

Record of Officer Decision

Decision title:	To approve expenditure up to £495,000 for construction of an integrated wetland scheme on land at Luston and to enter into a contract with JN Bentley Ltd								
Date of decision:	1 st February 2022								
Decision maker:	Service Director Highways, Environment and Waste								
Authority for delegated decision:	<p>A cabinet member decision was taken on 10 August 2020 authorising land purchasing and lease negotiations with landowners to progress acquisition, design, construction and management of up to 8 suitable sites:</p> <p>That the approved £2m allocation in the Council’s 2020/21 capital programme from the New Homes Bonus is authorised for the land purchase, design, construction and management of the integrated wetlands</p> <p>The Assistant Director for Regulation, Environment & Waste be authorised to take all operational decisions necessary to implement the scheme including the required land acquisitions and leases. In accordance with the cabinet member decision dated 10 August 2020</p> <p>https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7049</p>								
Ward:	Bircher								
Consultation:	Consultation has been carried out with the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport, the council’s Section 151 Officer, the Strategic Capital Finance Manager and the council’s Legal Team.								
Decision made:	<p>To approve the expenditure of up to £495,000 (including £100,000 contingency) for the construction of an integrated wetland site on land at Luston.</p> <p>To enter into a contract with JN Bentley Ltd for the construction of the wetland site on land at Luston.</p> <p>To delegate authority to the Senior Project Manager to manage and spend the budget and contingency.</p> <p>Financial Summary:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">Wetland Construction costs</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£365,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Soft Landscaping</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£30,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contingency</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£100,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total:</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£495,000</td> </tr> </table>	Wetland Construction costs	£365,000	Soft Landscaping	£30,000	Contingency	£100,000	Total:	£495,000
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Reasons for decision:	As set out in the cabinet member decision, the creation of wetland areas will, in addition to improving the water quality of the River Lugg, positively contribute toward the delivery of the environmental and economic priorities within the County Plan 2020-2024; enhancing local								

	<p>biodiversity, enabling sustainable housing growth in the north of the county and reducing carbon emissions through carbon sequestration.</p> <p>The benefits of wetlands in releasing prospective housing development currently unable to complete the planning process because of phosphate load will be of particular value in terms of the local construction economy and the delivery of established housing targets.</p> <p>Following the technical site investigations, the detailed design and planning process and the acquisition of the land, construction of the wetland is the next critical stage necessary to deliver a phosphorous-reducing wetland site. Wetland construction is a specialist area and it is essential that the appointed contractor have the necessary expertise, resources and experience to deliver a wetland scheme which meets the intentions of the design proposal.</p> <p>An open tender procurement process was conducted taking account of price and the capability of bidders. The contract award to JN Bentley Ltd is the result of that process.</p>
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p>There is a risk that costs may increase should there be any change to the design or to any of the assumptions within the tender package. To mitigate this a project management approach is in place whereby the design scope and contractor costs are closely monitored and changes approved only if they are critical to the successful delivery of the scheme.</p> <p>Any delay in proceeding to the construction stage would risk future cost increases through inflation and would risk failure of expenditure targets associated with grant funding.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>Not to proceed with the appointment at this time. This is not recommended as it would prevent or delay construction. The proposal to develop an integrated wetland site at this location would not be able to progress and the identified benefits, including grant funding, would not be realised.</p> <p>This would result in the continuing shortfall of water quality in the River Lugg in relation to its conservation target.</p> <p>It would also result in a continuing inability on the part of the council to grant planning permission for development proposals within the River Lugg catchment area where such developments have the potential to increase the phosphate load within the watercourse.</p> <p>As a further consequence, the council will be at risk of failure to deliver its required housing supply for the projected plan period and the local construction economy would continue to suffer detrimental effect.</p>
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>None</p>

I am an officer delegated to make the decision

Signed:

Print Name: Phil Crossland

Job Title: Interim Service Director – Highways, Environment & Waste