market Square, and Water Gardens projects, June 2014

	<p>Cabinet Report: Jellicoe Water Gardens Restoration: update on Parks for People application and delivery project, July 2014</p> <p>Cabinet Report: Bus Interchange Project – Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) proposal for Waterhouse Street, March 2016</p> <p>Strategic Planning &amp; Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Parking, Access and Movement Proposals for Hemel Hempstead Town Centre, September 2018</p> <p>Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Masterplan</p>
<p>Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:</p>	<p>PH - Portfolio Holder</p> <p>HCC – Hertfordshire County Council</p> <p>Hemel Evolution – the group name for a range of activities covering the delivery of the Town Centre Masterplan and other key regeneration projects. This update includes; The Old Town, Gadebridge Park, Marlowes Shopping Zone, Bus Interchange, Maylands Urban Realm Improvements, Maylands Business Centre Extension, Durrants Lakes, Jellicoe Water Gardens</p> <p>HLF – Heritage Lottery Fund</p> <p>OPUS - OPUS ARUP International Consultants (UK)</p> <p>TRO – Traffic Regulation Order</p>

## Background

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Parking, Access and Movement project focuses on the access and movement objectives identified for the Jellicoe Water Gardens Zone within the 2013 Hemel Hempstead Masterplan and complements the restoration of the historic Gardens and regeneration of the surrounding zones.
- 1.2 It puts forward a highway based scheme to form a new access into Water Gardens (South) car park from Leighton Buzzard Road, and to convert Bridge Street into a one-way egress from both Water Gardens (North) and (South) car parks, along with some changes to access arrangements to Water Gardens (North) car park from Combe Street. It also includes improvements to Bridge Street, west of Waterhouse Street, that will improve pedestrian movement through the Water Gardens and its car parks.

### 2. Jellicoe Water Gardens

- 2.1 The 2013 Masterplan's strategy for access and movement, aims to promote a permeable and easily navigable town centre that minimises conflicts between different modes of travel, with objectives set for each character zone, including the Jellicoe Water Gardens.

- 2.2 The creation of a shared surface across Bridge Street to physically and visually link the northern and southern sections of the Water Gardens was highlighted in the Masterplan and initially included within the proposals to regenerate the Gardens. This was challenged by the Heritage Lottery Fund as it involved works to the public highway which are outside of the area of the registered garden and was subsequently removed from the scope of the restoration project.
- 2.3 The restored Gardens are now once again a high quality public space which are greatly used and appreciated by visitors, residents and shoppers. However, there remain areas of poor quality public realm adjacent to the Gardens and issues which impede access to the car parks and shopping area, all of which detract from the overall impression of the town centre.

### **3 Parking, Access and Movement Project**

- 3.1 The Parking, Access and Movement project focuses on outstanding access and movement objectives identified in the Hemel Hempstead Town Centre Masterplan for the Jellicoe Water Gardens Zone.
- 3.2 In June 2014 Cabinet approved the commencement of the Access and Movement Improvement project and for delivery to be combined with the planned capital works to the decked Water Gardens (North) car park and Water Gardens restoration. Due to the complexity of the Jellicoe Water Gardens restoration it was subsequently decided to focus resources on the delivery of the Heritage Lottery Fund project.
- 3.3 With the Gardens now complete, the parking, access and movement proposals are being brought forward for delivery. An initial design was agreed with Hertfordshire County Council in 2016. In March 2017, works awarded to OPUS ARUP International Consultants (UK) through HCC's Client Services Term contract to complete the final design, apply for the required consents and manage the construction contract.

### **4 Parking, Access and Movement Objectives**

- 4.1 The project will deliver access and movement improvements to aid traffic flow, improve visitor experience and maximise the benefits of the Water Gardens restoration. A key objective is to improve access, connectivity and safety for pedestrians at Bridge Street, where the Jellicoe Water Gardens are physically and visually divided. At present Bridge Street does not provide a particularly attractive or accessible route between the Water Gardens, its car parks and the shopping area. Issues include:
  - poor visibility and public realm between Bridge Street and the pelican crossing on Leighton Buzzard Road;
  - poor connectivity through Water Gardens (South) car park to Bridge Street footpaths;
  - lack of dropped kerbs on Bridge Street for visitors walking through the Water Gardens;
  - blue badge parking on Bridge Street restricting visibility making it difficult for pedestrians to see motorists and vice versa, causing a safety risk.

4.2 A fully accessible route suitable for visitors with disabilities is required to link the Leighton Buzzard Road, Water Gardens car parks and Jellicoe Water Gardens with the pedestrianised shopping area.

## **5 Layout and design**

5.1 The layout and design is included as appendix A. Key features include:

- A new vehicle entrance to the Water Gardens (South) car park from Leighton Buzzard Road. This will be located at the southern end of the car park towards the Water Gardens flower garden and play area;
- Bridge Street changed to single width carriageway and exit only from the Water Gardens' car parks;
- Footpaths widened at Bridge Street between the car park exit and Waterhouse Street;
- Blue badge parking removed from Bridge Street through a new Traffic Regulation Order;
- A new 4m crossing table added to Bridge Street to provide a more visible and level pedestrian crossing point and to connect the footpaths through the Water Gardens;
- An improved pedestrian route from the pelican crossing on Leighton Buzzard Road to Bridge Street to include relocated recycling facilities and public realm improvements;
- Signage on the Leighton Buzzard Road indicating the new entrance.

5.2 OPUS will also consider how access for cyclists can be improved as part of the project.

## **6. Access to the Water Gardens car parks**

6.1 There are currently three vehicle access points serving the Water Gardens (North) and (South) car parks. Water Gardens (North) car park has two-way entrance/exit points from Combe Street and Leighton Buzzard Road. Both car parks have two-way access from Bridge Street, and the Water Gardens (South) can be accessed from the Water Gardens (North).

6.2 Blue badge parking regularly occurs on the single yellow line along Bridge Street between Waterhouse Street and the Water Gardens car parks. Blue badge holders can park for up to 3 hours on the single yellow line. The number of vehicles parking here obstructs access to the car parks and reduces the visibility of pedestrians crossing the road. In the new design, this section of Bridge Street will be reduced in width and made one way to exit only. In order to prevent parking on the reduced width section, a loading/unloading restriction will be introduced through a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) enabling the Council's parking team to enforce and manage this area.

- 6.3 The entrance and exits to Water Gardens (North) car park from Leighton Buzzard Road are retained in their current form. The Combe Street access point will also remain two-way, any design modifications required will be considered following the outcome of road safety audits.
- 6.4 Within the Water Gardens (South) car park vehicle movements will follow the existing clockwise direction. As a consequence of the works, two car parking spaces will be lost, reducing the car park's capacity to 93 spaces. There will be some loss of hedge screening and street trees along Leighton Buzzard Road as a result of the new vehicle entrance.
- 6.5 HCC generally accepts the proposals subject to a satisfactory road safety audit and further consideration of pedestrian access, in particular calming features to improve pedestrian access and connectivity at the car park exit at Combe Street and Bridge Street/Waterhouse Street junction. Measures may also be required to control movements into and out of the car park exit at Combe Street if additional use of this access point results in queueing traffic on the Leighton Buzzard Road.
- 6.6 These aspects are estimated at £25,000. Opportunities to promote sustainable journeys including improvements to existing or new crossing points will be considered at detailed design stage and will be informed by road safety audits.

## 7 Estimated costs

- 7.1 The total project costs are estimated at £725,000 of which £86,000 has been spent to date. Due to the nature of this project and the high risks associated with known and unknown utilities, a prudent contingency has been included within total project costs. There is £475,158 in the capital programme to deliver the access and movement improvements across 2018/19 and 2019/20. Delivery costs will be £640,000. Table 1 outlines estimated costs.

Table 1 Estimated project costs

Type of Spend	up to and inc 17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	TOTAL
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>84,842</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>640,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>749,842</b>
<b>Capital</b>	<b>84,842</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>615,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>724,842</b>
Professional & Design	84,842	25,000	30,000				139,842
Construction		0	385,000				385,000
Utilities			148,000				148,000
CCTV New Installation			27,000				27,000
Public Realm improvements			25,000				25,000
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25,000</b>
Project Support (reserve funded)			25,000				25,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>84,842</b>	<b>25,000</b>	<b>640,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>749,842</b>

- 7.2 This paper requests additional funding through a supplementary capital budget of £165,000 in 2019/20 to address the budget shortfall.
- 7.3 For prudence a revenue budget of £25,000 is requested in 2019/20 for project support and any non-capital expenditure during the delivery phase funded from the Planning and Regeneration Project Reserve. This will avoid any unnecessary pressure on existing revenue budgets.
- 7.4 It is expected that public realm and highway improvements will also be required within the surrounding area to complete the scheme and inform visitors of the changes, layout and capacity of the car parks. As a result, it is

proposed to seek s106 contributions and sustainable transport funding from HCC to supplement the available budget. The funds DBC and HCC currently hold from s106 payments could not be attributed to this scheme due to the requirements of their legal agreements and as a result the value of these potential additional contributions is unknown.

## **8 Strategic Planning & Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

8.1 A report on the Parking, Access and Movement project was considered by the Strategic Planning & Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

8.2 The following views on the scheme were expressed by Members:

- There was strong support for the removal of blue badge parking on Bridge Street (west) to improve safety for pedestrians and motorists;
- The length of the new access link into the Water Gardens (South) car park was considered excessive, in particular the environmental impact this would have through the loss of trees and hedge planting;
- Concern was raised at the project costs and it was suggested that a reduced scheme focussing on pedestrian access and public realm improvements may be able to achieve the objectives of the Parking, Access and Movement project.

8.3 The length of the access road cannot be adjusted as it has been designed to the standards set by the highways authority and tested through a road safety audit. The landscape changes required will be the removal of part of the beech hedge along the boundary of Water Gardens (South) car park and of some street trees which are not significant specimens. While pedestrian changes at Bridge Street would improve access for pedestrians, it would not deliver the vision of transforming the area into a pedestrian focussed high quality shared space, fully integrated with the Water Gardens.

## **9. Programme and Delivery**

9.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, the designs will be submitted for planning approval and formal consideration by the highways authority with a decision expected in the New Year. A legal agreement will be required with HCC to enable the works to be delivered on the public highway. Enabling works, such as tree removal will take place in early spring 2019 prior to the bird nesting season. The main works will follow in 2019/20, and will last 3 - 4 months, undertaken over several phases starting with utility diversions within the Leighton Buzzard Road verge. Works will be programmed to enable the Water Gardens (South) car park to remain open, with partial closures to bays and access points expected during the build period. Around 14 parking bays will be closed for one month to allow for construction of the new access into the Water Gardens (South) car park from the Leighton Buzzard Road.