

# AGENDA ITEM 4

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
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<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member, Regeneration &amp; Environment</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>7 March 2011</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Monksbridge Gateway Improvement Works – Land Adjoining Heritage Court, Outgang Lane, Laughton Common, Dinnington Ward</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Programme Area:</b>	<b>Environment and Development Service</b>

## **5. Summary**

To report on proposals for environmental improvement works to the above site, as indicated on the attached plan.

## **6. Recommendations**

**Cabinet Member approves the proposed works and notes the funding arrangements.**

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## 7. Proposals and Details

The Laughton Common/Monksbridge Road highway corridor was identified as a potential Gateway Improvement scheme within the wider Gateway Improvement Plan (approved 22 June 2005) and was included in the 2010/11 Regional Housing Programme.

The Cabinet Member will be aware of 'Gateway' style street name signs and street lighting already installed throughout this corridor two years ago; a further phase of works, comprising landscaping improvements throughout the area, together with selective street lighting and footway improvements was approved by the Cabinet Member on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2010 (Item 85 refers).

This proposal relates to a third phase of works, comprising a disused works compound associated with the nearby Persimmon Homes/Westbury Homes residential development; prominently situated, adjacent to the Heritage Court retail and residential development and highly visible from the B6060 Outgang Lane, a key approach to Dinnington Town Centre.

The site is currently owned by Persimmon Homes; however, by virtue of Condition 22 attached to Planning Permissions RB2004/0428, RB2005/0054 and RB2005/1170 relating to the nearby residential development, the site is identified for "community use". These conditions also require that Persimmon landscape and maintain this and other Public Open Space sites within the larger residential development.

The current proposal (see attached plan for details) is to restore this site as a Community Greenspace through the introduction of grass, wildflowers, trees, a foot path link, bins and interpretative signs explaining the historic, social and environmental background to the area. Works will also entail the removal of an unsightly fence and hedgerow that currently obscure the frontage of the site; and their replacement with a shrub border and decorative railing. A short section of foot path within the public highway, which fronts the site in question, will also be improved.

Persimmon are currently in the process of transferring ownership of the site to Thurcroft Parish Council, who have indicated that they would be willing to maintain the site. However, owing to the administrative deadline attached to the Gateways Programme (all works must be completed by June 2011) this transfer may not be completed by that date.

This being the case, landscaping proposals contain a one year maintenance programme, which includes the replacement of any dead or dying plant specimens. If legal transfer occurs before the expiry of this maintenance period, Thurcroft Parish Council will assume responsibility for maintenance; if not Persimmon Homes will continue to maintain the site in accordance with the above-mentioned planning conditions.

The Gateway project team within RIDO have ensured that extensive consultation has been carried out with the local community, including residents within the

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immediate vicinity of the site, the 'Friends of Laughton Common', New Laughton Tenants and Residents Association and Thurcroft Parish Council. Local Ward Members have been involved with the project via the Dinnington Area Development Framework Steering Group. Support for the proposal is widespread.

Subject to Member approval, works will be carried out during the period April to June 2011.

### 8. Finance

These works will be funded from the Regional Housing Board programme, with Monksbridge Gateway having been allocated a budget of £180,000.

Total estimated costs:

Temporary Fencing	£ 1,000.00
Excavate Existing Ground	£ 5,315.00*
Remove Existing Hedgerow	£ 450.00
Supply Sub-soil	£ 904.00*
Supply Top-soil	£ 5,268.00*
Tree Pits	£ 172.00
Plant Shrubs	£ 1,890.00
Plant Trees	£ 780.00
Cultivation and Seeding	£ 2,255.00*
Wildflower Seeding	£ 1,897.53
Bulbs	£ 250.00
Aftercare	£ 2,987.44
New/improved Foot Path	£ 29,671.33
Foot Path Design Fees	£ 2,373.31
Foot Path Supervision Fees	£ 2,076.99
Foot Path Contingencies	£ 3,000.00
Decorative Fencing	£ 11,500.00
Benches	£ 4,500.00
Interpretative Signs	£ 2,000.00
Bins	£ 2,000.00

**Overall Costs** £ 80,290.60

\* However, because Persimmons are required to landscape the site by virtue of the planning conditions described above, they have undertaken to fund site preparation and basic landscaping works (it should be noted that landscaping works are enhanced to a level beyond that which Persimmon might reasonably have been expected to provide) and, consequently, Persimmon will carry out works to a value of £13,742.00.

In addition the cost of the benches (£4,500) can be met from the under-spend on a nearby public arts project.

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Against this, further landscaping charges have been accrued in designing the above and other nearby potential works; more are anticipated in overseeing these works. These costs are estimated at £11,988.18.

This brings the total estimated cost for these works to £74,036.78.

The previous phase of works was estimated at £92,828.94 and it can be seen therefore that the current proposal would bring overall spend to £166,865.72 a figure which can be accommodated within the budget limit.

Estimated costs include for any defects of the hard works for one year following completion of the works. Thereafter, those works within the public highway will be transferred into the ongoing Streetpride maintenance programme; those within the confines of the Heritage Court site will be maintained by either Persimmon Homes or Thurcroft Parish Council.

Consequently, the proposed improvements will not add to the existing Streetpride maintenance budget.

### **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

The risks & uncertainties are expected to be only those which would normally be associated with small scale construction and landscaping works.

### **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The scheme contributes to the 'Rotherham Proud' agenda by enhancing the main 'Gateway' routes into the Borough with high quality public realm works. It will also contribute to 'Rotherham Safe' in that the public highway will be free of defects. The scheme contributes to the Community and Corporate Plans by:

Supporting the Housing Market Renewal Programme.

Improving and promoting the image of Rotherham and addressing negative views both within and outside the borough, through the environmental improvement of Gateway Corridors which form many peoples first impression of the borough, as well as a backdrop to the lives of many of its residents.

Providing sustainable neighbourhoods of quality, choice, etc, by contributing to an improved environment within many residential districts.

### **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Public consultation has been carried out by the Project Officer and the designs have been approved by the Dinnington ADF Steering Group, which includes the local Ward Members.

Further background papers include:

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The Gateway Improvement Plan (Approved 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2005, Cabinet Item 37)

Monksbridge Gateway Landscaping Improvements (approved by Cabinet Member for Environment and Regeneration, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2010, Item 85 refers).

Housing Market Renewal Area Masterplan (Dinnington)

The local community have been engaged on this and other related environmental improvement projects via the ADF Steering Group, Community Planning Officer and by direct mail shot of local residents.

Discussions have been ongoing with representatives of Streetpride to confirm their capacity to deliver these works during 2010/11.

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