

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

PORTFOLIO AREA: ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

Date of Meeting: 19 November 2007

Public

Key Decision: Yes

Recorded in Forward Plan:

Yes

Inside Policy Framework

Title: HISTORIC QUARTER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

Report of: Director of Community Services

Report reference: CS 91/07

Summary: This report has been prepared to update members on progress with the design and development of the above scheme which involves proposed changes to the traffic management arrangements in the Historic Quarter and also public realm improvements in Castle Street and pedestrian access routes into the area. As this scheme involves work on the public highway it has been necessary to involve County Council Officers and Members, as their approval is necessary to enable work to take place. The report gives details of the scheme as so far agreed with the County Council and outlines what further actions are required to ensure the scheme progresses to final implementation

Recommendations:

It is RECOMMENDED that:-

- 3.1 The scheme details as incorporated within this report be approved as a basis for consultation.
- 3.2 This report be referred to the Carlisle Local Committee meeting on 27 November.
- 3.3 Subject to approval a consultation be undertaken as set out within this report.
- 3.4 This report be referred to the Infrastructure O/S Committee meeting on 29 November.

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Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS

- 1.1 At its meeting on 11 September the Council agreed in principle to allocate £840,000 to public realm improvements in the Historic Quarter of the City. Since that decision the project team have assessed a range of options in the process of developing these proposals. This design development process has included the Chair of the Local Committee, the Chair of the Highways Working Group, the Portfolio Holder for Infrastructure and Environmental together with other Members and Officers from the County & City Councils. An addition to the process has also included the views of the various consultants commissioned through Carlisle Renaissance who are looking at other Historic Quarter and Public Realms issues. It is essential that this project incorporates those emerging issues to ensure effective integration.
- 1.2 This report presents details of the proposals. Whilst it is proposed to continue with the originally proposed works to access points there has been come changes to the design in Castle Street. The design proposals identify key principles to incorporate in public realm improvements in the whole area with the initial phase focus on the section of Castle Street between Paternoster Row and the Greenmarket area of the City Centre. It is considered that this initial phase will set the standard and design principles to be adopted in subsequent public realm improvements in the Historic Quarter.
- 1.3 The project comprises two inter-related aspects, traffic management changes and physical public realm improvements. The traffic management proposals show the changes required to deliver phase 1 of the Castle Street works and these would remain substantially unaltered when phase 2 was progressed. Similarly the public realm proposals provide details for the section of Castle Street in phase 1. The design principles and details would be extended to phase 2 of the works in Castle Street together with subsequent public realm projects in the city centre and Historic Quarter.

Traffic Management

- 1.4 Before any changes can be undertaken to the public realm it is considered to be essential to remove all unnecessary vehicle access to the Historic Quarter. With that in mind the design incorporates the pedestrianisation of Castle Street from Paternoster Row to the existing pedestrianised area, St Marys Gate and a section of Fisher Street. A plan showing the proposals is included as Appendix A, but briefly the main elements include:-

- a) A restricted zone comprising all the roads in the Historic Quarter. The only vehicles permitted to enter this area would be Disabled Badge Holders, resident permit holders, special permit holders and those wishing to load/unload
- b) Parking would only be permitted in designated areas indicated on the plan. These areas are on Fisher Street, Castle Street, Abbey Street and West Walls. The existing parking on other streets such as Finkle Street and St Mary's Gate are removed to ease flow on what are narrow streets and improve the visual appearance of streets.
- c) Vehicle access to Castle Street (south of Paternoster Row), The Greenmarket, St Marys Gate and part of Fisher Street would be restricted between 10.30am and 4.30pm and 7pm to 7am in a similar way to the restrictions which already apply in Scotch Street. Deliveries would only take place between 7am and 10.30am and 4.30pm and 7pm. Special permit holders requiring access to the Cathedral and private off road parking areas would be able to gain access at any time. Allocation of such permits would be strictly controlled to ensure that vehicle numbers were kept as low as possible.
- d) Traffic flow in the majority of the area would be one way due to the limited widths of the roads. Traffic would enter via Market Street and leave via West Walls when Castle Street is closed.
- e) Parking surveys have been carried out and sufficient parking spaces are being provided to cope with the existing demands of Disabled Drivers, Residents and Goods Loading in the Historic Quarter.
- f) A cycle lane is provided in Annetwell Street and Finkle Street.

1.5 Subject to approval the appropriate Traffic Orders would be progressed. One option could be to utilise Experimental Orders which could be subsequently amended as further phases of improvements are undertaken.

1.6 An indication of the required signage is also included on the plan (Appendix A). Whilst there is a statutory legal requirement for these, the design would reflect the emerging signage strategy from the wider public realm study.

Public Realm

1.7 The design development identified a number of key principles which were supported by the Member group (as set out in para. 1):-

- The initial phase of public realm improvements focus on the section of Castle Street between Paternoster Row and the City Centre area

- Priority of use to be changed by widening pedestrian footway areas and reducing the width of the carriageway
- Traditional natural, materials such as sandstone and setts etc. be used as the paving material
- Street clutter should be kept to a minimum
- Street furniture, signage etc to be the same as that emerging from Gillespies' study
- Appropriate architectural lighting/flood lighting
- Public art to be incorporated into the project
- Specification of works to meet Highways Authority standards

1.8 Using these principles as a basis a range of options have been assessed to define the street layout and choice of materials. The proposed design is included as Appendix B. The main elements of this design are:-

- A significant change in movement space with widened pedestrian areas and a reduced width for essential vehicle use. The widened areas on the east side would facilitate pavement cafes, seats and other street furniture
- In the section of Castle Street between Paternoster Row and St Marys Gate the pedestrian areas are paved in Lazonby sandstone with the vehicle areas in dark granite setts
- In the section from St Marys Gate into the City Centre the material treatment is uniform across the space with small natural stone paving, again some form of granite that will enable vehicle over-run. This layout enables a smooth transition into the City Centre.

1.9 At this stage the choice of street furniture and detailed construction/drainage issues have not been designed. These would be compatible with the overall public realm strategy.

1.10 The benefits of this design are:-

- Retains part of the original street character (which could later be extended along subsequent phases in Castle Street);
- Trees and light used to channel views to the Castle and encourage exploration of the historic core;
- The public realm responds positively to the Cathedral and Market Cross;
- Public art can be effectively integrated;
- Respects and enhances the historic buildings and existing routes;
- Traffic is slowed and the environment is given back to the pedestrian for most of the day when vehicles are excluded;

- Servicing existing businesses are retained;
- Flexible space (for extension of the market);
- Unique;
- Potential in future to incorporate the entrance to the Cathedral into the scheme

- 1.11 Detailed cost estimates can only be provided once the design is completed. However cost estimates indicate that this project can be delivered for the allocated budget based on current information. A more detailed breakdown is included as Appendix C.

Next Steps

- 1.12 The Executive are being asked to consider the outline scheme presented. A special meeting of the Carlisle Local Committee has been arranged on 27 November to consider the highway aspects of the scheme.
- 1.13 Subject to approval it is proposed to undertake a public consultation exercise over the first 2/3 weeks in December. This consultation would include:-
- Correspondence/visits to all residents and businesses in the Historic Quarter
 - Displays/manned exhibitions
 - Infrastructure O/S Committee
- 1.14 Consultation feedback and detailed design would be undertaken in late December/January 2008 with the aim of presenting final proposals to the Executive and Local Committee in late January/early February 2008.
- 1.15 If the scheme is approved then the Traffic Orders would be progressed and construction works could commence around Easter.

2.0 CONSULTATION

2.1 CONSULTATION TO DATE

A number of meetings have taken place with County Council officers and Members to ensure the scheme as it develops meets with their approval.

The City Council's consultants, Gillespies, who are developing the Public Realm Framework Principles have also been consulted at various stages as have consultants DCA who are undertaking a major study of the Historic Quarter.

2.2 **CONSULTATION PROPOSED**

When the final draft proposals have been accepted by County Council, it is proposed to carry out a programme of public consultation the results of which can be used to further develop the scheme if considered appropriate.

3.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is RECOMMENDED that:-

- 3.1 The scheme details as incorporated within this report be approved as a basis for consultation.
- 3.5 This report be referred to the Carlisle Local Committee meeting on 27 November.
- 3.6 Subject to approval a consultation be undertaken as set out within this report.
- 3.7 This report be referred to the Infrastructure O/S Committee meeting on 29 November.

4.0 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

In order for further development of this scheme to take place, members are requested to approve the proposals presented in this report.

5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

- * Staffing/Resources - Existing in house resources supported by consultants already commissioned through Carlisle Renaissance.
- * Financial
There is a non-recurring budget of £840,000 earmarked in the capital programme for the Castle Street Public Realm Improvement Project. This budget was approved by Council on 11th September but was earmarked pending further reports being presented to and approved by the Executive. As detailed within paragraph 1, the proposed scheme will now focus on initial work in Castle Street with this initial phase and any subsequent phases being subject to the results of the public consultation process. Following the results of this consultation process, detailed designs will be produced and more

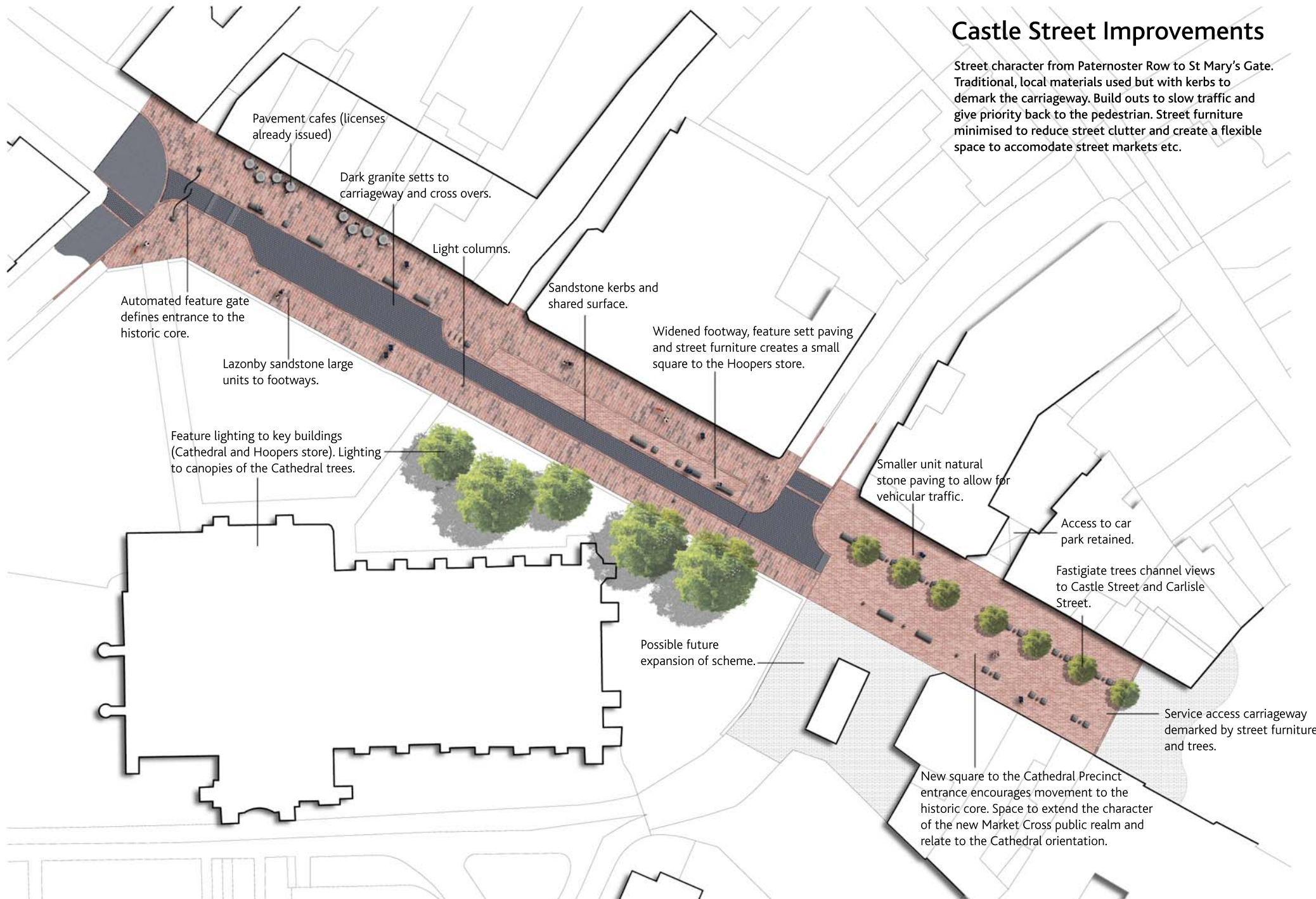
robust estimates provided of the total cost of the scheme. If the full Improvement Project does not proceed as originally planned the full allocation of £840,000 will not be required and any unused budget will return to the Councils capital reserves. It is envisaged that the initial work will commence in March 2008 and therefore the bulk of the expenditure, if the scheme proceeds, will fall within the 2008/09 capital programme. There is no revenue provision for any on-going maintenance costs although it is understood that any revenue costs will be met by the County Council as the Highways Authority.

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| * | Legal | - | The County Council, as Highway Authority, will be responsible for the advertising and processing of all traffic regulation orders related to this scheme. |
| * | Corporate | - | This scheme will represent the first tangible evidence of progress of Carlisle Renaissance and is the first phase of public realm improvement |
| * | Risk Management | - | The design of the scheme will take into account risk management and subject to approval a detailed risk register will be prepared |
| * | Equality Issues | - | The detailed design will incorporate equality of access. Alternative disabled parking provision will be provided. |
| * | Environmental | - | The scheme is designed to directly enhance the environment in the Historic Quarter. This will be achieved by greatly reducing the number of vehicles gaining access to the area and thereby creating a cleaner and quieter environment. The physical improvements proposed will also enhance the visual appearance of the area. |
| * | Crime & Disorder | - | There are no direct crime and disorder benefits other than the fact that restricting vehicle access to the area may help reduce vehicle crime or crime carried out using vehicles in the area. |

- * Impact on Customers - During construction, there will be temporary inconvenience to users of the area but all practicable steps will be taken to minimise this. When work is completed the experience of visiting this area should be greatly enhanced.

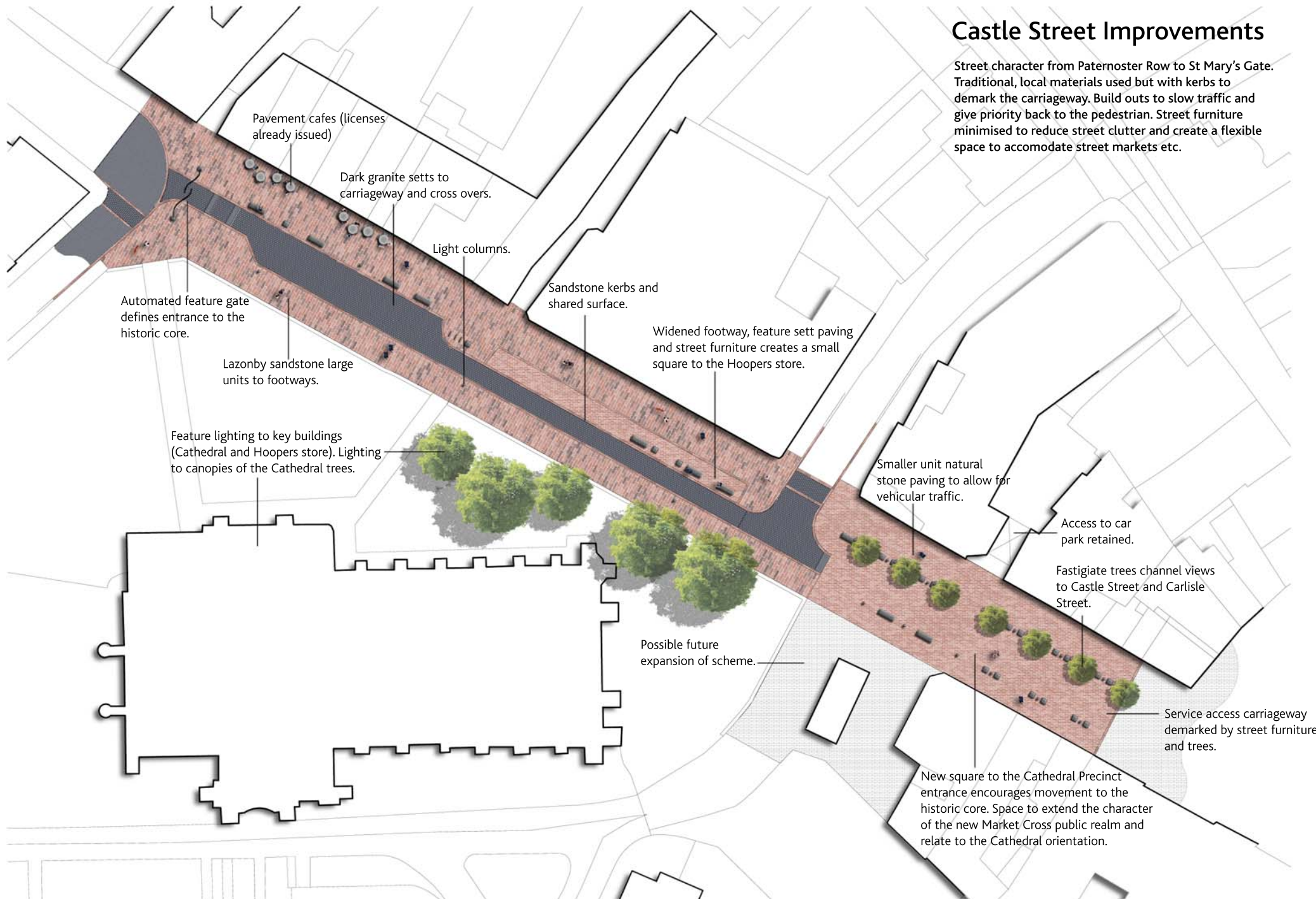
Castle Street Improvements

Street character from Paternoster Row to St Mary's Gate. Traditional, local materials used but with kerbs to demark the carriageway. Build outs to slow traffic and give priority back to the pedestrian. Street furniture minimised to reduce street clutter and create a flexible space to accommodate street markets etc.



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CASTLE STREET, CARLISLE

Preliminary Cost Estimate

Detail	Estimate
1. Reconstruction work at specific location: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dean Taits Lane- West Walls Heads Lane- West Walls / Dean Taits Lane- Abbey Street / West Walls Sub Total	<ul style="list-style-type: none">£15,300.00£12,800.00£ 8,300.00£31,600.00 <u>£68,000.00</u>
2. Reconstruction of Castle Street <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Street Furniture / Lights / Seats- Footways- Carriageway Sub Total	<ul style="list-style-type: none">£50,000.00£382,415.46£182,392.34 <u>£614,807.80</u>
3. Amendments to Traffic Layout / Road Marketing / Traffic Sign alterations Including Legal Costs Sub Total	£22,000.00
4. Supplementary works adjacent to Castle Way for signing information	£16,500.00
5. Consultation / interpretative Information	£10,000.00
6. Contingencies 10%	£73,130.78
7. Design Costs / Supervision Costs	£35,561.42
ESTIMATED TOTAL COST	<u>£840,000.00</u>