

Committee:	Dated:
Community and Children's Services Capital Buildings Board	03 May 2023 10 May 2023
Subject: Middlesex Street Estate – Resident Improvements and the Impact on the Service Charge	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	4, 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Joint Report of: Clare Chamberlain, Interim Executive Director Community & Children's Services Paul Wilkinson, City Surveyor	For Decision
Report author: Paul Murtagh Assistant Director Housing & Barbican	

Summary

The purpose of this report is:

To set out for members the benefits for residents arising from the City of London Corporation's (the Corporation) proposal to redevelop parts of the Middlesex Street Estate's basement, ground-floor, and first-floor car parks and, seven retail units along Gravel Lane, to provide an operational base for the City of London Police (CoLP) in the East of the City of London.

In addition, the report sets out the impact of these benefits to residents in respect of the annual service charges and seeks members approval to the recovery of future costs of running, servicing and maintaining these residents' benefits through the service charge account.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. Note the range and cost of benefits to be provided to residents of the Middlesex Street Estate as part of the proposal to develop surplus space within the car parks to provide an operational base for the CoLP.
2. To agree that the fair and reasonable costs incurred by the Corporation in running, servicing, and maintaining these benefits be recovered from residents through the service charge account for the estate.

3. Consider the introduction of a new post of Car Park Attendant/Officer to help ensure the efficient management of the space in the Middlesex Street Estate car parks and how this post may be funded.
4. To agree that £360,000 of the £3.45million ring-fenced for housing use, in respect of the appropriation of the Middlesex Street Estate Car Park, be set aside to fund, if necessary, further improvements and landscaping to the podium requested by residents.

Main Report

Background

1. At its meeting on 20 January 2023, the Community and Children's Services Committee agreed that identified areas in the car parks and the seven Gravel Lane shop units proposed for non-housing use at the Middlesex Street Estate were no longer required for housing purposes and may be appropriated for other use.
2. The Corporation (in its capacity as the police authority) is exploring the proposal to redevelop parts of the Middlesex Street Estate's basement, ground-floor, and first-floor car parks and, seven retail units along Gravel Lane, to provide an operational base for the CoLP in the East of the City of London.
3. If the CoLP proposal does proceed, there will be significant tangible benefits to the residents of the Middlesex Street Estate that are set out later in this report. Many of these benefits are a direct result of consultation undertaken with residents to understand how we can work together to provide improvements to the Estate that will enhance the health and wellbeing of its residents.

Considerations

4. Attached at Appendix 1 to this report is a table that sets out the many resident benefits that will be provided if the CoLP proposal does proceed. The table identifies that £2,756,100 will be spent on resident benefits as part of the CoLP project. This does not include the cost of the following beneficial works that are included and costed within the overall inherent design scheme for the project:
 - provision of electrical vehicle charging points.
 - improvements to disabled access.
 - improvements to the public realm and active frontage.
 - improvements to the roller shutters/barriers to the car parks.
5. The table at Appendix 1 identifies that the annual cost of running, servicing and maintaining these residents' benefits will likely be in the region of £34,000 per annum. Crudely, based on a total of 234 flats on the Middlesex Street Estate, this would result in an additional annual cost of around £145 per flat, if the running, servicing, and maintenance costs are to be recovered from residents by way of the service charge.
6. It should be noted however, that some of the residents' benefits such as, the waterproofing of the podium and the improvement works to the shutters and barriers to the car parks, will reduce the current cost of repairs due to water leaks and mechanical breakdowns. It is likely that the additional £145 per annum per flat

would be significantly offset by the compensatory savings from the improvement works.

7. It is the view of officers that the annual cost of running, servicing and maintaining the residents' benefits should be recovered from residents by way of the service charge. The initial capital outlay of £2,756,100 is a significant investment that is being made in additional works that will benefit residents and the estate at no cost to the residents and, it is not unreasonable to ask residents to contribute to the cost of the upkeep of these works once completed.

Management and Control of the Car Parks

8. During the consultation process undertaken with residents, serious concerns have been raised with the management and control of the Middlesex Street Estate car parks especially, in relation to the CoLP proposal and the impact that this will have on the ground floor in particular.
9. There is no doubt that the space in the car parks will need to be managed very carefully if the proposal for the incorporation of the new Eastern Base into the Middlesex Street Estate is to be successful. Work is underway to develop a robust Management Plan for the car parks that, if the CoLP proposal does proceed, will be brought back to this Committee for approval. This will include matters such as:
 - traffic management
 - pedestrian management
 - access control
 - security provisions and management
 - visitor protocols
 - proposals around strategy, resources
 - managing refuse collection, bins, storage facilities etc
 - other day-to-day operational matters
 - resources including the introduction of a Car Park Attendant/Officer.
10. It is felt that the existing staff resources in the Middlesex Street Estate Office are simply not sufficient to absorb the role of managing the car parks if the CoLP proposal does proceed. It is anticipated that a new post of Car Park Attendant/Officer will need to be created and funded. The estimated cost of this post, working normal hours (not 24/7), will be £100,000 per annum. It should be noted however, that it may be possible to reduce this cost by integrating the role into the Estate Office staff and making better use of modern technology. It may also be the case that the new post could also include responsibility for the management of other additional assets that the CoLP proposal will deliver including, the gym facility, community room and podium improvements. Officers will naturally, explore these options as the project progresses.
11. The introduction of this post will result in considerable benefits for residents such as, additional security and safety, properly managed car parks and pedestrian/visitor management. However, residents will likely argue that this post was only required because of the CoLP taking up surplus space in the estate car parks.
12. It is not considered reasonable that the cost of providing a Car Park Attendant should be recovered, in full, from residents through their service charge. An

equitable arrangement needs to be found and, members are asked to give their views and guidance on this matter. As a starting point, consideration could be given to an equal three-way split of the cost between residents, the HRA and the CoLP service charge.

Further Works to the Podium

13. Following recent further consultation as part of the design work for the project and, preparations for the submission of a planning application, residents have requested additional works, landscaping, and improvements to the podium. The cost of these additional items is estimated at around £360,000.
14. It has been agreed by the Community Steering Group (CSG), that has been set up to help move this project forward, that every effort should be made to try and fund these additional items from external sources and grant funding including, for example, a bid for funding from the Corporation's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
15. It is clear from the resident members of the CSG that these additional items are very important to the residents on the Middlesex Street Estate and, not including them in the scope of the project could have a detrimental impact and may encourage opposition to the planning application.
16. Members will be aware that, in recognition of the appropriation of surplus land in the Middlesex Street Estate Car Park, a capital sum of £3.45million has been ring-fenced for housing use. In the event that funding cannot be secured from external sources and grant funding, members are asked to agree that £360,000 of the £3.45million be set aside to fund the further improvements and landscaping to the podium requested by residents.

Financial Implications

17. There are no further financial implications arising from this report at this stage.

Legal Implications

18. There are no further legal implications arising from this report at this stage.

Equalities Implications

19. There are no further equalities implications arising from this report at this stage.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Residents Benefits

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