

WINCHESTER TOWN FORUM

28 July 2015

STATION APPROACH BRIEF

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (POLICY AND PLANNING)

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RECENT REFERENCES:

CAB2702 – STATION APPROACH, WINCHESTER – 6 JULY 2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At its meeting in July, Cabinet gave delegated authority to the Leader and Head of Estates to finalise a design brief for Station Approach. Attached is the draft design brief which has been amended to reflect legal advice on the design competition process as well as stakeholder comments and the views of the Station Approach Panel, for the Town Forum's comment.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That any comments of the Winchester Town Forum be reported to the Leader.

Contract Notice of a Competition for the Selection of Design Team for Station Approach, Winchester

1. Introduction
2. Background
3. Consultation
4. Design Principles

Futher sections to be added

July 2015

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Station Approach

1. Introduction

Winchester City Council is working in partnership with key stakeholders on plans to improve and better utilise the area of Winchester it calls 'Station Approach', as shown on the plan below.

The area currently has a variety of uses, some of which have obvious potential for improvement or development whilst others may be retained. There are a variety of ownerships; the Council proposes to engage with other owners through encouragement and enabling rather than through any other form of intervention.

The aim of this project is to realise the area's potential, both in relation to the city's economy and its role as a key gateway. If it is successful development could have a positive impact on the economy of the city as a whole and could provide a new and improved public realm with better walking and cycling links for people who live and work in the area, or who move through it. It is a key location in the City Council's 'Vision for Winchester' document.

A successful outcome of the regeneration of the area would be the creation of commercially successful new development, a location which has a distinctive local character respecting the best of the neighbouring area and an improvement in the connectivity between the emerging suburb of Barton Farm, the historic area of Hyde, the station and the town centre.

The Carfax and Cattlemarket sites are two key parcels of land within the area both owned by Winchester City Council and in excellent sustainable locations, offering the potential for creating innovative and attractive designs and public realm improvements balanced with much needed commercial and housing development together with car parking and financial returns. Development of these is seen as both a key objective in itself and as a catalyst for other improvements to public and private interests.

The City Council wishes to bring forward proposals to redevelop these key sites as well as creating a framework to enhance and develop the public realm and transport links throughout the area, reflecting the many different groups of people who pass through the area to access educational, commercial, retail and tourist attractions when this and other development takes place. It is intended to take forward the development in phases with the Carfax site being considered initially followed by the Cattlemarket site.

Design competition

The Council now invites expressions of interest from design teams as the first stage of a two stage competition for the Station Approach using the competitive dialogue process under the 2015 European Union Procurement Regulations.

Stage 1

Design teams are invited to submit expressions of interest to be included on a shortlist. The purpose of the short listing process is identify three teams which will then be invited to engage in a competitive dialogue leading to a preparation by each team of a masterplan for the development of the Carfax and Cattlemarket sites and for a supporting public realm framework which will identify how development on the sites will support and enable wider public realm improvements in the area. This will also require detailed design proposals for the Carfax site.

The selection criteria and methodology that will be used to create the shortlist is set out in Appendix XXXX.

Stage 2

The short listed teams will engage with the City Council to develop their proposals. This stage of the process will include an assessment to ensure commercial deliverability. Proposals which are judged not to be commercially deliverable will fail to meet the Council's requirements regardless of other merits.

Those proposals which do meet the requirement that they are commercially deliverable will be assessed by a jury in accordance with the rules of the competitive dialogue process. An anonymous display of submitted material for public exhibition may be required at this stage but will not form part of the assessment process.

The successful team will be appointed to prepare:

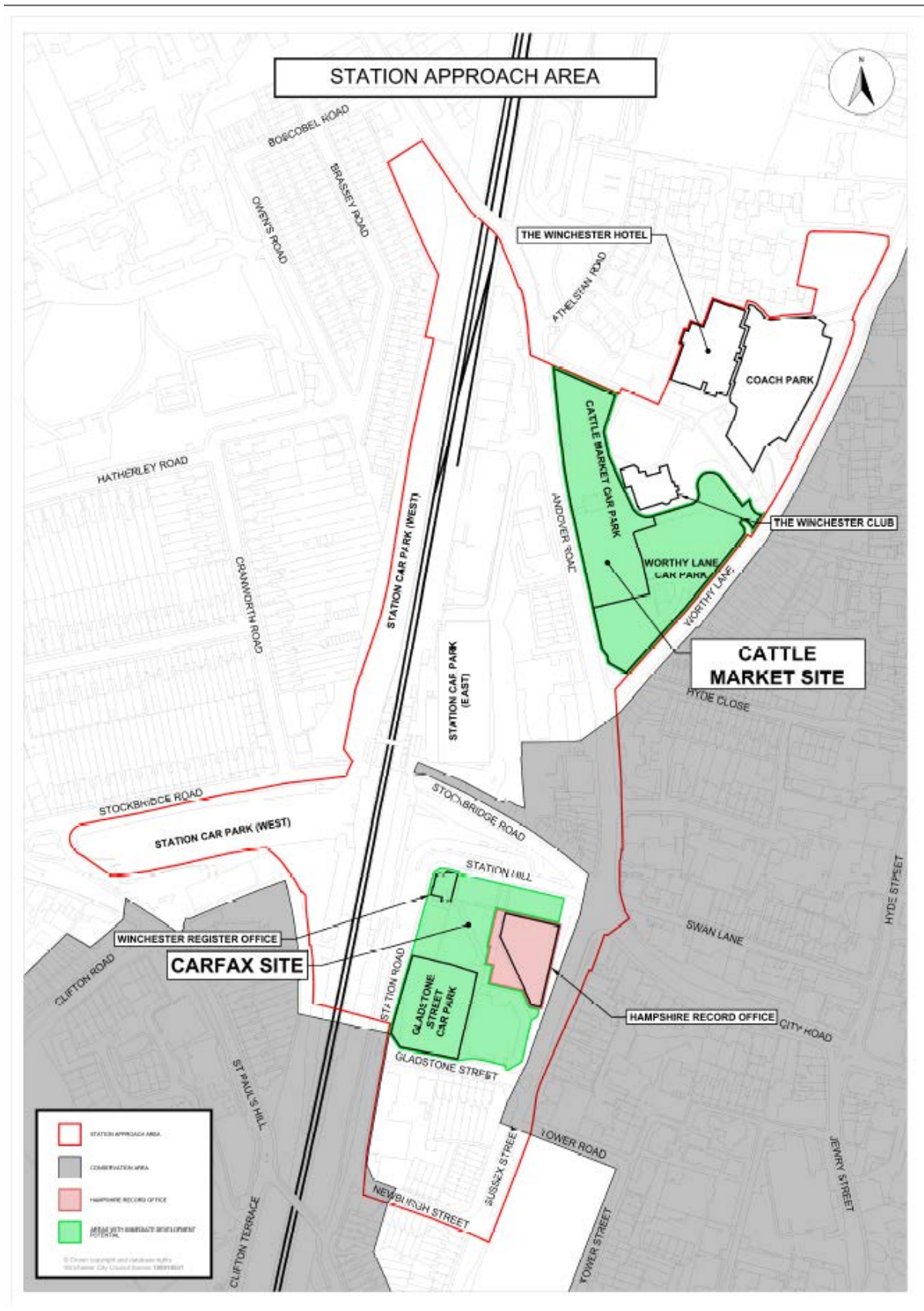
1. The design framework for the Carfax and Cattlemarket sites, with disposition of uses, layout, height and massing, access arrangements and similar detail;
2. The public realm strategy for the area as a whole;
3. The detailed design for the development of the Carfax site in accordance with 1 and 2 above.

The Council may, at its discretion, make a further award of the contract for the detailed design of the Cattlemarket development to the successful design team at a future date or may, at its discretion, procure this service through a further procurement exercise.

The City Council has an initial minimum requirement for the development content of the two sites and these are set out in the brief. However, it does not have a fixed view as to how this might be achieved. It is the purpose of the design process to demonstrate how these can be best achieved and how they can be modified in the process if it is necessary or opportune to do so. It therefore intends to appoint a design team under clearly identified leadership which will provide the technical and creative problem solving skills required for a project of this sensitivity and complexity.

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Plan 1 Station Approach Study Area



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To ensure that the area realises its full potential a number of public realm and accessibility principles have been identified. These need to be embedded in all concept designs, although it is acknowledged that their implementation will rely upon partnership working with Hampshire County Council, Stage Coach Bus, Network Rail and South West Trains along with other key stakeholder groups who have been involved in developing walking and cycling strategies for the City and the Station Travel Plan. Initial discussions have taken place with these organisations to confirm that they all support the objectives and are keen to remain involved as it progresses.

The City Council places a strong emphasis on functional, high quality design in appropriate materials which should be distinctive and obviously 'of its time' but which should respect and take cues from the adjacent townscape. As a mixed use hub of commercial, housing, parking and a small amount of retail space development the area has sufficient scale to have its own 'internal' public realm and design character but the transition to and from adjacent areas should be fluid and not abrupt. Sustainable building and layout based on good business principles should be at the heart of the design, construction and future operation.

A £5m bid is being made to the Local Enterprise Partnership for local growth funding to enable public realm, walking and cycling improvements to be made to the area around the development, Winchester Railway Station and linking into the City Centre and beyond. This work will help to identify and formulate schemes and projects to feed into that bid.

Workshops have taken place with stakeholders and residents looking at both sites and the public realm of the area, and have identified a number of issues and potential opportunities which are set out in a separate report.

Through the development the Council seeks to:

- ensure the area around the station enhances the economic vitality of the city, offering modern, purpose built offices to improve employment opportunities;
- create a commercial office hub;
- create a high quality and welcoming arrival 'gateway' point and improve 'wayfinding' and legibility so that people find their way to the city centre and other key destinations;
- enhance the public realm, public transport facilities and retail offer in the area to create pedestrian focused attractive and vibrant public spaces that serve a variety of people and builds on and adds to the existing commercial and cultural life in the city;
- consider the potential to incorporate appropriate cultural facilities in the area;
- improve the aesthetic and environmental impact of the area, including the retention of important trees and create new planting areas;

- demonstrate a high standard of architectural, highway and landscape design, noting the existing character of Winchester and use quality materials and detailing;
- safeguard and enhance important views and the character of the area;
- repair the urban fabric and create a cohesive high quality townscape, and public realm;
- improve linkages to the station and through the sites;
- recognise the area as a gateway, celebrating a sense of arrival;
- provide car parking which meets both public and private needs through the efficient use of space and is of a high quality design from a user perspective;
- strengthen the existing retail offer in addition to the local centre around Andover Road;
- achieve active frontages by providing a variety of active uses along key routes;
- provide a mix of houses and flats;
- improve pedestrian, cyclist and traffic flows through the area, including the City Road, Andover Road, Sussex Street junction ('Carfax Junction');
- have consideration of the findings of recent research that show that traffic reduction and maximising pedestrian and cycling facilities increase considerably the commercial potential of an area.

(<http://activelivingresearch.org/sites/default/files/MakingTheCaseReport.pdf> and a reference to the Pedestrian Pound at http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/sites/default/files/content/library/Reports/PedestrianPound_fullreport_web.pdf).

This development will contribute to achieving the City Council's objectives to increase high value employment prospects in the city and to promote the town's Walking and Cycling Strategies. Winchester has a shortfall in modern, desirable commercial premises resulting in some businesses not being able to establish themselves or expand in the City. The development will support desired transport outcomes by improving access to markets and employment, improving public transport access and locating housing and commercial premises in a highly sustainable location.

Background and Contextual Documents

The opportunity presented by this area has emerged from discussions between the Council and local stakeholders, and has been given momentum by the grant of planning permission for the Barton Farm development of 2000 dwellings and a local centre immediately to the north. Local Plan Policies set out in the adopted Local Plan Part 1 and in the Draft Local Plan Part 2 seek to ensure that there are a range of sites and premises available for businesses and commercial enterprises to set up and expand to meet their full potential and adequate infrastructure is available. The

Station approach area has specific development plan policies with which this brief is consistent.

As part of its response to Barton Farm, Hampshire County Council (the highway authority) has commissioned 3 corridor studies to identify measures which could be undertaken using these payments. The developer will also be funding new bus services serving the site, linking to the Rail Station/ City Centre. It has also developed a Winchester Railway Station Travel Plan.

There is therefore a strong strategy and policy framework to guide this work including the Local Plan Part 1, the City Council's 'Vision for Winchester' document, the Winchester Town Access Plan, a District Cycling Strategy and a Winchester Walking strategy.

The City Council has an adopted a Car Parking Strategy in 2014 which sets out a detailed policy framework against which to test and develop development proposals.

There is a designated Air Quality Management Area within central Winchester which contains thresholds for certain pollutants. This contains an action plan and work is planned on a vehicle profiling survey/ exercise which will help in form further actions that might be required.

Consultation/Engagement

Substantial local consultation has taken place in conjunction with the production of this brief and the draft Local Plan Part 2. Through February and March 2015 the Council undertook extensive consultation including a series of workshops with residents, local business and other stakeholders. A very good level of response was received including 650 individual comments through the online survey as well as 115 residents and 48 stakeholders who attended workshops.

During this consultation a wide variety of people and groups provided their thoughts on the Station Approach area and what possibilities there might be to improve it and support the local economy. The consultation was intended to help generate key principles at this early stage which will inform how any development will be taken forward. There is concern from local residents in particular regarding the form and operation of any development, and its impact on local traffic and travel patterns.

The full survey report will be provided as a background report to this brief.

As the project proceeds the selected design team will be required to engage with officers, stakeholders, members of the Station Approach Panel as well as the wider public at identified stages of the development of their work.

Public Realm

Securing a high quality public realm across the Station Approach area is an important objective and has two primary aims. Firstly the Council wishes to ensure that the quality of the public realm makes a positive statement about the city itself on arrival via the station, and by all transport modes via the Andover Road/new development area. This project represents an opportunity to set a new standard. Secondly, providing improved walking and cycling routes within the public realm can improve the links with new development to the north and ensure that there is strong connectivity to the town centre, improving convenience and encouraging non-car journeys.

Specific issues that the City Council wishes to see addressed include:

- the relationship of development on the Carfax site to the station forecourt so as to create a generous area of public realm to act as a legible and welcoming arrival and departure space.
- improving the interchange facilities between train, bus and taxi services with well-graded and well-signed pedestrian routes between the two, ensuring safe pedestrian links and ensuring the most direct and practical routing of bus services.
- improved cycling and pedestrian movement within and through the station and surrounding area, and improving pedestrian and cycle accessibility and way-finding into the centre of Winchester utilising both City Road and Station Road.
- we will require packages of transport and public realm interventions to be identified, with concept designs and initial costings which can be implemented in agreed phases and in line with funding as it becomes available.

Car Parking

Detailed parking surveys and accompanying reports have been undertaken and provide a further background reports to this brief.

The Council's Parking Strategy sets out the framework for the area in terms of parking provision and focuses on ensuring that parking spaces are provided in appropriate locations so as to manage traffic and retain the required provision to support Winchester's economy. Work done by the City Council's retained consultants suggests that careful provision in this area can provide both a sufficient number of purposeful car parking spaces, and reduce traffic flow across the very busy City Road junction.

Taking account of the total requirements indicated below, the design proposals should be developed to provide the optimal balance of public and private parking on

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each of the two sites, reflecting the survey and assessment work undertaken. It is recognised that design considerations may also have a significant role in determining the precise location and configuration of car parking provided.

Development Requirements

Across the two sites owned by the City Council the development requirements which the City Council believes could be accommodated and which should guide design proposals are:

- approximately 13,000 sq m office floor space divided into two buildings with facilities and floorplates suitable for flexible use either for a single or multiple occupiers with self contained car parking requirements incorporated into the design.
- approximately 5,500 sq m residential floor space.
- approximately 1750 sq m small scale retail floor space including restaurant/café uses.
- approximately XXX car parking spaces for general purposes managed by the City Council configured as a multi-storey car park or car parks.

Principles for determining a successful development outcome

In considering design proposals the City Council will expect proposals which:

Generally

- lift and set a new standard for the quality of design and public realm where it is currently poor, whilst relating well where it interacts with the existing conservation areas;
- give consideration to the retention of existing mature trees where they can make a contribution to enhancing the existing landscape character or to new planting where desirable;
- place an emphasis on individual building design being part of the character of the whole area rather than creating landmarks or statements in their own right. New buildings should be proportionately scaled using existing topography and the cues from existing buildings where these are helpful;
- design roads that are permeable to ensure that walking and cycling is prioritised along legible, well lit, attractive and lively routes;
- ensure that the street frontages of new developments enhance the pedestrian environment;

- ensure that frontages are active where possible, avoiding stretches of blank façade.

Cattlemarket site

- seek to provide a pedestrian and cycle route from Andover Road to Worthy Lane, with improved access and clear signage to North Walls recreation ground and the city centre;
- provide some integral public space that serves the new development and can be accessed by the wider community;
- create a frontage onto Andover Road that is set back from the existing edge of pavement to provide a generous footpath with tree lined verge;
- makes use of the Worthy Lane / Andover Road junction to create a focal point;
- careful massing to respect the 2 storey domestic dwellings which are opposite the site on Worthy Lane.

Carfax Site

- retain a pedestrian route cutting through the site linking the station forecourt and Sussex Street, and improve its quality and accessibility;
- create a focal point and attractive frontage immediately opposite the station to orientate arrivals;
- considers the relative merits of retaining or removing the former Registry Office building on the north west corner of the site as part of an overall scheme;
- consider how redevelopment could facilitate highway and public realm improvements on Station Road, the station forecourt and Station Hill which lead visitors naturally towards the City Centre via the Andover Road / City Road Junction;
- have regard to the existing Hampshire County Records Office and the Station building and assess the impact of development within the wider context including residential properties and views.