

Development Sub-Committee



9th August 2021

Title	Laleham Park Pavilion – Proposed Demolition of Pavilion and WC Block
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report Author	Jeremy Gidman, Asset Manager
Ward(s) Affected	Laleham and Shepperton Green Riverside and Laleham
Exempt	No
Exemption Reason	N/A
Corporate Priority	Economic Development Clean and Safe Environment
Recommendations	Committee is asked to: Approve the demolition of Laleham Park Pavilion and WC amenity block in September /October 2021.
Reason for Recommendation	Laleham Park Pavilion has been derelict since 2001 and has, over recent years, been subject to anti-social behaviour. Planning consent has been obtained for the demolition of the Pavilion and toilet block, and the re-development of the WC block with the Pavilion site left as hard standing for short term amenity use. It is recommended to proceed with demolition only at this stage, in order to meet specific timescales for removal of bats during nesting season in September/October.

1. Key issues

- 1.1 Laleham Park is a valuable leisure asset and a number of proposals have been made over recent years to enhance its amenity, although none of these have proved economically viable. The Pavilion building has been derelict since 2001 and has, over recent years, been subject to antisocial behaviour.
- 1.2 In February 2019 Cabinet approved a budget of £250,000 for the demolition of the existing pavilion and toilet building and construction of a new WC block

with hardstanding on the former pavilion to enable an outside catering facility. The view was taken that this would provide a short-term solution to the antisocial behaviour and provide amenity while an appropriate use for the former pavilion site was established.

- 1.3 The project has been overseen by the Assets team with day to day project management via the Building Management team. There have been two principal issues which have delayed the timing of this project:-
- (a) The presence of bats roosting in the pavilion which has required ecological reports and the application for a re-roosting licence from Natural England. The periods during which re-roosting may take place are typically March/April and September/October.
 - (b) Environment Agency objections to the building design due to perceived flood risk. In total, there have been four sets of consultation with the EA during the planning application process in order to reach their ultimate agreement. However, the conditions required by the LPA and the EA have included a number of flood mitigation measures which were not envisaged at the outset as the EA subsequently amended its River Thames flood risk model for the area.
- 1.4 Planning permission was obtained in October 2020 and the contract for demolition has been successfully tendered. The main contract for the new development was tendered at the beginning of this year, and from eight contractors, we received three submitted tenders. The lowest price tendered for the redevelopment of the project was £274,552 (versus a pro-rata budget cost for redevelopment costs of £120,000) which means that the projected cost for the whole project is now £336,583, significantly higher than the approved budget.
- 1.5 Since inception the project specification has taken on board Councillor requests for sustainable initiatives such as PIR lighting, the use of sustainable materials and provision of a water fountain. The design also incorporates a small site office in place of the previous store, which can then offer a security provision or amenity use. The project team has carried out a value engineering exercise, but there is a limit to reducing the projected costs meaningfully at this stage. The main reasons identified for the increased costs are set out below:-
- (a) £23,395 – fees for planning, FRA, bat survey, etc. increased by £12,771 due extra conditions imposed by LPA and EA.
 - (b) £28,369 – due to scope increase with the addition of site office (12m²) within the toilet block
 - (c) £5,750 – LPA sustainability requirement
 - (d) £16,669 – concrete ramp due to building height to meet EA requirements
 - (e) £40,952 – flood resistant doors to meet EA requirements
- £115,135**
- 1.6 It is proposed that the Assets team revisit the building design to establish whether cost savings can be achieved, and also look at alternative options for a more holistic development of the Pavilion site on the basis that the WC block rebuild in isolation now appears expensive. In the meantime it is

recommended that demolition of the pavilion and WC block takes place this autumn, to take advantage of the limited window for re-roosting the bats present in the Pavilion during nesting season.

2. Options analysis and proposal

- 2.1 The intention to deliver a new amenity provision at Laleham Park remains in place. There is clear demand from residents for additional amenity and the Assets team receive regular expressions of interest from members of the public who can offer mobile catering and other business proposals which would benefit the wider community. With the benefit of the new Community Assets Letting Policy, Council officers are now better placed to evaluate potential interest against wider community needs.
- 2.2 However, the unexpected escalation in costs means that building the proposed toilet block in isolation will not represent good value to the Council and residents. A separate report will follow in due course setting out the Council's proposals for re-visiting the design, once a through review of options has been finalised and ward Councillors have been fully consulted.
- 2.3 The immediate options available are to either demolish the WC block now, or to wait until a refined scheme has been approved before proceeding with demolition and rebuilding of the toilet block. The third option is to not take forwards the proposals at all.
- 2.4 By demolishing the WC block in the autumn, the Council will ensure that anti-social behaviour is minimised and that further deterioration of the WC block and Pavilion does take place, thereby avoiding any health and safety concerns. This option will also ensure that construction works to rebuild the WC block can proceed more quickly once a revised scheme and Committee decision has been approved. The toilet block has been non-operational since March this year, but since closure we have not received any complaints from members of the public which further points to the limited amenity provided by the WC facility in isolation.
- 2.5 Demolition in the short term will also enable the site to be delivered with hardstanding ready for potentially interested parties to deliver amenity through mobile catering projects or similar by early next year.
- 2.6 If the Council decides not to demolish now, then the property will potentially encourage further anti-social behaviour over the winter months. Due to the presence of bats, the earliest timeframe for demolition would be March/April 2022 which will further delay the delivery of hardstanding for a mobile catering project.
- 2.7 If the decision is made to not proceed with the plans at all, then the Council could either re-open the WC block or simply retain the property as a non-operational asset. The latter is not considered a viable long term option.
- 2.8 Based on the above, it is recommended that the WC block demolition takes place this autumn as this will reduce further delays to the original programme.

3. Financial implications

- 3.1 There is an approved budget within the capital programme for 2021/22 of £250,000 for Laleham park Upgrade. The cost of taking forward the demolition is approximately £32,000 including replacement hardstanding, and costs incurred to date are c £18,000. The WC is currently non-operational,

and a cost of c £8,500 would be required to re-connect the electricity supply from the substation.

- 3.2 Due to current cost inflation, there is a further case for proceeding with demolition now to avoid the risk of increases in project costs for this element. It is accepted that costs may increase further in the wider redevelopment project, but this is viewed as an acceptable risk.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1 It is proposed that the relevant ward councillors are consulted on the demolition and potential re-design of the WC block, assuming that Committee members are in agreement to proceed with demolition.

5. Equality and Diversity

- 5.1 The aspiration to provide enhanced amenity at Laleham Park will benefit the wider community, and will showcase an attractive riverside location in the Borough.

6. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications

- 6.1 The proposed WC block has been designed to include sustainable initiatives, as highlighted above, and these will be prioritised in redesign options.

7. Timetable for implementation

- 7.1 If Committee members are in agreement, then it is proposed that the bats are re-roosted in mid to late September, with demolition works commencing in October on the basis of a three week programme.

Background papers: There are none.

Appendices: N/A