New plans for Picardy Place proposed

by Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter

The latest plans for the redesign of Picardy Place have been published.

For much of the last five years and more, Picardy Place has faced continuous disruption from roadworks as a result of the construction of St James Quarter and ongoing Tram to Newhaven works, giving rise to much congestion, and anyone in the know avoiding the area completely.

A long-awaited overhaul of the roundabout that connects Leith Walk, Leith Street, Broughton Street and York Place is planned to begin in January, in a £2.7 million roadworks project.

As part of the Trams to Newhaven scheme a new travel interchange will be built at Picardy Place in time for the extension of the line to Newhaven opening in Spring 2023.

Ambitious plans to redesign the central 'island' — which for years has been an construction site — are in the final stages and were presented to the council's Transport Committee on Thursday.



The drawings show the island re-imagined as a new public realm space with landscaping, trees, a water fountain and access for pedestrians and cyclists. The blueprint also includes proposals for several bike stands and a 'cycle hire location'. Much of this has been mooted previously.

A report stated that stakeholders including local councillors, community councils and residents groups met in August "to discuss the project's goals and constraints, and provide an opportunity to raise issues that could be included or excluded from the project".

Work on more detailed designs and procurement will take place between now and December before construction starting in January, with the project set to run until spring when it is hoped the trams will begin carrying passengers.

"The estimated cost for the delivery of this project is £2.7 million, however once the detailed designs are developed a more accurate cost estimate will be available," the report

states.

Speaking at the committee meeting, City Centre councillor Claire Miller urged officials to engage with the stakeholders before plans are finalised.

She added they are "aware we are working to quite tight timescales to deliver this" and noted there has been "a bit of frustration in the past" over the level of engagement from the council.

Cllr Miller said: "I have received quite a large number of comments and questions from the stakeholders who took part in discussions that led to this and they really want to be part of that feedback."

A local group called Better Broughton convened under the leadership of Mark Lazarowicz, former Transport Convener and former MP met in January to make suggestions on the layout of Picardy Place.



This is a visual published in 2018 when plans for the interchange and public realm were discussed

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