

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 15th September 2022

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Economy, Enterprise and Property

PORTFOLIO: Environment and Urban Renewal

SUBJECT: Brindley Green, Runcorn SCAPE Framework

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update of the development of the High Street Connectivity project in support of the Runcorn Town Investment Plan. It will seek approval to utilise the SCAPE framework for the integration of the already designed Brindley Green plans with the High Street scheme to Project Order stage. It will also update on the Inception Phase of the previously approved development of the High Street Connectivity project as per the Town Centre bid, which has led to a change in scope.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1) **the use of the SCAPE framework for the integration of the already designed Brindley Green plans with the High St scheme to Project Order stage; and**
- 2) **the delegation of authority to the Operational Director, Economy, Enterprise and Property to authorise the passing of the SCAPE gateways prior to this Stage.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Runcorn Town Deal programme of seven projects called “Reconnecting Runcorn” includes a project called High Street Connectivity. An Exec Board report January 2021 gave authority to start the development High Street Connectivity through the Scape Framework. Another Town Deal project is the Brindley Theatre Enhancement, which has two elements: the Brindley extension (with integrated library), and the Brindley Green (a quality open public space). The design of the Brindley Green is in similar style to the recently constructed Station Piazza. In order to achieve economies of scale, the delivery of the Brindley Green can benefit from integration with the public realm plans for the High Street. The section of High Street considered borders directly on the Brindley Green.

- 3.2 Following information provided by Balfour Beatty during the Inception Phase of the Scape Framework, budget limitations for the High Street Connectivity project became clear with regard to the previously proposed replacement footbridge across the canal. Consequently, the envisaged canal footbridge was removed from scope, and the Town Deal Board decided to focus the limited budget on improving the area along the High Street by including St Paul's mews, situated between the Brindley Green and the High Street.
- 3.3 The High Street Connectivity scheme is in concept design. Due to removal of the footbridge from the scope and inclusion of the area of St Paul's mews, the deadline for submission of business case is extended from 1 August to 1 November 2022. There are detailed plans for the Brindley Green, but the interface between the two schemes requires attention. The successful Business Case will then look to secure the funding of in total around £3.6m Town Deal funding to proceed with the works.
- 3.4 Due to the successful use of the Scape Framework for the recent completion of works on Silver Jubilee Bridge, Runcorn Delinking and Runcorn Station Quarter, it is felt that this would be a useful and timely mechanism to develop these schemes and by utilising Early Contractor Involvement ensure costs for the proposals as they develop are as accurate as possible.
- 3.5 We have a development budget of £68,460 to develop these two schemes, which will be utilised to secure any necessary surveys and third party design works. The Scape process is otherwise free to the Client for the first two stages of the process, as the Contractor is not completing costly tendering works. There is £1m HBC match funding for the Brindley Green.
- 3.6 The Scape process has six stages as shown in the Appendix. This report seeks permission to integrate the Brindley Green in the already authorised use of the Scape process to the end of Stage 2, and the Project Order gateway with delegation of Authority to the Operational Director for the approval of the Gateways up to this point. Once Stage 2 is complete and the Project Order is ready for approval it is proposed a further report will be presented to Executive Board seeking approval to proceed to pass this Gateway and onto construction. At this point funding would be secured. The Council reserves the right to stop works at any stage in the process outlined above until a Notice to Proceed is issued and therefore retains complete control. The terms of the Town Centre Bid state that construction is to be completed by April 2026.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None.

5.0 OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Utilising a pure Design consultancy to develop the two schemes could be completed instead but wouldn't achieve the accuracy of costs or enable the Contractors knowledge to be utilised in the scheme development in line with Construction Playbook principles. This would therefore increase the risk of cost overrun once a Contractor was engaged to complete the Project and reduce the potential for value for money efficiencies to be realised.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

Children and Young People in Halton The highway network is utilised and relied upon by Children and Young People in similar ways to any other demographic of the population.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

A Healthy Halton Improved sustainable links should encourage more people to walk and cycle, and hence develop healthier lifestyles.

6.4 A Safer Halton

A Safer Halton Improvements to walking and cycling links will be designed to improve the safety of the traveling public.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Halton's Urban Renewal Providing improved sustainable links to the town centre will improve the public realm and the reputation of the borough, thereby making it potentially more attractive to investors, visitors and to those who live here.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 The SCAPE Framework is a public sector owned and competitively tendered process. Pursuing alternative procurement options would prolong scheme development and implementation likely beyond the available timescales.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 None.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Appendix 1 Scape Process Map