

**To:** City Executive Board  
**Date:** 22 January  
**Report of:** Executive Director Sustainable City  
**Title of Report:** Project Approval – to relocate car park decking from Oxpens car park to Redbridge Park and Ride.

| <b>Summary and recommendations</b>  |  |
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| <b>Purpose of report:</b>   | To seek project approval, subject to budget approval by Council, to relocate and extend the car parking decking currently at Oxpens car park at Redbridge Park & Ride. |
| <b>Key decision:</b>  | Yes  |
| <b>Executive Board Member:</b>  | Councillor Hollingsworth, Planning and Regulatory Services   |
| <b>Corporate Priority:</b>  | A Vibrant and Sustainable Economy.   |
| <b>Recommendations:</b> That the City Executive Board resolves to:  |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Grant</b> project approval, subject to Council approval of the capital budget for the relocation and extension of the car park decking currently located at Oxpens car park at Redbridge Park and Ride; and</li> <li>2. <b>Delegate</b> to the Chief Executive in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officers the authority to enter into all appropriate contracts to implement the recommended option.</li> </ol> |  |

## Introduction and background

1. In January 2015 the Westgate multi-storey car park ceased to operate as a public facility and was subsequently demolished as part of the Westgate Alliance redevelopment of the Westgate Centre.

2. The planning approval for redevelopment included temporary arrangements regarding parking. These arrangements included the installation of additional temporary car parking at the Oxpens car park.
3. This requirement was met by the Council extending the car park to the rear of the ice rink and the installation of decking which together provided 420 car parking spaces.
4. The temporary planning permission for the extension and decking expired in January 2019, and steps have now been taken to restrict the use of the additional capacity.
5. The land (including the Oxpens car park) was transferred to OXWED in December 2018. The council now occupies the land and operates the car park on licence from OXWED. That licence requires that the Council removes the decking and reinstates the original car park footprint by June 2019.
6. This report sets out the project to remove the decking from Oxpens and relocate and extend the decking at Redbridge Park & Ride, primarily to provide additional capacity during the construction of the Oxford Flood Relief Scheme which will impact on the capacity of that site. It is anticipated that Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS) will utilise a significant section of Redbridge Park & Ride car park as a base to construct and install the conduits under the Ring Road adjacent to the site. It is estimated that this will result in a temporary loss of circa 450 parking spaces for a period of around 30 months. However, it should be noted that the contractor has a four year option stipulated in the Heads of Terms. There will be the permanent loss of circa 50 spaces.
7. The decked structure installed is a prefabricated unit that it is possible to disassemble and reassemble at another location although it is an expensive operation, particularly for anything other than a relatively short transport distance. This is primarily because, once installed with asphalted upper flooring, the cost of breaking it up and re-installing elsewhere is not economic and transporting intact is complex and expensive.
8. A number of options have been considered and assessed by the Council's Development Board. That Board supports the recommendation as set out in this report.
9. The Business Case considers 5 options:
  - a) Relocate the current decking footprint to Redbridge - achieves an additional 100 spaces with a net loss of 331 during the OFAS build. At this point it is proposed the

decking would be retained along with 380 of the original spaces returned to car parking.

- b) Relocate the current decking to Redbridge and increase the footprint with additional decking to create a total additional 200 spaces with a net loss of 231 during the OFAS build. At this point as in option a) the decking would be retained along with the original 380 spaces returned to car parking.
- c) Relocate the current decking and increase the footprint to create a total additional 300 spaces with a net loss of 131 spaces during the OFAS. At this point as in option a) the decking would be retained with the original 380 spaces returned to car parking.
- d) Remove and store the decking with no relocation to Redbridge. Results in a net loss of 431 spaces during the OFAS build.
- e) Remove, store and sell the decking with no relocation to Redbridge with a net loss of 431 spaces.

The options to relocate decking at Redbridge assume it can be installed under Local Authority Permitted Development rights. We are currently seeking advice to establish whether this is the case.

### **Commentary on options**

The Business case reviews each option. In general it can be said that:

- 10. The Council has to remove the decking from Oxpens and all options come at a cost.
- 11. If no provision is made to replace the lost parking bays at Redbridge, it is highly likely that the Park & Ride will fail to meet the required demand and income would be impacted. This would result in congestion, a possible deterioration in air quality and a high level of customer dissatisfaction.
- 12. In addition, the inability to provide adequate parking provision may encourage customers to seek an alternative area to work or visit, which may impact the local economy.
- 13. If the deck was relocated to Redbridge Park & Ride, this would mitigate some of the impact of the flood alleviation scheme on Park and Ride provision. However, if current levels of use are maintained, the car park will not be able to meet the demand.
- 14. It has proven difficult to establish a value for the decking as we have not been able to establish whether there is a market for such equipment, particularly bearing in mind the handling and transport costs. We have certainly not been able to find a potential buyer. It may be that the decking actually has a negative value even

taking into account low value sale of scrap value due to disassembly and transport costs. The estimated minimum cost to dismantle the decking (costs of labour) is £243k. On-top of this there is a significant risk of additional transport and scrap fees.

15. Option b) providing an additional 200 spaces is the option recommended by officers.

## **Financial Implications**

16. The Council has £243k allocated in the 2019-20 capital budget to remove and reinstate Oxpens car park to pre Westgate footprint. It may be necessary to bring forward this budget into 2018-19 in order to commence preliminary works, which the Head of Financial Services has the authority to authorise. In addition, within the Council's Consultation Budget, there is an indicative amount of £1.685 million in 2019-20 to relocate the decking to Redbridge Park & Ride.
17. The Council's consultation budget has allocated £1.9 million to this project. The objective will be to deliver the project for the lower amount. However, there are some factors that have not yet been confirmed and therefore it is prudent to make adequate provision for these.
18. The preferred option is within the amount set side in the consultation budget with sufficient allowance for a project contingency.
19. As it has not been possible to establish an asset value for option e), it has not been included in the following financial appraisal. The two most attractive options have been short-listed and are shown below:

| Relocation of Decking to Redbridge<br>Impact on parking numbers based<br>on assumption of lost spaces during<br>OFAS construction | Option 1  | Option 2  |
|---|---|---|
|   | Reduction<br>in number<br>of overall<br>spaces by<br>331, by<br>creating<br>100 new | Reduction<br>in number<br>of overall<br>spaces by<br>231, by<br>creating 200<br>new |
| Additional Spaces created   | 100   | 200   |
| Parking Charges Income  | -49   | -90   |
| Cost  | 10  | 20  |
| Net Revenue Implication Per Annum   | -39   | -70   |
| Payback period  | Yr 26   | Yr 25   |
| IRR   | 1.26%   | 1.58%   |
| Capital Investment Required   | 737   | 1,287   |

20. Whilst the payback period is an important factor, it should not be the only consideration when reviewing the options available. The deck will provide other non-financial benefits to the Council, including: the ability to effectively manage the transport network and ensuring people are able to access the city, thus supporting the local economy.

21. The impact of the Environment Agency Compound for the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme will result total loss during the build phase of 431 spaces. At a 70% occupancy rate this would equate to a loss of 247 income earning spaces per day, which is c£151,000 per annum.

22. Option b) is in line with the strategy on P&R and protects parking income. Whilst there are no plans to increase the P&R tariffs, it should be noted that for every 50 pence increase to the parking fee, it is estimated that the payback period would be reduced by approximately 6 years.

## **Environmental**

23. The current policy of the City and County Council is to encourage the use of the P&R sites and dissuade motorists from entering the city. This policy has been extremely successful in reducing city centre congestion and pollution.
24. In order for the P&R sites to remain an effective measure of control, there does need to be capacity in the sites to meet the demand. If the sites are unable to accommodate the required amount of vehicles, customers will be forced to seek alternatives, which could result in wasted mileage and congestion.
25. As the amount of city centre parking is reduced and the zero emission zone is introduced, it is anticipated the requirement for P&R parking will increase. It is essential therefore that provision is made to facilitate a positive change in customers' behaviour.

## **Legal**

26. The Council is under a planning and contractual obligation to OXWED to remove the carpark extension and decking by June 2019.
27. It is proposed that the decking would be installed under Permitted Development Rights contained in Part 12 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. Advice is being taken on this point.
28. The decking would be added to the public car parking operation using the usual off street parking orders.

## **Risk**

29. The probability that the OFAS scheme will go ahead is high. However, to date the scheme does not have planning permission and has not achieved Final Business Case.
30. The dismantling, transport and reassembling of the decking is complex and close control would be required of costs. We do however have the experience of being the main contractor when the decking was first installed.
31. Ground conditions at Redbridge, being a former waste disposal site, are an issue. However, it is considered that adequate due diligence has been carried out regarding this and other matters to enable the project to proceed.

## **Conclusion**

32. The Council has to act to remove the additional parking installed during the Westgate re-development. All options have an associated cost.

33. During the construction period, the OFAS scheme will have a negative impact on parking at Redbridge P&R. The use of the decking provides an opportunity to mitigate that impact.

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**Background Papers:** None

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