

HAMBLETON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report To: Cabinet
2 December 2014

Subject: **BEDALE GATEWAY CAR PARK**

Bedale Ward
Portfolio Holder for Economic Development and Finance: Councillor P R Wilkinson

1.0 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 In April 2014 Cabinet considered the last in a series of reports on the possibility of providing a car park at North End, Bedale. Amongst other things, Cabinet resolved that the principle of a smaller Gateway car park be approved, that £400,000 be approved for the project and that the Auction Mart car park be disposed of to fund the remainder of the cost (Minute CA.111 refers).
- 1.2 Following concern from local Members it was decided to undertake public consultation on:
 - 1.2.1 the principle of providing a Gateway car park;
 - 1.2.2 whether either or both of the existing car parks in Bedale should be sold to part finance the new car park.
- 1.3 The consultation took place in October and this report provides feedback on the outcome and a suggested response to the outcome.

2.0 THE CONSULTATION:

- 2.1 The consultation involved a public event at Bedale Hall on 2 October, publicity on the Council's website and direct requests for feedback from local organisations and businesses. There was a good response with at least 238 replies to at least one of the questions posed. There were also a significant number of individual comments.
- 2.2 A copy of the consultation document and a summary of the responses are attached as an Annex to this report.
- 2.3 Those who responded were almost equally split on whether they thought there was a need for a new car park with 50% of those who expressed a view being in favour of the Gateway car park but 50% being either against or unsure.
- 2.4 A clear majority (58% of those who expressed a view) were against the use of either of the existing car parks to finance the new car park.

3.0 CONSIDERATIONS:

- 3.1 The proposed new car park has always been intended as a response to the possibility that the new Bedale and Leeming Bar Relief Road will divert vehicles (and particularly trade) from Bedale. Construction of the Relief Road will commence shortly and should be completed in 2016. The outcome of the consultation suggests that the public and organisations have doubts about the need for the car park. One response to this might be to cancel the project for the Gateway Car Park and remove funding from the Capital Programme.

- 3.2 Another option would be to retain the project in the Capital Programme, but not make a decision on whether to implement it until after the opening of the Relief Road to see if there is an adverse effect that needs addressing. Another alternative is to proceed although from the results of the consultation there is not clear support for this.
- 3.3 The cost of the project is currently estimated to be £612,000. Approximately £212,000 of this was due to be funded by sale/re-development of one or both existing car parks in the town. The consultation clearly shows a significant number of people are against this option.
- 3.4 It is clear that many of these people think there is an on-going need for the car parks even with a Gateway Car Park. This is a view which is not shared by officers. Whilst it may be more convenient for some residents and workers to retain the existing car parks, current evidence of usage suggests there is no need in capacity terms. The Gateway Car Park would replace any lost capacity and is not an unreasonable distance from the centre of the town.
- 3.5 Nevertheless the weight of local views should not be treated lightly. If the Council wished to support the local preference to retain the car parks it could seek to fund the whole project from capital reserves. This would require a further £212,000 to be committed to the project probably in 2019 or 2020.

4.0 RISK ASSESSMENT:

| Risk | Implication | Prob* | Imp* | Total | Preventative action |
|----------------|---|--------------|-------------|--------------|---|
| Cancel Project | Long term damage to local economy if loss of visitors and trade | 3 | 4 | 12 | Advertising of Bedale as a place to visit |

5.0 EQUALITY/DIVERSITY ISSUES:

- 5.1 The Council is required to consider the impact of its proposal on those with mobility difficulties. It is not considered that closing one of the town centre car parks would have a disproportionate effect on those with mobility difficulties as provisions could be made in the remaining car park. Clearly, if both car parks were retained these would be no issue.
- 5.2 Any design of a Gateway car park would need to take on board mobility and access issues.

6.0 LEGAL ISSUES:

- 6.1 There are no legal issues arising out of the consultation process.

7.0 FINANCIAL ISSUES:

- 7.1 If the project proceeds as planned there will be no further significant financial issues although because of the delay in commencing the project some expenditure may be pushed back.
- 7.2 If the project is cancelled then approximately £400,000 will become available for other projects. There would also be some revenue savings in staff time.
- 7.3 If the Gateway Car Park is deferred then the expenditure would be moved to later in the Capital Programme.

- 7.4 If neither of the existing car parks are used to part finance the project then the remaining finance of approximately £212,000 will have to come from the Capital Programme. Clearly, this will mean that that sum will not be available for other projects.
- 7.5 The impact on the Capital Programme of deferring the project and not selling the existing car parks is shown as follows:

| | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | Total |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Costs | £ 20,000 | £ 160,000 | £ 422,000 | £ 10,000 | £ 612,000 |
| Financed by: Capital Programme | 20,000 | 160,000 | 422,000 | 10,000 | 612,000 |

8.0 CONCLUSIONS:

- 8.1 The consultation process seems to reflect an uncertainty locally about the need for the Gateway Car Park and a clear preference for retaining the existing car parks.
- 8.2 Previous consultations (for the Local Development Framework) had not shown any significant objection to the loss of the existing car parks. However, the latest consultation has raised concerns. Consequently, it is recommended that Cabinet agree in principle not to sell either of the existing car parks and to fund the project in its entirety from capital.

9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 9.1 It is recommended that:
- (1) the Gateway Car Park project be deferred, the Capital Programme be adjusted accordingly and a further report be presented after the Relief Road has opened;
 - (2) an additional sum of £212,000 be included in the Capital Programme.

JUSTIN IVES

Background papers: Consultation Correspondence
Consultation Responses

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021214 Bedale Gateway Car Park

BEDALE GATEWAY CAR PARK CONSULTATION
October 2014

The Council has developed plans for a Gateway Car Park in Bedale.

We would like to hear your views and suggestions and would be grateful if you would complete the following form to help inform the consultation process. Further information about the proposals can be found online at www.hambleton.gov.uk/bedalegateway

Please complete and return to the FREEPOST address overleaf.
Alternatively, complete this form online at www.hambleton.gov.uk/surveys/bedale

Closing date: Friday 17 October 2014

Do you think Bedale needs the proposed new Gateway Car Park to respond to the introduction of the relief road?

- Yes
 No
 Not sure

If you ticked 'Yes', which of the following options would you prefer to help fund the project?

- The sale of the Auction Mart Car Park
 The sale of the Bridge Street Car Park
 Neither option

Any other option, please detail below:

If you have any other comments relating to Bedale Gateway Car Park, please enter them below:

Thank you for your comments

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October 2014

Final summary
93 online and 145 paper responses = 238 total

| | |
|---|--|
| Do you think Bedale needs the proposed new Gateway Car Park to respond to the introduction of the relief road? | |
| 107 (45.0%) | Yes |
| 89 (37.4%) | No |
| 18 (7.6%) | Not sure |
| 24 (10.1%) | No reply |
| If you ticked 'Yes', which of the following options would you prefer to help fund the project? | |
| 58 (24.4%) | The sale of the Auction Mart Car Park |
| 7 (2.9%) | The sale of the Bridge Street Car Park |
| 87 (36.6%) | Neither option |
| 86 (36.1%) | No reply |
| Any other option, please detail below: | |
| 86 responses received | |
| If you have any other comments relating to Bedale Gateway Car Park, please enter them below: | |
| 155 responses received | |