

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD

11 March 2014

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 TOWN LOCK CAPITAL PROJECT

Summary

This report updates members on progress and provides a programme for the implementation of the scheme.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 I last reported to members on the Town Lock project at the meeting of this Board on 4 June 2013. At that time the detailed design was being finalised so that the scheme could be costed prior to inviting tenders for construction. Members may recall that, in the context of a fixed scheme budget, I had highlighted the possibility that elements of the design would need to be reviewed if the estimated cost exceeded that budget.
- 1.1.2 In the event, the estimate did indeed exceed the budget and so I was prevented from proceeding to tender stage. This is frustrating, but not uncommon, particularly with schemes involving features such as engineering near the river which are often difficult to cost. There followed a period of working with the Environment Agency and Halcrow, the designers, to redesign various elements of the scheme such that the costs could be reduced to an affordable level. This process has been necessarily time consuming in order to retain the essential project requirements and function without significant loss of overall quality. The scheme has now reached the limits of what can be achieved by 'value engineering' and so it is appropriate to now continue to tender to determine the 'real' cost of building the revised scheme.

1.2 What has been done?

- 1.2.1 The scheme 'plan' has not had any fundamental changes, although individual elements of the scheme have been critically scrutinised to see how they might be provided in a less expensive way.
- 1.2.2 The key focus of the value engineering has been upon lighting and upon the flood wall. The lighting has been simplified such that there will be a 'lit way' through the

scheme rather than an attempt to provide lighting to all areas of open space. This takes account of reflected light from adjacent buildings and is better in environmental terms such as light pollution and power consumption.

1.2.3 The reinforced concrete flood wall has been replaced for a significant part of the scheme by a masonry wall/earth bund composite structure which will be equally as effective. The brick cladding and coping to the remaining concrete flood wall has been deleted. Some railings have been deleted consistent with the existing similar areas in Medway Wharf Road.

1.2.4 Elsewhere, small changes have been made to a number of other elements which cumulatively will all help in reducing cost.

1.3 Programme for Implementation

1.3.1 The revised drawings and tender documents are programmed to be completed by the end of March which will allow tenders to be received and analysed during May.

1.3.2 A start on site is now anticipated for July 2014, which will allow the majority of construction work to be completed during the summer months when working conditions are most favourable. Completion will be around October/November dependent upon the contractor's approved construction programme.

1.4 Legal Implications

1.4.1 None arising from this report.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.5.1 The scheme budget is currently fixed at £791,600, funded from a variety of sources including contributions from nearby development, funds from the Environment Agency and the Council's own capital plan funding.

1.6 Risk Assessment

1.6.1 There is still a risk that a tender will not returned within the available budget and a further review might prove necessary in those circumstances.

1.7 Recommendations

1.7.1 That Members **NOTE** the update on progress towards implementing the Town Lock capital project and **APPROVE** the programme as outlined.

The Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers: Nil

contact: Steve Medlock

Steve Humphrey
 Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Screening for equality impacts:		
Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	The scheme is designed on the basis of 'access for all' to the lock side open space.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	No	
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.