

CABINET

9 JUNE 2010

UPDATE REPORT - WINCHESTER COLLEGE CAMPUS CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

REPORT OF HEAD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

Contact Officer: Steve Opacic Tel No: 01962 848101

RECENT REFERENCES:

[CAB1994](#) – Major Landowners' Masterplans, Cabinet 17 March 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The 'Winchester College Campus Conservation and Development Framework' was presented to Cabinet for general endorsement in March 2010, alongside the Marwell Wildlife Masterplan. While Cabinet gave general endorsement to the Marwell document it raised several concerns about the Winchester College Framework and deferred a decision to enable these to be discussed.

This has happened and this report discusses the concerns raised and the College's response. It recommends that, in view of the assurances given, Cabinet gives its general endorsement of the Framework, whilst avoiding any pre-judgement of future planning applications.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 That while not wishing to pre-judge the outcome of any future planning applications, the City Council welcomes the production of the Winchester College Campus Conservation and Development Framework, including the consultation that has been undertaken in producing it, and gives its general endorsement to the document.

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Winchester District Local Plan's Policy DP.2 encourages major landowners in the District to produce long-term masterplans for their land holdings and indicates that significant development would not be permitted without such plans. Several masterplans have now been produced, for example for the Cathedral Close and University of Winchester. It is normal for there to be consultation on these documents and for the City Council to be asked for its general endorsement of them.
- 1.2 Winchester College has produced such a document, called the 'Winchester College Campus Conservation and Development Framework'. This is intended to guide the development and use of the College campus over the coming 10-15 years. However, because of the uncertainties involved in planning for such a period, the College has called the document a 'Framework' rather than a masterplan, to maintain an element of flexibility.
- 1.3 The process of developing the Framework achieved good involvement by the public and stakeholders and that the resulting 'Preferred Options' were considered sensible and warranted general support. Some would require future applications for planning permission and/or Listed Building Consent and proposals such as the development of Blackbridge Yard would require a change to current Local Plan policy (as the site is outside the Winchester settlement boundary). However, the Framework recognised this and officers recommended in report [CAB1994](#) (17 March 2010) that the Council give its general support to the Framework.
- 1.4 A number of concerns were raised by Cabinet about the Framework and consideration of it was deferred to allow these to be discussed and the College to respond. This report clarifies the concerns and sets out the College's response and an officer recommendation.

2 Cabinet Concerns, Winchester College Response and Officer Recommendation

- 2.1 At the Cabinet meeting on 17 March 2010 the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Access raised a number of concerns about the Winchester College Framework, as follows:

- how land within the South Downs National Park would be dealt with;
- further clarification regarding the housing proposed;
- further clarification regarding the proposals for the replacement of the boat house with Housing;
- further consideration regarding the development of land on the edge of Kingsgate Park.

2.2 Following a meeting with the Portfolio Holder, these concerns were clarified and the following points were put to the College:

- Antrim House - concern about the possibility of demolition given the background to the site and its location in the Conservation Area. References in para 8.25 to the possibility of reviewing the position should be deleted and the beginning of para 8.22, which suggests that the site is 'potentially unconstrained', should also be reconsidered;
- Replacement boat club - concern about the potential impact of the replacement building, which should be flagged up in the text (para 8.46);
- Blackbridge Yard – concern about endorsing something which is currently contrary to policy. The site should be provided by the College as a public open space, enabling provision of the proposed footpath.

2.3 The College's planning consultant replied to these points by letter dated 23 April 2010 and this is attached at Appendix A. This highlights the strategic nature of the Framework and the benefits which it proposes, alongside the development proposals. In response to the specific concerns raised, the following points are made and an officer recommended response is made:

- Antrim House/Kingsgate Park – Demolition is not being proposed and the Framework merely refers to a possible review of this position. Paragraph 8.22 is referring to other sites as well. **Officer recommendation:** the College is now well aware of the Council's concern about demolition of Antrim House and possible development adjoining it. The Framework does not propose demolition and it is recommended that this section should be generally endorsed, the Council having flagged up its concerns;
- Boat Club – the impact of the building can be considered through the planning application process. The Framework acknowledges the sensitive location of the site and illustrates how the proposed new boat club could enhance the area. **Officer recommendation:** agree that the sensitive location of the site is acknowledged and the impact of the building can be considered fully through any future planning application;
- Blackbridge Yard – acknowledge that development of the site would conflict with the Local Plan and that it needs to be promoted through the SHLAA and LDF process. Not aware of any previous proposals for open

space use. **Officer recommendation:** the previous report to Cabinet was clear that development of this site would conflict with current policy and was not being endorsed. Open space has not been previously suggested on this site and there is no requirement on the College to make it available for this use, although if the City Council now wishes to acquire it for open space use this is something that could be discussed further with the College, as with any other landowner. Otherwise, the Framework is clear that housing development at Blackbridge Yard conflicts with current policy and endorsement of it would not commit the Council to amending the policy in the future.

3 Conclusion

- 3.1 The production of the Winchester College Campus Conservation reflects the aims of Local Plan Policy DP.2 and is to be welcomed. The document has been developed over a two-year period in consultation with the Council's officers, the public and other stakeholders. It include proposals that will in due course be submitted as planning applications and it would not therefore be appropriate for the Council to formally 'adopt' it.
- 3.2 Cabinet's previous concerns and the College's response have been considered. The Framework is not being adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document or other formal planning guidance. Therefore, it will not be of sufficient 'weight' to pre-judge future planning applications or decisions about changes to planning policy and the Council has highlighted areas where there may be future concerns. The Framework is based on a sound analysis of planning and other policies, the characteristics and constraints of the respective sites and the opportunities arising. Accordingly it is recommended that the Cabinet should give the Council's general endorsement to the production of the document and, in broad terms, its content.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

4 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CORPORATE BUSINESS PLAN (RELEVANCE TO):

- 4.1 Winchester College contributes to various aspects of the Sustainable Community Strategy, including economic prosperity, high quality environment, and health and wellbeing. The Framework will contribute to the aims of the SCS by helping to ensure the continued development and improvement of this establishment.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The Council's officers have been involved in the preparation of the Framework but there are no significant additional resource implications.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 6.1 None.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Letter from Adams Hendry (on behalf of Winchester College) 23.4.10

Our Ref: L 100423 CCDF
Project No: WC/781

Mr Steve Opacic
Head of Strategic Planning
Winchester City Council
City Offices
Colebrook Street
Winchester
Hampshire
SO23 9LJ

23rd April 2010

Dear Mr Opacic,

WINCHESTER COLLEGE CAMPUS CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Thank you for your email dated 14th April that followed the Cabinet meeting on 17th March, in which you explained Cllr Wood's concerns about the preferred options for three of the sites identified in the document. As I said in our recent telephone conversation my Client was disappointed to receive these comments, particularly in view of the lengthy discussions on the CCDF that we have had with you and other officers and also having regard to the extensive public involvement on the content of the document.

As you know, the document is intended to provide a long-term strategic framework for the College campus and not only includes development proposals but also a series of opportunities for adding to the extensive benefits that the College already makes available to the local community. Examples of these are the conservation of the wet meadows and the dedication of land for an important new cycleway link. I suggest that the document therefore needs to be considered 'in the round'. Moreover, whereas Chapter 8 sets out the preferred options for each of the potential development sites, it is not intended to provide a detailed brief for each of them. Specific proposals for the sites will be the subject of planning applications, at which time they will of course be subject to detailed scrutiny, including consideration of the visual impact of specific development proposals. The College acknowledges that the CCDF cannot fetter the local planning authority's detailed consideration of these future planning applications.

Antrim House

With the above in mind, the College is not currently proposing the demolition of Antrim House; it merely notes the possibility of reviewing the future of the building when detailed proposals for this part of the campus are drawn up. My view is that this is clearly expressed in paragraph 8.25 of the document.

Sites 10 and 22

I now turn to your concern that the early part of paragraph 8.22 emphasises the development significance of Sites 10 and 22. Although the preceding heading refers only to these two sites, the text of the paragraph makes it clear that it is not only Sites 10 and 22 that are considered to be the least constrained parts of the campus but also the other sites adjoining the PE Centre (i.e. Sites 11,14, 24 and 25). It should be noted that a similar statement is also set out in paragraph 8.27, which relates to these other sites adjoining the PE Centre. I trust that these statements make it sufficiently clear that Sites 10 and 22 are not being singled out for particular emphasis in terms of future development potential.

Site for Replacement Boat Club

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting confirm my recollection that the Cabinet's concern related to the existing Boat Club site (Site 16) rather than the proposed replacement site (Site 21), to which you refer in your email. Notwithstanding this, I trust that my introductory remarks about the purpose of the CCDF will clarify that the detailed impact of the proposed new building can best be considered when pre-application discussions are held in advance of the submission of a detailed planning application. The document acknowledges that the site lies within an area that is subject to countryside policies and you will also have noted that Figure 12 indicates how the impact of the existing tennis courts and club house on the site, as well as the setting of the new boat club, can be improved with the introduction of new planting.

Blackbridge Yard

With regard to Blackbridge Yard (Site 17), the College acknowledges that development would be contrary to current planning policies as set out in the Local Plan and that any possible change to the site's planning status would need to await the preparation and adoption of the relevant LDF local development document. As you indicated in your report to the Cabinet, the College does not therefore expect the City Council to be able to endorse this aspect of the CCDF at this stage. You will recall from the College's submissions on the SHLAA that we regard this as a brownfield site that is suitable for housing development and we have not previously been made aware of any City Council proposals for its use as open space.

In addition to revisions following last summer's public involvement, we have already made two subsequent sets of changes to the document in response to officer comments. Amending the document is costly and my Client is most reluctant to incur the expense of amending the text further. In the light of my comments I would hope that the portfolio holder would be prepared to consider recommending that his Cabinet colleagues endorse the document. I would of course be

happy to discuss with you any further comments that Cllr Wood may have after you have consulted with him.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Wilson', with a long, sweeping flourish at the end.

Peter Wilson
Principal Planner

cc John Wells, Winchester College