

CABINET

17 March 2010

MAJOR LANDOWNER'S MASTERPLANS - WINCHESTER COLLEGE CAMPUS
CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK AND MARWELL WILDLIFE
MASTERPLAN

REPORT OF HEAD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

Contact Officer: Steve Opacic Tel No: 01962 848101

RECENT REFERENCES:

None.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Winchester District Local Plan encourages major landowners in the District to produce long-term masterplans for their land holdings. Several masterplans have now been produced, for example for the Cathedral Close and University of Winchester. Two masterplans have been recently submitted to the Council with a request for their endorsement.

Winchester College has produced a 'Winchester College Campus Conservation and Development Framework' following public consultation on a draft document in 2009. The Framework is intended to guide the College's future decisions over the next 10-15 years but is not intended to be an inflexible 'masterplan'. The College has aspirations for development of parts of its 60ha land holdings, both for educational buildings/facilities and for development to raise funding. The Framework therefore has looked at the opportunities for development in the campus, taking account of the substantial heritage, landscape and other constraints affecting much of the area and puts forward proposals accordingly.

Marwell Zoological Park (now 'Marwell Wildlife') has also produced a masterplan following consultation on a draft during summer 2009. There are a number of key issues which the Masterplan identifies and seeks to address, including the need to

enhance the visitor experience and take account of sustainability issues, the listed buildings and archaeology, the need to review parking provision and the need to consider accommodation for staff and visitors. The Masterplan has been developed in consultation with City Council officers and was published in draft in August 2009. Marwell is aiming to relocate its main entrance point, in association with the reorganisation of parking, shifting the centre of gravity of the park further to the north and relocating functions way from Marwell Hall and associated listed buildings.

Winchester College and Marwell Wildlife are seeking the City Council's endorsement of their Framework/Masterplans.. Whilst any such endorsement must be expressed in such a way as not to pre-judge the outcome of future planning applications it is entirely consistent with the principles of good development management for the City Council to provide a high level response to such documents. In both cases it is suggested that the response be to indicate support.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That without pre-judging the outcome of any future planning applications, the City Council welcomes the production of the Winchester College Campus Conservation and Development Framework and the Marwell Wildlife Masterplan Statement, including the consultation that has been undertaken in producing them, and gives its general endorsement to the documents.

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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 'Framework' rather than a masterplan, to maintain an element of flexibility.
- 1.3 Marwell Wildlife (formerly known as Marwell Zoological Park) has produced a Masterplan Statement, which summarises a larger Masterplan document which was subject to consultation in 2009. This aims to give a clear direction for Marwell to 2026 to guide development and investment.

2 Winchester College Campus Conservation and Development Framework

- 2.1 Work on the Framework commenced in 2008 and City Council officers have been consulted throughout. There was public consultation on an 'Issues and Options' document in March 2009, which elicited 70 written representations. These have been assessed and a revised framework produced, which the College has asked the City Council to give its general endorsement to.
- 2.2 The Framework's Executive Summary and Site Options Plan are attached at Appendix A and the full document can be viewed by Members in their Information pages on the Council's Intranet. The Framework analyses the functioning of the College, in relation to the buildings and spaces which form its campus. This concludes that: the College is a highly sustainable use as it is compact and self-contained; the College already provides significant opportunities for the public to enjoy its campus but there is some scope to enhance this; that Kingsgate Street forms the central spine of the College with

most buildings located close by; and that there is scope for new buildings to incorporate resource efficient technology.

- 2.3 The Framework then assesses various aspects of the College's context, including planning policy, landscape, built heritage, flood risk, and transport. A set of development principles, issues and preferred options are developed from the results of these assessments. The Executive Summary (see Appendix A) gives a useful summary of the main elements of the Framework.
- 2.4 Officers consider that the process of developing the Framework has achieved good involvement by the public and stakeholders and that the resulting 'Preferred Options' are sensible and warrant general support. Some of these will 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 recognises this and it is considered that the Council can give its general support to the Framework without pre-judging future planning/Listed Building applications, or possible changes to planning policies/designations.
- 2.5 Accordingly, it is recommended that the Council welcomes the production of the Winchester College Campus Conservation and Development Framework and gives general endorsement to it, including the consultation that has been undertaken in producing it.

3 Marwell Wildlife Masterplan Statement

- 3.1 Work started on the Masterplan in 2006 and there has been ongoing dialogue with City Council officers and other stakeholders. A larger Masterplan document was subject to consultation in 2009 and a summary Masterplan Statement has been produced to reflect the outcome of the consultation. This aims to give a clear direction for Marwell to 2026 to guide development and investment.
- 3.2 The Masterplan emphasises Marwell's importance as a visitor attraction within the South East, attracting 500,000 visitors annually with consequent benefits for the local economy, as well as its role in nature conservation, education and tourism. Marwell wants to become a centre of excellence for sustainability and to invest in buildings that showcase renewable technologies and waste reduction. It has identified a need to reorganise its accommodation to create a new entrance point, to move the focus of the park to the north and to improve the setting of the Grade 1 listed Marwell Hall.
- 3.3 Appendix B attaches Section 4 of the Masterplan Statement (Key Concepts, Development and Implementation) and Plans 3 and 4 showing the Key Concepts and Development Proposals. Together these summarise the key elements of the Masterplan. The full document can be viewed by Members via their Information area on the Council's Intranet. It proposes to relocate the park entrance to the north, in conjunction with moving the centre of gravity of the park to the north and way form the 'wet' southern area. This would

improve the visitor experience and take advantage of the landscape setting of the site to improve views of Marwell Hall. It is also proposed that service functions should be moved away from Marwell Hall to improve its setting and that exhibits be reorganised around a 'biomes' concept.

- 3.4 The intention is that new buildings around the entrance would be designed as a sustainability centre of excellence and include a replacement shop, administrative offices and Science and Learning Centre. In response to officer concerns about the potential scale of the retail element, it has been confirmed that this would just sell park-related gifts and the like and would be no larger than the existing shop.
- 3.5 Marwell has called the new entrance/sustainability centre project its 'Adaptation Project' and is seeking grant funding from the Wellcome Trust. It will be important for it to be able to demonstrate to the Wellcome Trust that it is working with the local authority and that there are not likely to be any insurmountable planning problems. Cabinet's general endorsement of the Masterplan Framework will therefore be very important to Marwell, and it is recommended that this be given.
- 3.6 Officers have been consulted on the Masterplan and any significant concerns have been overcome. However, the Council's Landscape Officer advises that a landscape management plan for the entire site should be considered in conjunction with the Masterplan to ensure protection and enhancement of landscape character/cultural heritage. The desirability of such a management plan should be drawn to the attention of Marwell Wildlife.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 The production of the Winchester College Campus Conservation and Development Framework and the Marwell Wildlife Masterplan Statement reflects the aims of Local Plan Policy DP.2 and is to be welcomed. Both documents have been developed over a period of time in consultation with the Council's officers, the public and other stakeholders. Both documents 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' them.
- 4.2 Nevertheless, they are both considered to be 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 gives the Council's general endorsement to the production of the documents and, in broad terms, their content.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

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

- 5.1 Both Winchester College and Marwell Wildlife contribute to various aspects of the Sustainable Community Strategy, including economic prosperity, high

quality environment, and health and wellbeing. The Framework/ Masterplans will contribute to the aims of the SCS by helping to ensure the continued development and improvement of these establishments.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

6.1 The Council's officers have been involved in the preparation of the Framework/Masterplan so there are no significant additional resource implications.

7 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

7.1 None.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Winchester College Campus Conservation and Development Framework
Marwell Wildlife Masterplan Statement

APPENDICES:

Appendix A - Winchester College Campus Conservation and Development Framework - Executive Summary and Site Options Plan;

Appendix B – Marwell Wildlife Masterplan Statement – Section 4 and Plans 3-4.