

37. BEDFORD ROW STREET IMPROVEMENTS

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The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on a proposal to widen the footpath on the South side of Bedford Row at its intersection with Manchester St, and to seek a funding contribution for this from the City Streets budget.

For some years the Council has been in negotiation with the owner of properties at nos. 8-12 Bedford Row (Mr D Harwood) to undertake footpath improvements to enable the adaptive reuse of his property (ie ground floor café-bars, and residential above). This follows a study undertaken in 1997 by Ian Athfield of this general locality, which identified the potential of Bedford Row and other streets and their adjacent buildings for improvement and revitalisation.

In November 1997 the Council approved an application to use legal road for access and outdoor seating on the street including the removal of 5 car parking spaces for the area in front of Number 8 Bedford Row. In August 1999 Mr Harwood was advised that the Council had agreed to contribute the sum of \$35,000 to extend and pave the footpath, this to be funded from the Urban Renewal account. At that time only one property (No. 8) was included.

Mr Harwood has more recently refined his proposals and now wishes to extend the paving to include Nos. 10 and 12 Bedford Row as well. The current estimate of costs, including some provision for lighting (not provided for earlier) is \$75,000. This would require an additional balance of four car parks to be removed.

A contribution to upgrading the buildings was also approved in 1999 and the quantum of this is the subject of review.

There is now a shortfall of \$40,000 of the street works improvements, and the most appropriate source of funds would be from the city streets budget. This will require substitution from some other projects.

Bedford Row is seen as an important element in revitalising the eastern side of the city, and was specifically adopted as a key area included in the Central City Strategy Stage 1 report adopted by Council in March 2001. The location of these particular buildings at the Manchester Street entrance to the street are of key significance to achieving redevelopment opportunities in this area.

The proposed scheme is attached (note however, there are some additional tree placements being considered for the area which will need to be agreed with the building owner).

Council staff have been working over the past few months with the owner to encourage an appropriate development, and the revised proposal now under discussion should help achieve this.

The intention would be to enter into contractual arrangements with Mr Harwood to the effect that the street works would be undertaken following building reconstruction, that is, street work improvements would only go ahead if the development proceeds; but the agreement would give a binding undertaking which would enable the developer to proceed with confidence.

- Recommendation:**
1. That \$40,000 be made available from the City Streets budget for street work improvements on the south side of Bedford Row, in front of buildings 8, 10 and 12 in general accordance with the attached plan.
 2. That appropriate contractual arrangements be made with the building owner(s) of Bedford Row 8, 10, 12 which ensures the street works be carried out following building reconstruction, to give the building owner confidence to proceed and the council the assurance that the redevelopment occurs.
 3. That public consultation be carried prior to the works being constructed.

- Chairman's Recommendation:**
1. That the above recommendation be adopted and
 2. That staff recommend an appropriate substitution and advise on any rental income from the use of part of the footpath for café tables and chairs.