

Capital Project Appraisal & Procurement Report

Project Title	Upper River Cam Biodiversity Project
Target Start Date	August 2010
Target Completion Date	Dec 2012
Project Manager / Lead Officer	Ellis Selway Community Reserves Officer
Scrutiny Committee and Portfolio	Environment Scrutiny Committee – Environment, Climate Change & Growth
Scrutiny Committee Date	16 th March 2010

1 Recommendation/s

Financial recommendations - 'The Executive Councillor is asked to recommend this capital scheme (which is not included in the Council's Capital Plan) for approval by Council, subject to resources being available to fund the capital and revenue costs associated with the scheme. The total capital cost of the project is £130,000, funded through the Citywide S106 Informal Open Space contributions. The annual revenue costs, expected to be no greater than £5,000, will be funded from the Single Farm payment (SFP) and Local Nature Reserve (LNR) budget.

Procurement recommendations – 'The Executive Councillor is asked to approve the carrying out and completion of the procurement of materials and services for the project. If the quotation or tender sum exceeds the estimated contract value by more than 15%, the permission of the Executive Councillor and Director of Finance will be sought prior to proceeding.'

2 What is the project? Provide a description of the proposed project, justify the reason for the project, and note what alternative options were considered.

Habitat and access enhancement works have been identified for Paradise Local Nature Reserve as part of the Housing Growth Fund (HGF) Green Necklace Project.

These works have received favourable public response and were scheduled for 2010. HGF funding has been withdrawn however officers propose to continue these plans, utilising S106 contributions for Citywide Informal Open Space, as part of a wider project to include the adjacent Sheep's Green and Coe Fen County Wildlife Sites.

The enhancement of all three sites has been identified as a key priority in the adopted Nature Conservation Strategy (2006).

Paradise Habitats and Access Project

£110,000 would be allocated to the Paradise Habitats and Access project to achieve:

- Biodiversity improvements involving earthworks to lower sections of the marsh and diverting water from an existing ditch through the marsh, reducing the

amount of time the marsh dries out in the summer months. It is evident that the marsh and wet woodland are drying out and this is having a negative impact on the wildlife that is supported by these habitats. By creating a sustainable drainage system (SUDS) we aim to utilise runoff to increase biodiversity and improve the water quality before it is finally discharges into the Cam.

- Access improvements to allow year round access; including the upgrading of existing pathways and access points to DDA standards, the installation of a new raised boardwalk, and extension of the existing boardwalk. Improvements to access will allow safer access and increase usage of the reserve by families. This will address anti social behaviour by allowing the opportunity for wider public use.
- Installation of a canoe platform adjacent to Lammas Land car park, with minor alteration to the car parking layout to allow unobstructed access to the platform and reserve entrance.
- Installation of interpretation panels and seasonal nature trail to signpost users from the Lammas Land play area to maximise the opportunity for families to enjoy the trail. A new nature trail leaflet would be produced.
- Subject to relevant approvals the works will be complete by December 2012.

Sheep's Green and Coe Fen Project

£20,000 will be used to implement the objectives of the Sheep's Green and Coe Fen Management Plan prepared in partnership with the Wildlife Trust:

- Installation of new Interpretation panels as part of proposed Local Nature Reserve Designation.
- Control of invasive plant species such as cow parsley and nettles to enhance grassland species richness.
- Tree works including the re-establishment of pollards and reduction of scrub/tress which cause significant shading to watercourses
- Channel works to create emergent shelves and access for cattle.

2010 has been named 'International Year of Biodiversity' by the United Nations and Cambridge City Council has pledged support to this initiative and the launch of this project would demonstrate the authorities commitment.

3 Outline the aims and objectives of the project and highlight how it contributes to achieving the Council's Medium Term Objectives.

MTO: Lead the growth of Cambridge to achieve attractive, sustainable new neighbourhoods, including affordable housing, close to a good range of facilities, and supported by transport networks so that people can opt not to use the car

Service Objective 10: To conserve (protect and enhance) the distinctive historic and natural environments of the City

Management and promotion of nature conservation and biodiversity through:

- Adopt Coe Fen & Sheep's Green management plan and Investigate LNR designation
- Develop and secure funding for Paradise LNR enhancement project

The project supports the Council's Nature Conservation Strategy objectives, both through the enhancement of an existing LNR (Paradise LNR) and the positive management of the adjacent Sheep's Green and Coe Fen County Wildlife sites. The designation of Sheep's Green and Coe Fen as Local Nature Reserves is proposed for 2011.

4 Identify and summarise the impact on and major issues for stakeholders & other departments. Summarise the key results of initial consultation (including members where appropriate).

The following key stake holders have been consulted and full support has been given with have no objections:

- Residents of Newnham (Paradise Open Evening)
- Councillors
- The Local Wildlife Trust
- Environment Agency, Cam Conservators
- Nature Conservation Strategy Implementation Group

The Sheeps Green & Coe Fen Management plan has been drafted in consultation with key officers and stakeholders. It is planned that this will go to public consultation in Spring 2010.

This joint project will positively benefit the county NI197 target to increase the number of local wildlife sites in favourable management.

5 Procurement. What resources for this project will be procured from outside the Council? What method of procurement are you to use? What is the estimated total value for each procurement element?

Individual elements of the project could be procured by obtaining three written quotes (<£30,000) and/or through invitation to tender for works and/or utilising the Environmental Improvement Schedule of Rates for Engineering Projects. Figures are based on quotes received for previous work and/or Schedule of Rates.

Paradise Habitat and Access Project:

Biodiversity improvements: £30,000

- Three written quotes to be obtained.

Access improvements: £77,000

- Contractors used for previous projects on LNR's would be asked to provide quotes on the access elements of the project. Scottish Natural Heritage Specifications based on DDA requirements would be given where appropriate

i.e. path, boardwalk and access point design.

- Invitation to tender or Environmental Improvement Schedule of Rates for Engineering Projects would be used.

Interpretation: £3000

- Use of current supplier of interpretation materials.

Sheep's Green and Coe Fen Project:

Project cost £20,000

- Streetscene and Contractors used for previous LNR projects. Tree work will be advertised using the Arboriculture Team's procedures and guidance.

6 Summarise key risks associated with the project. Include the key risks the project aims to mitigate, risks involved in delivery of the project and risks that might occur if the project does not take place.

- Paradise LNR and Sheep's Green/Coe Fen contain both national and local priority habitats and species, including wet woodland, lowland grassland and river and streams; supporting species such as Dunnock, Bullfinch, Song Thrush, Spotted Flycatcher, Starling, Common Lizard, Common Toad, Grass Snake, Otter, Pipistrelle Bat, Harvest Mouse, and Hedgehog (Section 41 NERC Act: Species of principal importance in England).
- The project supports the objectives contained within Cambridge City Council's Nature Conservation Strategy adopted in November 2006 through the enhancement of an existing/proposed LNR's to benefit biodiversity.
- Much of the access work would improve site safety and duty under the DDA act.
- Without the proposed biodiversity works the marsh/wet woodland at Paradise LNR and the grasslands of the County Wildlife Sites would further deteriorate and CCC would be failing in its duty to biodiversity under the NERC Act 2006.

7 Financial implications. Comment on any special financial considerations associated with the project such as grant or funding conditions. Ensure that any additional insurance costs/implications are considered.

Appraisal prepared on the following price base

2010 / 2011

The maximum capital cost of the project is £130,000. Materials used including recycled plastic would be durable, virtually maintenance free and covered under the councils insurance, in the same way as existing Local Nature Reserve infrastructure.

The revenue costs of the project are expected to be no greater than £5000 annually, and can be funded from the Local Nature Reserve revenue budget and Single Farm payment received for the Commons. In addition the weekly LNR volunteer team would be tasked with elements of the initial project and maintenance.

8A Capital costs & funding		
	£	Comments
Capital Costs		
Biodiversity Works (Paradise)	30,000	
Access works (Paradise)	77,000	
Interpretation costs	3,000	
Sheep's Green/Coe Fen costs	20,000	All costs
Total Capital cost	130,000	
Capital Income / Funding		
Citywide S106 Informal Open Space contributions	130,000	Requested funding
Revenue contributions		
Total Income	130,000	
Net Capital Bid	0	
Expenditure profiling:		
	£	Comments
Year 1: 20010 / 2011	107,000	<i>(Usually the current financial year)</i>
Year 2: 2011 / 2012	23,000	
Net Capital Bid		

Appendix A, Capital Project Appraisal profiling, should also be completed.

8B Revenue costs			
	In 2011/12 per (year) £	Ongoing £	Comments
Revenue Costs			
Employees			
Premises costs	5,000	5,000	SFP and LNR budget
Transport			
Supplies & Services			
Repair & renewal contributions			
Total revenue cost	5,000	5,000	
Revenue Income			
New charges, rents etc.			
Existing revenue budget/s	5,000	5,000	
Total income	5,000	5,000	
Net revenue bid	0	0	

9 VAT implications. Comment on any VAT implications identified in consultation with the Finance Department.

- There are no adverse VAT implications to this project

10 Other implications. Comment on any other relevant implications including property, accommodation, environmental, health & safety, community safety, procurement, human resource, equal opportunities and diversity.

- These works provide safe access along the river and around the reserve, as well as enhancing biodiversity. It is hoped that these works would help to reduce anti-social behaviour at Paradise LNR.

11 Estimate of staffing resource required to deliver the project. Comment on the availability of internal project team resources. Ensure that the costs of external resources required have been included in the financial table/s above.

- The project would be implemented by the Community Reserves Officer and be overseen by the Nature Conservation Projects Officer. Volunteers from the Tuesday Conservation Group would provide additional help. Work has already started on the design of the individual elements of the project. Tree felling work at Paradise LNR is due to be completed before 1st March 2010 to allow phasing of proposed works and to minimise disturbance to wildlife. Work is on-going on preparation of the FD1 application for flood consent from the Environment Agency and planning application if required.
- Works would be completed by end of December 2012.

Skills required / internal or external	Estimated number of hours	Proposed Timescale	
		Start date	Finish date
Community Reserves officer/volunteers	50hrs/annum	April 2010	On-going

12 Identify any dependencies upon other work or projects. Identify any other projects which cannot progress until this particular piece of work is complete

- N/A

13 Background Papers. List any background papers used in the preparation of this project appraisal.

- Landscape Master plan (June 2008) Paradise Project
<http://www.lnr.cambridge.gov.uk/uploads/Paradise-LMP1.067.pdf>
- CCC Nature Conservation Strategy (2006).
<http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/public/pdfs/Nature-Conservation-Strategy.pdf>
- Biodiversity Action Reporting System
<http://www.ukbap-reporting.org.uk/uploaded/files/S41%20NERC%20List%20-%20May%202008v2.xls>

14 Inspection of papers

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Filename/path	N:\POLICY AND PROJECTS\LNR Sites\LNR 070 Paradise\071 Reserve Management	Last amended	23/09/2010 15:23

Finance Department use only:

Project Approval Dates	Date
Approved by DoF	
Reviewed by AMG / ICT	
Executive Councillor Approval	
Scrutiny Committee Approval (if applicable)	
Council Funding Approval	
Added to Hold List	
Removed from Hold List	
Added to Capital Plan	

Capital Project Appraisal - Capital costs & funding - Profiling

Appendix A

Make sure year headings match start date ...

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	
Capital Costs						
Building contractor / works		107,000	23,000			
Purchase of vehicles, plant & equipment						
Professional / Consultants fees						
Other capital expenditure:						
Total Capital cost	0	107,000	23,000	0	0	
Capital Income / Funding						
Government Grant						
S106 funding		107,000	23,000			Citywide Informal Open Space
R&R funding						(State cost centre/s)
Earmarked Funds						(State cost centre/s)
Existing capital programme funding						(Programme ref.)
Revenue contributions						(State cost centre/s)
Total Income	0	107,000	23,000	0	0	
Net Capital Bid	0	0	0	0	0	