

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PROFORMA**

Cabinet Meeting .....5th July 2007

1. Title of Item/Report

Preston Hall and Park Masterplan

2. Record of the Decision

Members considered a report relating to the Masterplan for the development of Presto Park and Hall.

Cabinet was reminded that the Adults Leisure and Culture Select Committee had undertaken a review of the park and hall and produced a report that recommended the development of a Masterplan with emphasis on developing and making sense of the current incoherent visitor offer.

Following the Scrutiny Committee report in late 2006, Officers from Stockton Borough Council had been working with Cassella Stanger (now Bureau Veritas) to an achievable Masterplan for the Park and Hall.

It was explained that specific recommendations, as agreed through the Scrutiny Committee, had been worked up which included a Masterplan for the Development which incorporated much of the detail identified during the Scrutiny in its consultation about the park. In addition further consultation was ongoing with both users and non-users and tenants / residents to ensure the detail within the proposals was right.

Running parallel with the development of the Masterplan, officers were working up application for funding through both the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and Big Lottery.

Subject to approval, it was proposed to continue to work up funding applications to HLF Main Programme stage 1 September 2007, and Big Lottery stage 1 March 08.

If successful in stages 1 & 2 of both schemes funds would be available from late 2009, with work commencing mid 2010.

Members noted that the detail within the Masterplan proposals did not radically change the park but did make better sense of the whole facility,

taking into account under utilised areas and maximising synergy.

In addition, greater emphasis was placed upon the historic aspect of the facility and its links with the Railway, the river and the industrial heritage. Improved visitor signposting and access was proposed, as was a new visitor welcome centre, which would act as a hub for the whole facility.

Members were provided with the main proposals of the Masterplan together with a plan showing their location:-

- a) Access and egress for traffic using the park was to be addressed (1) by improving the entrance with the probable introduction of a roundabout on Yarm Road.
- b) The introduction of a small visitor reception centre (2) providing information for visitors to the park facilities and events, it would also incorporate toilets and a café.
- c) A reconfigured car park / coach park area with re established planting in both the existing car park and in the identified areas (4) and (5) subdividing the current open space to the front of the hall, but not preventing continuation of existing events. This would include improved drainage throughout which would help make more space available for usage. This combined effect of the reconfiguration of the car park and re establishment of the trees part way across the 'event field' would significantly alter the impression on arrival to the park, giving a glimpse of the hall in its parkland setting, rather than having a car park as the first thing you see.
- d) The potential to re-establish the kitchen garden areas within the park (8) perhaps including a niche retail element specialising in traditional/rare plants, flowers and fruit.
- e) To re-establish the views from the hall, particularly across the Tees toward Roseberry Topping (11), and to provide a general improvement to the woodland and other planted areas.
- f) A new landing stage (12) and other features to encourage greater use of the river.
- g) An extended Play Area (14) combining the existing type of facilities with new arial walkways and 'tree house' structures.

h) Improved links across the river to provide access to both Thornaby and Ingleby Barwick linking the wider network of footpaths and cycleways. (15) A number of options were being considered for a crossing such as a fixed pedestrian bridge and or a ferry crossing facility.

i) Improved entrance signage and a general improvement to all footpaths and signage including interpretation to encourage greater use of the whole park.

j) Restricting vehicular access to the front of the Hall to wedding cars and emergency vehicles, diverting all service and staff traffic via the existing entrance at Preston lane.

k) Plans for the Hall itself would focus on improving use of space and flow through it, to allow more of the collection to be displayed in more interesting ways, and to significantly improve physical access.

l) Improved toilet and refreshment / catering facilities was essential, these would also increase the quality of the venue for weddings and conferences.

m) A new consolidated accessible museum store (10) as part of the redevelopment of the workshops to the end of the Period Street, to allow items of the collection not currently displayed to be accessed by the general public.

RESOLVED that the Masterplan proposals for Preston Park and Hall be approved, as the basis for substantial capital grant applications.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To enable the progression of proposals to secure funding to facilitate a redevelopment of Preston Park and Hall

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not applicable.

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

No later than midnight on Friday 13th July 2007

Proper Officer  
09 October 2007