



St Edmundsbury
BOROUGH COUNCIL

B201

Cabinet 15 September 2010

Recommendations from Bury St Edmunds Area Working Party: 14 September 2010 (Sep10/05)

Chairman of the Working Party: Councillor Robert Everitt

1. Bury St Edmunds Visitor Trail: Issues and Options (Report B207)

RECOMMENDED:- That

- (1) the proposals for a new visitor trail in Bury St Edmunds consisting of a range of solutions (visual and audio) and improved signing be approved in principle; and***
- (2) officers develop the proposals and produce detailed specifications and costings for consideration by the Bury St Edmunds Area Working Party prior to approval by the Cabinet.***

The Council has allocated £20,000 for providing a new visitor trail in Bury St Edmunds. Developing a visitor trail and improving signing are recommendations in both the Council's Tourism Strategy and the Economic Action Plan.

Officers have been working with partners in the town to ensure that the trail meets their needs and complements what they are doing. The aim being to build a partnership to deliver this trail to ensure that it is a town-wide project and not just a Council initiative. The main issues that need to be considered in planning a new visitors trail are:-

- (1) the needs of visitors;
- (2) the needs of tourism attractions and retailers;
- (3) sensitivity of the historic environment;
- (4) robustness;
- (5) future proofing;
- (6) consistency; and
- (7) suitability for users with disabilities.

The costs of any panels will depend of the materials used. Partners in the town have expressed a desire for a high quality, robust and long lasting scheme, but the better the scheme the more it is likely to cost and the more important it is to ensure that the information provided will not go out of date quickly. A revenue budget needs to be allocated to ensure that visitor information and signs are kept up to date.

The most desirable time to launch a new visitor trail is at the start of the tourist season in the spring and, therefore, the target date for installation of this scheme is March 2011.

2. School Yard Land, Bury St Edmunds (Report B209)

RECOMMENDED:- That,

- (1) works be undertaken to use School Yard West as a weekly ticket holders car park and short stay car park on Sundays;***
- (2) School Yard East be retained as a strategic site; and***
- (3) until that time, to undertake works to use School Yard East as a 'sustainable' low emissions short stay car park.***

On 16 June 2010 the Council acquired two parcels of land which were surrendered by the tenant, Centros, out of the land they held under the arc head lease.

School Yard West

School Yard West, the larger of the two sites and the part which backs onto Nelson Road, is a rectangular parcel of land having an area of approximately 0.1 ha (0.25 acre). The land was used by Taylor Wimpey (now Vinci) as the site for temporary, prefabricated office accommodation during construction of the arc. Previously the site was a public car park in association with land to the north that adjoins Risbygate Street.

Officers have undertaken an investigation of the use for weekly ticket holders' car parking. The site is ideally located for short stay parking or for weekly ticket holders, for which there is a known demand. Providing weekly tickets on this site will allow the demand of this type of ticket to be accessible. This site could accommodate up to 40 spaces, currently it is expected that tickets will be for six days, but this may change to five depending on demand.

The current surface is uneven, and preparation, including marking out bays, repairs to the surface, barriers, signage and reinstatement of a spare ticket machine are estimated to cost £33,000. The estimated annual income is £54,000 for weekly ticket and Sunday short stay parking.

School Yard East

School Yard East, the smaller of the two sites which backs onto the Lacy Scott Auction Centre, is also a rectangular parcel of land having an area of approximately 0.05 ha (0.13 acre). Many years ago it was the site for public toilets, which were demolished and the site was left vacant.

In 2005 the adjoining owner, Lacy Scott, prepared a master plan for all the land in its ownership. This showed a phased development and incorporated School Yard East as part of the third phase. Phase one of 15 units is still under construction. Subsequent phases could be deferred for some years. Nevertheless, the Council's land could be a strategic part of any redevelopment proposals.

In the short term, say five to ten years, School Yard East could be used for car parking. It is proposed that the land could be managed as a 'sustainable' low emissions short stay park of approximately 20 spaces. This would support the Council's sustainable transport objective by rewarding owners of low emission cars. Designation of around 20 spaces is considered to be the appropriate number at the present time. The preparations of the site are estimated to cost £17,000. The estimated annual income is £11,000 for low emission parking offered.

3. Proposed Changes to Management of Off-Street Car Parks, Bury St Edmunds (Report B210)

RECOMMENDED:- That

- (1) the change to the Excess Charge Penalty for abusing the disabled drop off bay near to the cinema off Parkway Surface Car Park, Bury St Edmunds, detailed in Section 2.3 of Report B210 be approved;***
- (2) changing the restriction on blue badge holders only bays to 24 hours be approved;***
- (3) the removal of the prohibition on washing cars in car parks to allow formal car washing arrangements to be made in some car parks be approved;***
- (4) the provision of an experimental drop off bay in the Cattle Market/arc car park, Bury St Edmunds, as detailed in Paragraph 2.6 and Appendix A of Report B210 be approved; and***
- (5) re-drafting the wording in the Traffic Regulation Order for the car parks to clarify the display of parking tickets be approved.***

(1) Excess Charge Penalty: Parkway Surface Car Park

When the multi-screen cinema was built in Bury St Edmunds a drop off bay for disabled users was provided on the Parkway car park access road. Unfortunately this bay is subject to a high level of abuse by delivery drivers and members of the public visiting adjacent food outlets. The bay is clearly signed and regularly patrolled, however this does require a significant resource to ensure that it is available for the frequent legitimate users. To increase the deterrent for misuse of this bay it is suggested that the excess charge is increased to £100 (discounted to £40 if paid within seven days). The higher excess will be advertised clearly in the vicinity of the bay.

(2) Restriction on blue badge holder bays

Currently designated blue badge holder bays in the car parks can only be enforced during the hours of charging. This has resulted in complaints that they are unavailable during the evening. Therefore, it is proposed that the restriction on blue badge holder only bays be increased to 24 hours daily. It is not anticipated

that regular enforcement will be necessary, instead enforcement will be targeted in response to complaints.

(3) Prohibition on washing cars in car parks

The maintenance of motor vehicles, except in an emergency, is currently prohibited in the off-street car parks. It is suggested this prohibition is amended to enable car washing/valeting on a commercial basis. This service is increasingly offered in car parks and is well used by drivers. Providing this service will also generate additional income for the Council.

(4) Drop-off bay in the Cattle Market/arc Car Park

It has been observed that there is a significant demand for a drop-off facility within the Cattle Market/arc Car Park. Officers have assessed the car park and concluded that the only feasible location for such a facility is in the area shown on the map attached as Appendix A to Report B210. It is intended that if this area is established it will operate on an 'airport style' basis, i.e. vehicles only to stop for as long as it takes to drop off passengers and no unattended vehicles will be allowed in the area.

(5) Change in the wording in the Traffic Regulation Order

In view of national experience on challenges to parking tickets it is recommended that the wording of the section of the car park Traffic Regulation Order relating to the display of tickets is re-drafted to ensure clarity.