

To: City Executive Board
Date: 16 October 2018
Report of: Regeneration and Economy Programme Director
Title of Report: Footpath crossing the railway at Aristotle Lane

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To advise the board of the satisfactory completion of all conditions to the previous resolution of the Board in February 2013 in relation to Network Rails proposal that the Council release its rights over the footpath crossing the railway between Aristotle Lane and the Trap Grounds Allotments and to seek Board approval to proceeding to complete such release.
Key decision:	No
Executive Board Member:	Susan Brown, Economic Development and Partnerships
Corporate Priority:	none
Policy Framework:	none.
Recommendations: That the City Executive Board resolves to:	
1. Approve the surrender of such rights that the City Council has in respect of the footpath crossing the railway between Aristotle Lane and the Trap Ground allotments and delegate agreement of the detail of the documentation to the Regeneration and Economy Programme Director	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Aristotle Lane Report 13 February 2013
Appendix 2	Appendix 6 to the Aristotle Lane Report 13 February 2013
Appendix 3	Appendix 7 to the Aristotle Lane Report 13 February 2013
Appendix 4	Extract from CEB Minutes February 2013

Introduction and background

1. In February 2013 The Head of City Development submitted a report which explained that Network Rail was proposing to make substantial investment in Oxford Station and the main line network between Southampton and the Midlands and that to support this investment, Network Rail was seeking agreement from the City Council to close the footpath crossing the railway at Aristotle Lane.
2. The Board Resolved to:-
 - a. Surrender such rights the City Council had in respect of the footpath crossing the railway between Aristotle Lane and the Trap Ground allotments by a Deed of Release subject to the City Executive Board being satisfied that Network Rail had provided, in consultation with local stakeholders, the promised improvements to the Aristotle Lane footbridge, the provision of a new car park on Council land at Aristotle Lane, the provision of a permissive footpath over its land to the Trap Grounds (Town Green) and had made satisfactory progress on the Oxford Station development including the completion of a Master Plan;
 - b. Instruct the Head of Corporate Assets to complete negotiations with the County Council to transfer part of the City Council's land to the Saint Philip and Saint James Primary School.
3. Since the 2013 resolution Network Rail following extensive consultation obtained Planning Permission for its proposals at Aristotle lane and has completed all works satisfactorily including:
 - New road and parking for the allotments adjacent to Aristotle lane
 - Upgrading and improvements to bridleway linking Aristotle Lane to Port Meadow including surfacing retaining wall staircase access new walls fences and improved grading to ease use by allotment and other users
 - Provision of new bridge over railway with improved balustrading and safety protection
 - Provision of new bridge link on the Port Meadow side of the railway bridge linking the bridleway to the allotments
 - Provision of secure access gates and ramped access and other minor improvements within the allotments
 - Provision of new permissive footpath link from the new parking area to the Trap Grounds Town Green
4. The 2013 resolution also required satisfactory progress on the Oxford Station development including the completion of a Master Plan.
 - a. These proposals have advanced substantively and master planning exercises completed.
 - b. In the intervening period the debate on the future of the station and railways has broadened significantly as matters such as the Rail

Connectivity Study and proposals for Cowley Branch Line have come forward.

- c. Given the developments and substantive progress this should no longer be considered a condition or constraint on completing the release of the rights at Aristotle Lane.
5. The second resolution passed has progressed to the point of completion with the final transfer of land on hold pending the release but with County/School having been allowed access under licence to complete their works and to occupy the additional land for the School

Financial implications

6. All costs in relation to works undertaken were met by Network Rail and the Councils Legal fees in connection with Deed of Release are also to be borne them.

Legal issues

7. Failure to complete the release prevents the transfers of land with County and the School completing.
8. The Director of Regeneration and Economy is seeking delegated authority to agree the detail of, and complete, the Deed of Release.

Level of risk

9. Potential for damage to the Councils relationship with Network Rail by not concluding the release where Network Rail has successfully and substantively delivered all that it agreed to deliver

Equalities impact

10. This is sign off to a previous resolution and an equalities impact assessment is not Necessary

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Background Papers: None

