

Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
WYCLIFFE, ABBEY, AYLESTONE, BELGRAVE

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:

Cabinet

5th June 2002

Capital Programme 2002/05: Conservation & Heritage Initiatives and Riverside budgets

Report of the Director of Environment, Development & Commercial Services

1. Purpose of Report

To seek approval to schemes under the Capital Programme 2002/05.

2. Summary

Council approved a three year Capital Programme on 31st January 2002. This included several schemes that were reserved for further Cabinet approval. Two of these were budgets for *Conservation & Heritage Initiatives* and *Riverside* amounting to £165,000 and £150,000 respectively, both over three years.

Details of how it is proposed to spend these budgets are set out in the Supporting Information document. Plans showing the locations of the Riverside sites to be improved in the year 2002/03 are attached as Appendix I.

3. Recommendations

Cabinet is requested to approve the schemes set out in the Supporting Information document and confirm funding from the Capital Programme for these schemes from the *Conservation & Heritage Initiatives* and *Riverside* budgets.

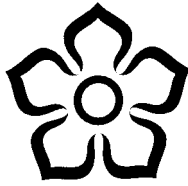
4. Headline Financial and legal Implications

Conservation & Heritage Initiatives (£165,000) and Riverside (£150,000) budgets are both included in the approved Capital Programme 2002/03 to 2004/05 as schemes pending further Cabinet approval. This report provides the details for approval of the funding over the 3 year period.

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

5. Officers to contact:

Conservation & Heritage Initiatives: Steve Bradwell (Ext 7296)
Riverside: Anne Provan (Ext 7297)



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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. ***Conservation & Heritage Initiatives 2002/05: St George's Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme***
 - 1.1 Heritage Economic Regeneration schemes (HERs) operate in partnership with English Heritage and run for a period of three years. English Heritage has offered £165,000 over three years for a HERs within the St George's Conservation Area, subject to match funding from the City Council. It is proposed to commence this scheme in June / July 2002 subject to Cabinet approval to a three year block sum to match fund English Heritage's commitment. Additional 'leverage' will come from the private sector, specifically from owners of buildings included in the scheme. Individual schemes will be approved on the basis of priorities set out below, up to a maximum commitment from the Capital Programme of £65,000 in 2002/03 and £50,000 in each of the two subsequent years.
 - 1.2 The scheme forms part of the wider commitment to the development of the Cultural Quarter.
 - 1.3 The purpose of the HERs is to offer grant assistance towards the cost of repairs to historic buildings and for enhancement works, such as the restoration of St George's churchyard. The operation of the scheme will assist with the regeneration of the Conservation Area, which is an integral part of the St George's Regeneration Area.
 - 1.4 It is proposed that, as a priority, the HERs identify and target for action buildings, both listed and unlisted, that have been identified as being either 'at risk' or 'vulnerable'. Targeted buildings for the first year of the scheme include: St George's Church, Premier House (29 Rutland Street), Carron Buildings (35 Rutland Street), 37-43 Rutland Street and Wimbledon House. This list will be reviewed towards the end of each year of the scheme.

- 1.5 It is proposed that eligible repair work to these and other identified buildings will be eligible for up to 50% grant assistance (with a maximum grant of £20,000 per property in any one financial year). However, a higher level of assistance, of up to 90%, will be offered to charitable organisations or places of worship (maximum of £40,000 in any single year).
- 1.6 Building works eligible for grant aid include: roof repairs; repairs to chimneys and replacement of pots; repair of cast iron gutters and downpipes; repointing of brick and stonework; repair of original windows and external timber doors; and, repair of original shop fronts.
- 1.7 In addition to these building works, it is proposed that the restoration and reinstatement of traditional architectural features be eligible for up to 70% grant (maximum of £20,000 in any one financial year).
- 1.8 The HERs will be managed by the Urban Design Group who will determine, from detailed specifications that are submitted with grant applications, what works are eligible for assistance.

2. *Riverside 2002/05*

- 2.1 The *Riverside* block sum for 2002/05 forms the basis for the implementation of the Riverside Strategy and the establishment of a long term rolling programme of improvements to Leicester Riverside.
- 2.2 Based on the principle of 'regeneration through conservation', it will fund a range of environmental and regeneration projects vital to the development of Leicester Riverside, both directly and in partnership with other agencies. It will support and encourage further investment and regeneration of the Riverside area. The schemes identified below have been developed in response to a demonstrable increase in interest in Riverside development and will seek to achieve three key aims:
 - improve environmental quality;
 - encourage use and enjoyment of the Riverside; and
 - promote regeneration and investment
- 2.3 Leicester Riverside is the 'backbone' of the Leicester Regeneration Company (LRC) area and a tremendous natural asset to the city. It is likely to form a key component of the LRC Masterplan currently under preparation. Improvement and enhancement of the appearance, infrastructure and environmental quality of the area are vital to encourage further development and investment in the city. Furthermore, the Riverside is a unique and regionally important strategic wildlife corridor. It is essential that the whole of the wildlife corridor is recognised and enhanced to ensure that its nature conservation value is retained for the future.
- 2.4 The block sum provides opportunities to establish strong partnerships with external agencies, most notably British Waterways and the Environment Agency, enabling them to co-ordinate their own longer term capital programmes with the City Council to effect significant improvements to Leicester Riverside. The *Riverside* capital programme

provision is key to the leverage of external resources from these agencies. The ability to make funding commitments in advance, at least in principle, to capital projects also significantly enhances the City Council's ability to influence the future development of the Riverside and the priorities of funding partners.

2.5 Proposed improvements will support policies identified in the Local Plan and complement the Local Transport Plan. They meet Community Plan priorities in relation to Environment and Regeneration and objectives identified in the Cultural Strategy.

2.6 Proposed schemes for 2002/3 are outlined below. The programmes for years two and three will reflect the priorities identified through ongoing discussions with British Waterways and Leicester Regeneration Company and in the context of the Masterplan to be published later this year. The figures represent the City Council's commitment to schemes. Contributions are also to be sought from external funding partners and the Local Transport Plan, as appropriate.

(i) National Space Centre River Frontage Improvement Scheme £22,000

This will be the first phase of a wider scheme to improve the area around the National Space Centre (NSC). The scheme will enhance the NSC's Riverside setting, improve access, make links with the NSC and Abbey Pumping Station, encourage greater use of the Riverside as a visitor attraction and support the regeneration of key sites in the area.

(ii) Abbey Park Canal Frontage Scheme (Phase III):
Planet Works Canal Frontage £13,000

This is the third phase of a major scheme to significantly improve the Canal Towpath between Abbey Park Road and North Bridge. This phase will improve access and public safety on this important pedestrian route from St Margaret's Way to North Bridge and will be carried out by British Waterways.

(iii) Aylestone Meadows Access Improvement Scheme £10,000

Working in conjunction with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV), this scheme will involve the creation of ponds, restoration of boardwalks and improvements to access at Aylestone Meadows Local Nature Reserve. This scheme is important to the achievement of EMAS and Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets in Aylestone.

(iv) Improvements to the Former Leicester Marina Site £5,000

The former marina site has been out of use for the last ten years and has no immediate development potential as a marina. Working in partnership with the Environment Agency, it is proposed to bring this site into beneficial use by establishing it as an angling venue. The importance of the site for Nature Conservation will be retained through a management agreement with an angling club.

2.7 The proposed improvement schemes are part of a comprehensive regeneration of the Riverside corridor. Fencing adjacent to individual improvement schemes will be made good at the same time that the improvement works are carried out to ensure that the scheme is of benefit to the whole section of the Riverside. Further, the design of

individual schemes will take account of the future maintenance needs of the scheme and the adjacent areas to ensure that it can be maintained from allocated revenue budgets. The maintenance specification for the site can then be incorporated into the appropriate Grounds or other maintenance contract as appropriate.

3 Finance, Resources and Equal Opportunities Scrutiny Committee

3.1 The Scrutiny Committee, whilst welcoming the capital investment being proposed for these projects and in particular the riverside, is nevertheless concerned that certain anti social activities which are occurring, and believed to be increasing, in the area could undermine what this investment is designed to achieve. The Committee hopes Cabinet will take steps to ensure that this issue is addressed in the appropriate forum.

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

1. Financial Implications

Conservation & Heritage Initiatives (£165,000) and Riverside (£150,000) budgets are both included in the approved Capital Programme 2002/03 to 2004/05 as schemes pending further Cabinet approval. This report provides the details for approval of the funding over the 3 year period.

2. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

3. Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph References Within Supporting information
Equal Opportunities	Yes	All sections of the community will be taken into account in the design of individual schemes as appropriate
Policy	No	
Sustainable and Environmental	Yes	The entire report relates to environmental improvements
Crime and Disorder	Yes	These will be taken into account in the design of individual schemes
Human Rights Act	No	
Elderly/People on Low Income	No	

4. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

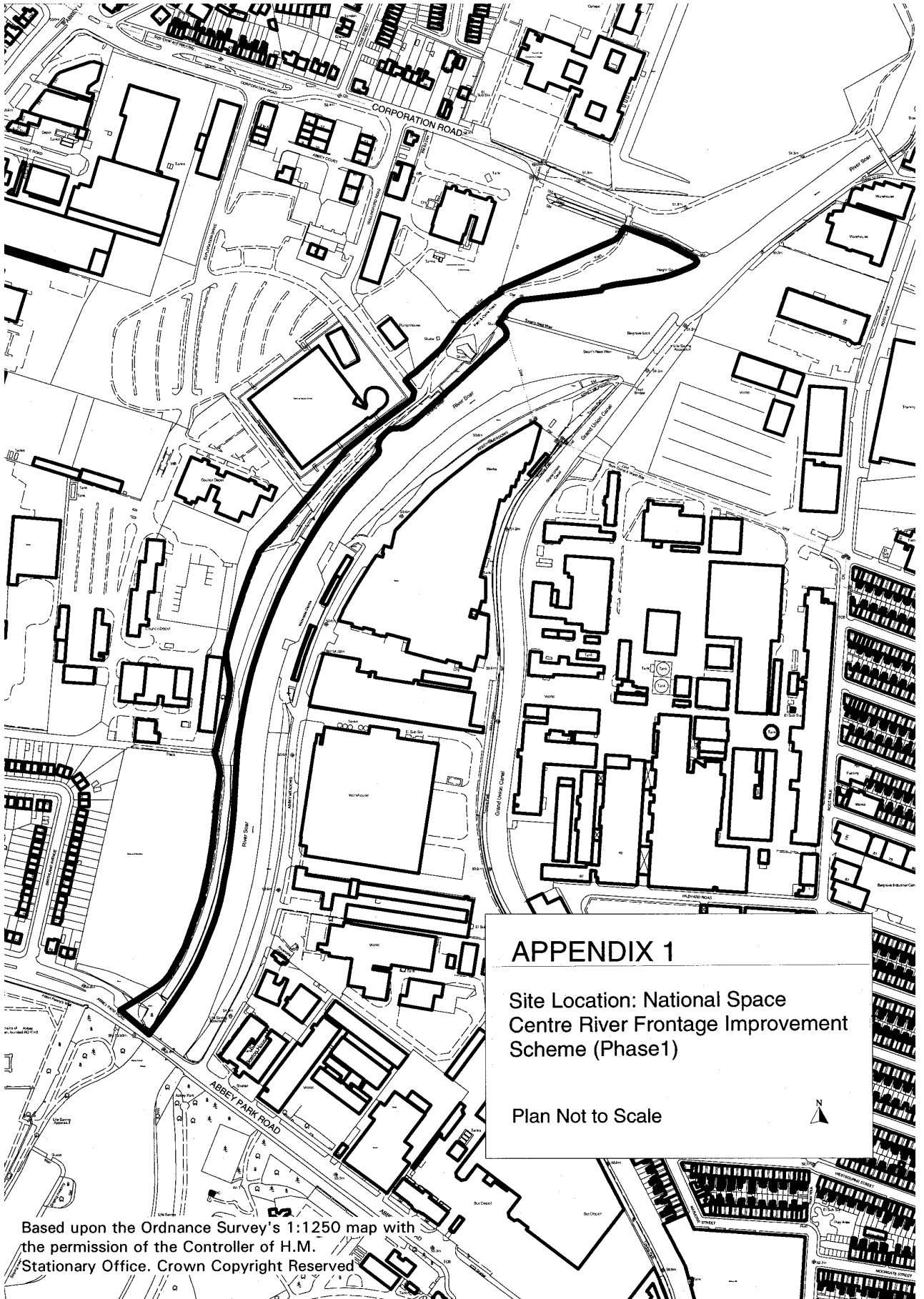
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5. Consultations

Finance, Resources and Equal Opportunities Scrutiny Committee has considered this report and its comments are included at paragraph 3.1.

6. Persons to contact:

Conservation & Heritage Initiatives: Steve Bradwell, Ext 7296
Riverside: Anne Provan, Ext 7297



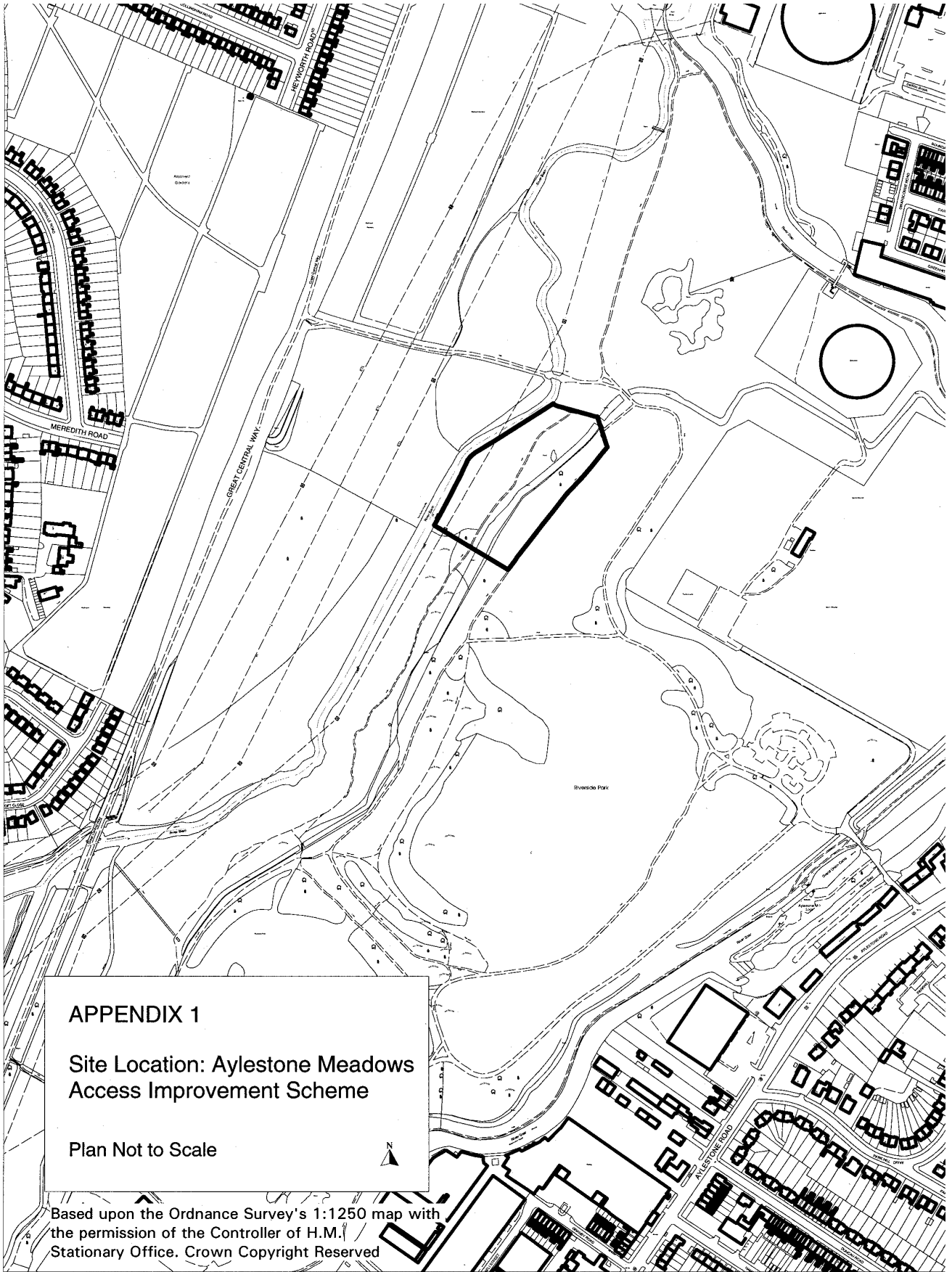
APPENDIX 1

Site Location: National Space
Centre River Frontage Improvement
Scheme (Phase 1)

Plan Not to Scale



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APPENDIX 1

**Site Location: Aylestone Meadows
Access Improvement Scheme**

Plan Not to Scale



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