

CENTRAL WINCHESTER REGENERATION INFORMAL POLICY GROUP

14 May 2018

Attendance:

Councillors
Horrill (Chairman)

Ashton
Burns
Hutchison
Read

Officer: Veryan Lyons – Head of Programme

Others in attendance:

Councillors: Gottlieb and Tod

Officers in Attendance:

Laura Taylor – Chief Executive

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Iazard

1 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That subject to the reference under public participation to Tim Field being corrected to Tim Fell and to Jeff Withe being corrected to Jeff White, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 March 2018 (Report CAB3062 refers) be approved and adopted.

2 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Rebecca Taylor of John Thompson and Partners (JTP), architects and master planners and approximately 50 members of the public. Members of the public were informed that a Broadsheet giving an update on the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and the process and timescale for its future adoption, was available for collection at the end of the meeting.

The Chairman thanked all those that had provided feedback as part of the consultation exercise and who had expressed their aspirations for the City.

3 **CENTRAL WINCHESTER REGENERATION AREA**

The Chairman described the regeneration area stating that although it was not the largest of sites it was highly visible and an important location in the context of the Town.

4 **PURPOSE OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)**

The Chairman explained the purpose of the SPD to the meeting. The Chairman made reference to the adopted Local Plan and the necessity to make links to that document. The SPD set out the aspirations for the area and gave guidance on the expectations for the area based on the gathering of considerable evidence in accordance with the prescribed approach. The SPD set out a broad indication of potential uses within the framework and was not specific on site allocation.

The language of the document had been changed; increased emphasis had been placed on linkage with the Local Plan policies. There was public support for the general direction of the SPD and a clear message to developers to support the vision. Any development proposal that would not complement the vision would be self evident.

Following representations and a risk of legal challenge , leading counsel's advice had been taken. The SPD could not allocate land for new uses that were not already identified in the Local Plan and therefore the SPD could not be too prescriptive. The SPD could not require a landowner to use their land for a specific use. The language within the SPD had been reviewed and reflected this legal advice.

The Council would not be using Compulsory Purchase powers in order to consolidate land holdings within the regeneration area, and it would proceed through partnership working. The City Council was however one of the largest landowners within the regeneration area.

RESOLVED:

That the comments of the Chairman be noted.

5 **PRESENTATION**

Rebecca Taylor and the Chairman gave a presentation on the draft SPD.

Engagement and Consultation

Rebecca Taylor gave details of the extensive engagement and consultation exercise that had taken place since February 2017. There had been a series of meetings, focus groups and road shows. The regeneration site had been visited; there had been hands-on planning groups and exhibitions held. In addition, there had been street surveys and discussion with commuters, developers and local businesses. 1,500 people had been included on the consultation database and this high level of engagement had helped to define the essence of the SPD - "Winchesterness".

What You Told Us You Wanted

Rebecca Taylor provided an overview on range of comments received

- Maintain Winchesterness
- To have incremental development rather than a large, single scheme
- To have multiple architects
- The revamp of the Brooks Shopping Centre
- To retain the Antiques Market and Woolstaplers Hall
- To incorporate heritage and culture into the area
- To have mixed uses where people could live, work and shop
- To take practical measures to keep the town working during the construction period
- To make the area pedestrian friendly
- To expose the waterways
- To provide housing for all so that the area was alive both at night and day
- To continue with the high level of community partnership
- To have policies on bus routing, parking strategies (with the Middle Brook Street Car Park to be considered as the bus station location).
- To have meanwhile uses
- To be flexible in the description of land uses, so that changes in housing need and retail requirements could be responded to.

The close for consultation had been the 5 February 2018 and comments had been collected and responded to and were available to view on the Council's website.

Key Themes and Updates to the SPD

The Chairman summarised the key themes that had emerged through the consultation process.

The SPD had been updated to better reflect sustainability and environmental protection. This included minimising emissions, including renewable energy and having clarity on cycle routes. The findings of the parallel work that was taking place on the Winchester Movement and Access Strategy would also be taken into consideration.

The provision of retail space had been defined in the range of 3000 square metres to 8700 square metres. There was presently 4000 square metres of retail provision within the regeneration area and therefore present retail provision could also be met within the regenerated area. In comparison, the 2014 scheme had proposed 15,000 square metres of retail provision. The proposed retail space gave flexibility and it was noted that from the consultation there was a preference for independent and smaller stores.

The SPD now included the findings of the Archaeology Advisory Panel. It was proposed to set up a public meeting where members of the Advisory Panel could provide details on its conclusions.

There was sufficient direction and guidance within the SPD in respect of design.

The Informal Policy Group had undertaken a due diligence role to assess the SPD's viability and delivery. Members would also be visiting Bath, Chester and Oxford to increase their understanding of cities that had undertaken regeneration projects.

Next Steps

The Chairman stated that Members would continue to work with the teams and JTP to refine the SPD. The timeline was included in the Broadsheet available at the meeting, with the SPD to be submitted to Cabinet on 20 June 2018.

In the interim period, better use would be made of existing areas in the site including the Antiques Market and Coitbury House. The Broadway's public realm would be improved and work would be carried out in conjunction with Hampshire Cultural Trust to bring interest to the area.

RESOLVED:

That the presentations be noted.

6 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

During public participation the following points were made, which are summarised below, and the Chairman responded accordingly:

Retail

Catherine Turness (Winchester BID): There had been considerable recent media attention to retail. She could give assurance that retail in Winchester was not dying but it was diversifying. It was welcomed that the SPD was not prescriptive. Independent businesses were part of Winchesterness. Businesses still wanted to be in Winchester and the regeneration would give choice in a town where rents were at a premium, which was problematic to some businesses. The Winchester BID offered its continued assistance towards the formation of the SPD.

Adoption process and legal implications

Patrick Davies: Asked if more clarity could be given on who had made the legal challenge and what were the implications in that the SPD could not go beyond the original planning document.

Judith Martin: Following the legal challenge and to maintain public goodwill the SPD should be submitted to full Council for adoption.

Councillor Gottlieb: Declared a personal but not prejudicial interest and stated that the legal challenge had not been made by him.

Tim Fell: Commented that in his view the lead-in time for consideration of the SPD by The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet was too short for the SPD to be properly debated. He also asked if a name for the area had been decided upon.

Sustainability and Environmental Protection and Transport

Christine Holloway: Welcomed the responses to the consultation and brought attention to the Winchester Clean Air Day to be held on the 26 June which would promote walking and cycling.

Peter Robinson (Stagecoach): Stated that it was vital for shoppers that buses be kept close to the city centre and this would also help to reduce traffic congestion.

Terry Gould: Stated that the public realm in the Broadway should be improved and that buses should be kept close to the centre, for example by utilising the existing Friarsgate Car Park area rather than the Middle Brook Street Car Park.

Phil Gagg: Welcomed the inclusions on cycling and sustainable building design. He commented on the affect of proposals to introduce short term parking in the Colebrook Street Car Park and how this could generate additional traffic movements that could impact on the Broadway.

A representative of Cycle Winchester asked that this new group be involved in consultations and commented that improvements to the public realm, for example the opening of water ways, should have public access.

Expert Studies

Richard Baker (City of Winchester Trust): Enquired if the studies by Deloitte and Mace on retail and those on archaeology and housing would be fed into the SPD. He added that the implementation and phasing (of development) would be challenging to keep the city working.

Design

Hew Thomas: Enquired what the design would look like.

A resident asked if there was a model of the development that the public could view.

Needs of the Disabled

A resident: Asked about the provision for the access needs of disabled people.

The Chairman thanked the public speakers for their contribution.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and concluded at 7.35 pm