



Leicester  
City Council

**WARDS AFFECTED:  
WESTCOTES WARD**

**CABINET**

**25 JULY 2005**

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## **ADDENDUM BOWSTRING BRIDGE**

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### **Report of the Corporate Director of Resources, Access and Diversity**

#### **1. Report**

- 1.1 Cabinet at its meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2005 deferred making a final decision on the future of the Bowstring Bridge (the Bridge) until the next Cabinet meeting to be held on the 25<sup>th</sup> July 2005.
- 1.2 This would give Great Central Railway Plc and/or Great Central Railway (Nottingham) Ltd. some time to explore the practicalities and costs associated with their proposals for the Bridge.
- 1.3 Property Services wrote to the Great Central Railway Plc on the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2005 seeking the following information:
  - a) Audited accounts for the last 3 years both for the Great Central Railway Plc and Great Central Railway (Nottingham) Ltd. by Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2005.
  - b) Confirmation of whether or not their engineers consider the Bridge is capable of being dismantled (in a manner which would enable it to be reassembled elsewhere) and transported to a site of their choice by April 2006. If so, their estimation of the full cost of undertaking such an operation was also requested.
  - c) Confirmation that the companies referred to in a) above would meet the full costs of such dismantling and relocation works over and above the cost of demolishing and removing the Bridge. Furthermore, that the same companies would be able and willing to lodge with the Council's solicitor a sum of money (prior to entering into any contract to dismantle and transport the Bridge to a designated site) to meet such additional costs referred to immediately above.

- 1.4 The Council's Bridges Section has also been requested to advise whether or not they consider the Bridge would be capable of being dismantled (in a manner which would enable it to be reassembled elsewhere) and transported to a location of Great Central Railway Plc's choice by April 2006. If so:
- a) How much would it cost?
  - b) What is the latest date the tender process (to obtain competitive quotes for:
    - i) Undertaking the dismantling, for reassembly, and transportation of the Bridge to a specified site and
    - ii) Undertaking demolition and removal)could start in order to fully complete either of the works in i) or ii) above by April 2006?
- 1.5 If Cabinet resolved to retain the Bridge insitu at Duns Lane the consequences of such a decision would be as follows:
- (i) To ensure insurance cover is maintained for any unforeseen event associated with the Bridge it would be necessary to expend in excess of twice the sum required for its demolition to strengthen the Bridge to prevent collapse under its own weight. Such strengthening work would need to be reinspected in 3 years time and possibly further expensive repairs will be required as a result of any such future re-inspections. Ongoing yearly maintenance costs would also be incurred by the Council.
  - (ii) A use would still need to be found for the Bridge otherwise it would continue to suffer from acts of general vandalism. If it is reopened as a pedestrian and cycle route then it would serve a similar purpose to the existing pedestrian/cycle route which runs adjacent to the old River Soar at ground level and connects, via a light controlled crossing at Western Boulevard, with the route running alongside De Montfort University's (DMU's) John Sandford Sports Centre.

However, any such route which incorporates the Bridge would not be accessible by all citizens of Leicester due to the step access/egress adjacent to Corah Street and the personal safety of users would be diminished (in relation to the ground level alternative route) because there is no natural public surveillance of such an elevated route. Although, this issue could be overcome by the installation of CCTV but at an additional cost.
  - (iii) Reopening the viaduct as a pedestrian/cycle route would also allow easy access for vandals to repeat their past actions of throwing stones at the windows of Bede Street houses backing onto the viaduct.
  - (iv) If an economic use was found for the Bridge, for example a restaurant, then it would most likely need to be enclosed, possibly by glass, thus altering the character of the structure and detracting from the reason for its retention.

- (v) The present proposal for the possible redevelopment of the Council's adjoining land at Duns Lane as a sports centre by DMU may be adversely affected. The site is not extensive and any reduction in developable area, due to part of the viaduct needing to be retained to support the Bridge, may prevent the scheme from proceeding at this location and thus preventing the delivery of a publicly accessible swimming pool.

Retention of the Bridge would create complications for the delivery of the proposed new sports facility and I understand DMU's position is that it would be more desirable if the Bridge was removed.

- (vi) Retention of the Bridge would complicate and possibly frustrate any redevelopment of the Council's land and viaduct at Bede Street. Whilst the property currently provides some employment facilities, its redevelopment would improve the built environment of the area and capitalise on the valuable river frontage.

1.6 Property Services will provide a verbal update to Cabinet on any responses received from Great Central Railway Plc and the Council's Bridges Section.

**2. Officer to contact:**

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**Tom Stephenson**  
**Corporate Director of Resources, Access and Diversity**

**DECISION STATUS**

<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Reason</b>	N/A
<b>Appeared in Forward Plan</b>	No
<b>Executive or Council Decision</b>	Executive (Cabinet)