

<b>DECISION-MAKER:</b>	PLANNING AND RIGHTS OF WAY PANEL		
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	REMOVAL OF TREES – STATION QUARTER AND WESTERN GATEWAY		
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	20 AUGUST 2013		
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	HEAD OF CITY SERVICES		
<b><u>CONTACT DETAILS</u></b>			
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#### **STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

None.

#### **BRIEF SUMMARY**

The highway and public realm enhancements north of Southampton Central Train Station (Station Quarter (north) and Wyndham Place) is an improvement project, which forms a component of the Future Southampton City Centre VIP projects, Phase 1 of the Station Quarter (north) improvement programme seeks to deliver public realm improvements and highway enhancements, the design proposed however seeks the removal of 24 trees. A minimum of 24 new trees will be planted in replacement, the species to be agreed with the Tree Officer.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- (i) To allow the removal of 24 trees to enable the public realm enhancements and highway improvements; and
- (ii) To provide 24 new trees. Replacement tree size and specific planting location and layout to be agreed with a Senior Tree Officer.

#### **REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. If the 24 trees are retained they will prohibit the design for the Station Quarter improvement scheme from being implemented. A number of trees obstruct the new parking provision being provided by the enhancement programme, whilst others are causing root heave to footway paving, car parking spaces and highway surfaces.
2. The removal of the 24 trees and their replacement with 24 new trees will result in a more coherent and pleasing design and layout - being planted within the landscape zones which will complement the car parking arrangements and the new footway and carriageway surfacing, removing the conflict the trees can bring to these areas. The layout will form landscaped waves throughout the street scene providing an enhanced visual amenity quality to the locality.

## **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

3. The safe retention of the 24 trees would require the existing highway design to be adapted and the root heave to be repaired and managed through the new design. In some instances the provision of car parking spaces would be reduced as a number of trees are obstructing the new car parking layout
4. Provide an alternative design which would deliver retention. The Station Quarter enhancement programme seeks to make it easier and safer for people to interchange between trains, cycles and buses, and for those arriving on foot and by taxi to navigate their way around more easily. A programme of community engagement and consultation with those who regularly use the area has taken place, and a Champions Group of local residents and business representatives has been set up to help guide the design of the area. The design as promoted delivers these aspirations. Retention would compromise the design to deliver a more coherent transport interchange and public realm environment.

## **DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)**

5. The Station Quarter is identified in Southampton's City Centre Master plan as one of the most strategically important areas not only as a transport gateway but as an area which could encourage economic growth through private investment.
6. On 16 and 17 July 2013, Cabinet and Council approved the creation of the new scheme North Station Quarter with a budget of £2.28 million, for the delivery of the scheme. Phase 1 will commence Autumn 2013, which will see the delivery of the public realm and highway enhancements on Wyndham Place Commercial Road, Blechynden Terrace and Southbrook Road.
7. Phase 1 of the project construction will commence in October 2013 and be completed in March / April 2014.

Phase 1 improvement works will consist of the following:

- Renewal of footway surfaces along the length of Blechynden Terrace, Southbrook Road and West Park Road, with high quality materials (granite) being used along the lengths adjacent to the station forecourt.
  - Renewal of road surfaces along the length of Blechynden Terrace, Southbrook Road and West Park Road with a granite 'shared surface' adjacent to the station forecourt and extending out to the junction with Wyndham Place.
  - Introduction of a formalised taxi rank and turning circle to the west of the station forecourt.
  - Pedestrian crossing point where Blechynden Terrace meets West Park Road.
  - Coach bay parking allocation moved to the southern side of West Park Road.
  - Provision of cycle lanes on the northern and southern sides of West Park Road.
8. The 24 trees are proliferated through these various elements of work and range in age and variety.

9. These 24 trees are spaced and placed within Phase 1, based upon the original footway and highways layout dating from the 1960's construction of Wyndham Court flats and Commercial Road shops and the subsequent subtle changes during the changes to the location in the 1980's with the construction of the Nelson Gate office buildings. The trees are reflective of the landscaping regimes implemented during these periods of development, but are not obstructing the new public realm areas to be delivered.
10. It is intended that replacement trees will be planted within the Phase 1 of works.
11. External Consultation has been conducted regarding the Station Quarter project. Initial designs were presented publically on 5 and 6 July 2012. Further public consultation was held on 25 and 26 April 2013, presenting revised and designs. The City Council has a dedicated web page to the project and the overall Station Quarter programme. A programme of community engagement and consultation with those who regularly use the area has taken place, and a Champions Group of local residents and business representatives has been set up to help guide the design of the area.
12. Internal consultation has taken place with Station Quarter Project Board, finance, legal and the Parks and Open Spaces teams, regarding the need to remove the trees and to provide replacement trees.

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Capital/Revenue**

13. All works are being funded from the Station Quarter previously approved by Cabinet.

### **Property/Other**

14. The replacement tree will be planted within the landscape areas within the ownership of the City Council.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:**

15. In accordance with the Constitution any decision relating to Council trees, unless delegated, will be determined by the Planning Panel.

### **Other Legal Implications:**

16. The trees are not subject to Tree Preservation Orders.

## **POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS**

17. None.

**KEY DECISION?** No

<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:</b>	Bargate
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## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

### Appendices

1.	Station North side - Phasing Plan – Phase 1
2.	Station North side – layout plan
3.	Station North side – 3D sketches

### Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
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### Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	Yes/No
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### Other Background Documents

#### Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)

Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)

1.	None	
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Report Tracking

VERSION NUMBER:	1
DATE LAST AMENDED:	25 July 2013
AMENDED BY:	Ali Mew

**FOR DEMOCRATIC SERVICES USE ONLY:**

DATE AND TIME REPORT RECEIVED:      Date            Time:     

CLEARANCE:            [TYPE YES or NO]

Name: