



**AGENDA ITEM:**

**EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW &  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:  
28 JANUARY 2021**

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**Report of: Corporate Director of Place and Community**

**Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor David Evans**

**Contact for further information: Peter Richards  
(Email: [peter.richards@westlancs.gov.uk](mailto:peter.richards@westlancs.gov.uk))**

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**SUBJECT: ORMSKIRK EASTERN GATEWAY PROPOSALS**

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Wards affected: Derby, Knowsley and Scott wards

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To present the plans prepared for the Ormskirk Eastern Gateway in partnership with Lancashire County Council, and to seek the committees comments on the proposals for feedback to Cabinet alongside the public consultation feedback.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That agreed comments on the Ormskirk Eastern Gateway proposals be submitted for consideration by Cabinet at their meeting on 9 March 2021.

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**3.0 BACKGROUND**

3.1 For some time, this Council and Lancashire County Council (LCC) have held the aspiration to create better cycling and walking links between Ormskirk town centre and Edge Hill University, and to renovate Ormskirk bus station. Both projects are referred to in the Lancashire Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3), the West Lancashire Highways & Transport Masterplan and the adopted West Lancashire Local Plan.

3.2 In addition, the section of Moor Street from the junction with St Helens Road to the junction with Moorgate is cluttered and in need of improvement, with pedestrian safety a concern where pedestrians cross on the bend as Moor Street turns into Railway Road and where pedestrians cross Moor Street from the bus

station to St Helens Road. Such improvements include the enhancement of the public realm in the pedestrianised section to Moorgate, to complement the works done by LCC further west along Moor Street (between Moorgate and the Clock Tower) a few years ago.

3.3 As these three projects were discussed with colleagues at LCC, and plans begun to be drawn up, it was clear that it is sensible to consider all three projects as part of one Programme of Works and that, together, the three projects will reinvigorate this gateway to Ormskirk Town Centre. As such, the projects have been brought together under the umbrella of the Ormskirk Eastern Gateway to ensure that all three projects are delivered in a complementary fashion and in a way which will create cost-efficiencies in their construction.

3.4 In terms of funding for this Ormskirk Eastern Gateway programme:

- The Council committed £185,000 of capital funding to the public realm improvements on the pedestrianised section of Moor Street;
- The Council has received nearly £500,000 in S106 monies from Edge Hill University, related to developments on their campus, for "improvement to local transport infrastructure to improve accessibility to the University Campus by means other than private car";
- LCC has earmarked £1.25m of LTP3 funding to the Edge Hill Cycle Link and Ormskirk Bus Station projects; and
- The Council were successful in a bid to Historic England for a Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) for Ormskirk Town Centre, which attracted over £750,000 of funding, £565,000 of which is earmarked to add to the various sources identified above to deliver the improvements to Moor Street, Ormskirk bus station and the Edge Hill Cycle Link.

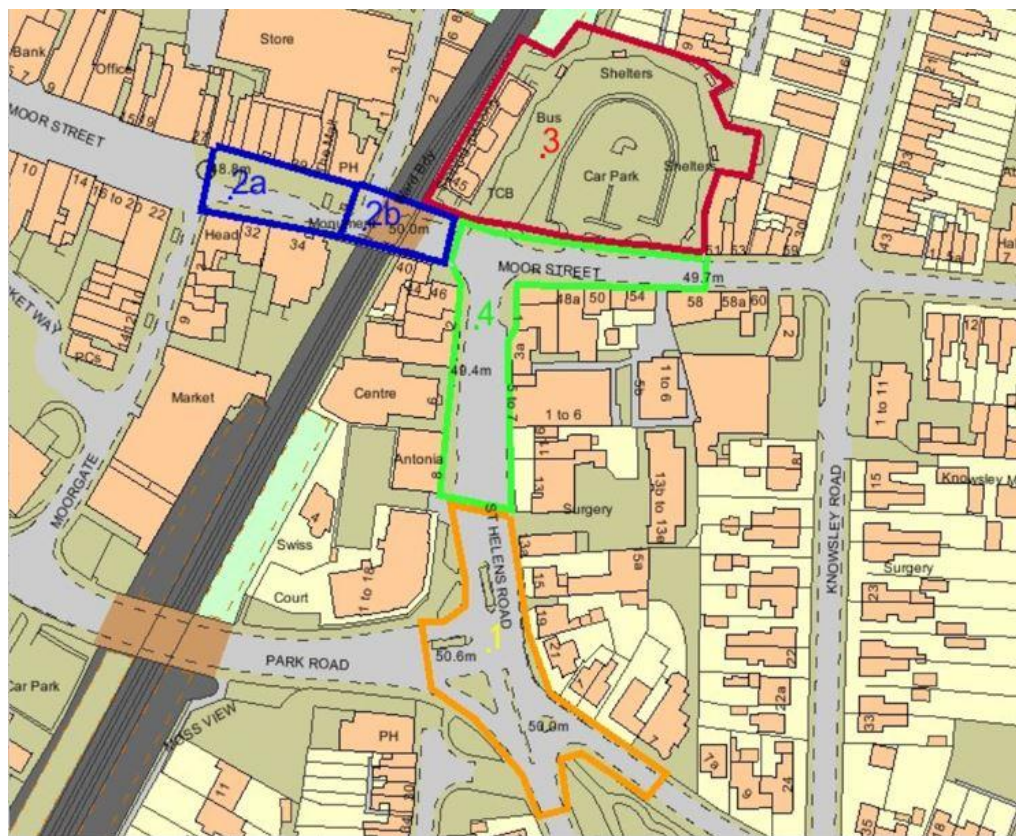
3.5 As a result, and excluding the S106 monies already spent on the rail station to bus station path in 2019/20 as the first step in delivering the Edge Hill Cycle Link, there is a total fund of nearly £2.4m available for the delivery of these three projects from a combination of the above funding. WLBC and LCC officers have now prepared proposals for delivering all of the projects within the Ormskirk Eastern Gateway between 2021 and 2024 and a public consultation on the proposals is (at the time of the Executive Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting) now underway.

#### **4.0 ORMKSIRK EASTERN GATEWAY PROPOSALS**

4.1 The Programme for the Ormskirk Eastern Gateway can be split into the following phases, as show in the plan below:

- Phase 1 - Ruff Lane/St Helens Road/Park Road junction (the improvements already agreed and planned for Spring 2021)
- Phase 2a – pedestrianised section of Moor Street from Moorgate to Railway Road

- Phase 2b – Moor Street from end of pedestrianised section to Bus Station
- Phase 3 – Bus Station site (including bus station car park)
- Phase 4 – Moor Street / St Helens Road junction



4.2 The plans provided at Appendix A show proposals in more detail for each part of the Ormskirk Eastern Gateway. Phase 1 was agreed by Cabinet in September (in allocating S106 monies to it), but in relation to the remaining phases, in summary, the proposals are:

#### Phase 2a

4.3 This Council consulted on proposals for public realm improvements on this pedestrianised section of Moor Street in August 2019. These proposals, and the feedback received from the public, has been shared with LCC, who will now work-up and deliver the proposals for Moor Street, seeking to match the public realm created on the rest of the pedestrianised section of Moor Street a few years ago.

#### Phase 2b

4.4 The proposals for this small section of Moor Street, over the rail bridge, are seeking to de-clutter the public realm in this area and narrow the carriageway to force cars to slow down as they enter this part of the road and then turn right onto Railway Road. The entrance to this area from the St Helens Road junction will involve a segregated cycle path crossing from the bus station to travel down St

Helens Road and a pedestrian crossing, and there will be removal bollards to enable access westwards onto Moor Street from the St Helens Road junction to be closed off for events and potentially for an extended Market. There will also be a defined pedestrian crossing of Railway Road for movement between the bus station and the pedestrianised part of Moor Street. Surface and public realm materials used in this phase will complement that provided in other phases and be in-keeping with the Conservation Area.

### Phase 3

4.5 In relation to the bus station site, the proposals involve the retention of the horse-shoe shaped road for buses and coaches using the bus station, with the car park sitting within the horse-shoe and fronting Moor Street. However, on that same basic layout, the proposals do involve quite significant changes to the bus station, including:

- The demolition of the existing bus station building;
- The creation of segregated cycle path north-south across the western side of the bus station (where the building currently is) to connect from the station-to station path in the north down to the new cycle path on St Helens Road;
- A new "Cycle Hub" for secure, sheltered cycle parking;
- The creation of a new, smaller building on the eastern side of the bus station to accommodate public toilets and facilities for bus drivers;
- A change to the exit from the car park;
- A redistribution of the bus stands (although there will still be five stands, with new bus shelters, for regular bus services and a drop-off/pick-up stand specifically for coaches); and
- New surfacing (in keeping with the Conservation Area) throughout the pedestrian areas of the bus station.

4.6 In addition, should additional funding be identified, the new toilet building could be expanded to provide a small new market office and storage room, to provide an on-site base within the town centre for managing the Market (this is currently provided within the existing building).

### Phase 4

4.7 This last phase of works will involve the completion of the cycle lanes and new crossings on St Helens Road / Moor Street, to link the sections already provided through Phase 1 and Phases 2b / 3. In addition, the proposals see a reconfiguration of the junction of St Helens Road and Moor Street to remove traffic signals from the junction itself and replace it with a mini-roundabout, and create a toucan crossing of St Helens Road just south of the junction to enable safe crossing by cyclists and pedestrians. This phase will follow-on from the completion of Phase 3, as temporary bus stops will need to be located on St Helens Road while the bus station is closed for the implementation of Phase 3. Surface and public realm materials used in this phase will complement that provided in other phases and be in-keeping with the Conservation Area.

## **5.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The delivery of the Ormskirk Eastern Gateway proposals will bring various positive benefits for sustainability and the community, including:
- improving the public realm in the area, to enhance the historic character;
  - making walking and cycling easier and safer between the town centre and Edge Hill University (and Ormskirk Hospital, via Ruff Lane entrance); and
  - making the town centre more attractive as a visitor destination, and so supporting the town centre economy.
- 5.2 Furthermore, the traffic modelling undertaken by LCC suggests that the improvements will not significantly increase journey times for cars around the gyratory or create congestion, but will provide much better public transport facilities in the Bus Station.

## **6.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The budget currently available for the Ormskirk Eastern Gateway proposals is outlined in paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5 above, and comes to a total of nearly £2.4m. The cost of the various elements of the proposals comes to a total of approximately £2.9m, and this would rise to nearly £3.1m if a larger building is developed on the eastern side of the bus station, to accommodate the small market office and storage room, as well as the toilet and bus driver facilities.
- 6.2 As such, there is currently a budget gap of between £500,000 and £700,000 on the project. WLBC and LCC officers are looking at various potential sources of funding to meet this budget gap, with the most promising source appearing to be LCC's recently created Economic Recovery & Growth Fund. WLBC have made an initial submission to LCC's Economic Development Service to apply for this Fund, and that submission includes funding to meet this budget gap on the Ormskirk Eastern Gateway proposals.

## **7.0 RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 There is no risk associated with this report, as it merely seeking agreed comments on the Ormskirk Eastern Gateway proposals from the Committee.

## **8.0 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The Ormskirk Eastern Gateway proposals will have health and wellbeing benefits as they will make it easier to cycle and walk through this part of the town centre and to the south-eastern side of Ormskirk. They will also create a more pleasant environment in this part of the town centre (which can benefit mental health), and improve safety at the Moor Street/St Helens Road/Railway Road junctions.

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

The Ormskirk Eastern Gateway proposals are likely to have a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders and so an Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared (see Appendix B).

### **Appendices**

Appendix A – Plans of Ormskirk Eastern Gateway proposals

Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment