



To: Executive Councillor for Streets and Open Spaces:
Councillor Anna Smith

Report by: Head of Streets and Openspaces

Relevant scrutiny Customer and 5/10/17

Committee: Community Services Committee

Wards affected: Arbury, Kings Hedges and W Chesterton

LOCAL CENTRE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME (LCI) – ARBURY COURT LOCAL CENTRE PROJECT

Not a Key Decision

1.0 Executive summary

- 1.1 This report details the development, proposed improvements and completed consultation for Arbury Court Local Centre Project.
- 1.2 The scheme involves soft and hard landscaping, upgraded crossing point across Arbury Road, improved lighting and public realm in and around Arbury Court. The City Council part of the project has been developed as part of the Local Centres Improvement Programme, for which approval was granted by the Executive Councillor for City Centre and Public Places in October 2014, to improve two local centres (Cherry Hinton High Street and Arbury Court) with a third to be determined.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive Councillor is recommended to:
- a) Note the results of public consultation on improvements to Arbury Court as set out in **Appendix A**.
 - b) Note that the scheme is being proposed for funding through the Mid-Year Financial Review (MYFR), following Capital Programme Board approval 04/07/2017.
 - c) Support the proposed improvements to Arbury Court Local Centre as illustratively set out in Appendix B for further development and implementation.

3.0 Background

Local Centres Improvement Programme

3.1 The Local Centres Improvement (LCI) Programme was agreed initially by resolution of full Council in February, 2014, for targeted improvements to select local centres, for 3 Local Schemes of between £200,000 and £340,000 to 2019/20. At Community Services Scrutiny Committee (CSSC) July 2014 a proposed approach to the LCI programme was agreed for the years 2014 to 2020 with an audit criteria and approach for selection of local centres to be presented to the next CSSC. Then at CSSC in October 2014 a phased-in budget of £635,000 for the targeted three projects, specifically Cherry Hinton High Street, Arbury Court and Mitcham's Corner pending design was approved. However following this budget approval the funding was reserved and an indicative value of £635,000 was placed on the Projects under Development list.

3.2 In addition at the meeting of the CSSC on October 16, 2014, the Executive Councillor for City Centre and Public Places approved a detailed audit of Local Centres and the recommendations were as follows:

- i. the selection of Cherry Hinton High Street and Arbury Court centres for inclusion in the Local Centre Improvement Programme for the reasons set out in the officer's report;*
- ii. the retention of a third priority project to be added to the programme, after debate at scrutiny committee, at a later date pending the outcome of progress with planned work related to the Mitcham's Corner District Centre as part of City Deal implementation; and*
- iii. that the detailed funding, design and delivery of improvements to Cherry Hinton High Street and Arbury Court be the subject of Project Appraisals to be approved by the Executive Councillor for City Centre and Public Places at a future committee meeting.*

3.3 The third resolution above notes the need for the approval of a "Project Appraisal" the Part B project appraisal went to Capital Programme Board and was approved 04/07/2017. The resolution also required the same to be approved by the Executive Councillor at a future committee meeting, in essence this meeting.

3.4 Cherry Hinton High Street Local Centre Improvement was completed in 2016 in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council's Cross City Cycleway Improvement Programme.

4.0 Arbury Court Local Centre Improvement

4.1 The project steering group was formed in January 2016 to develop and shape a project to improve Arbury Court. Following a general stakeholder workshop in March 2016. 3 key general thematic areas were identified:

- Shops and Facilities
- Public Realm and
- Public Safety

This also identified that the Local Centre of Arbury Court is not functioning as well as it could.

4.2 Following this public consultation was undertaken during May and June 2017 on the outline design. Designs were presented to the public through a range of media to encourage and ensure the general public were able to interact and give feedback on their views towards the design and project principles.

4.4 Arbury Court was one of the three chosen centres deemed to be most in need of improvement following a local centres strategic appraisal. The aim of the improvements are to focus on the public realm around the retail space, which is set to include upgrading street furniture, improved signage, improved lighting, surface treatment, new soft and hard landscaping, as well as improvements to access points including the pedestrian crossing point.

4.5 The design consultation reinforced the ideas and views on improvement required in the area. 109 responses were received with 78% of respondents rating the scheme 6 out of 10 or more. Following this consultation the designs were then adapted accordingly and presented to the Steering Group (who were happy with the proposals).

4.6 Cambridge City Council Capital Programme Board approved (04/07/2017) the project to be considered by full Council as part of the MYFR (19/10/2017) and now Scrutiny Committee determination.

5.0 Implications

A decision not to approve the capital bid will impact on the credibility of Cambridge City Council delivering what they say they will particularly considering all the work undertaken see section 4. No decision will mean the project cannot deliver and this could have financial, staffing, equality and poverty, environmental, procurement, consultation and communication and / or community safety implications.

(a) **Financial Implications**

Total City Council funding of £200,000 has been identified and included in the MYFR by the City Council's Capital Programme Board.

Local Centres Improvement Programme Budget - October 2017

(Total remaining in LCI Budget currently is **£384,282**)

Local Centre or Project	Requested Allocation	Spend
Cherry Hinton High Street Local Centre	£215,718	£215,718
Arbury Court Local Centre	£200,000	£0
Mitcham's Corner ¹	TBC	£0

The County Council are separately providing funding for the creation of improved cycling facilities which includes upgraded and widened crossing point on Arbury Road.

(b) **Staffing Implications**

Client team staffing costs will need to be met from the overall project budget for Local Centres.

(c) **Equality Opportunities and anti-poverty implications**

An EQiA was completed for the project and determined that the impact of the scheme would be positive overall. The assessment identified no significant negative impact, whilst positive impacts included improved access and egress between communities across Cambridge for pedestrians and other active transport modes, the project also helps promote equal opportunity and economic prosperity through improved quality of environment in the local centre, regardless of economic status, age, ability or orientation.

(d) **Environmental Implications**

The environmental implications of the programme are considered to be positive as they support the quality and continuity of the city's neighbourhoods through the improvement of selected local centres and will be positive for residents, the local economy and businesses. However the assessment doesn't consider impact on the public environment and therefore the assessment considered the project to have a nil impact overall.

¹ Mitcham's Corner has a Planning Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the area see link [Mitcham's Corner Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document | Cambridge City Council](#). This project is supported by Cambridge City Council through the SPD; work is underway in partnership with the Greater Cambridge Partnership (Former City Deal) to identify funding opportunities to enhance the area.

(e) **Procurement**

The procurement process will be undertaken by the Cambridge City Council in accordance with the City Council's procurement rules.

(f) **Consultation and communication**

Significant local public and stakeholder engagement has been undertaken to inform and determine the scope and design. For more details see **Appendix A** as well as comments included in the main body of this report.

(g) **Community Safety**

The programme is designed to deliver public realm improvements and foster increased pride of place and community cohesion. As such, it is expected to have a positive impact on community safety.

6.0 Background papers

- Budget Papers 2014/15 Agenda item 5 and report for Council Meeting 27 February 2014.
- Report for Agenda Item 12 Community Services Scrutiny Committee of July 11, 2014.
- Community Services Scrutiny Committee Minutes of October 16, 2014
- Report for Agenda Item 12 Community Services Scrutiny Committee of October 16, 2014.
- Arbury Court Steering Group Notes 29/06/2017.
- Full Public Consultation Report on Arbury Court Local Centre Design 03/07/2017.
- Capital Programme Board Minutes 04/07/2017.

7.0 Appendices

Appendix A – Summary Report on the Design Consultation for Arbury Court Local Centre.

Appendix B – Arbury Court Local Centre design proposals (2x 3-D Consultation Design Proposals)

8.0 Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

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Appendix A

Summary Report on the Design Consultation for Arbury Court Local Centre

Purpose

To outline the feedback from the consultation and analyse the responses giving an indication/recommendation of how the design can move from developed design through to final concept design.

Background

- Local Centres Programme approved in Feb 2014 – at Full Council
- Arbury Court project has been developing since Jan 2016.
- Steering Group and stakeholder workshop identified local centre not functioning as well as it could - 3 key themes identified
- A key concept design option(s) workshop at the end of September 2016 was held which looked at 5 options for the main square space. The Steering Group at this meeting agreed to a woodland concept design. This design was then developed further into a 3-D simulation and then exhibited to the public from the 8th May to June 16th 2017.

Consultation Method

A number of media options were undertaken to encourage and ensure the general public were able to interact and give feedback on their views towards the Design and project principles. The main methods included:

- Electronic consultation leaflet made available on Cambridge City Council consultation webpage
- Leaflets distributed to the Residents and Businesses of Arbury Court
- Exhibition set-up at Cambridge North Academy, Arbury Community Centre, Arbury Library and the Gurdwara on Arbury Road.
- Exhibition at the Arbury Festival and at North Area Committee.

Question Response Summary

- 109 responses received
- Rating for the design average was 6.84 out of 10
- With 78% giving the scheme 6 out of 10 or more
- 22% 5 out of 10 or less

- Of the 59 respondents who highlighted the elements they disliked about the scheme we received:
 - 4 x who wanted to improve the entrance areas of Alex Wood Court and Leys Ave more
 - 5 x who wanted to increase the cycle parking
 - 6 x want to ensure event space still available for xmas tree and events etc
 - 6 x respondents think the maze is a benefit and wouldn't want it to go.
 - 9 x people wanting more colour or too retain planters
 - 7 x people suggesting too many trees or don't like the concept
 - 4 x people wanting to plant more trees

- 6 x saying no need for artwork/signage wayfinding
 - 5 x not wanting feature paving because of cost or don't feel it achieves anything.
 - 3 x people wanting more facilities shops and cafes
- 53 responses outlined ideas to improve the scheme/project
 - Improvements to entrance ways particularly Alex Wood Road, Leys Ave (x6)
 - Room for additional activities particular events (Christmas tree etc) and market trading (x4)
 - Flower, colour and Planting beds (x5)
 - Gardening Project (x2)
 - More stores such as café with outside seating (x4)
 - Cycle path/route issues (cycle signage) improved connections (x7)
 - Clean the area (x6)
 - Community Defibrillator unit (x1)
- **To the question about design of the interpretation panels, entrance features and signage**
 - 78% (Of the 74 respondents) supported the design, 22% (16) did not
 - 31 further comments on the designs to be passed onto Artist and any relevant amendments made.

Comments Overall

- We have had responses from either end of the range supportive and against the suggested design and scheme but there is a need to concentrate on the majority and the averages of the 109 responses.

Recommendations as Outlined

Proceed as per the implementation and design proposals; with the following exceptions highlighted in the public consultation responses:

- That the screening next to Gurdwara is now a decorative feature.
- That the bushes/shrubs planted, flower, blossom or bring colour to the area at certain points in the year.
- Functional (decorative) artist to continue to work up the designs with Officers and public representatives particularly the wording and images.
- As the walls and associated planters are due to be removed there may be a need to deter

THE FULL PUBLIC CONSULTATION REPORT IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Appendix B
Arbury Court Local Centre – Consultation Design Proposal (1)



