

# STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

## COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 14 DECEMBER 2023

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Extension of Berkeley Car Park</b>			
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To consider a proposal allowing for the extension of the SDC Car Park at Marybrook Street Berkeley			
<b>Decision(s)</b>	<b>Council RESOLVES to</b>  <b>1) Appropriate the SDC Garage Site from the Housing Revenue Account into the General Fund</b>  <b>2) Add to the Capital Budget the required sums for completion of the project to extend the public car park - subject to the grant of planning permission.</b>  <b>3) Delegate Authority to the Strategic Director of Communities to make the appropriate parking orders as required.</b>			
<b>Consultation and Feedback</b>	Consultation has taken place with lead officers, ward members and Berkeley Town Council, who are all supportive of the proposal. Further consultations will take place as part of a planning application and parking order processes.			
<b>Report Author</b>	Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources Email: andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk			
<b>Options</b>	Members may choose not to proceed with the outlined scheme			
<b>Background Papers</b>	None			
<b>Appendices</b>	Appendix A: Plan and photographs and photos showing the location of car park and adjacent garage site Appendix B: Equality Impact Analysis			
<b>Implications (further details at the end of the report)</b>	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

### 1. Introduction / Background

- 1.1 Stroud District Council currently operates a car park at Marybrook Street in Berkeley which provides 24 spaces on a free of charge basis with a maximum stay of 23 hours.
- 1.2 Adjacent to the car park is a garage site, held in the Housing Revenue Account, which is earmarked for disposal as part of the Council's ongoing programme.
- 1.3 The Town Council has approached the District Council with a request to extend the existing car park onto the site currently occupied by the garages. This report sets out the details of the project and seeks member approval to proceed with the scheme.

## **2. Details of the Garage Site**

- 2.1 A plan and photographs of the 13 garages and site are shown at Appendix A. The garage site is shown edged red on the attached plan with the adjoining Marybrook Street car park edged in blue.
- 2.2 The site is about approximately 650sqm - 0.16acres in totality and encompasses two separate blocks of garages, one of 7 garages and one of 6 (see red circles on aerial map). The entrance from Lower Berrycroft is shared with the car park, the health centre service access, parking for housing to the north and No 16 Marybrook Street.
- 2.3 The current position is that 8 garages are vacant and 5 are rented on monthly basis.
- 2.4 The council's direction of travel, evidenced in previous Committee decisions, is to dispose of the council's garages stock and manage surplus property with an aim to reduce costs and generate finance to support the HRA. Therefore, every garage site is reviewed on an ongoing basis to establish its potential to support operational use, its value for redevelopment, particularly new council housing, and then for general sale.
- 2.5 This garage site is not suitable for redevelopment essentially because of the vehicular and pedestrian rights that bisect it and the limitations caused by the health centre and council housing accesses.
- 2.6 These garages are not required for operational use and would normally be sold in accordance with the process identified in paragraph 2.7. However, the shortage of local public car parking highlights the increased use value to the Town to be gained by demolishing the garages and using the site to extend the adjoining public car park. This would be a positive use of SDC property. A similar scheme at Nailsworth where the garages behind the Britannia Inn were demolished and the car park extended met with widespread public approval.
- 2.7 If there were no alternative scheme for the garages the remaining monthly hirings would have been ended and the site marketed with uplift conditions to protect a share from any long term development value
- 2.8 There is extensive evidence of the value for garage sites with similar development limitations across the district from other disposals. This provides the relevant evidence for assessing the current market value of these garages to be £112k.

## **3. Extension of the Car Park**

- 3.1 In 2022 Berkeley Town Council first approached SDC with a request to extend the car park at Marybrook Street onto the garage site. Discussions have continued since and a site visit was held in the Summer of 2023 with the senior officers from SDC, Ward Councillors, Berkeley Town Councillors and the Town Clerk.
- 3.2 This project has been taken forward to this stage as it is considered to have a positive benefit to Council Plan objective ER1 (Economic Recovery – Support our High Streets and Businesses) as well as CW3 (Strengthen Local Democracy).
- 3.3 To deliver the scheme will require the appropriation of the site from the HRA into the General Fund, the demolition of the existing garages and then the extension of the car park onto the land currently occupied by the garages.
- 3.4 Detailed studies and surveys have not yet been carried out, but initial estimates suggest that the capacity of the car park could broadly double from its current level should an extension onto the current garage site be completed.

- 3.5 No formal planning pre-app has been submitted at this stage, A formal planning application would be required to cover the change in use from a private residential car park / garages to a public car park. Permission would also need to be sought for the demolition of the existing garages.
- 3.6 Potential considerations for planning mitigation to include cycle parking and works to improve appearance and ecological benefits. Engagement with local residents and the wider community would be a part of plans going forward.
- 3.7 SDC would be responsible for managing the project and would retain ownership of the car park site once the extension was completed.

#### 4. Costs of the Project

- 4.1 At this stage estimates have been made of the costs of completing the works required to extend the car parks. These are shown in the table below along with the cost of transferring the site into the General Fund of £112k.

**Table 1**

<b>Site Cost</b>	<b>£112,000</b>
<b>Demolition Costs</b>	<b>£14,000</b>
<b>Asbestos Surveys</b>	<b>£1,000</b>
<b>Surface Patching and Set Out</b>	<b>£10,000</b>
<b>Planning mitigations</b>	<b>£5,000</b>
<b>Contingency (10%)</b>	<b>£3,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£145,000</b>

- 4.2 As part of their commitment to the project Berkeley Town Council has agreed a sum from their own resources to contribute. The minutes of their Full Council meeting from October 2022 state that “following a discussion it was resolved to offer £25k towards the re-development costs and to ask SDC if they could retain ownership within their General Fund”.
- 4.3 At the time of writing Stroud District Council is about to open the application window for the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF). The District Council has an allocation of £400k under this scheme and bids can be made to the scheme of up to £20k. The Town Council have indicated that they will be looking to bid for the full amount as additional match funding towards the scheme, if successful this would increase their contribution to £45k.

- 4.4 The District Council would be funding the balance of the project after the contribution from the Town Council. This is therefore estimated to be £100k - £120k depending upon the success of the REPF bid.
- 4.5 The site value of £112k would pass into the HRA and be used as part of financing the existing HRA capital programme. As stated earlier in the report the receipts from the sale of garage sites are included within the assumed funding for the HRA.
- 4.6 There are no parking charges in the Marybrook Street Car Park so the cost of the project cannot be recouped through those means.

## **5. Conclusion**

- 5.1 Members are recommended to approve the project and the appropriate funding to complete the works. This scheme represents an opportunity to support the Town Council and business community of Berkeley by progressing a scheme increasing the capacity of the town's only public car park to support visitors and the visitor economy.

## **6. Implications**

### **6.1 Financial Implications**

The cost of the project would be £100k-£120k as set out elsewhere in the report.

This would be funded from the Authority's capital reserve which still has sufficient funding available.

As stated earlier in the report the site value would be transferred into the HRA and used to finance the capital programme. No new capital projects would be created in the HRA to utilise the funding.

A larger car park will likely create a larger ongoing maintenance cost which would have to be met from within existing car parking budgets.

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### **6.2 Legal Implications**

Under section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council may appropriate land for any purpose for which the council are authorised by that or any other enactment to acquire land by agreement any land which belongs to the council and is no longer required for the purpose for which it is held immediately before the appropriation. There is an exception for some land held under the HRA, but it will not apply to this land because it is not used for the purpose of housing.

However, any such appropriation of land is subject to the rights of other persons in, over or in respect of the land concerned. It is noted that 5 of the garages are currently rented although the basis of that rental is not specified. Legal advice should be obtained on how to terminate the garage rentals as they will need to be terminated in accordance with the requirements of the documentation.

The current extent of the car park at Marybrook Street is shown on a plan attached to the current Stroud District Council (Off Street Parking Places) (Consolidation) Order 2010 (appendix 5.2). The Order will need to be amended by way of substitution of a plan should the car park be extended and those amendments must be made in accordance with

statutory procedures under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and The Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996, The procedure requires public consultation and publication of the proposed changes.

The change of use from private residential car park/garages to a public car park would require planning permission. This would be progressed and determined under a separate planning process and in accordance with its notification, consultation and publicity requirements.

The Rural England Prosperity Fund is a scheme run by DEFRA as a top-up to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. SDC has secured funding to support eligible capital projects. The grant application by the Town Council will need to be determined in accordance with the grant terms and conditions and the eligibility requirements.

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### **6.3 Equality Implications**

An EIA has been carried out by Officers in relation to the decision made in this report and is attached. Due regard will be given to the implications identified in it.

### **6.4 Environmental Implications**

Increasing the number of car parking spaces in the town in order to encourage additional visitors to the town is also likely to lead to increased usage of fossil fuel powered cars.

As partial mitigation the District Council has recently approved funding to install two EV chargers in the Marybrook car park which should encourage EV takeup among both visitors and residents. The planning process will also encourage further mitigations of an environmental nature.