

Report to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
Report submitted by: Head of Service - Highways
Date Monday, 13 March 2017

Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:
Chorley South; Chorley
West;

Chorley Town Centre - Public Realm Proposals and Masterplan

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Executive Summary

The Chorley Town Centre Masterplan was first written in 2013 and it identified a number of key improvements for the town centre. This included the construction of the new ASDA store and associated public realm improvements. The South Market Street/Fleet Street area was improved with highway improvements for South Market Street completed in 2015. This linked in to the section of Market Street that was re-opened to vehicular traffic in 2012. The Town Centre Masterplan also set out a Public Realm Strategy for the Town Centre.

Chorley Borough Council (CBC) has engaged a consultancy, Planit, to review and update the Masterplan. Planit have been involved in the design of Fishergate in Preston and are also involved in the UCLAN project for the Adelphi Quarter. They have used this knowledge and experience to help inform the further development of the Masterplan.

The proposals contained in the refreshed masterplan will have an impact on the future management and maintenance of the highway. The design and materials will be agreed between Lancashire County Council (LCC) and CBC with a higher quality material palette than the standard specification for highway works.

The proposals will also mean changes to traffic movements and to waiting and loading provision. The impacts are not considered to be significant or be detrimental to traffic movements generally. Amendments to waiting and loading provisions will be managed on a scheme by scheme basis within an overall view of requirements.

As schemes come forward there will be a close working arrangement with agreement secured at an early stage on the design and construction arrangements. These arrangements will be subject to agreements under the powers of s278 of the Highways Act 1980.

Recommendation

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport is recommended to:

- (i) Note that the proposals contained within the Chorley Town Centre Masterplan have implications for the existing highway layout, including variation to carriageway and footway widths;
- (ii) Approve that the Masterplan be supported in principle subject to detailed proposals being approved by Head of Service – Highways;
- (iii) Approve that the negotiation of agreements be entered into with CBC under s278 of the Highways Act 1980 for the delivery of works on the highways, subject to the detailed agreements being agreed by the Head of Service - Highways pursuant to the County Council's Scheme of Delegation to Heads of Service;
- (iv) Approve that an agreement be entered into under S278 of the Highways Act 1980 for the Market Walk development based on CBC carrying out the works as described in this report, subject to the detailed agreement being agreed by the Head of Service - Highways pursuant to the County Council's Scheme of Delegation to Heads of Service.

Background and Advice

The Chorley Town Centre Masterplan was first written in 2013 and it identified a number of key improvements for the town centre. This included the construction of the new ASDA store and associated public realm improvements. The South Market Street/Fleet Street area was improved with highway improvements for South Market Street completed in 2015. This linked in to the section of Market Street that was re-opened to vehicular traffic in 2012. The Town Centre Masterplan also set out a Public Realm Strategy for the Town Centre.

The refreshed Masterplan document builds on what has been achieved in the last three years and now includes details of Public Realm proposals for the town centre. The proposals identified are seeking to establish a common theme for Chorley Town Centre as a Place Management project with consistent design themes and materials. There will be an impact on the highway network by improving and upgrading streets. This will include changes to the way in which traffic accesses and moves on the town centre network and facilities for parking and loading for all needs.

The masterplan sets out movement strategies for vehicles and for pedestrians, it includes a review of parking and a framework to improve cycling routes and facilities through the town centre. The place making element of the strategy includes signing, public art and monuments. The strategy also covers inclusivity and identifies ways in which the proposals will make provision for all groups.

Proposal – the Masterplan, use of S278 Agreement and the Market Walk development

The Masterplan identifies a number of schemes to improve the public realm along with development opportunities. This covers the area of the town centre bounded by Market Street North to the west, Hollinshead Street to the north, George Street to the

south and Shepherds Way to the east. Within this area the highways will be resurfaced using high quality materials and will involve the reallocation of road space and will be designed along the shared space principles used in Preston city centre and already used on Market Street South. As in Preston city centre, vehicles will be constrained to defined routes within reallocated road space.

The proposals are broken down into packages of work which will be phased and delivered over a number of years. Schemes identified for Fazakerley Street, Market Walk (both highway and retail development) and the bus station have all progressed with a start on site programmed before the end of the 2016/17 financial year subject to technical approval by the County Council and completion of agreements with CBC to allow the work to take place on the highway.

S278 of the Highways Act states that a highway authority may, if they are satisfied it will be of benefit to the public, enter into an agreement with any person for the execution by the authority of (such) works incorporating particular modifications, additions or features, or at a particular time or in a particular manner, on terms that that person pays the whole or such part of the cost of the works as may be specified in or determined in accordance with the agreement.

Highways officers have been involved in discussions with CBC officers over the details of the traffic management arrangements to ensure that traffic flows on the highway and the availability of parking and loading facilities can be accommodated.

Highway Maintenance and Management

The proposals contained in the masterplan will have an impact on the future maintenance of the highway. The design and materials will be agreed between the County Council and CBC with a higher quality material palette than the standard specification for highway works. The use of high quality materials, as have already been used on Market Street, will mean that reactive repairs will be more costly, both in materials and in labour. In order to mitigate the impact, CBC will be asked to pay a commuted sum under the agreement to reflect increased maintenance and this will be used in particular to purchase an increased quantity of materials and to hold those in stock so that repairs can be undertaken using the same materials. CBC will thereby bear the cost of purchasing and storing a quantity of the materials. In the short term there will be a reduced pressure on the highway maintenance budget because of the renewal programme, however there will be an additional financial burden in the longer term in maintaining a higher quality public realm.

The proposals will also mean changes to traffic movements and to waiting and loading provision. The impacts are not considered to be significant or be detrimental to traffic movements generally. Amendments to waiting and loading provisions will be managed on a scheme by scheme basis within an overall view of requirements.

Collaboration

CBC have engaged a consultancy, Planit, to review and update the Masterplan. Planit have been involved in the design of Fishergate in Preston and are also involved in the UCLAN project for the Adelphi Quarter. They have used this

knowledge and experience to help inform the development of the Masterplan. CBC have also engaged Royal Haskoning as design consultants and Eric Wright Group as Contractors to deliver the Market Walk development.

The works on Seymour Street, Fazakerley Street and Theatre Walk have been designed by LCC and design fees paid by CBC, albeit with a contribution from LCC. LCC have been working with Chorley since 2015 to develop this project and LCC have now appointed the construction contractor for these works. This appointment has been made ahead of the sign off on the s278 due to time pressures and a commitment to CBC, as the completion of these works is critical to the delivery of the larger Market Walk development.

The Market Walk development has been progressed through the early stages without LCC involvement. However, subsequent discussions between LCC and CBC have resulted in a provisional proposal for the work to be delivered by CBC using their consultants and contractors through a s278 agreement. This is a typical mechanism to allow construction works on the highway to be undertaken by a third party through their designers and contractors and whereby funding passes including for the commuted sum.

Subject to the parties entering into an agreement under s278 of the Highways Act 1980, technical approval of the scheme designs by the county council and indemnity by the borough council in relation to their appointment of the Eric Wright Group, it is recommended that the borough council's proposal in this regard be accepted.

As further schemes come forward there will be a close working arrangement with agreement secured at an early stage on the design and construction arrangements. These arrangements will be subject to agreements under the powers of s278 of the Highways Act 1980.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposals contained masterplan can be expected to enhance the area impacting on its attractiveness to users. Many of the ideas in the Masterplan have merit and could be developed (to the satisfaction of LCC) to enable their progression. The Masterplan contains a strong theme of sustainable and inclusive transport which should help to provide greater opportunities for pedestrians and cyclists as well as improvements to road safety and public transport. This theme is consistent with national policy which sets out the objectives to integrate planning and transport at the national, regional, strategic and local level and to promote more sustainable transport choices.

There is detail in the document that may need to be revised but as a masterplan it is considered a sound document which is also consistent with national policy.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Chorley BC are proposing works on the public highway for which LCC are responsible as Highway Authority. In order to allow work to be undertaken then an agreement with Chorley BC for the projects is required under the powers contained in s278 of the Highways Act 1980. Should an agreement not be entered into by Chorley BC then the works cannot be undertaken.

Financial

Financial risks are covered by agreement under s278 powers with the County Council being indemnified by Chorley Borough Council.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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N/A		
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Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A