



Haverhill Area Working Party 11 March 2010

Conversion of Car Parking Area to Form Public Plaza

1. Summary and Reasons for Recommendations

- 1.1 Following completion of the refurbishment of Haverhill Leisure Centre, the car parking area to the front designated for parent and toddler parking has been used mainly by the general public attending the restaurants or cinema. As there is a surplus of parking available in the vicinity, it is proposed that the parent and toddler parking area be set aside to form a public Plaza.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Subject to the approval of the Cabinet, it is **RECOMMENDED** that:-

- (1) the car parking area, detailed in Appendix 1 to Report A559, be redesignated to form a public Plaza;
- (2) street furniture and play equipment be introduced and the cost be financed from the existing allocated car parks capital budget; and
- (3) seven of the spaces currently designated as disabled parking spaces be redesignated as parent and toddler parking.

3. Corporate Objectives

- 3.1 The recommendations meet the following, as contained within the Corporate Plan:-

- (a) Corporate Priority : *'To secure a sustainable and attractive environment';*
- (b) Cabinet Commitments : *'Future development of Haverhill';* and
- (c) Vision 2025 : *St Edmundsbury will be a place, 'where the wide range of accessible leisure and cultural facilities on offer provide opportunities for all sectors of the community'.*

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4.	Key Issues
4.1	The restaurant and cinema development to Ehringhausen Way formed a key part of meeting the overall Masterplan Vision for investment in Haverhill. Together with investment in the Haverhill Leisure Centre (HLC) it has brought about the dramatic transformation and improvement of this whole area.
4.2	Following the re-opening of the HLC the area of the car park designated for parents and toddlers has been widely used by everyone, in contravention of the designation. Regrettably, under current traffic management legislation it is not possible to enforce parking designations of this nature.
4.3	The use of the car park has been so intense, with cars parking outside of the paved areas such as between trees and on designated planted areas, that there is concern about future maintenance of the landscaping.
4.4	The proposal would see this area identified on the Plan attached as Appendix 1 to the report, converted to use as a public Plaza. It would be accessible to all, and be complemented by the installation of seating. It would act as a focal point and could be used for various public events including exhibitions. Being set in a Plaza also allows the new development, including the refurbished leisure centre, to be seen and appreciated without the imposition of cars.
4.5	There are sufficient car parking spaces available in the newly formed Meadows car park which has 250 spaces of which generally only 40 are currently being used. Additional capacity is also available at Ehringhausen Way where generally only 170 spaces of the 210 are used, with the exception of parking on Saturdays.
5.	Other options considered
5.1	It would be possible to operate the area as a Pay and Display car park for general use; however, this would be to relinquish all the benefits that a public open space would bring. For the reasons given in 4.2 above, it is not considered desirable to continue to operate the area for parent and toddler parking as originally envisaged.
6.	Community impact <i>(including Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and diversity issues)</i>
6.1	<u>General</u>
6.1.1	Making this area a public Plaza will form a focal point for members of public to meet.
6.2	<u>Diversity and Equality Impact</u> <i>(including the findings of the Equality Impact Assessment)</i>
6.2.1	Currently there are disabled designated spaces immediately in front of the leisure centre. Generally less than half of these are in use. It is therefore, proposed to redesignate seven of these spaces for parent and toddler parking, accepting that we cannot enforce against their misuse by others.
7.	Sustainability Impact <i>(including environmental or social impact on the local area or beyond the Borough)</i>
7.1	It is proposed to reuse the existing pavements.
8.	Consultation
8.1	Haverhill Members, Portfolio Holders, Abbeycroft Leisure, Management Team and Haverhill Area Working Party.

- 9. Resource implications** *(including asset management implications)*
- 9.1 The cost of the works are estimated to be £80,000 including fees. This allows for relaying the existing pavements into a formal pattern as opposed to parking bay layout, seats, picnic tables and bollards. It also allows for a play area to be formed together with play equipment.
- 9.2 Whilst car parking will be lost in effect, this is only being displaced into adjoining car parks so there will be no loss of income.
- 9.3 The cost of the works can be funded from the existing allocation for car parks (relating to the cinema development) contained within the approved capital budget.

10. Risk Assessment *(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)*

10.1

[YOU SHOULD CROSS-REFER THE REPORT TO THE RELEVANT RISK REGISTER (CORPORATE, SERVICE AND/OR PROJECT) AND USE THE ASSESSMENTS IN THOSE. A FORMAT FOR SUMMARISING THE RISKS WOULD BE AS FOLLOWS.]

Risk area	Inherent level of Risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual Risk (after controls)
	High/Medium/Low		High/Medium/Low
Damage to planted area		Remove parking including post and kneel rail	L

- 11. Legal or policy implications**
- 11.1 There will need to be a variation to the current Off-Street Parking Places Order to bring about the proposed changes.

Wards affected	All Haverhill Wards	Portfolio Holders	Economy and Asset Management; and Haverhill and Housing
Background Papers		Subject Area	Property Management Leisure, Sport, Arts and Culture

APPENDIX 1

additional disabled parking space

access retained

paving blocks re-laid to remove parking bays

seating

play feature – tree trunk

space left free for 'events'

tree replanted (raised bed?)

planting beds reduced

block paving extended to integrate space

new tree removed

