

HAMBLETON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report To: Cabinet
7 February 2017

**Subject: IMPROVING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN NORTHALLERTON HIGH STREET
AND THE PRISON SITE**

All Wards
Portfolio Holder for Economic Development & Finance: Councillor P R Wilkinson

1.0 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 This report provides background to work undertaken to date examining the east west connectivity in the town centre between the High Street and the development to take place on the former HMP Northallerton site. Authority is sought to prepare more detailed proposals for key links.
- 1.2 In order to maximise the economic potential of the re-development of the prison site and the relocation of the North Yorkshire Police Headquarters to Alverton Court the connectivity between these sites and the town centre needs to be inviting and easily accessible to pedestrians. Accordingly in June 2016 consultants, Gillespies, were asked to undertake a high level appraisal of all the connections that exist and their improvement potential.
- 1.3 A report has been produced which looks at a series of alleyways along with Zetland Street that could potentially form improved pedestrian linkages between the sites. Extracts from the report are attached at Annex A and the full report is placed in the Members' Lounge. Input has been sought from NYCC Highways as well as local Members. Broad agreement has been reached on three key links to improve, these being Zetland Street and the alleys of New Row and Central Arcade.
- 1.4 In May 2015 the Council purchased the former HMP Northallerton in order to have greater control over the redevelopment of the site to ensure it complements the town centre and the best use is made of the opportunity.
- 1.5 To ensure the benefits of the new development are maximised connections between the prison site and the High Street need to be high quality and easily accessible to encourage pedestrian flows. This will encourage exploration and dwell time in the town centre which in turn encourages higher levels of spending and improves the vibrancy of the High Street.
- 1.6 Various connections exist, many are in private ownership and their condition and utility is very variable. An assessment of the best routes to look to improve was therefore required as well as examining appropriate treatments that would encourage their use.

2.0 PROPOSALS:

- 2.1 Three options were presented for Zetland Street which include formalising loading bays, disabled parking and bus stops, reducing the route to a single carriage way, improving the environment with better quality materials and introducing some planting and landscaping. Additionally improvements to shop fronts have been included as an illustration of what could be achieved though it is anticipated these improvements would be private sector led. It is proposed that a preferred option based on Option 3 in the report will be worked up in more detail and visualisations of the improvements produced.

- 2.2 A number of alleyways and yards were examined and a framework for their improvements produced. This includes suggestions on the materials, signage, lighting and how the spaces address the points of access to the High Street and East Road. New Row and Central Arcade have been suggested by the local Members as the principle routes that should be improved. It is proposed that these improvement schemes will be worked up in more detail and also that further route improvements are included for the other alleyways as an annexe with the high level improvement suggestions to provide a framework for improvements should other parties wish to take forward wider improvements.
- 2.3 The proposal is to invite Gillespies to develop in more detail improvement schemes for Zetland Street, New Row and Central Arcade.
- 2.4 The aim is to develop a scheme that will attract external funding and a bid for LEP Local Growth Deal Round 3 has been submitted.

3.0 LINK TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES:

- 3.1 Ensuring strong linkages between the redeveloped prison site and the High Street to maximise their economic potential supports the Council's Vibrant Market Town element of its Economic Development priority.

4.0 RISK ASSESSMENT:

- 4.1 Risks associated with not approving the recommendations.

Risk	Implication	Prob.	Imp.	Total	Preventative Action
Reputational Risk to the Council	Council may be criticised if it is not seen to be ensuring there are strong linkages between prison site and town centre.	4	3	12	Undertake the study, develop improvement plans for appropriate connections.
Potential to spread the economic impact of the redevelopment is missed	Footfall is attracted to the prison site at the expense of the High Street.	3	4	12	Seek to improve connections between the sites to encourage wider exploration of the town.
Investment in the prison site is not fully realised, retail / commercial tenants may be put off.	Potential tenants may see the prison site as an isolated island without wider connectivity which may not generate sufficient footfall.	3	5	15	Improve connectivity between the site and the High Street.

Prob = Probability, Imp = Impact, Score range is Low = 1, High = 5

4.2 Risks associated with approving the recommendations.

Risk	Implication	Prob.	Imp.	Total	Preventative Action
May not be able to implement proposals due to lack of funding	Poor connections remain, pedestrians are not encouraged to flow between the sites, economic potential is not maximised.	3	4	12	Identify funding from private and public sources that can assist with delivery.

Prob = Probability, Imp = Impact, Score range is Low = 1, High = 5

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

5.1 The cost of undertaking the work to develop the detailed improvement proposals is £7,300 and this will be taken from the Economic Development Fund Vibrant Market Town Theme.

5.2 Delivery costs of the improvement proposals will be sought from external sources.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

6.1 There are no legal implications in relation to developing the improvement scheme proposals.

7.0 EQUALITY/DIVERSITY ISSUES:

7.1 All improvement scheme proposals will be fully accessible to ensure there are no equality and diversity issues.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION:

8.1 It is recommended that improvement schemes for Zetland Street, New Row and Central Arcade be worked up in more detail.

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Background papers: None

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