

## **QUYS LANE, ROCHFORD**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report brings forward for Member decision the proposal to upgrade Quys Lane, Rochford, currently a private unmade footpath / vehicular access, to an access of satisfactory standard for pedestrian and vehicular use.

### **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 Members will recall that finance has been set aside in the Capital Budget for possible purchase of the former Rumbelows building in West Street. However, although the ownership of the site has recently been transferred, indications are that the scheme agreed will still be pursued. Consequently it now seems opportune to bring forward a proposal for Quys Lane, in line with the previous decision of this Authority to look at this once the future of the Rumbelows site started to become clearer. (Min. 46/04)
- 2.2 Quys Lane has been the subject of much interest from the public, as it is used as a pedestrian access between the residential development of Millview Meadows and the town centre.
- 2.3 Some research has been carried out to establish ownership, but this has been unsuccessful and no owner has been identified. However, there appear to be access rights over the lane for those properties adjacent.
- 2.4 A scheme has been designed to bring this access up to a safe surfaced standard for both pedestrians and vehicles, where there are rear access rights. A site location plan is included as Appendix A.
- 2.5 Although the scheme is looking to achieve an adoptable quality standard to provide a good design life, Essex County Council has already indicated that they would not adopt the finished access. The full adoptable standard cannot be achieved, as there is no room for a turning head for vehicles.
- 2.6 Councillors Mrs M A Starke and M G B Starke have in the past declared a prejudicial interest in this scheme, by virtue of their interest in a property with access rights via Quys Lane.

### **3 BACKGROUND TO QUYS LANE**

- 3.1 Although a large amount of development has been undertaken of both East Street and to the rear of Quys Lane, although far shorter than before, has still remained an unmade pedestrian access between the new areas of residential development and Rochford Town.

- 3.2 Although through vehicular traffic is not permitted, vehicle access over this section is needed to the rear of numbers 4,6 and 8 East Street and number 1 South Street, for commercial and residential purposes.
- 3.3 Due to the width of Quys Lane, it has also become a private car park for any vehicle able to find the space. This causes problems for those properties requiring access.
- 3.4 As the surface is un-metalled and loose in nature, the continued use by vehicular traffic has caused the surface to deteriorate, with the result that several large holes have appeared and loose stone is being trafficked to either end, causing street cleansing and health and safety issues.
- 3.5 Parked vehicles in the lane force pedestrian traffic to walk on the damaged and unstable surface, causing further problems for pedestrians and conflict between pedestrians and those vehicles gaining access or trying to park.

#### **The Proposal**

- 3.6 A draft of the proposed scheme is attached as Appendix B. This is a detailed non-technical specification, to provide a basis for the estimated costs.
- 3.7 If Members are minded to approve the proposal, it will be subject to consultation with local residents, businesses, Parish Council, and the Chamber of Trade. If there are no fundamental objections, then a scheme can proceed.
- 3.8 The method of working will also be subject to consultation with the current users. The construction phase of this scheme is expected to last no more than 4 weeks, providing that the area can be closed for the whole of that period. If, after negotiation with affected parties, access has to be maintained over the road, then the construction phase will need to be extended up to 8 weeks in total, depending on the difficulties encountered.

#### **Situation under the Town & Country Planning Act**

- 3.9 The T&CP (GPD) Order Schedule 2 Part 9 allows repairs to unadopted streets and private ways. This part grants planning permission for works of maintenance and improvement, whoever undertakes them, in relation to unadopted streets and private ways, being in both cases ways or highways which are not maintainable at public expense. The proposed works must be within the recognised boundaries of the non-maintainable highway or way.

#### **Tendering the scheme**

- 3.10 The scheme will be tendered under the rules set out in the Council Constitution.

### **Timescales**

3.11 Following this report, the programme could be as follows:

- Consultation - August / September
- Design and Tender - October / November
- Avoid Christmas disruption and winter weather
- Start on site March 2006.

## **4 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Quys Lane has long been a source of complaint regarding the state of the surface, as it is used by many older people, in particular, to access the town centre in Rochford. The Council, although not the owner, is aware of the risks of the use of this access, particularly to pedestrians.
- 4.2 Making up this access to a safe surface will incur maintenance costs in the long term and will provide some risk to the Council, as currently the Council has no direct responsibility for the condition of Quys Lane. A quality scheme at this stage will defer any serious maintenance costs for at least ten years, but maintenance can be expected after that period. It is difficult at this stage to predict the potential maintenance costs.

## **5 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 In designing the scheme, lighting has been incorporated which will make the access more secure during dark evenings.

## **6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The scheme has been designed to the latest guidelines for sustainable surface water drainage and will impose no additional loading on the existing sewers.

## **7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The capital budget allocation for West Street is £75,000. This scheme has been costed using current schedule of rates contract at £67,000, including contingencies and fees. The scheme can be completed within the allocated budget, subject to tendering of the scheme.

## **8 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 In taking on the additional responsibility of making up Quys Lane, the Council may be increasing its risk of legal action should an accident occur.

**9 PARISH IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Rochford Parish Council has indicated that it is able to fund a street light in Quys Lane from funding from the Crime and Disorder Partnership, as long as it is spent in the current financial year, by 31 March 2006.

**10 RECOMMENDATION**

- 10.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

- (1) That the upgrade of Quys Lane, as proposed, be agreed, to be funded from the money set aside for the Rumbelows site, subject to local consultation with the Parish Council, Local Chamber of Trade, residents and businesses affected by the scheme.
- (2) That, subject to there being no negative feedback which causes a major redesign from the consultation exercise, the scheme be tendered with a view to commencing on site in Spring 2006.

Roger Crofts

Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)

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**Background Papers:-**

None

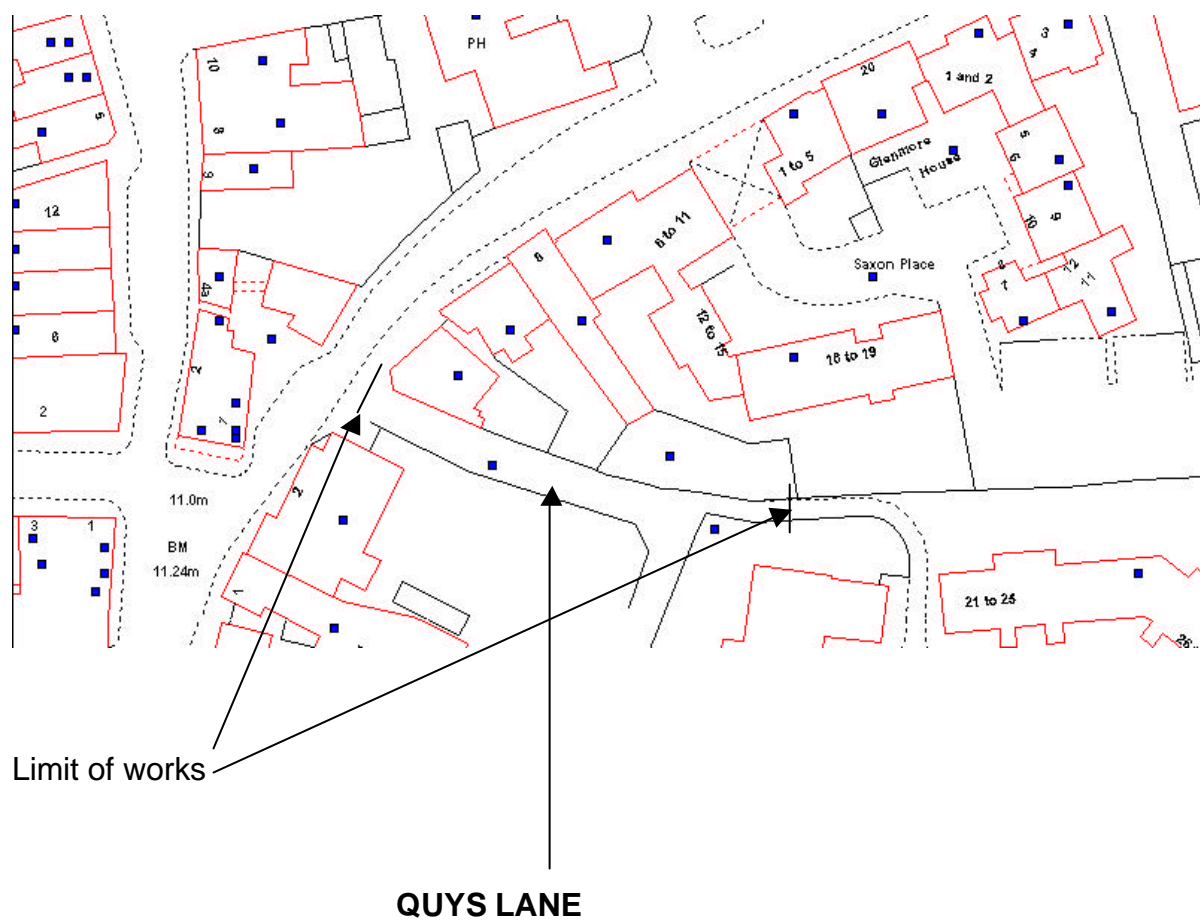
For further information please contact David Timson on:-

Tel:- 01702 318110

E-Mail:- [david.timson@rochford.gov.uk](mailto:david.timson@rochford.gov.uk)

APPENDIX A

QUYS LANE, ROCHFORD



## **APPENDIX B**

### **SCHEME DESIGN PROPOSAL**

Access must be maintained for vehicles requiring it, although the parking of vehicles is to be discouraged. A pedestrian walkway is to be constructed with a high kerb to discourage bump parking and illumination for the walkway be provided with the use of top illuminated bollards that radiate the light horizontally and do not contribute to upward light pollution.

The surface of the walkway would be interlocking block paving, to match the existing highway fronting 2 and 4 East Street. The road / access surface would be hardened and asphalted to provide an even running surface. A passing bay will be constructed, combining with the rear access to 4 and 6 East Street.

The road surface proposed is porous asphalt, laid over a semi permeable sub base. The base is a specially constructed plastic webbed box which allows the surface water to drain from the carriageway surface, passing through the layers of construction and then to drain naturally back into the existing soil.

The use of a drainage kerb along the walkway edge, connected to the carriageway sub-base, would allow any walkway drainage to also be reintegrated into the soil.

The use of this kind of drainage would enable the work to be carried out with the minimum of disruption to passing traffic in East Street. No permission is required to connect to existing drainage sewers and the scheme would comply with the latest Department of Environment guidelines for sustainable surface water drainage.

Due to the specialist nature of some of the proposed products, availability is limited to a few suppliers.