



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Connswater Community Greenway Update
Date:	18 th June 2010
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects.
Contact Officer:	Celine Dunlop, Estates Surveyor, Property and Projects.

Relevant Background Information

Belfast City Council, as part of the City Investment Strategy, has agreed to coordinate the acquisition of lands to enable the Connswater Community Greenway Programme to proceed. The Council will secure rights over the land needed for the Greenway and shall be responsible for the management and maintenance of this land and any assets on the land. The Greenway must be accessible for 40 years to comply with the Big Lottery Fund letter of offer, although the intention is to secure rights for longer if possible.

Key Issues

1. An area of land at Laburnum Playing fields off the Knock dual carriageway consisting of 0.609 acres has been identified as being required for the Connswater Community Greenway. Council officials have provisionally agreed, subject to CBM Developments Ltd Board and Council Committee approval, to (i) purchase the area of land shown shaded yellow on the attached plan at Appendix '1' from CBM Developments Ltd (ii) take a licence from CBM Developments Ltd for a temporary path and associated temporary embankment to support the path along the route shown outlined red on the plan at Appendix '1'. The proposal is for this path to remain in place until a proposed new road is constructed through the Laburnum site at which time the footpath adjacent to the new road will become the Greenway. The proposal for the new road requires both Belfast Education and Library Board support and full planning approval and at this stage there is no certainty as to whether such approval will be forthcoming within the timeframe of the Greenway project. The agreement will provide for the temporary route to remain in place for a minimum of 40 years if the new road is not constructed/approved.

2. The area of land outlined red on the plan at Appendix '2' consisting of 0.036 acres has been identified as being required for the Greenway. These lands are owned by Deramore Property Group and Council officials have agreed subject to Committee approval to acquire these lands from Deramore Property Group subject only to the Council paying their reasonable expenses in connection to the transfer.
3. The area of land outlined red on the attached plan at Appendix '3' consisting of 0.622 acres has been identified as being required for the Greenway. These lands are owned by the DRD and are held as part of the Road Protection Corridor for the Connsbank Link and Hollywood Arches Bypass. The DRD cannot dispose of these lands while the proposal for the Connsbank Link and Hollywood Arches bypass remains extant however Council officials have agreed to take a five year licence from DRD to facilitate the construction of a public square as part of the Greenway. The Big Lottery and other funders have confirmed that they are content with this approach and can waive the usual requirement for a minimum 40 year term given the particular circumstances of this case.

Resource Implications

Financial

1. These proposals require expenditure of £21,500 to acquire the lands shown shaded yellow on the plan at Appendix '1' plus professional and legal fees.
2. The land required from Deramore Property Group at Loopland Court will require expenditure of reasonable expenses.
3. The land required from the Department for Regional Development at Hollywood Arches will require expenditure of legal fees only.

The purchase costs for all of the land required for the Connswater Community Greenway are included in the Connswater Community Greenway budget of the City Investment Fund and there will be no additional cost to Council.

There may be an additional cost to Council if the proposed new road linking the Laburnum playing fields to the Knock dual carriageway receives planning approval and is constructed outside the contract period for the Connswater Community Greenway. However, any such additional expenditure will be the subject for a further Committee report and decision.

Human Resources

No additional human resources required.

Asset and Other Implications

The additional land will form part of the Connswater Community Greenway which when complete will be managed and maintained by the Council.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee grant approval to the purchase of the lands outlined red on the plans attached at Appendix '1', Appendix '2'and Appendix '3'.

Decision Tracking

Action by Celine Dunlop to be completed by September 2010.

Key to Abbreviations

None.

Documents Attached

Plans at Appendix '1', Appendix '2'and Appendix '3'.