

15 January 2020		ITEM: 17
		Decision: 110522
Cabinet		
Acquisition of Land		
Wards and communities affected: Stanford Le Hope West	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Mark Coxshall, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Strategic Planning		
Accountable Assistant Director: Anna Eastgate, Assistant Director - Lower Thames Crossing and Transport Infrastructure Projects		
Accountable Director: Andy Millard, Director of Place		
This report is Part Exempt – Appendix A and B is exempt by virtue that, in accordance with Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (category 3), it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).		
Date of notice given of exempt or confidential report: 17 December 2019		

Executive Summary

The Stanford Le Hope Interchange scheme involves the construction of new station buildings with footbridge and lifts, passenger information system, bus turnaround facility, passenger drop-off points and cycle parking.

The current design of the Stanford Le Hope transport interchange scheme is complex and expensive. A review of the design has been undertaken in light of a potential option to purchase additional land in the locality to support a simpler but high quality scheme which delivers all of the components required of the scheme in a different way. This would enable the scheme to be delivered within the current budget envelope and would considerably reduce the risks the scheme is currently carrying.

If successful, the revised scheme with the additional land, which would require planning permission to be granted, would deliver a much improved and cost effective solution, improving the public realm and parking available in the locality and supporting the Council's corporate policies and regeneration objectives.

1. Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

1.1 Notes the regeneration and financial opportunities presented by the potential acquisition of land identified in Appendix A.

1.2 Delegates authority to the Director of Place and Director of Finance, Governance and Property in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration to commence negotiations and seek to agree final terms for the acquisition of the site and to enter into any such agreements necessary to conclude the acquisition of the site.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 The Stanford Le Hope Interchange scheme involves the construction of new station buildings with footbridge and lifts, passenger information system, bus turnaround facility, passenger drop-off points and cycle parking.

2.2 The location of the station within Stanford Le Hope is at times congested and busy. This is due to the constraints within the locality which include Mucking Creek, London Road and the railway crossing. The station is used as part of the travel plan for London Gateway DP World with buses bringing staff in to and collecting from the station during shift changeovers. The station is also heavily used for by commuters into London and there is limited availability of parking both at the station and within Stanford Le Hope itself.

2.3 Works were undertaken in March 2019 to demolish the existing station building to provide access into the remainder of the site to deliver the works. However, there are a number of issues that still need to be overcome to deliver the scheme.

2.4 The preliminary design of the scheme, with a cantilevered deck, is an expensive option to deliver. A review of the design has been undertaken to identify alternative design and construction options to enable the project to be delivered within the budget envelope.

2.5 The review identified that the scheme could be delivered by amending the design to incorporate a retained fill of the void area beneath the existing deck. The deck design is being driven by the need to provide a bus turnaround facility to relieve congestion along London Road during peak periods which in turn is driving the need to acquire the area at Mucking Creek and build out over the Creek which again increases the costs and complexity of delivering the scheme to a high standard.

3. The Opportunity

3.1 The acquisition land, if acquired, could significantly improve both the quality and deliverability of the scheme that can be delivered. Primarily it would negate the need for the complicated and expensive cantilevered deck, the need to build out over Mucking Creek and the need to rebuild the London Road Bridge, all of which are significantly increasing the costs and risks associated with the scheme.

- 3.2 If the scheme were to be considered in two phases, it is believed that it could be delivered within the existing budget envelope.
- 3.3 Phase 1 would be the delivery of the platform widening, stations forecourt area without the bus turnaround facility (see Phase 2), footbridge and lifts and new high quality station building. This would result in a much improved public realm area in front of the station
- 3.4 Phase 2 would involve the acquisition of the land set out in Appendix A which would provide a bus waiting and turnaround facility, passenger drop off as well as improved parking for the community of Stanford Le Hope.
- 3.5 The overall benefits of this proposal would result in improved public realm, a high quality design, improved parking and facilities for residents of the locality as well as commuters. This would also enable the scheme to be delivered within the existing budget envelope by removing the expensive and complex elements of the scheme which are currently causing delay and increasing costs.
- 3.6 Acquisition of the land and changes to the scheme would require further assessment and/or modification of the existing planning consent currently in place and a new consent if the acquisition site is secured.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The proposed acquisition site has been identified as a solution to a number of issues and barriers to delivery of this important scheme. Progressing this alternative scheme contributes to the regeneration and economic growth objectives of the Council. Providing improved parking in the locality would support the local high street and provide a revenue stream from parking charges.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 None

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

- 6.1 If delivered, this improved scheme would support the Council's regeneration aspirations, by improving the accessibility to public transport for communities, providing high quality public realm and station facilities which enable communities to be connected as well as commuters to enjoy an improved experience. The scheme with its proximity to London Gateway DP World and with the Lower Thames Crossing proposals mean there is a need to provide connectivity for workers to support the delivery of infrastructure and the local economy, consistent with the Council priorities of people, place and prosperity.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Jonathan Wilson**
Assistant Director, Finance

It is expected the acquisition of the proposed land would enable the project to be delivered within existing capital budgets. This remains subject to the agreement of the final price.

Should the land be acquired by negotiation there will be a financial assessment undertaken to ensure the acquisition represents value for money and to understand any wider financial impacts on the medium term financial strategy. This will be assessed by the Director of Finance, Governance and Property in consultation with the Director of Place prior to any recommendation being made.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Tim Hallam**
**Acting Head of Law, Assistant
Director of Law and Governance and
Monitoring Officer**

Local Authorities are empowered under the Localism Act 2011 and the Local Government Act 1972 to acquire land. A local authority has the power to buy any land by agreement for the purposes of its functions.

Furthermore, Section 226 of the TCPA 1990 gives local authorities the power to compulsorily acquire any land in their area for development and other planning purposes.

Should negotiations progress, there will need to be a legal due diligence exercise to ensure (amongst other things) that there are no title encumbrances that would create any issues in relation to the future use of the site.

Any future operational development and change of use of the site will also require planning permission.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Smith**
**Strategic Lead, Community
Development and Equalities**

The proposed acquisition could potentially facilitate regeneration, improve public realm and reduce congestion. Any future development would be subject to a community equality impact assessment

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children)

None

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

None

9. Appendices to the report

Appendix A – Financial information (exempt from publication)

Appendix B – Site Plan (exempt from publication)

Report Author:

Anna Eastgate

Assistant Director – Lower Thames Crossing and Transport Infrastructure Projects