

DISABILITY ADVISORY AND ACCESS FORUM

DATE: 22ND OCTOBER, 2002

SUBJECT: LUTON GATEWAY PROJECT

REPORT BY: HEAD OF PLANNING

CONTACT OFFICER: IAN SLATER 01582 546329

IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL COMMUNITY SAFETY

EQUALITIES ENVIRONMENT

FINANCIAL CONSULTATIONS

STAFFING OTHER

WARDS AFFECTED: HIGH TOWN AND SOUTH

PURPOSE

1. To advise the Forum of the latest position in respect of the redevelopment of Luton railway station.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. The Disability Advisory and Access Forum is recommended to note the report.

BACKGROUND

3. Railtrack plc submitted an application for redevelopment of Luton railway station to create a “Luton Gateway” in January 1999, the redevelopment to be funded by retail development on a part of Power Court. The Borough Council resolved to grant planning permission, subject to conditions and appropriate legal agreements, in August 1999. Subsequently there have been revisions to the scheme at the suggestion of both Railtrack and Luton Borough Council, in particular involving the inclusion of a new bus station to create an integrated public transport interchange where public transport – rail and bus – are adjacent and astride the main pedestrian route from the east of the town into the town centre. These changes introduced delays in the processing of the legal agreements required before a planning permission could be issued.
4. In 2001, as negotiations were nearing a conclusion, Railtrack was put into Railway Administration. This further delayed negotiations.

REPORT

5. Recently Railtrack Developments Limited has been identified as the part of the Railtrack Group to take forward the planning application for the Gateway project. Because of the new structure of Railtrack, however, complications have been identified concerning how the project will be delivered in terms of its construction, and the recent decision to sell Railtrack Developments Limited has introduced still further complications.
6. The overall result of these actions is a proposal by Railtrack Developments Limited that there should be a new planning application for the railway station proposals, and a separate application for the retail development on Power Court. The implications of this are still being examined by Council Officers, and especially the concern that this could mean delaying works

to the railway station which remain the principal objective of the whole development.

7. However, the main elements of the proposal remain as they were before, and there is every probability that any planning application[s] can be considered and determined in a shorter timescale than previously.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100D

Planning applications relating to the Railtrack Gateway Project