

**Meeting** Executive  
**Portfolio Area** Regeneration  
**Date** 8 December 2021



## CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW STATION NORTH MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK AND CYCLE HUB AS PART OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE

### KEY DECISION

#### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This report follows the item previously presented to Executive in November 2020 relating to the construction of a new Multi-Storey Car Park & Cycle hub (MSCP), which recognised the long-term need to consolidate the parking offer in Stevenage Town Centre. That report also considered the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on parking and the resulting temporary reduction in demand.
- 1.2. New developments within the town centre are now underway (Matalan/Guinness & Marshgate Life Sciences redevelopments) increasing the pressure on long-stay parking capacity. Car park usage has also increased significantly following the lifting of restrictions imposed during the pandemic, although these have yet to return to 2019 levels.
- 1.3. In order ensure adequate capacity - and prevent future loss of parking revenue, it is now appropriate to consider the construction of a new MSCP taking into account: overall parking capacity, planned changes to existing car parks, increasing demand, construction materials availability, build times and pricing challenges.
- 1.4. This report provides an update on the feasibility and design process, a design & build contractor having been appointed and design & feasibility work having been completed.

- 1.5. A detailed cost plan has been produced and the sources of funding for the project have been identified and relevant documents have been prepared for the purposes of seeking planning approval.
- 1.6. Finally this report notes that further work is necessary to set out the extent of any council borrowing and impact on revenue during the construction as well phase as what mitigation will be required to meet parking demand until the new provision is in place. This work will be reported to Executive in early in the New Year (2022).

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1. That Executive note:
  - 2.1.1. the impact of new and existing redevelopments in the town centre and the impact it will have on car parking capacity and locations;
  - 2.1.2. that an application for planning approval is being prepared for submission for the MSCP & cycle hub facility;
  - 2.1.3. the emerging design for the MSCP, which can be refined during and after the planning process;
  - 2.1.4. the total estimated budget for the scheme is £9.7m, with a target construction price of £8.9m;
  - 2.1.5. the decision-making gateways for the project;
  - 2.1.6. the revenue impact of any borrowing to fund the capital cost and any forecasted one-off income loss during construction are key financial considerations for the General Fund, authority will be sought from Council to delegate to Executive approval of the additional borrowing and change to the Treasury Management Strategy, subject to the revenue impacts falling within current Executive delegated limits.
- 2.2. That Executive approve the:
  - 2.2.1. proposed funding mechanism for the project, subject to the Towns Fund approval process & funding being confirmed by Department for Levelling-up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), comprising:
    - £6m from the "Towns Fund",
    - £200K from the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (Hertfordshire LEP),
    - £1.45m from the Marshgate land sale receipt, as set out in recommendation 2.2.2, and
    - £1.85 to £2.05m from prudential borrowing subject to the net impact on General Fund as stated in 2.1.6.
  - 2.2.2. use of £1.45m of capital funding from the Marshgate land sale receipt, which was ring-fenced for regeneration purposes in August 2021. This receipt was generated from the sale of car park and as such part of the receipt is being requested to be used to replace parking in the town

- 2.2.3. the preparation of a report detailing the available options for mitigating any loss to parking capacity and income the during construction phase including (but not limited to):
- “park & stride” at alternative sites;
  - utilisation of existing capacity in other car parks, with flexibility on tariff types;
  - enhanced maintenance in St George’s Way Multi-Storey Car Park;
  - review of parking concession deals and where their parking is located;
  - promotional campaign relating to the other parking facilities, improvements made, and the range of options available.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

#### **Transforming our Town**

- 3.1. The transformation of Stevenage Town Centre is a top priority for Stevenage residents, businesses, and for Stevenage Borough Council as highlighted within the Future Town Future Council (FTFC) Programme. It is also aligned with the Future Town Future Transport strategy.
- 3.2 The Council worked closely with its partners including Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire LEP, Hertfordshire Chamber Of Commerce and Industry, and Homes England to develop the Stevenage Central Framework (“the Framework”) which was approved by Executive on 24 July 2015. The Framework has now been embedded in the Local Plan and sets out the regeneration strategy for the Town Centre.
- 3.3 The Framework sets out a clear vision and the scale of opportunity within a regenerated town centre that:

*“Stevenage was, and should be again, a destination town centre with a combined retail, leisure and residential offer that will meet the needs of our population, and attract visitors well into the future. We need to recognise the huge changes that are underway in terms of retailing and what people are seeking in their leisure time. We also need to build on the traditional role our town centre has played in being a meeting place and central hub for our community.”*

- 3.4 This vision has informed the regeneration programme and Towns Fund submission. This includes the SG1 regeneration project between the Council and Mace, the redevelopment of part of northern Queensway between the Council, Reef and Aviva, investments into the public realm, a new bus interchange, enhanced Town Square, a new and thriving offer in the Town Square North Block co-working facility, and a range of private developments.

- 3.5 The Stevenage Central Framework and the Local Plan set out clear opportunities and policies to enhance the town centre. Regeneration of the Town Centre is a vital contributor to the overall vision and strategy expressed in the Local Plan. In her report on the Public Examination, the Local Plan Inspector concluded that the 'policies and overall vision for the Town Centre are well thought out and have the potential to improve the Town Centre significantly in a number of ways', whilst noting the regeneration of the Town Centre would require work with local partners to secure funding to enable development, as well as private funding and investors to deliver schemes. The Inspector noted the opportunities presented by the current inefficient land use and environment of the town centre and the need for regeneration to help create a thriving and vibrant town centre. With over 7 hectares of surface-level car parking in the town centre, the adopted Local Plan identifies the need for alternative provision via MSCP facilities.
- 3.6 The Stevenage Central Framework identifies the need for the provision of a new MSCP to support the growth and expansion within the town, to create a vibrant and thriving town centre with a mix of uses from new leisure uses, places to work, places to enjoy, work space, high quality public realm and places for people to live and to improve how land is used in the town centre to support the creation of the homes, jobs and economic benefits sought in the framework and Local Plan.
- 3.7 The Local Plan itself (Policy TC4: Station Gateway Major Opportunity Area) identifies the need for new Multi-Storey Car Parking, specifically the following principles to include:
- at least one multi-storey car park and cycle parking plus drop-off space to specifically serve train customers;
  - high quality landmark gateway environment to create a positive image of Stevenage for all rail visitors.
- 3.8 An Area Action Plan (AAP) is being prepared for the station area, with consultation on-going. Although not yet adopted, this is expected to include a high quality and highly sustainable local environment, which could include a mix of uses such as multi-storey car parking, a hotel or other commercial uses, residential and office space. To assemble the land to achieve these aims, the existing car parking will need to be rationalised into a smaller footprint.
- 3.9. This project seeks to enhance the quality of provision for those using cycling and parking facilities, integrated with use of the station and bus interchange. The new offer will be designed to ensure facilities are suited to modern requirements and, have integrated climate change and sustainable transport measures such as quality and accessible cycle parking, electric vehicle charging, and utilise technology to enable us to maximise parking capacity to support town centre businesses.
- 3.10. The project has been included as part of the Station Gateway Towns Fund project, of the ten projects submitted to the Government in the Stevenage Town Investment Plan. The aims of this project are:

- a vastly improved and inspiring arrival experience and high-quality public realm at the gateway to the town;
- the stimulation of major investment commitments of developers and international companies to the development and occupancy of an extensive portfolio of new, high quality commercial space within the town centre;
- an exemplary sustainable car parking facility comprising 600 spaces demonstrating advanced practices in EV charging and the wide adoption of electric vehicles (including bikes and scooters) all powered from renewable energy sources;
- realisation of a sustainable, integrated transport hub enabling interchange between rail, road, cycle, bus and pedestrians. Capacity for ultra-low emission vehicle parking alongside rail and bus operations and cycling and walking;
- a sequential flow of investment in high quality floorspace and housing on three Station Gateway sites and throughout the rest of the town centre;
- recognition of Stevenage Town Centre as a high prestige location for headquarters and R&D for state-of-the-art technology companies prominent on the world stage.

### **Procurement and Design Development**

- 3.11. In November 2020, Executive approved the inception of this project. Following the decision, an Officer team and project group was established, with the aim of carrying out the following steps:
- appointing an external consultant with expertise to support the Council through the planning, design and build of the facility;
  - prepare tender documents to go to market for a design & build contractor;
  - carry out an OJEU-compliant tender to secure the optimum contractor to carry out the design & build process;
  - following appointment, carry out a design process to develop a proposal that responds to the prominent location of the facility;
  - prepare a design pack for submission for the purposes of seeking planning permission;
  - develop a full cost plan, and this to inform a funding plan for both the construction of the facility and its future maintenance/operation
- 3.12. The Council has appointed Calfordseaden as multi-disciplinary consultancy for this project. Tender documents for the construction contract were prepared for an open OJEU tender with Selection Questionnaire stage which enabled the Council to select the most relevant contractors for this type of building. This process and all subsequent elements of the project have been

carried out without prejudice to the options proposed in the Council's Station Area Action Plan, which is subject to separate planning policy considerations and process.

- 3.13. In November 2020, Executive approval was given for the Council to procure and enter into a Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA) with a contractor, to enable the contractor to develop a new MSCP design on behalf of the Council. As a result the Council expanded the appointment of Calfordseaden to include acting as Employer's Agent. Tender documents were subsequently prepared, including, employers requirements and other necessary documents for a Design and Build tender.
- 3.14. The tender for a design and build contractor was an OJEU process with an initial Selection Questionnaire, which helped to shortlist the most suitable contractors to take part in the ITT (Invitation to Tender) stage of the tender, based on factors including experience delivering similar projects. All tender returns were evaluated by an independent Panel Members, consisting of SBC Officers as well as independent Consultants from Calfordseaden.
- 3.15. Following the completion of the tender process, Huber Car Park Systems ("Huber") have been appointed as the preferred contractor due to the high quality of their tender return and the price offered was within the project's projected threshold. Huber have extensive experience of delivering similar projects across the country, with a standard build system, which limits construction cost and programme due to the utilisation of steel and standard sized concrete pads, which also allows for a bespoke external design of the cladding system. The company also has strong sustainability credentials and a proven track record of delivering high-quality developments.
- 3.16. During the tender process, prices were obtained for different stages of the design. During the first PCSA stage, the contractor and their design team carried out the necessary design and feasibility work required to develop the design from the tender concept through to planning submission. The second stage price is referred to as the General Maximum Price (GMP), which is the total construction cost; this is a target price for the contractor not to exceed, although revisions are expected in relation to any client design changes. The price will be adjusted during the second stage and in accordance with a detailed design being developed.
- 3.17. Should the Council not be in a position to enter into the construction contract ahead of the agreed target of March 2022, the current GMP price would expire and there is a risk that the cost of the project would increase significantly.
- 3.18. In the worst case scenario the Council would need to re-tender the construction contract based on the design developed by Huber. In this case the cost of the project could be much higher than expected and may even be prohibitive. The Council is currently in discussions with Huber relating to the risks around construction material price volatility and availability.
- 3.19. The initial design provided by Huber at the tender stage has been developed further. The design principles were presented to the Regeneration Executive Working Group in July 2021. The feedback from the session indicated that the design should be reflective of Stevenage's unique heritage and culture and

acknowledge the prominent location of the building. A new design was presented to Members on the Regeneration Executive Working Group and Project Sponsor in early October (see appendices A-F).

3.20. The new design for the MSCP features:

- 622 spaces; including 30 Blue Badge spaces (with an equivalent proportion of EV space for BB holders);
- provision of up to 25% of overall spaces are EV charging bays with an EV infrastructure provided for 50% of the MSCP, in an effort to futureproof the design and allow for considerable growth in the use of electric vehicles;
- secure bicycle hub for catering for approximately 80 bikes and 3 accessible bikes;
- a modular building design with perforated metal cladding providing natural ventilation and meeting the highest levels of fire safety standards;
- a design which includes perforated metal facades incorporating designs highlighting some of the best features of the town, as a unique car park for Stevenage;
- textured coloured pre-cast concrete stair cores - adding colour to the design and avoiding the need for use of more metal within its construction;
- coloured parking bays and lights at night will make the colour illuminate from the inside of the car park to outside.

3.21. As noted above the tender programme has secured a General Maximum Price (GMP) until March 2022. In order to enter in to contract, final commitments will need to be in place by the middle of February 2022, to facilitate a start on site in April 2022. Due to cost inflation and supply chain pressures across the construction sector, especially in relation to steel, it is anticipated that any delay – resulting in the contract being entered into outside of the GMP timeframe could result in additional costs in excess of £1m.

### **Town Centre Parking Provision and Impact of the Covid-19**

- 3.22. Following the relaxation of Covid-19 national restrictions and an observed increase in traffic, the Council commissioned a transport consultant to provide advice on town centre car parking capacity to enable SBC to make an informed decision on if, or when, any construction of new the car park should commence.
- 3.23. The report found clear evidence that, following easing of restrictions (after the first and second national lockdowns (2020 – 2021), traffic levels are returning to pre-covid levels and car park occupancy levels are recovering particularly for the railway and long stay car parks.

- 3.24. The longer-term trends in relation to covid-19 recovery are as yet unknown. The transport consultant used existing data, trends and behaviour to forecast demand to 2031 and the following high-level conclusions were reached:
- By 2022/23, commuter long-stay demand likely to exceed total capacity (spaces next to the station)
- By 2024 a demand for 1,727 to 1,750 spaces against an overall capacity of 2,387 spaces and an effective capacity of 2,148 spaces.
- By 2026-2028 (demanding on rate of demand increase), a demand for 2,079 to 2,110 spaces against an overall capacity of 2,387 spaces and an effective capacity of 2,148 spaces.
- Beyond 2026-2028 (depending on rate of demand increase), overall demand would exceed effective capacity.
- 3.25. Fully exploiting existing capacity is dependent on a number of factors, including customers being flexible about location of spaces, and the Council altering the balance of short-stay and long-stay spaces. Based on the current configuration, the report identifies that in both scenario forecasts, rail commuter / long stay demand will exceed capacity by 2022. This will require commuters and other users of long stay car parks to utilise spare capacity away from the station, e.g., at St Georges and Westgate.
- 3.26. From 2023/24 onwards, there will be a significant short fall in rail & long stay provision relative to forecast demand of some 400 to 500 spaces. This shortfall increases to 600 to 700 spaces by 2029/31. Due to the potential challenges of availability of railway station parking spaces during construction, there is the potential for there to be a significant one-off impact on car park revenue whilst the works are underway and this is being modelled and will be included in a future report.

## **Funding**

- 3.27. The Stevenage Development Board and Stevenage Borough Council were successful in securing £37.5M from the Town's Fund programme; detailed background on Towns Fund has been provided to Executive and Full Council in reports in October 2021. Up to £6M from this fund could be utilised to cover the part of the construction costs of the MSCP and cycle hub, which are key enabling works for the Station Gateway project. The Towns Fund allocation is subject to a separate business case and approval from the Council acting as Accountable Body and the Department of Levelling up, Housing and Communities.
- 3.28. Another Towns Fund supported project - the Marshgate Life Science Centre, is now under construction. The Council has sold the land required for the project for a capital sum of £4.85m which has been ring-fenced for regeneration.
- 3.29. A funding plan has been developed against the cost plan, which identifies the following sources of funding to contribute towards the project:



£6m to be funded by Towns Fund, subject to approval of the Station Gateway business case and submission to the Department for Levelling-up, Housing and Communities (CLUHC).

£200,000 funded by Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (Hertfordshire LEP).

£1.45m to be funded from Marshgate land sale receipt.

- 3.30. Based on a total budget of £9.7m a further capital investment of approximately £1.85 to £2.05m will be required; this could be met through prudential borrowing and as the MSCP will be a revenue generating asset the total cost to the General Fund is being modelled .

#### **4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS**

- 4.1. Following the progress over the past year, and taking in to account the different factors outlined in section 3 of this report, there are a number of key considerations to balance in the decision-making process. These include the:
- economic benefits of ensuring there is neither an under or over-supply of parking capacity, to ensure the most efficient use of land;
  - long-term threat to revenue income should there be a lack of desirable parking spaces in close proximity to the station;
  - financial challenges posed by being exposed to the recent construction material price inflation and/or losing-out on time-limited grant funding;
  - impact of borrowing on the general fund and the delivery of other services;
  - strategic benefits of making a significant quantum of land available for brownfield redevelopment, including significant local economic benefits.
- 4.2. The Council is currently in the process of developing an Area Action Plan (AAP) in support of the Stevenage Local Plan for the station gateway area. The proposed MSCP has been designed to suit the current layout around Lytton Way and the Station North car park; however it is also compatible with all of the options that the Council has been consulting on during the development of the AAP scheme.
- 4.3. The creation of the MSCP is a key enabling step in unlocking the Station Gateway area, as well as providing a key impression to those arriving at the station. It will serve commuters who are looking at convenient location for a car park when travelling by train as well as serving those that currently park there.
- 4.4. The MSCP construction price is only valid until the end of March 2022 and if a contract with Huber cannot be signed before this deadline there is a significant risk that the cost for this project will increase substantially. Whilst the optimum timing for providing the capacity is an important consideration, the financial impact of increased construction price and materials prices, and potential loss of grant funding opportunities means that the impact of delaying

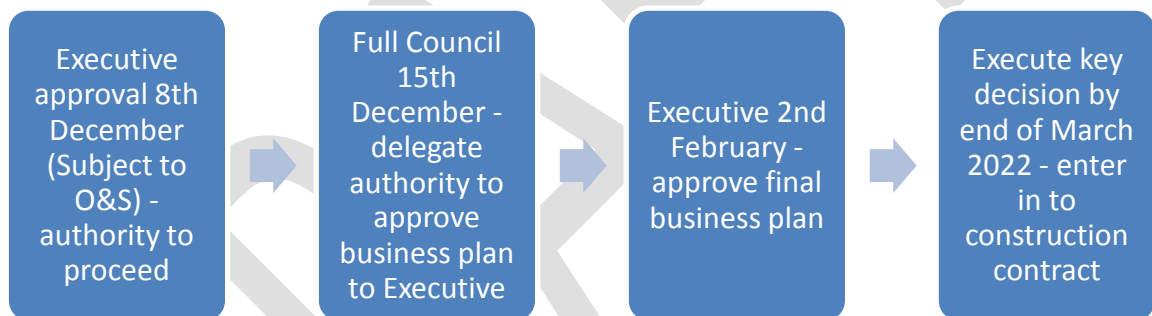
the build outweighs the risk of the building not being utilised to full capacity immediately when opened.

- 4.5. The parking data demonstrates that whilst the overall capacity within the town centre is sufficient for approximately 5 years, the capacity is not necessarily in the optimum locations or of the right tenure to ensure that there are no specific parking shortages. The highest pressure is predicted in relation to commuter/long stay parking close to the station – the overall capacity of this type of parking has been reduced due to the redevelopments that have already been committed.
- 4.6. Whilst the threat to revenue income can be mitigated somewhat in the short-term by altering pricing strategies and incentivising some rail commuters to use other long-stay car parks such as St George's Way, this would not provide an adequate medium-term solution. There is therefore significant pressure to ensure a long-term solution, such as the MSCP, is online in 2023 to reduce the threat to commuter capacity and income.
- 4.7. As set out in section 3, if existing capacity demands continue on their current trends, the construction of the facility itself could have a significant one-off impact on car park revenues. This is because the number of spaces available at the station will be substantially reduced to safely accommodate the development site. In practice, this is a risk and a challenge irrespective of when the car park is built, unless there is another substantial decrease in usage; however, committing to a construction contract when usage is below current capacity would in itself represent a significant risk and would solely be based on forecasted future parking demand. It is therefore considered that construction within the next 12 months is the optimum option, provided that substantial mitigation is put in place.
- 4.8. Officers across multiple Council teams have held initial discussions about potential mitigation. It is recommended that Executive approve the preparation of a detailed plan, which appraises all of the potential options. Some options – such as providing a temporary decked steel car park to increase capacity – will require feasibility work to carry out cost/benefit analysis, although this can be carried out within the existing project budget. The aim of the mitigation will be to:
  - minimise disruption to railway commuters and ensure any displacement is for the shortest possible period, with a significant improvement to quality and availability of parking once the new facility has been constructed.
  - Minimise any loss of revenue and forecast this as accurately as possible, as this will need to be absorbed by the general fund budget.
  - Retain current railway users, to ensure the long-term support for the excellent connections and services available from Stevenage.
  - Advertise and promote both the mitigation measures and improvements that have already been carried out in Stevenage Town Centre car parks, to ensure residents are supported through this period proactively.

- Increase the cleaning/maintenance regime of other car parks to ensure people are able to benefit from the best facilities possible during the period of disruption.

4.9. As the exact cost of borrowing and the forecasted one-off income loss are key financial considerations for the project, it is recommended that authority is sought from Council to Executive, to delegate the approval of the borrowing , provided the revenue costs to the General Fund fall within the Executive revenue delegated limits.

4.10. This will enable a future Executive meeting and subsequent Overview & Scrutiny meeting to examine the detail behind the cost plan, funding plan and income loss mitigation measures (once planning permission is granted (subject to independent consideration by the Council's Planning & Development Committee)) and projected costs and assumptions have been refined further, in early 2022. The approval process would therefore proceed as below:



4.11. Other options:

- repeating the tender process to see if a reduced price could be achieved:

Huber provided a good price considering the quality of the car park they can offer; the earlier tender process also returned higher cost proposals for the MSCP. Repeating the procurement process would take approximately 4 months impacting on the target date for submitting the planning application. As a consequence the project cost would increase. Advice from external experts is that currently construction market is very volatile – both in terms of price and material availability, which could result in a further significant cost increase.

- Delay the start of construction on site:

it is anticipated that costs would have risen by this point as Huber would not be able to hold their price beyond March 2022. There is a risk that new developments in the town centre could have impact on the car parking capacity.

- Not to build a MSCP:

commuters could possibly move to other towns when parking is more convenient. This option would result in an insufficient number of car parking spaces and consequential impacts on parking across the town.

The town is looking to create a night-time economy to bring more footfall to the town centre and trying to extend the hours when the town centre is operational. Those visitors should have the ability to park in a close proximity to the town centre giving them access to everything the town aspires to offer.

- 4.12. The Leader, Regeneration Portfolio Holder and Regeneration Working Group as well as an internal Working Group (that includes Officers from Estates, Landscaping, Finance, Parking, Planning, and Legal, Engineers, Procurement and Commercial teams) have been consulted on the potential design for the MSCP.
- 4.13. The project team has engaged with a number of external stakeholders: TOC, Network Rail, cycle hub providers, EV charging providers, an existing car parks electronic signage provider and relevant Consultants (Highways, Transport) who were able to investigate specific work required for this project. Highways consultants were engaged in order to check options for opening the northern parcel of land, Neptune Transport have provided car parking capacity and occupancy study.

## 5. IMPLICATIONS

### Financial Implications

- 5.1. The design and feasibility work carried out by the Council prior to going out to tender, and then carried out by the appointed contractor Huber, has enabled the production of a detailed cost plan. A number of these items, such as the electricity sub-station, cycle hub fit-out, and foundation requirements, include provisional sums or assumptions which will require further requirement, with contributions to the cycle hub fit-out likely to come from dedicated cycle improvement funding. This work enables us to reach a forecast total budget of £9.5-£9.7m, dependant on current discussions around material price inflation and risk.
- 5.2. A mix of funding has been identified for the delivery of the project, as set out in 3.27. This enables the Council to estimate the total funding gap required to deliver the project, which could be funded through borrowing. As there will be further refinement of the cost plan and risk items through the RIBA 4 technical design and following the planning application, it is proposed that a 'business plan' which draws together the cost plan, capital funding gap and source of borrowing is submitted for approval by Executive at a future meeting, should

Members be minded to support the recommendations in this report. Authority to Executive to approve this will be sought from Council as set out in 4.7.

- 5.3. In terms of financial risk, contingency has been included, and the total budget takes in to account 1.5% design contingency, 2.5% build contingency, technical assistance time and all professional fees. A lower contingency is included at this stage as the project is subject to a GMP as outlined earlier in the report, which is generally less financially risky than a typical construction contract, as more of the risk sits with the contractor.
- 5.4. It is worth noting that the funding gap is less than previously projected in November 2020, as this report seeks approval to utilise the additional sale price secured from the Marshgate land sale (£4.85m total) and the confirmation in principle of £6m of Towns Fund grant towards the construction towards the project. Unless other capital receipts are used, this does still have a capital borrowing requirement which will need to be paid back from 2023/24 onwards.
- 5.5. The current overall project cost is estimated at £9.5M taking into account the following Budget Clarifications and Assumptions:
  - Original Tendered Scope has been secured as Fixed Cost to March 2022 – Current Planning Programme advised would enable this date to be met
  - Change Orders are subject to Material Inflation Fluctuations and can only be fixed if Orders Placed now not so Risk Contingency allowed for
  - The facade strategy is based on the enhanced design which has been developed and any changes to this will need to be reviewed with Huber
  - The Renewables Strategy of PV panel + Battery storage needs technical New Diligence and cost validation. This option could replace the need for a new substation as it could provide some energy needed to cover the demand of EV charging points.
  - UKPN have yet to provide and Full Quotation for the Connection which may include costs not advised so a Provisional sum left in for £30,000
  - No CIL or s.106 Costs included in the budget as previously briefed by SBC Planning Team, subject to Huber meeting the most recent requirements for Developer Contributions
  - Ground Contamination and Statutory Diversions are still Provisional Sums in the GMP
- 5.6. The Council will gain a new asset which will need to be incorporated into the Asset Management Strategy. A new, good-quality facility should protect income in a more resilient way and provide opportunities to enhance income in the future. However, sufficient budget will need to be identified for the maintenance requirements of the new asset.
- 5.7. Protection of existing car park income is crucial; with the redevelopment of a number of long-stay car parks, it is important for the Council to ensure that as demand increases following the impact of the pandemic, a situation is avoided where permanent capacity falls below demand, which would result in lost income, although short-term mitigation could be put in place by changing the pricing strategy/type of some of the car parks. The recommendation

regarding preparing a capacity & income mitigation appraisal will be supported by the finance team.

- 5.8. The new car park will provide 622 spaces in comparison to the existing 339 car parking spaces.

### Legal Implications

- 5.9. The design and build contractor has been procured through an OJEU-compliant tender process.
- 5.10. The proposed form of contract is a JCT construction contract, which will be reviewed by legal services prior to any contract being agreed. The pre-contract services agreement (PSCA) allows the Council to end the contract on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2021 should a decision be taken to pause the project and not proceed further.
- 5.11. Legal services have already been engaged and provided input into the process so far through a commission from the regeneration team.

### Risk Implications

| NO | RISK  | MITIGATION ACTION  |
|----|---|--|
| 1  | GMP price secured until mid- March 2022 due to material prices uncertainty cause by pandemic and Brexit. If a contract is not signed the cost of the project is likely to increase significantly. | Sign JCT D&B contract by the middle of February 2022 to enable Huber to start placing orders with their suppliers.   |
| 2  | Approved new developments will change the future car parking capacity and delaying construction could result in behaviour change for commuters and shoppers                                       | Consider the best time to start building the car park as the construction completion will take 30-40 weeks.  |
| 3  | Slow responses from Statutory Consultees may not allow meeting the Planning milestone dates.  | Working with Planning Officers to find out if it could be possible to obtain an external independent advice where necessary. Although this could have cost implications to the project, it would allow the project to progress within the tight deadlines. |
| 4  | Cost of borrowing cannot be absorbed within general fund budget   | Utilising Towns Fund grant money (subject to approval) and part of Marshgate land receipt has significantly reduced the borrowing total and cost of borrowing;   |

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
|   |   | business plan to come back for further approval   |
| 5 | Impact of reduced capacity during construction on car park capacity and revenue | Mitigation appraisal to be prepared to review a number of options that could be taken in order to ensure maximum capacity and minimum loss of income; to be presented at a future Executive meeting in accordance with the decision flowchart |

### Planning Implications

- 5.12. The project team have engaged in pre-application discussions with the LPA in order to keep officers up to date on the project progress and timeframes. Officer comments have been taken into account in the design of the scheme and feedback has been positive. Officers have advised on the validation requirements for the project and the project team are ensuring that all items are in place in good time for the submission.
- 5.13. The proposed development is in accordance with the adopted Local Plan and the wider aspirations for the town centre and railway station area. The project team have also carried out pre-application engagement with the County Highways Authority to ensure that the scope of the forthcoming Transport Assessment is agreed, and that the scheme aligns with other ongoing works including the Bus Interchange and Lytton Way bus priority scheme.
- 5.14. To protect the agreed price with Huber every effort is being made to make the process as efficient as possible. The milestone dates are subject to Statutory Consultees providing their feedback within an expected period of time and an approval to enter into a JCT D&B contract with the contractor.
- 5.15. As per the SBC's new SPD Developer Contributions policy, Huber will:
- attempt to fill 5% to 10% of construction jobs on-site associated with their development with Stevenage residents,
  - attempt to fill one apprenticeship position per 10 construction jobs on-site with a Stevenage resident or student (with a cap for requirement of 10 apprenticeships),
  - provide a financial contribution in lieu of not achieving either or both of the above targets.

### Environmental Implications

- 5.16. The project team are preparing an embodied carbon calculation for the building. The selected construction system is extremely lean and efficient, minimising the volume of new materials that goes into its construction. Many elements of the building can be reclaimed and recycled, including metals and concrete. The project team have considered the future re-use or repurposing

of the building but MSCPs are not easily converted due to structural constraints, and to futureproof the structure for other more demanding uses would not be cost-effective. The parking decks are open-plan which means the parking layout can be easily modified if future needs change. Instead, the building is designed to be as lean as possible.

- 5.17. The building will meet aspects of a sustainable building and Park Mark quality. Options are being investigated that would involve the building generating the power required for the EV charging capacity. The MSCP will provide 25% of EV charging points with a further 50% EV infrastructure put in place that will futureproof the car park enabling a conversion of standard car parking spaces into EV bays. This will be one of a very few station car parks that would provide such a significant number of EV bays.
- 5.18. The facility will also encourage a greater use of bicycles thanks to modern, secure cycle storage.

### **Climate Change Implications**

- 5.19. The new facility will provide additional choice and convenience for residents who wish to utilise sustainable transport options to visit the town centre – this includes providing modern, secure cycle storage, a significant number of current and futureproofed EV charging points, and providing better links between different modes of transport. The design meets aspects of a sustainable building that adheres to the Council's Climate Change Strategy and Local Plan 2031. It would encourage the use of sustainable transport options in the long-term to help meet our climate targets.
- 5.20. The drainage design for the building takes into account climate change predictions for increased rainfall over the life of the building, in accordance with LLFA requirements.
- 5.21. Solar panels and a battery storage option are being investigated to power the electric vehicle charging points. This could mean that the facility is able to generate and store the power needed to charge the electric vehicles on site.

### **Staffing and Accommodation Implications**

- 5.22. Car park staffing numbers may need to be reviewed in order to have the right amount of staff available to run the car park especially when offering additional services (i.e. space hire, potential to offer the space for different uses etc.).
- 5.23. The cycle hub will be provided within the car park's footprint by an external provider who can manage the facility on behalf of SBC. This is the most common management model for cycle hubs.

### **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 5.24. The proposed building is fully compliant with Approved Document M and BS8300. The majority of the dedicated disabled parking spaces are provided at ground level close to the station access at the southern end of the site, with additional dedicated spaces provided on the upper floors adjacent to the



primary lift core. The current at-grade car park does not offer any blue badge parking bays.

- 5.25. Lift access is provided to all floors with two lifts provided for resilience in the event of a breakdown or maintenance. Disabled refuge spaces with intercom are provided at each level within both cores. A proportion of the disabled parking bays will be provided with electric vehicle (EV) charging points, to match the proportion of non-disabled EV bays.
- 5.26. The cycle storage will be required to provide a number of spaces suitable for outsize or non-standard bikes such as trikes. It is based at the southern edge of the car park making it easy and quick for the users to access the station.

### **Service Delivery Implications**

- 5.27. The design looked at the best way to create landmark building but also took into consideration the maintenance. Cleaning regime will be discussed in more details with SBC's Parking team who have already given initial comments on this.
- 5.28. Estates and Parking section to ensure they have appropriate staffing level in order to manage and maintain the new asset.

### **Community Safety Implications**

- 5.29. The MSCP has been designed in accordance with Park Mark standards and to reflect the design team's experience in working with Police Designing out Crime officers elsewhere. The MSCP has been designed to maximise natural surveillance into cores and parking decks, with good visibility across each level. The landscaping has been designed to deter antisocial behaviour and to improve the connection with the Cycleway to the western boundary. The height and design of the façade on the open top-deck is intended to deter people from jumping from the building.

### **Other Corporate Implications**

- 5.30. The new MSCP will provide improved sustainable transport options in Stevenage which are currently lacking. There is only an insignificant number of EV charging bays available in the town centre and none are provided around the railway station.
- 5.31. This project is in a response to Stevenage Central Framework and the Local Plan sets out a medium-term ambition to provide a MSCP on Lytton Way in close proximity to the station. It is also a key project as part of the "Transforming our Town" programme and contributes to "Making your money count"
- 5.32. This is a key project as part of the "Transforming our Town" programme and contributes to "Making your money count" through the retention of existing revenue from car parks. The project will deliver improved parking provision to residents, commuters and visitors encouraging them to stay/visit Stevenage.

## **APPENDICES**

- A Proposed Site Plan
- B Proposed General Arrangement South Elevation
- C West Elevation
- D East Elevation
- E Stair Cores Design Proposal
- F Night-time CGI

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