

## MARSH LANE DEPOT OFFICES REFURBISHMENT / IMPROVEMENTS - SUPPLEMENTARY CAPITAL BID

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 During the expenditure planning process for 2007/08 a scheme was submitted for the refurbishment of the Building Cleaning offices at Marsh Lane Depot to be incorporated into the Building Works sections office accommodation.
- 1.2 The business case supporting this request was that the Building Works team had outgrown the existing accommodation, further expansion to the office based establishment was needed to manage the increase in work being undertaken by the team (following the transfer of responsibility from Housing) and that the offices currently occupied by the Building Works team required a major upgrade. These are the last of the main offices at the depot that need upgrading.
- 1.3 At the time a detailed design and specification was not prepared but a general estimate was submitted to reflect a budget amount against which work could be commissioned particularly for the refurbishment of the Building Cleaning offices. This resulted in the approval of funding in the sum of £20K.
- 1.4 Preliminary work has now been completed to refurbish and make better use of office space vacated by the Building Cleaning Section. This has provided upgraded accommodation for 7 employees and resulted in the vacation of the main Building Works Section offices pending the refurbishment of the now empty building.

### 2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 A detailed design has now been prepared for the second phase of the works which will provide the remaining accommodation and future storage needs for the section. At the same time a full structural survey has been commissioned for the building as, despite the completion of major underpinning works in 2002, it continues to show serious signs of instability. Results of the survey indicate that further underpinning to some of the internal walls is required together with the installation of lateral restraint supports to prevent the external walls from splaying.
- 2.2 The proposed new design consists of the installation of a mezzanine floor, and alterations to the existing building at ground floor level. This scale of work was not originally allowed for in the original capital funding. Due to the continued success of the section, the increase in work undertaken by the team and recently confirmed poor condition of the building it is now considered necessary to undertake this level of work. The scheme will deliver the following benefits:
  - Complete the stabilisation work needed to the building thereby safeguarding the asset for the future
  - Provision of greatly improved working conditions for employees
  - Improved layout and utilisation of space within the building

- Relieve pressure on office accommodation elsewhere in the depot
- Enable the Building Works team to be located in a single office complex with separate areas for the Planned Maintenance, Reactive Maintenance, Gas servicing and Administration teams
- Provide the team with the necessary space and standard of office accommodation needed to deliver the increased planned and reactive maintenance work programme that the team now has responsibility for
- Provision of much needed additional document storage space at first floor level
- Reduction in pressure on office accommodation at Appletree Court (3 Maintenance Inspectors relocated to Marsh Lane Depot from Appletree Court in 2007) complimentary to the one site project

### **3. ASSET MANAGEMENT GROUP**

- 3.1 The Asset Management Group acts as a strategic review body for all property and land transactions to ensure an integrated approach is adopted between services and the Corporate Strategy. The group also maintains an overview of property related matters such as maintenance and health and safety. Membership of the group consists of senior officers from a cross section of services and the Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder. The group provides a forum for evaluating significant capital proposals to ensure that a robust business case has been produced.
- 3.2 The proposed additional works were presented to the Asset Management Group on 23 May 2008. The Group supported the need to undertake the work, particularly the work required for the structural stabilisation of the building.
- 3.3 It was recognised that the existing problems associated with this building and the current impact on the Building Works team meant that delaying these works was not a favoured option. However the team did express the view that the long term plans for the depot should be a consideration in any future building works or office alteration proposals for the depot.

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The estimated cost of phase 2 of the works is £76,000. This includes £19,200 for essential structural works, £31,850 for the new mezzanine floor, £24,950 for other alterations to the building associated with the new layout and works associated with ICT, telecoms, fire and security alarms. The project will be undertaken during the 2008/09 financial year.

### **5. CRIME & DISORDER, ENVIRONMENT AND EQUALITIES & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are none arising directly from this report.

### **6. EMPLOYEE SIDE COMMENTS**

- 6.1 Employee side fully endorse the proposals to improve the standard of office accommodation for staff and to locate the team in a single office building.

## **7. PORTFOLIO HOLDERS COMMENTS**

7.1 The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Efficiency fully supports the recommendation in this report recognising the benefits that will be delivered by the scheme, namely:

- Essential structural works to stabilise the building
- The provision of office accommodation to an acceptable standard
- Bringing the Building Works team together in a single location

## **8. CONCLUSIONS**

8.1 The current arrangements for accommodating the Building Works team at Marsh Lane Depot are unsatisfactory as the team are currently unable to be located in a single office building and the quality of accommodation available is currently well below the acceptable standard. There is no alternative accommodation that could be used at the depot to house the whole team.

8.2 In order for the team to operate efficiently and effectively it is essential that they are located in a single building. This is particularly important given the current and future work programmes and responsibilities taken on by the in-house team.

8.3 A structural survey of the building has identified that essential work is required to stabilise the existing building. Doing nothing is therefore not an option. The proposed scheme will resolve the structural problems and at the same time improve the quality of offices and make better use of the building space.

## **9. RECOMMENDATION**

9.1 That Cabinet recommends approval of a supplementary capital bid of £76,000 to undertake the phase 2 refurbishment and stabilisation works to the main Building Works offices.

### **For Further Information:**

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### **Background Papers:**

Briefing Paper to Asset  
Management Group 23.5.08