

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive (Introduced by the Executive Leader)	Executive Cabinet	8 December 2016

BOTANY BAY MASTERPLAN: UPDATE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To update Members on the progress of the Council project to develop an Economic Masterplan for the Botany Bay Area.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- That Members note the report and the draft illustrative Masterplan document at Appendix A.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

- In November 2013 the Council adopted the Chorley Local Plan for 2012-2026. This Plan allocated the Botany Bay/ Great Knowley Area as a sub-regional employment and mixed use site under policy EP2.
- This allocation replicated the size of the site in the previous Local Plan Review Document 2003. The changes within Policy EP2 is the requirement for a Masterplan, an acceptability of other forms of development to secure the delivery of the wider allocation including retail and housing.
- The Council recognised that this was the second time this area had been allocated in the Local Plan for this use and if the site were not to come forward in this plan period then it would be unlikely to ever be delivered and would have to be deallocated.
- The Council then set as a corporate priority the Development of an Economic Masterplan for the Botany Bay Area. This project has been progressed with stakeholders and this report updates on progress and introduces an up to date final draft for information.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Key Decision? Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Reason Please bold as appropriate	1, a change in service provision that impacts upon the service revenue budget by £100,000 or more	2, a contract worth £100,000 or more
	3, a new or unprogrammed capital scheme of £100,000 or more	4, Significant impact in environmental, social or physical terms in two or more wards

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

- Members cannot "approve" the proposed Masterplan as this will be a consideration for any

Planning Application and the Council should not do anything that may give the appearance of fettering any future decision.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

8. To take no action on progression of the Corporate Project.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

9. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all		A strong local economy	X
Clean, safe and healthy communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	

BACKGROUND

10. The land at Botany Bay/ Great Knowley has been in Chorley's Local Plan since 2003, initially as a site allocated for residential, employment and leisure and latterly in the Local Plan adopted in 2013 as employment and leisure on the Botany Bay part of the site and employment, residential and restaurants/cafes on the Great Knowley part.
11. The Council recognised that if this site were to be brought forward for development, it would have to happen in this Local Plan period. Any further delays could demonstrate that this site is not deliverable which in itself would be evidence for deallocation.
12. The Council were also concerned that the pressure on the landowners to realise the value in the site may compel them to bring forward an unco-ordinated site delivery. It is acknowledged that the Local Plan requires there to be a Masterplan to show delivery on the site, but policies can be overcome if there is evidence to demonstrate this is appropriate.
13. As a result of these concerns, the Council made the project "Develop an Economic Masterplan for the Botany Bay area" part of the corporate strategy.

INITIAL STEPS

14. The Council approached the stakeholders and offered to facilitate the preparation of a Masterplan for that area. It was confirmed that the Masterplan would be policy and evidence led, but would attempt to reflect the aspirations of the stakeholders. It was proposed that the Council would lead on the preparation of the Masterplan, appoint the consultant and initially would meet the costs. Stakeholders who wished to participate in the process would be obliged to sign up to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).
15. The MoU confirmed that the Stakeholders wanted to participate and confirmed the cost of the work and the stakeholders contribution. All the stakeholders except 2 signed. The 2 land holdings of the outstanding stakeholders do not impact on the delivery of the site in that any planning application submitted would include their land and use the Masterplan as evidence in support of that application.
16. The Council led MoU approach was felt to be necessary. By leading, the Council, who have no ownership in the site, could provide a view on the needs of the Borough but also represent the interest of local residents who would (other than as consultees) have no voice in the process.
17. In preparing the MoU, the stakeholders agreed to the scope of the work for the Masterplan and agreed to contribute to its cost pro rata to the size of their landholding. It is acknowledged that the 2 landowners who did not sign the MoU will get the benefit of the Masterplan but they have lost the opportunity of contributing to its development and put forward their views on the shape of development on their land.

THE MASTERPLAN PREPARATION

18. Planit IE a firm of Architects with a particular expertise in Landscape Architecture, Masterplanning and place shaping were retained. The Council recognised the particular challenges of this site in relation to the mix of uses required being residential, leisure, employment and retail, the particular topography of the site, the existing use and building (the Former Mill), highways and the proximity of the Motorway and the existence of the canal running through the site. Planit have a proven record of delivering successfully a masterplan for this type of scheme having worked on Kirskstall Forge in Leeds, Liverpool Waters, Liverpool and Keybridge House in Vauxhall which were all schemes containing elements also part of the Botany Bay project. The Council proposed the use of Planit to the stakeholders who had signed up to the MoU and their appointment was agreed.
19. Planit firstly identified the context of the site. The challenges of the site (recognised above) were considered in relation to its location and its surrounding area. They acknowledged the proximity of the residents of Great Knowley, recognising that any development should limit its impact on the established community, particularly in terms of visibility and highways.
20. The topography and land conditions were considered important factors in delivery on the site and would contribute to the zoning of uses but also the visual appearance of development. The canal and the slope up to Knowley Brow were features which could be incorporated into any design.
21. It was also considered that the land at Gale Moss, which does not form part of EP2 should be included in any Masterplan. This land is allocated as employment land within the Local Plan and any development at Botany Bay/Great Knowley has a clear impact on the Gale Moss site and vice versa. It was also recognised that bringing the sites together in a single Masterplan would allow greater control over the delivery of the wider site and the Corporate Strategy outcomes.

Priorities and Principles

22. The clear instruction to Planit was that any proposed Masterplan should be capable of receiving a recommendation for approval by the Council's planning service. It should be evidence driven and where possible compliant with the Local Plan. It was not the case that Planit were directed to depart from the Local Plan but it was recognised that the stakeholders, as land owner / developers should have the opportunity to maximise the value of their ownership. This often leads to a departure from planning policy, but the Council's "control" over this was that any departure should be evidence based and support the purpose of the Local Plan. In addition Planit were instructed, with the agreement of the stakeholders, that any proposed Masterplan must specifically limit harm to Chorley Town Centre.
23. Planit fixed the following priorities and principles for their commission
 - a. The proposed Masterplan should incorporate the Gale Moss site;
 - b. The proposed Masterplan should be as far as possible compliant with the local policy document EP.2 but it was recognised that departures which could be justified by the inclusion of Gale Moss or other evidence should be incorporated where the end result was an improvement in the overall scheme;
 - c. The design should incorporate key features of the area to include the canal and topography of the site, ensuring that any proposal was sensitive to the area;
 - d. The interests of the residents of Great Knowley particularly in relation to highways issues should be protected as far as possible;
 - e. The proposal should produce a high quality destination location;
 - f. The vibrancy of Chorley Town centre should be protected;
 - g. The value of the landowners interests should be maximised within the agreed commission priorities and principles.

Options

24. A vision document was initially prepared and circulated to stakeholders who had signed up to the MoU in June of this year. This put forward 3 proposals on site use and layout.

Fundamentally the use of Gale Moss for each was the same (employment and or light industrial). Early Gale Moss delivery is considered to be essential to justify the delivery of the wider masterplan area including a higher level of housing and less employment floorspace. Viability of individual parcels and the site as a whole will influence the final distribution of uses in order to ensure a deliverable Masterplan development. The Botany Bay/ Great Knowley site options were different based on 3 approaches to delivery. Firstly, there was a residential lead development. Whilst this would maximise the value of the site, there was insufficient evidence to support such a significant departure from the Local Plan. This site (particularly the Botany Bay part) is allocated for Employment use (EP1.2) with the Great Knowley part being a mixed allocation to include employment and housing with the justification for housing being via the Masterplanning of the wider site. A residential lead development would be too much of a departure from the allocation and would be unlikely to be approved.

25. The second option was a Landscape lead development. This whilst being most sensitive to the locality it significantly limited the developable area of the site. In order to be a viable option, there would have had to have been a greater proportion of residential accommodation than proposed within the local plan and again this was felt to be too much of a departure from policy to be recommended for approval.
26. The final option was a merging of the earlier two. It retained the split on the site caused by the canal with residential use being allowed on the East of the canal. A greater area was allowed for residential, with the topography of the site being the limiting factor for development rather than a landscape driven design. To the West of the canal there would be a mix of retail, leisure and office driven uses. This proposal also contained the option to retain the Mill Building as a landmark, suggesting that the Mill's appearance could be enhanced and it could contribute to the destination feel of the development. Accesses to the site were proposed to be as existing to Botany Bay with a new access off A675 being created into the Great Knowley side of the development. This was to limit the impact of traffic on the existing Great Knowley residents.
27. The third option was agreed to be the preferred one and Planit were instructed to develop this proposal in consultation with the stakeholders and obtain evidence to support this delivery.
28. This option has been developed with stakeholders and their specific aspirations have been included in the scheme. A copy of the up to date draft Masterplan is appended to this report for information.

Evidence

29. Topographical and Site Survey Reports have already been obtained which contributed to the design of the scheme and its development. Now there is a draft scheme setting out the quantum of the development the following evidence is being obtained to confirm deliverability of the scheme.
30. A Market Assessment is being prepared. This specifically addresses the retail and leisure aspects of the proposal. It considers the proposed developable areas within the scheme and advises over whether there would be;
 - a. market interest in this type of development in this location;
 - b. potential occupiers of the units; and
 - c. potential incomes.
31. This evidence is important as it contributes to the consideration of the deliverability of the scheme. If there is no interest in this type of scheme in this location then the stakeholders would need to reassess their aspirations.
32. A Retail Impact Assessment will be undertaken when the quantum of retail and type of retail has been established. This will inform on the likely impact of this development on retail centres in the region, including but not limited to Chorley Town Centre. This is an important document particularly in relation to any planning application as it will be evidence that supports the scheme. By leading on the Masterplan the Council were able to stress the need to protect the town centre in particular.
33. As part of the development of the Masterplan Planit have worked with Highways England and LCC Highways to assess the impacts on junction 9 of the M61 and the highways

network in that area. Initially this was limited to the motorway junction and the Hartwood Roundabout, recognising the additional traffic generated in that area. In addition however, Highways England are willing to invest in undertaking some modelling of the impact on the highways network caused by this proposed development, the Market Walk extension, Euxton Lane Digital Health Park and proposed developments in the A49 area with the Council agreeing to fund the initial surveys.

34. Again this will be used as evidence in the event an application is made for planning consent for the Botany Bay / Great Knowley / Gale Moss site.

INVOLVEMENT OF CBC GOING FORWARD

35. As stated above, Chorley Council are not a landowner on that site. As such the Council's interest relates the management of the delivery and long term sustainability of the site. We are also very keen to ensure that proper engagement is done with other none landowning stakeholders. As a result the Council are arranging meetings with local Councillors and with LCC Councillors as well as the residents of Great Knowley to ensure they understand the proposals. This is in addition to the obligations on any applicant for planning consent to consult.
36. It is not proposed for the Council to take any further stake in the site.

MASTERPLAN AND ITS USE

37. The Local Plan requires any application for planning consent to demonstrate through a masterplan the comprehensive development of the site. This recognises that the site has a number of proposed uses including residential. The Masterplan would ensure that developers could not simply "cherry pick" the best parts of the allocation for their parcel of land. It requires the landowners to work together to show coherent delivery of the allocation across the site.
38. The Masterplan will be used to support any planning application as evidence. It will show how all the parcels of land within the allocation will contribute to the Local Plan. The Masterplan will not show the detail of the applications but will show the zoning and quantum of development.
39. Stakeholders who have paid their financial contribution to the cost of the development of the Masterplan will receive not only the Masterplan document itself but also have copies of the supporting evidence which will be required to demonstrate the deliverability of the scheme.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

40. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal		Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area	X	Policy and Communications	

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

41. The costs of the masterplan will be met from contributions from the site's various stakeholders and the carried forward inward investment budget. The additional works regarding the improvements to the highway network will be met from the furthering key employment sites budget.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

42. Members are not being asked to approve the Masterplan document. They do not have the authority to do so. The document will be used to support any planning application made in

that area and the proper place to consider its planning relevance is at Development Control Committee. Members are being asked to consider the progress of the project and note the principles used to develop the Masterplan proposal.

GARY HALL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Chris Moister	5160	22 November 2016	***