

## **CABINET**

**15 JANUARY 2013**

### **ROCHESTER RAILWAY STATION RELOCATION AND NEW CAR PARK PROVISION**

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Rodney Chambers, Leader

Report from: Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration Community & Culture.

Authors: David Bond, Transport Operations Manager  
Rubena Hafizi, Parking Manager  
Noel Filmer, Valuation & Asset Management Manager

#### **Summary**

This report informs Members of proposals to re-develop part of the Corporation Street car park as a component of a scheme to re-locate Rochester Station and provide access to the Riverside development whilst providing additional replacement parking facilities for shoppers, businesses and rail users. Funding for the scheme was announced in the Network Rail National Infrastructure Plan in early January 2013. It is a £26-£28million investment in Rochester.

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

- 1.1 The value of the land to be disposed of is below £1,000,000. Therefore, any decision to dispose of the site is a matter for Cabinet.
- 1.2 The Cabinet is asked to accept this report as urgent in response to the Network Rail announcement on the scheme and to enable officers to start work on the proposals as soon as possible.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Council owns the freehold of the Corporation Street car park as edged black and hatched black on the attached plan (Area approximately 5385 sqm (1.33 acres)). The car park has 217 spaces.
- 2.2 As part of the East Kent re-signalling programme, Network Rail wishes to relocate Rochester Station onto the area approximately hatched black (Area approximately 1198 sqm (0.3 acres)). This will result in the Council losing approximately 103 car parking spaces from the Corporation Street car park. However, a brand new car park will be provided and run by the Council within

a few metres of Corporation Street, accessed by a new pedestrian subway. The new car park will be designed to accommodate the growth potential of the new station as well as not disadvantaging the current shoppers and businesses who need to park in Rochester. The new car park will be a minimum size of at least 134 spaces, but can be enlarged if a business case can be demonstrated. It will be built on land owned by the Council at Rochester Riverside. Vehicle access will be via Gas House Road or Blue Boar Lane and subject to planning consent and public consultation. To save money the compound, which Network Rail will need to hard surface on Rochester Riverside will, at the end of their building works, be designed for use as our car park surface. The proposal will have the following benefits:

- Increased platform and concourse capacity to cater for 12 car trains, rather than 9 as at present.
- Quicker more frequent/more reliable service up and down the line to and from London to Medway and beyond.
- Station better located for Rochester town centre and Rochester Riverside.
- Ability to better integrate with other modes of transport.
- A new pedestrian subway (to be funded by Network Rail) to link the new station with the Rochester Riverside site and Rochester town centre.

2.3 The station will be open in mid December 2015 and to facilitate this; work will need to start on site in February 2014.

2.4 Car parking issues/business case:

2.4.1 The new station will result in a reduction in the capacity of the current Corporation Street car park from 217 spaces to approximately 114 spaces. Car parking surveys have shown existing occupancy levels to vary between 50% and 60%, which, as an average, equates to approximately 119 spaces. During construction works, the works compound will be on Rochester Riverside and it is intended to provide additional temporary parking off Gas House Road, which is very close to Corporation Street.

2.4.2 Surveys have determined that there is a parking demand of 122 spaces at the existing station (albeit only 35 spaces are available), which gives a reasonable starting point for the calculation of the parking that would be required at the replacement station.

2.4.3 The new Station has been designed to accommodate a 30% growth in the number of rail passengers in the future. Assuming that how these passengers arrive at the Station is split evenly across modes of transport, this would give a demand for station car parking of 156 spaces. This is based on the existing bus usage of 7.8% for rail users arriving by bus. However, if increased car parking were provided above this figure, passengers might either decide to change their station of origin in favour of Rochester or switch to car from non-car based travel, if it is perceived to be more attractive to do so.

2.4.4 As the current percentage for bus usage (7.8%) is very low and because the new station is located on a corridor with high frequency bus services, it is not unreasonable to expect the bus usage to increase. Therefore, for the purposes of this exercise, a figure of 9.5% has been assumed

2.4.5 However, this figure is still very conservative. To demonstrate this a comparison of existing Rochester Station data with that gathered by the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC), as part of the introduction of Travel Plans at 31 stations across the country, has found the following benchmark splits for arrivals:

- Bus, 14%
- Car driver, 9%
- Car passenger, 3%
- Cycling 2%
- Drop off, 19%
- Taxi, 6%
- Train, 6%
- Walking 41%

2.4.6 Using the assumption of increasing bus usage by 1.7% to 9.5% would reduce demand for car usage to about 121 spaces for the new Station. The total number of spaces required would therefore be as follows:

- Existing users of car park, 119
- Proposed Hotel, 8
- New Station Users, 121
- Total, **248**
- Less the 114 spaces, which will remain at Corporation Street, leaves a shortfall of **134** spaces.

2.4.7 The recommendation is to accommodate all these additional spaces in a new car park to be constructed within the Rochester Riverside site and located close to the new subway, which Network Rail will build to link the site to the new station and Rochester town centre. The new car park will be managed by the Council along with Corporation Street as at present.

2.5 Fundamental to this proposal are highway improvements, which will be funded from the Council's Local Transport Plan. These will encourage the use of sustainable transport modes, as follows:

- New bus stops with high quality shelters
- Real time bus passenger information screens at both bus stops and within the Station concourse
- An extension of the existing bus lane (Without reducing the existing capacity of two lanes each way for other vehicles.)
- New controlled pedestrian crossing adjacent to the new station building
- Cycle parking, taxi bays and pick up and drop off within the main car park immediately adjacent to the station building.

2.6 Inevitably there will be some disruption during building work, but this will not result in the closure of the majority of Corporation Street car park and most of the building work will be in a new site compound on Rochester Riverside and will not therefore affect local businesses or shops.

### 3. Options

- 3.1 Do nothing.
- 3.2 Dispose of part of the site for a new station and do not replace the lost parking spaces.
- 3.3 Dispose of part of the site for a new station and replace the lost parking spaces.

### 4. Advice and analysis

- 4.1 Option 3.3 is recommended, as this will result in the benefits listed in paragraph 2.2 above.
- 4.2 Provisions will need to be included in the disposal documentation to ensure that:
  - The site can only be used as a station.
  - If the site is not developed as a station, that the Council can take it back.
  - That the pedestrian subway is built before the land for the station is transferred to Network Rail, so that the Council can make provision for additional parking on the Rochester Riverside site in advance of the station being open.
- 4.3 As stated above, on disposal of part of the Corporation Street Car Park for the Station, the parking spaces available here will decrease from 217 to 114 (a loss of 103 spaces.) Adding this loss to the predicted growth in demand will result in a requirement of an additional 134 spaces. It is proposed that these are provided on the Rochester Riverside site. It is likely that many of users of this new Rochester Riverside car park will be commuters using the new Rochester train station.
- 4.4 The current annual income for Corporation Street car park equates to £709 per space with the expenditure per space equating to £85 per space this leaving a surplus of £624 per space.
- 4.5 Network Rail has agreed in principle that it will fund a large proportion of the works required to construct the new car park to the meet the Council's requirements. It is anticipated that the only costs that will remain for the Council to fund are the top surface, bay markings, installation of pay & display machines, CCTV, lighting, signage and a legal order, an estimated breakdown of these costs is as follows:

Top surface	£135,000
Bay markings	£3,000
2 x Pay & Display Machines	£7,000
CCTV	£2,000
Signage	£2,000
Legal order	£1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£150,000</b>

- 4.6 Annual costs for this new site would include rates, electricity, general maintenance, cleansing and cash collection services, an estimated breakdown of these costs are as follows:

Rates	£6,000
Electricity	£1,000
General Maintenance	£2,000
Cleansing	£6,000
Cash Collection	£500
<b>Total</b>	<b>£15,500 per annum</b>

(Although the rates estimated above for the new site will be approximately £6,000 per annum, due to the reduction in spaces at the Corporation Street Car Park the rates here will reduce by approximately £4,560 per annum, the additional rates bill will therefore reduce to £1,440) Taking this into account, the total additional annual expenditure for the new car park will be around **£10,940**.

- 4.7 The average maximum usage at Corporation Street Car Park is currently 60%, of capacity, the loss in income following the loss of 103 parking spaces is estimated at £63,648 per annum, however, based on the current tariff for the Corporation Street Car Park, it is anticipated that the revenue from the new parking site will recoup this £63,648 per annum and will also generate a further £19,344 per annum, with an opportunity remaining for further growth, this income will enable the capital costs incurred for the new site to be repaid in under 8 years.

## 5. Risk Management

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Action to avoid or mitigate risk</b>	<b>Risk Rating</b>
The Car park does not make enough income to repay the borrowing to pay for it.	Income from the car park is less than anticipated.	Parking tariffs for this car park to be reasonable with other rail station parking facilities	D2
The Council leases the land to Network Rail but it does not build the station.	The station will not be built and the land could be sterilised for redevelopment.	The lease will not be granted until Network Rail has the consents and funding which it needs for the works and there will be a break-clause in the lease, which can be exercised if the station is not built.	D3

Lack of finance to fund the necessary highway improvements (Estimated at £350,000.)	Insufficient Local Transport Plan Settlement.	Ensure that this scheme is given top priority.	B2
Uncharted underground services.	Risk of major design change or the need to divert services resulting in extra costs and delays.	Carry out site investigations in addition to usual enquiries of service providers. These are to be done early in 2013/14 so that any issues can be addressed.	C2
Archaeological	Discovery of items of archaeological significance resulting in extra costs and delays.	To carry out Archaeological watching brief and written record of findings.	D3

## 6. Consultation and Programme

- 6.1 Consultation has taken place with the relevant service directorates and no objections to this proposal have been received.

## 7. Financial and legal implications

- 7.1 The Council is under a duty under s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to obtain best consideration when it disposes of land. In assessing whether a proposed sale price is best consideration, the Council is entitled to take into account any terms, which have a financial value to the Council. The proposed sale will require Network Rail to construct a pedestrian subway, in this regard, the cost of the Pedestrian Subway (around £1.8m) can be taken into account and the cost of these works exceeds the market value of the land, which is being disposed of. Therefore it is assessed that the transaction meets the requirement to obtain best consideration.
- 7.2 The car park generated a net income of around £135,000 last year. All else being equal, the reduction of the 103 spaces would lead to a loss in income of £63,648 pa however there will be more demand for the remaining spaces. As stated in 4.7 above, it is anticipated that the new parking site will recoup this and will also generate a further £19,344 per annum with an opportunity for further growth.
- 7.3 The Cost of the Highway works, which the Council has agreed to fund, is estimated at £350,000. These will be funded from the Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2013/14 allocation.

7.4 The site is included in the Rochester Riverside Collaboration Agreement with the HCA (Formerly SEEDA) and therefore the HCA's consent will be needed before the site can be disposed of or any rights can be granted across the Rochester Riverside site. The Corporation Street Car Park is included within the Collaboration Agreement with an agreed site value of £975,000 for the whole site. As a result, if the whole site is included in the Rochester Riverside development, then this will increase the percentage share, which the Council receives from any future disposals of the Rochester Riverside site. However the Collaboration Agreement does not cover the position where part only of the Corporation Street car park is included in the development. As a result, the Collaboration Agreement will need to be amended to take account of the Council's further investment in the site, so that the Council's share of any future receipts from the Rochester Riverside site is increased accordingly. It is considered that, whilst the site will be disposed of to Network Rail, the disposal, with the obligation to construct the pedestrian subway, will benefit the Rochester Riverside site within the Collaboration Agreement.

## **8. Recommendations**

- 8.1 Cabinet is recommended to delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Legal and Corporate Services, in consultation with the Leader, to:
- (a) Declare surplus part of the Corporation Street Car park site and to dispose of it to Network Rail to use as a site for a new station;
  - (b) Grant any necessary rights over the Council's land to enable the Station to be built; and
  - (c) Amend the Collaboration Agreement to reflect the inclusion of part of the Corporation Street Car Park as part of the Rochester Riverside site.

## **9. Suggested reasons for decision**

- 9.1 To ensure that the new station can be developed on the site and that there is no consequential net loss of parking spaces.

### **Lead officer contacts**

David Bond, Transport Operations Manager [david.bond@medway.gov.uk](mailto:david.bond@medway.gov.uk) 01634 334314.

Rubena Hafizi, Parking Manager [rubena.hafizi@medway.gov.uk](mailto:rubena.hafizi@medway.gov.uk) 01634 331725.

Noel Filmer, Valuation and Asset Management Manager [noel.filmer@medway.gov.uk](mailto:noel.filmer@medway.gov.uk) 01634 332415

### **Background papers**

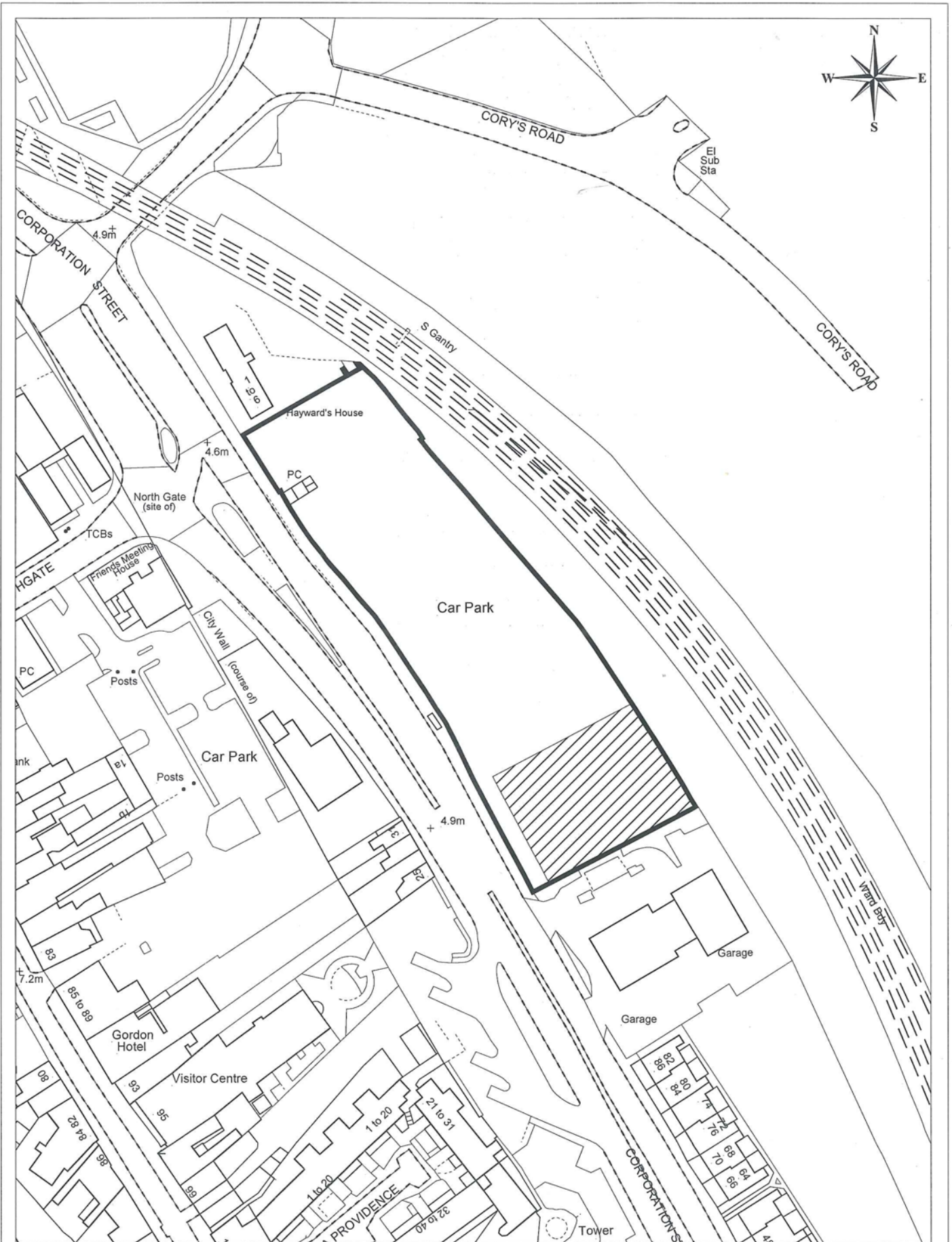
Corporation Street Development Brief  
Rochester Riverside Masterplan

These documents are available on Medway Council's website:

<http://www.medway.gov.uk/environmentandplanning/developmentplan/developmentbriefs.aspx>







**New Railway Station  
Corporation Street, Rochester**



*Serving You*

Scale: 1:1250 22/11/12