

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Planning & Development (Introduced by Cabinet Member (Finance, Property and Assets))	Cabinet	15 March 2023

Worden Park Infrastructure and Landscaping

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	Yes
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Savings or expenditure amounting to greater than £100,000	Significant impact on 2 or more council wards
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Purpose of the Report

- To bring forward a report outlining the proposed works planned to Worden Park and to award the contract to the successful tenderer following a procurement exercise carried out in accordance with South Ribble procurement protocols.

Recommendations

- That Cabinet award the contract to complete works to Worden Park as set out below to Landscape Engineering Ltd (Bidder 1 in Table 1, below)

Reasons for recommendations

- In accordance with the Council's procurement rules a decision is required by Cabinet to award the contract for works to be carried on Worden Park.

Other options considered and rejected

- The option of not doing the work was considered and discounted. In order to complement the recently completed works to Worden Hall there is now a need to improve the green infrastructure of the wider Worden Park and it is this option that has been taken forward.

Corporate priorities

- The report relates to the following corporate priorities: (Please bold one)

An exemplary council	Thriving communities
A fair local economy that works for everyone	Good homes, green spaces, healthy places

Background to the report

6. Worden Park is listed Grade II on Historic England's Register of Historic Parks & Gardens of Special Historic Interest and therefore any proposed improvements to the Park are designed in such a way as to protect the character of the landscape and safeguard the park's historic landscape design and built structures.
7. Worden Park is the borough's largest park and attracts a large number of visitors annually. The site is the only park north of London to have consistently retained the Green Flag Award since the scheme began in 1996/7.
8. The majority of the proposed works involve the improvement of the park's existing paths and drives. A number of these are likely to date back to the 16th century or earlier with subsequent alterations and additions, for example, the creation of the carriage drive from the new North Lodge entrance by the late 1840s following the creation of the new road to the east of the park (Worden Lane).
9. Improvements have been carried out to various areas of the park over the years with recent improvements taking place to the park's car parks, playground and formal gardens rockery. However, there are still areas within the park that would benefit from improvement, especially the park's paths and drives where the surface is beginning to wear.
10. A large project to refurbish and reopen Worden Hall is now largely completed with finishing touches and wi-fi installation being completed and therefore we are now in position to embark on the improvements to the wider park to raise the quality of the footpaths and landscaping to further enhance the Hall refurbishment project.
11. In 2022 the site was surveyed to assess what work was required to improve the quality of the park, with particular attention on the visitor access to the new newly refurbished Hall complex in the centre of the park. A proposed scope of work was agreed by Cabinet in the meeting of 14th September 2022, following which a period of public consultation was undertaken.
12. The proposal below represents the main infrastructure and landscaping project which is the subject of this report and the tender exercise undertaken
13. There will be a need for further specialist work with a specialist contractor to provide the final bonded golden gravel surface dressing on principal footpath routes. This has to be done at a later stage after the initial footpaths have been created. It will not affect the usability of the footpaths but will involve further work at least 2 months after the main contract has been finished This will be subject to a invitation to tender (ITQ) exercise and approval process with an estimated cost of circa £85,000. Budget for this has been allowed for in Green infrastructure budget going forward.

The Proposals

14. The proposed scope of the project agreed in September 2022 and tendered in early 2023 aims to deliver a range of improvements across the park including improving the deteriorating paths and drives, improving access to the Hall by rebuilding the existing vehicle and pedestrian routes between the Main and Hall car parks (including the addition of bollard lighting for evening events), creation of the new footpath links between the main car park and North Lodge Drive, Fish Pond and playground and

improved drainage with new shallow swales and gullies to drain areas of hard surfacing currently prone to flooding.

15. The path running east-west between the Farmyard Wood and Shaw Brook Road entrances forms part of the Leyland Loop and so is proposed to have the surface improved to tie in with the Green Links scheme.
16. The proposals also seek to reinstate parts of Nesfield's 1840's landscape design for the site and remove modern additions that have not provide to an enhancement of the original design. It is proposed to reinstate the stone surfaced paths that once ran through the area south of the formal gardens but were removed in the 1950s/60s as this area is well used and the ground is worn and muddy in a number of places without hard surfaced routes.
17. As part of this restoration of Nesfield's design, it is proposed to remove the Rose Garden laid out in 1994 as roses have struggled to thrive due to a common build-up of fungus in the soil giving rise to 'Rose Replant Disease' and the lack of air movement caused by the evergreen hedges has cause the ground conditions of the area to become progressively wetter further limiting the plants that are thriving. it is therefore proposed to return the area to the original grass and specimen trees with the seats relocated to the adjacent Formal Garden. Reusable stone from the rose garden would be used to reinstate Nesfield's lost paths described above.
18. The majority of the park improvement works are proposed to be contained within the contract for which this report seeks approval to award. These works include the majority of the path network improvements, the drainage improvements and the reinstatement of lost paths and removal of modern paths. Where works can be carried out in house or more cost effectively procured separately from specialists, these works have been omitted from the main contract and are subject to a separate procurement, with contract awards to be requested by Executive Member Decisions. An example of this is the final bonded golden gravel finish to a number of the pathways which is being procured separately from specialist surfacing contractors, to be carried out shortly after the main path construction works are completed.
19. Tenders for the works were invited on an open basis through both The Chest and Contracts Finder e-procurement portals. 4 compliant bids were received by the deadline and were evaluated in accordance with the criteria set out in the tender invitation documents. The bids received were as follows:

Table 1

Bidder	Price	Price Score	Quality Score	Social Value Score	Total Score
1	£608,482.18	60.00 / 60	23 / 25	6.19 /15	89.19 / 100
2	£652,541.24	55.95 / 60	25 / 25	8.13 /15	89.08 / 100
3	£924,728.65	39.48 / 60	16 / 25	7.50 /15	62.98 / 100
4	£830,133.01	43.98 / 60	21 / 25	8.00 /15	72.98 / 100

20. Landscape Engineering Ltd (Bidder 1) achieved the highest total scoring bid and is recommended for acceptance.
21. The approved capital programme contains the budget for the project as follows:
 - a. £500,000 from the direct budget for Worden Park improvements budget

- b. £355,485 from the Council's Green Infrastructure budget and
- c. £62,075 from Council's Leyland Loop budget as paths we are refurbishing form part of the Leyland loop

Consultation Carried Out

- 22. Following agreement from Cabinet for the scope of the project, public consultation was carried out via the public access portal from 1st December 2022 to 2nd January 2023 with publicity through the council's social media portal and an information board within the main entrance of Worden Hall with the proposals plan and links to the online portal. 42 responses were received with the scheme generally receiving support from respondents.
- 23. In addition to the public consultation carried out above, residents also had chance to submit representations during the consultation period of the applications for planning permission and listed building consent which were then submitted to Planning Committee as part of the guidance for Members to determine the applications.

Climate change and air quality

- 24. The work noted in this report impact on the following areas of climate change and sustainability targets of the Council's Green Agenda:
 - Reducing waste production.
 - Limiting non sustainable forms of transport
 - Improving green areas and biodiversity
- 25. The following remediations have been undertaken to limit the environmental effect:
 - Waste materials arising from the works including timber, metal and stone, will be reused on site where possible and recycled off site where needed minimising the amount of material disposed of at landfill.
 - The improvement of the park's path network along with ongoing addition of cycle parks aims to increase the number of journeys to the park on foot or cycle rather than by car.
 - A replanting project has anticipated many of the trees that require removal due to their age, deteriorating condition or to allow alterations to the park's landscape to take place and therefore many of these trees have already had replacements planted. Improvement of the park's habitats to enhance biodiversity is ongoing through a number of projects and the works contained in this report have been designed to harmonise with and contribute to these projects.

Equality and diversity

- 26. The works seek to make the park more inclusive and accessible by design by improving footpaths and reducing conflict with vehicle traffic as far as possible, with a differing surface for carriageways and footways/shared spaces. A shorter pedestrian path between the main car park and playground would assist in gaining PIPA accreditation for the playground – a benchmark for inclusive play areas.

Risk

27. A number of risks linked to the current site layout and condition will be addressed through the proposed improvement proposals. The project risk register identifies other key risks, the majority of which will be mitigated by the procurement processes followed and the contract document to be used.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

28. As detailed in point 21 there are existing, approved, capital budgets available to fund these works.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

29. There are no issues of concern to raise from a Monitoring Officer perspective. An appropriate procurement exercise has been carried out and the necessary planning consents are in place. Formal contract documentation will be entered into.

Background documents

Cabinet Report – Worden Park Improvement Masterplan – 14th September 2022 (requesting approval of the proposed scope and to undertake public consultation ahead of a tender exercise)

Council Budget Report, Appendix F1 to F3: Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2024/25 - 23 February 2021

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