

CABINET

Wednesday, 21 June 2023

Attendance:

Councillors
Tod (Chairperson)

Cutler
Becker
Porter

Thompson
Westwood

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Learney

Members in attendance who spoke at the meeting

Councillors Horrill, Laming, Lee, Wallace and Warwick

Other members in attendance:

Councillor Batho

[Video recording of this meeting](#)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received as noted above.

2. **MEMBERSHIP OF CABINET BODIES ETC.**

RESOLVED:

1. That Councillors Gordon-Smith and Godfrey be appointed to the Treasury Investment Group (in addition to Councillors Cutler, Learney and Power who were appointed at Cabinet on 23 May 2023).

2. That Councillor Pett be appointed as director of Venta Living Ltd (the Council's housing company).

3. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillors Porter and Tod declared personal (but not prejudicial) interests in respect of various agenda items due to their role as County Councillors.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Six members of the public/representatives from parish councils spoke regarding reports CAB3378 and CAB3397 and their comments are summarised under the relevant minutes below.

5. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 23 MAY 2023**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held 23 May 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

6. **LEADER AND CABINET MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader stated that a petition had been received prior to the meeting from the Badger Farm and Olivers' Battery residents' association in connection with the proposed decision on the Bushfield Camp masterplan. The Strategic Director and Monitoring Officer acknowledged the petition and confirmed that she would respond to the petitioners under the formal petition process. She noted that the petition contents primarily related to planning issues that were not the responsibility of Cabinet.

Councillor Thompson reported that the opportunity for rural community groups to apply for funding under the Rural England Prosperity Fund remained open.

7. **CONCEPT MASTERPLAN GOVERNANCE**
(CAB3408)

Councillor Porter introduced the report which set out the council's proposed approach to concept master planning.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Laming, Horrill and Lee addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Laming

He highlighted that the recent councillor workshop on masterplans had demonstrated the benefits of the "15 minute city" but he did not believe it would be possible to travel from the city centre to Bushfield camp without a car. He suggested that a city-wide masterplan should be developed, which included consideration of wider transport links, before developing a masterplan for any specific area.

Councillor Horrill

She considered that the concept was positive but expressed concern that the decision had not been subject to wider member scrutiny, although there had been an all member briefing. She also believed it would be preferable to wait for consultation on the Regulation 18 draft local plan to be concluded. She queried what was the specific criteria for a site to be required to produce a masterplan.

Councillor Lee

He supported the general master planning concept if it enabled environmental concerns to be addressed at an early stage. However, he believed the current approach suggested was too people centric and should instead focus on protecting the natural environment and regenerative design. He also requested that the importance of building typology be reviewed as part of the local plan.

Councillor Porter and the Corporate Head of Planning and Regulatory responded to the comments made, including highlighting that the Winchester Movement Strategy was being developed with the County Council and the cross-party Local Plan Advisory Group had discussed Strategic Policy D5 (Masterplan).

The Corporate Head of Planning and Regulatory, the Strategic Director and Monitoring Officer and the Chief Executive responded to Cabinet Members' questions including on the how a site would be determined as significant and the relationship with both the planning application determination process and the emerging new Local Plan.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out in the report and addendum and outlined above.

RESOLVED:

That the approach to Concept Masterplanning, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be approved.

8. **BUSHFIELD CAMP CONCEPT MASTERPLAN**
(CAB3378)

Councillor Porter introduced the report and emphasised that it sought approval of a high level concept masterplan but was not seeking any decision regarding specific elements of any future development. Matters such as car parking provision or building size and heights would be considered as part of any planning application process.

She welcomed two representatives of the developer to the meeting – Nikki Davies (Meeting Place) and Neil Goldsmith (Lichfields).

Six members of the public/representatives of local groups spoke during public participation as summarised briefly below.

Councillor John Godbold (Badger Farm Parish Council chair)

He reported on a recent meeting organised by the parish council which had recorded the views of local residents on the proposals. The developer had been unable to attend. He stated that many people did not object to the development in principle, but had concerns regarding the scale, the impact on traffic and possible pressure on residents' parking spaces. In addition, residents had expressed concern regarding the visual impact on the South Downs National Park area. The parish council was not opposed to any development but wanted it to be suitable for the area and not cause additional problems.

Siobhan Osborne

As a Badger Farm resident she objected to the proposal to develop 49 acres of land at Bushfield citing its importance ecologically. She believed that detailed information had been omitted from the materials shared during the public consultation which made it difficult to submit meaningful comments. In particular, she expressed concern regarding the reference to an urban campus development. She also stated that the developer's list of stakeholders omitted the Badger Farm and Olivers Battery residents' association, despite a specific request for it to be included. She referred to the petition "Protect Bushfield" which had received comments that the public consultation had been unhelpful and did not adequately represent the proposal. In general she believed there had been a lack of transparency and engagement from the developers.

Ali Cochrane

She expressed concern that no independent viability study had been available to the public and considered that the estimate of 2,500 jobs seemed optimistic. She queried whether there was demand for the office space proposed. She expressed concern regarding the negative impact on the surrounding area including loss of biodiversity, traffic congestion and more pressure on local amenities. She believed there was a lack of impartial overview with reports being prepared by the developer. If the scheme did go ahead, she requested assurances that land handed over for public benefit was protected by covenant.

Phil Gagg (WinACC)

He considered that the draft Bushfield masterplan did not demonstrate it had undertaken the work required in a concept master planning exercise. He believed there was not adequate demonstration of how and what feedback had been taken into account. He queried the impact of approving the contents of the masterplan on consideration of a future outline planning application. He highlighted that the technical report included reference to 2,520 campus jobs which would require significant parking spaces to be allocated as there was insufficient existing capacity within the park and ride. There was also a lack of information regarding energy use and target emissions. As a result, he considered it was premature to approve the masterplan at this stage.

Mike Davies

He emphasised that Bushfield camp had been rewilded for the past 45 years with in his view, at least two thirds classified as greenfield. It was an important green corridor with much biodiversity and had been designated as a site that was of importance for nature. He queried how the council decided what land was considered brownfield? He highlighted the importance of the area particularly because of the significant amount of grassland that had already been lost within Winchester.

Paul Cooper

He considered that the proposed development would lead to significantly worse traffic congestion in an already busy area. He also expressed concern about the possible impact of employees choosing to park on-street in neighbouring areas. He requested that the proposals be rejected.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Warwick, Laming, Wallace and Horrill addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Warwick

She spoke in her role as both city and county councillor and acknowledged the efforts made by the developer in engaging with the public and the potential for a positive impact on the local economy and biodiversity net gain. However, she highlighted that the concerns raised by local residents should not be overlooked and requested that a business case and needs analysis should be published as to why this site should be developed in preference to other sites. In particular, she mentioned the concerns raised regarding the impact of additional traffic, on residents' parking in neighbouring areas and of light pollution.

Councillor Laming

He explained he was also speaking as chair of the Badger Farm Community Centre and the Badger Farm and Oliver's Battery Residents' Community Association. He reiterated his comments made earlier in the meeting that it would be premature to approve a masterplan for Bushfield before a city-wide masterplan had been completed. He expressed concerns related to the impact of increased traffic causing unacceptable levels of congestion in addition to the potential for people to opt to park on-street in neighbouring areas. He believed that the proposed scale and mass of development was inappropriate for such a sensitive area.

Councillor Wallace

He emphasised that the design principles within the masterplan should be fixed before the outline planning application was considered and believed that many of the carbon neutrality principles had been missed. He also believed that proposals for energy generation were not adequately addressed. With regard to transport, he thought it was unlikely that the Council would be in a position to agree an area wide transport plan prior to the submission of any planning application with could cause significant issues.

Councillor Horrill

She welcomed the masterplan noting that the site had already been allocated in the Local Plan for employment. She also commended the development team for their engagement approach and welcomed the proposals to preserve open spaces for all residents to enjoy. She asked for some clarity on specific points including what was meant by the site being identified as "mixed use", whether student accommodation was included in proposals and exactly how the developer would produce opportunities for local people. She highlighted that the issue of car parking provision and potential overspill in neighbouring areas would require further discussion.

Councillor Porter, together with Mr Goldsmith, Ms Davies and the Service Lead – Built Environment and Principal Planning Policy Officer responded to the points raised by members of the public, local groups and councillors. In particular, it was emphasised that decisions on many of the matters of concern raised had

not yet been determined. By agreeing the concept masterplan, matters such as access, amount of parking, amount of development and access linkage of the site were not prejudiced. The existing Local Plan (Policy WT3) and emerging policy limited the development area to 20 hectares which effectively was the area previously occupied by the military camp. Details about the net zero carbon goals for the development would be included with the planning application. With regard to the types of development included, the emerging policy WT5 allocated the site for “mixed use high quality flexible business and employment space, an innovation/education hub and creative industries” and it would be for the developer to submit their proposals on the detail.

With regard to ongoing consultation, Ms Davies confirmed she was hoping to agree a new date to meet with the parish council as soon as possible. She also confirmed that they liaised with the residents’ association through the chair.

Cabinet considered the report and appendices in detail and officers together with Mr Goldsmith and Ms Davies responded to questions thereon. In particular, the following points were clarified:

- The concept masterplan will be one of many material planning considerations that would be considered during any future planning application.
- Officers were confident that the Bushfield masterplan did conform with the principles established in the concept masterplan governance.
- The Local Plan policy (existing and emerging) did not include reference to specific uses such as a hotel, retail space or sports facilities and it would be a matter for the developer in submitting their planning application to demonstrate how their proposals conform to national and local plan policies setting out their planning case for those aspects that were not specifically listed in the local plan policy.
- As planning authority, the council’s role would involve assessing and testing the developer’s evidence base and mitigation proposed at the planning application stage consulting with statutory and non statutory consultees.
- The importance of the developer detailing proposals for phasing at an early stage was emphasised.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out in the report and addendum and outlined above.

RESOLVED:

1. That the concept masterplan process as undertaken by the applicants be supported and the accompanying technical document that has helped to inform the preparation of the concept masterplan for Bushfield Camp, which has been undertaken in general conformity with the Councils emerging master planning process be noted; and
2. That the Bushfield Camp concept masterplan that is attached at Appendix 1 of the report along with the accompanying technical document attached at Appendix 2 be agreed as a material

consideration to inform the development management assessment of the planning application.

9. **PARK AND RIDE BUS CONTRACT**
(CAB3397)

In Councillor Learney's absence, Councillor Tod introduced the report, highlighting the challenges currently faced in securing electric buses and the proposals to enable alteration of the contract should this position change.

Phil Gagg (WinACC) spoke during public participation as summarised briefly below.

He expressed concern that the requirement to tackle the climate emergency, including the council's own declared targets, were not specifically mentioned in the report. The only option to address this was to have net zero emissions at its core through the introduction of electric zero emission buses. He suggested that if savings were required to enable their purchase, this could be achieved through other means such as using the Hampshire Enhanced Bus Partnership to integrate park and ride services with town services or the more aggressive transfer of parking away from city centre car parks to park and ride.

At the invitation of the Leader, Councillors Wallace and Bolton addressed Cabinet as summarised briefly below.

Councillor Wallace

He concurred with the points made by Mr Gagg. He queried why an alternative business case was not being examined to address the reduction in the buses being used by those travelling to work. He suggested work on the Station Approach area could be progressed to increase usage of existing car parks. In general, he was disappointed in the report as currently set out and hoped that the council would reconsider its options in order to address its climate commitments.

Councillor Bolton

He welcomed the approach suggested to enable break clauses in the contract should future funding for electric buses become available. He suggested that a review should be undertaken to better assess current usage of the service, for example to obtain more understanding of visitor and shopper use. He considered that even if government grants became available, the introduction of electric buses was likely to create additional costs requiring ongoing support from the council. He asked how it was proposed this would be funded.

Councillor Tod responded to comments made and confirmed the council's commitment to net zero carbon emissions. The cost of the park and ride service would be expected to be met from the overall parking budget. The Head of Programme also responded to comments made regarding any possibility of integrating services and confirmed that a full review of the current usage of the service had been undertaken jointly with the county council.

Cabinet agreed to the following for the reasons set out in the report and addendum and outlined above.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Strategic Director be given delegated authority to seek tenders based on options as outlined in the report, and to agree tender documentation to be used pursuant to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, selection criteria, and the detailed evaluation criteria for the award of the contract based on a 80% price: 20% quality ratio. and that the tender be advertised as set out in full in Appendix A of report CAB3397 and include the following key provisions:

- a) Vehicles should be specified as new at the beginning of the contract with Zero Emissions, a minimum capacity of 70 passengers and a maximum length of 12.5 metres.
- b) To include a tender option that allows for Euro VI standard buses (reuse of the existing or same specification buses) so that the comparison cost of a Zero emission vs conventional bus can be determined. This option will also include use of HVO as an alternative fuel.
- c) To include tender options to allow for a contract period of 8 years in the case of Zero Emission Buses and up to 5 years in the case of conventional buses.
- d) To allow for a peak time vehicle frequency of 10 minutes (7 bus operation) and off-peak (and Saturday) frequency of 15 minutes (4 buses).
- f) To operate the P&R service six days a week from 0625 to 1930 (Monday to Friday) and 0700 to 1930 (Saturday).
- g) In the in the case of a Zero Emission bus contract the maximum age for the vehicles at the end of the contract be 8 years. In the case of a Euro VI bus contract the maximum age for the vehicles at the end of the contract be 13 years
- h) To run a 'linked' bus route, connecting all the City's Park & Ride sites as detailed in Appendix E of the report.
- i) To allow for enhanced levels of operation during the five weeks before Christmas including provision of a Christmas Sunday shuttle service.
- j) In the case of a Euro VI standard bus contract the notice of termination be set at a level of six months to allow for a scenario where WCC is successful in obtaining grant funding for a replacement Zero Emission bus contract.

2. That the outcome of the tendering process be reported to Cabinet in Autumn 2023 for approval to award the contract and noting that this will need to be considered in relation to the council's overall budget position and in context of car parking charges.

3. That the tendering process recommended in the previous recommendations is subject to achieving agreed heads of terms with Hampshire County Council for lease renewals for South Winchester, Barfield and St Catherine's Park and Ride car parks.

4. That the Corporate Head of Asset Management be authorised to enter into lease renewals for South Winchester, Barfield and St Catherine's Park and Ride car parks and negotiate terms.

10. **FUTURE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION BY CABINET**

RESOLVED:

That the list of future items as set out in the Forward Plan for July 2023 be noted.

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am, adjourned at 12.40pm and resumed at 12.50pm and concluded at 1.30 pm

Chairperson