

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET ON 7TH MAY 2013 FROM THE REGENERATION, ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY PANEL MEETING HELD ON 24TH APRIL 2013

REC161: PROPOSED ENHANCEMENTS TO THE SPINNEY, HUNSTANTON

The Regeneration Programmes Manager presented the Cabinet report which detailed proposals which had been developed as part of the Hunstanton Town Centre and Southern Seafront Masterplan, to enhance the Spinney area in Hunstanton.

The Panel was informed that the enhancement scheme would create a focal point and provide an area for events and activities to encourage footfall and vibrancy in the town centre.

The Regeneration Programmes Manager explained that the Hunstanton Town Centre and Southern Seafront Masterplan which had been published in 2008, had identified the potential to create a Town Square to provide a focal point for the town centre. She informed the Panel that regeneration efforts had already been focussed on other areas such as the seafront and sailing club. The Masterplan contained a series of recommendations relating to initiatives around quality urban design and public realm, improving transport facilities and movement around the town and supporting and developing the local economy through the enhancement and development of a number of opportunity sites. The Regeneration Programmes Manager informed the Panel of the Masterplan vision as follows:

- An active town – expand the existing water sports and activities offer
- A local town – which met the needs of its residents with an expanded retail core
- A more attractive seaside destination – where visitors stay longer and spend more
- A town that respected its heritage – whilst looking to the future
- An environmental town – making the most of the town's natural assets.

The Regeneration Programmes Manager highlighted that changes affecting high streets nationally had been recognised, therefore the current focus of the regeneration plans were on the town centre, recognising that it needed support to remain viable and vibrant, especially considering the seasonal nature of the resort and the effect it had on retailers.

The Regeneration Programmes Manager explained that the Spinney was in a key location near the bus station and the High Street and provided views of the Green and the seafront. A brief to develop the enhancement scheme at the Spinney had been developed by the

Hunstanton Regeneration Project Team in consultation with the Hunstanton Town Team and the Town Council and key objectives had been identified for inclusion in the design:

- Improved connections – strengthen the pedestrian routes from arrival points to the High Street.
- Pedestrian priority – give priority to pedestrians in the area by reducing dominance of on street car parking and maximising underutilised highway along St Edmunds Terrace.
- A social space – provision to enable informal/formal activities i.e. power supply for events, seating, lighting, suitable hard surfacing etc.
- A green space – maximise the attractiveness of the existing trees and use of the green space.
- A space that reflected Hunstanton's heritage – ensure materials are complementary to the Hunstanton Conservation Area and Victorian Heritage.
- A focal point – provide space in scheme for a focal point in the public realm area.

The Regeneration Programmes Manager informed the Panel that landscape architects had been appointed in October 2012 and consultation on two design options had been carried out in December 2012. A public consultation event had been carried out in Hunstanton with over sixty people attending and generally feedback had been positive. Dedicated sessions had also been held with interested organisations such as the Hunstanton Chamber of Trade and the Hunstanton Round Table. The Hunstanton Round Table had offered a financial contribution to the scheme for the installation of a memorial for the late Councillor Richard Searle and this would be incorporated into the final scheme.

The Regeneration Programmes Manager explained that some of the feedback received from the consultation exercise had raised concern over the proposed tree removal. The Panel was informed that a detailed arboricultural assessment had concluded that six of the trees on the Spinney had been identified as a health and safety risk by the Council's Tree Officer and should be removed.

A final consultation exercise for the revised design had been carried out in February and March 2013 and a public consultation event had resulted in over one hundred additional feedback responses. The Panel were provided with a plan of the final design proposal as included in the agenda and were provided with details of the materials to be used. The Panel was informed that the memorial for the late Councillor Richard Searle would take the form of letter engraving in the feature wall and Hunstanton Round Table would be asked to provide some wording for this. It was also hoped to incorporate some ceramic tiles into the wall which would have photographs printed on them of Hunstanton's history and heritage. Incorporated in the proposals was

provision for the potential use of the site in the future for events such as specialist markets and the use of a temporary marquee.

The Chairman thanked the Regeneration Programmes Manager for her report and invited questions from the Panel, some of which are summarised below.

In response to a question from the Vice Chairman, the Regeneration Programmes Manager clarified that the options as outlined in the report detailed the progression of the scheme and the final design layout had been included in the agenda at Appendix 1 of the report.

The Vice Chairman felt the photographs which were to be incorporated into tiles in the wall was a good idea and asked if it would be possible for the tiles to be changed every so often to refresh the area and give visitors something new to look at. The Regeneration Programmes Manager explained that unfortunately it would not be easy to change the tiles as they would need to be recessed into the wall, however it was proposed that approximately twenty five tiles would be used in the wall, which she hoped would offer a lot of variety.

Councillor J Moriarty asked if May Gurney would be completing the works, to which the Regeneration Programmes Manager explained that as the scheme incorporated land which was identified as Norfolk County Council Highway, the work would need to be completed by the County's Norfolk Strategic Partnership which was currently with May Gurney. Early contractor involvement with the Partnership was underway to agree a target cost for the works based on the final design.

Councillor J Moriarty asked for details of the less favourable responses received through the consultation exercise and the Regeneration Programmes Manager explained that most of the negative feedback related to concerns regarding the removal of six of the trees. She explained that ten new trees would be replanted as part of the scheme and the six existing trees that would be removed were as a result of three different arboricultural reports which all had concluded that the six trees were decaying and repressing the other trees on the site.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Councillor A Beales reminded the Panel that the trees were currently in a challenging environment and by removing the weaker specimens the stronger ones would flourish. He reminded the Panel that the purpose of the regeneration works was to enhance and extend the green space available.

In response to a question from the Chairman regarding the ten proposed new trees, the Regeneration Programmes Manager explained that the type of tree to be used would be similar to the existing trees which were sycamore and elm, and the new trees would be suitable for the seafront environment.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment, Councillor B Long explained that he had recently visited the Spinney and the existing trees provided such a canopy over the area that he considered it to be dark and dismal. He hoped that by removing some of the trees and replanting smaller new ones, the area would be opened up to natural light which would hopefully increase public utilisation.

Councillor Bubb asked how the area would be maintained and cleaned and the Executive Director explained that it was a zone one area under which meant that Environmental Services would clean the area before 8.00am each morning.

Councillor Pitcher asked if the proposed tegular paving which would be installed over existing areas of grass would have an effect on the trees to which the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Councillor A Beales explained that once the walkway was in place it would spread pressure on the roots and would still be permeable to moisture.

Councillor Mrs Watson informed the Panel that she supported the scheme and felt it was important to improve the connectivity of the different parts of Hunstanton. She explained that as a result of the regeneration efforts in this area the derelict garage site near the Spinney had recently been purchased and would hopefully be developed into flats.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Councillor A Beales explained that the recent purchase of the derelict garage site was an important point to note and quantified the intangible benefits of focussing regeneration efforts in this area.

RESOLVED: That the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet as follows:

That Cabinet:

- (1) Authorise Regeneration and Economic Development to commission the Norfolk Strategic Partnership to implement the scheme with the existing allocation in the capital programme.
- (2) Delegated authority granted to the Legal Services Manager to complete the necessary legal documentation required in order to implement the scheme.
- (3) Delegated authority granted to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration to agree the final scope of works and costs associated.
- (4) Subject to recommendation in 3, rephrase the capital programme in the next monitoring report to Cabinet to facilitate completion of the scheme in 2013/14.

REC163: **TUESDAY MARKET PLACE**

The Executive Director presented the Cabinet report which detailed the final proposals for the refurbishment of the Tuesday Market Place in King's Lynn. He reminded the Panel that they had received all previous reports on the progress of the scheme and explained that this was the final report for Cabinet/Full Council approval.

The Executive Director explained that Cabinet would be required to determine the layout of the parking spaces as either echelon which would provide 169 spaces or standard providing 195 spaces. He reminded the Panel that all spaces would be 2.5m wide, which was 10cm wider than all the existing parking spaces in the town centre.

The Executive Director drew the Panel's attention to Section 5 of the report which explained that to assist in arrangements for market promotions it was proposed to install sockets for a market shelter, which could be in the form of a plastic covered marquee, or a solid upvc marquee and could be installed on the Tuesday Market Place for special events throughout the year.

The Executive Director confirmed that Norfolk County Council Highways would resurface the highway surrounding the Tuesday Market Place at the same time as the redevelopment work, which would minimise traffic disruption and the need to close the road at a later date.

The Panel was informed that Cabinet would also be asked to determine if they would like to increase the budget available for the scheme to allow for the installation of tegular blocks throughout the whole area. Current proposals, to stay within budget, were to finish the tegular blocks at the junction of Market Lane and then tarmac up to St Nicholas Street. To extend the use of tegular blocks would add £50,000 to the current cost of the scheme. The Executive Director explained that the additional funds required for this could be met from the Car Parking Reserve budget.

The Executive Director informed the Panel that Norfolk County Council had recently undertaken core sampling work on the Tuesday Market Place, which had involved digging holes. The works had identified a series of old air raid shelters under the Tuesday Market Place. The location of the shelters had now been plotted and it was hoped that in future work could be carried out to bring them into use.

The Chairman thanked the Executive Director for his report and along with the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Councillor Beales, reminded the Panel that they would need to provide Cabinet with their views on the recommendations as set out in the report relating to the parking layout and request for additional funds for tegular paving.

The Chairman invited questions and comments from the Panel, some of which are summarised below.

Councillor Pitcher explained that he supported the provision of additional funds to increase the area of tegular paving, but asked if this option was not agreed whether coloured tarmac be used. The Executive Director explained that the tegular paving would be the reddish colour that was currently used in the town centre and colour tarmac could be used.

Councillor Mrs Watson commented that it was important to utilise the air raid shelters in the future and felt that schools would benefit from access to them.

Councillor Bubb commented that he favoured the echelon parking layout. He explained that although the report explained that fewer spaces would be available through this layout, he felt that the aisles between the spaces could be narrowed to provide additional spaces. The Executive Director agreed to investigate this and provide additional information to Cabinet at their meeting.

Councillor Bubb also explained that he felt that the disabled parking spaces were too far away and would prefer to see them clustered together closer to the High Street. The Executive Director explained that he had consulted disabled groups on the scheme and reminded the Panel that if the bays were close to the town centre, they would not be available on Market days. He reminded the Panel that additional disabled parking bays would be created through the scheme.

Councillor Mrs Collingham asked what provision was available for Private Hire Vehicles who may be required to wait on the Tuesday Market Place whilst their customer nipped into the town. The Executive Director explained that there was a number of free twenty minute parking bays included in the scheme. There was also a taxi rank provision for Hackney Carriages.

Councillor Loveless addressed the Panel under Standing Order 34 and explained that the proposals did not increase the number of bicycle parking stands. He felt that this was a good opportunity to increase the provision as often the stands in the town centre were full, proving the need for additional stands. He explained that there was no provision for bicycle parking outside of the Corn Exchange. He asked the Panel to consider recommending to Cabinet, the allocation of additional space for bicycle parking particularly in close proximity to the Corn Exchange.

The Executive Director agreed to investigate this issue and determine the most appropriate space for any additional stands. He explained that he had investigated the use of block stands which would be easy

to move and relocate as they were portable. They could be installed in a certain area to see if there was sufficient demand for them.

Councillor Pitcher asked if fewer car parking spaces would result in a loss of income to the Council. The Executive Director explained that he did not think it would, as the town centre generally had capacity, however at peak times it was often difficult for drivers to find the available parking spaces. To combat this, Variable Messaging Systems would be installed on the routes into the town centre and would advise drivers which car parks had spaces available. Other options such as changing car parks from long term to short term after a certain time of day would be investigated.

The Panel discussed the parking layout, and were reminded by the Executive Director, that should the standard layout be preferred this would create a pedestrian space outside the Corn Exchange, the echelon parking layout would not provide this space.

RESOLVED: That the Regeneration, Environment and Community Panel make the following recommendations to Cabinet:

- (1) The standard parking layout 195 spaces be used.
- (2) That the size of spaces as 2.5m wide be confirmed.
- (3) That the use of S106 funding for market shelters be confirmed.
- (4) Additional funding of £50,000 to be added to the scheme to allow the extension of tegula blocks to the junction with St Nicholas Street.
- (5) Approve the overall scheme design and costs and delegate authority to the Executive Director, Commercial Services in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Regeneration and Health and Well Being to implement the scheme.
- (6) Delegate authority to the Executive Director, Commercial Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing to amend Car Parking Orders.
- (7) That additional bicycle parking be installed in close proximity to the Corn Exchange.