

REPORT TITLE: NORTH WHITELEY DEVELOPMENT FORUM PROGRESS
REPORT AND UPDATE

30 OCTOBER 2018

REPORT OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER: Cllr Caroline Brook; Portfolio Holder for Built
Environment

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WARD(S): WHITELEY AND SHEDFIELD

PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is to update the Forum on progress with issues relating to the North Whiteley Major Development Area.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the content of the report be noted.

IMPLICATIONS:1 COUNCIL STRATEGY OUTCOME

- 1.1 The provision of 3,500 houses at North Whiteley is a key Local Plan policy and will help the Council to deliver quality housing options. It will support economic growth in the south of the District in accordance with Council Strategy objectives.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 The Council will receive various financial contributions arising from the development which may include the New Homes Bonus subject to any changes in this funding mechanism which may be made by the Government. The triggers for the payment of financial contributions are set out in the Section 106 agreement.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no legal issues arising from the report itself. Some important information regarding the legal issues associated with the planning consent is contained in the report.

4 WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5 PROPERTY AND ASSET IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The City Council or the parish council for the area will eventually receive various assets transferred under the terms of the Section 106 agreements.

6 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 Good communication and the provision of timely information to local residents and businesses is a joint responsibility of the various public bodies involved and the development consortium. The Forum itself plays an important role in this process. As the development progresses the appointment of the Implementation Officer is a proven mechanism to ensure that information is available locally to help maintain awareness of the progress of the development.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The report itself has no environmental implications. The environmental impacts of the development were fully and carefully assessed as part of the planning decision making process and will be reviewed as necessary.

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 None.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Mitigation	Opportunities
<i>Property</i> <i>None</i>		
<i>Community Support</i> If communication and information provision to local residents and businesses is poor there could be an impact on community activities, the development timetable and reputation for those involved.	Regular Forum meetings to be held Good communication by the development consortium Appointment of Implementation Officer Close working liaison with parish councils and ward Members.	
<i>Timescales</i> If the development does not progress in a timely fashion the Council's ability to demonstrate a five year land supply will be comprised. It is important that works on adjoining parts of the highway network be coordinated and this requires maintaining a strong focus on achieving target dates.	The Council has limited control over the timetable for development which will be largely a commercial matter for the developer. The appointment of an Implementation Officer will help to reduce the scope for delays which might occur as a result of planning process and communication issues. Good dialogue between HCC, WCC, WTC and the consortium will help ensure project milestones are coordinated and achieved.	
<i>Project capacity</i> <i>None</i>		
<i>Financial / VfM</i> <i>None</i>		
<i>Legal</i> <i>None</i>		
<i>Innovation</i> <i>None</i>		
<i>Reputation</i> <i>None</i>		

10 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Background

- 10.1 The North Whiteley development will consist of 3,500 dwellings, 2 primary schools, a secondary school and other supporting infrastructure, including major highway works. It will integrate with the existing residential, commercial and employment development at Whiteley which has now been established for many years. The development site itself is effectively under the control of a consortium of three housebuilders (Crest, Taylor Wimpey and Bovis) and one landowner. It is wholly contained in the Winchester City Council area. A resolution to grant planning permission for the development was made by the City Council's Planning Committee on the 12th October 2015.

Issue of Decision Notice

- 10.2 As reported to the last meeting, following long discussions and numerous delays for other reasons, the final hurdle for the issue of planning consent and the accompanying Section 106 agreement was the completion of an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations to meet the requirements of a recent clarification of the law in the European Court. That Assessment was completed very efficiently by the Council's appointed consultants and planning consent was issued on 30 July 2018. The Section 106 agreement was exchanged on the same day.
- 10.3 The period in which a challenge to the issue of planning consent could be made by judicial review has now past and the consent is therefore legally safe from challenge.
- 10.4 This is, of course, the most important single milestone in the whole of the project delivery timetable and it is enormously significant that it is now achieved. With the consent and the Section 106 agreement in place, there is project structure and funding programme for the delivery of infrastructure, and developers and landowners are able to proceed to the next stages of the project as described below. Whilst the pace at which development proceeds is never certain (because housing delivery is always subject to economic forces which are beyond any single project however large) the relationship between delivery of housing and infrastructure is clearly established and will proceed against the triggers in the Section 106. These have been summarised for members of the Forum in a previous report.

Update on Key Infrastructure and Planning Issues

- 10.5 The interrelationship between elements of the highways infrastructure in on the M27 and in the Whiteley area are one of the most important for delivery of development, and of the greatest concern to existing residents.
- 10.6 The County Council has appointed a project manager for the delivery of its work on Junction 9 and Whiteley Way and preliminary works have begun around the junction. The County Council is liaising closely with WYG who are the project managers for the consortium. Regular meetings take place to ensure that there is coordination of planning and work between the two and these include meetings with Whiteley Town Council which is taking a very active interest in the project and providing useful input into local priorities and

concerns. The County Council is also in close touch with Highways England who are project managing the SMART Motorway project on the M27.

- 10.7 The consortium has now begun the collection and transfer of reptile and amphibian species from the woodland off Whiteley Way through which access to the development site is provided. These works are authorised by the outline planning consent in which they were included and by licences granted by Natural England. A civil engineering main contractor is appointed to start work towards the end of October on a first contract to establish the western access on Botley Road and to construct a short length on-site spine road off that access. This contract will also include the construction of a haul route to enable Hampshire County Council to access the southern primary school site so that they can commence construction of that facility in spring 2019. This means that the current plan, which is for the primary school to open in September 2020 as the “new” Cornerstone school (and for the temporary school buildings to be removed from the site at Lady Bettys Drive), is still feasible. Other aspects of the timetable remain as previously reported but may be dependent on the confirmation of the approved infrastructure funding from the Solent LEP. An update on this will be given at the meeting.
- 10.8 All three of the consortium developers are now in some aspect of pre-application discussions with the City Council regarding their first ‘reserved matters’ applications. These are applications which seek approval for the detailed housing layouts in parcels of land in the development area. Over the next ten to twenty years (because that is how long a development of this size may take to be completed) there will be many such applications, each of which must be in conformity with the design code and the masterplan which were approved as part of the outline application. Each application requires its own consideration by the City Council’s planning committee. Although the Forum does not have any role in the formal decision making process, its meetings do provide an important opportunity for informal engagement.
- 10.9 Consortium members have provided display material showing the current form of their reserved matters applications and members of the Forum and members of the public are invited to view these and discuss them informally with officers and consortium representatives after the meeting.
- 10.10 The owners of the doctor’s surgery building will be making a planning application to Fareham Borough Council in due course to seek permission for the extension of the car park which serves the surgery. If this is approved it will make access easier for all patients. If it is not approved, the expansion in the number of doctors working from the premises can still take place but access arrangements will remain difficult for those who cannot walk or use public transport.

Bury Farm

- 10.11 Members of the Forum will recall that the business units at Bury Farm are within the development area and that existing businesses have known for

some time that they will need to find new accommodation once the site is required for development. Some efforts have been made by the City Council's Economic Development team, funded by Crest, to assist businesses in identifying new premises, but this has not been easy, at least in part because the rents paid at Bury Farm have been very low compared with other similar locations. Crest has adjusted its planning timetable as far as possible to ensure that it only takes property at Bury Farm at the last possible moment, but clearly this is only of benefit to those businesses which gain time as a result.

- 10.12 Following the issue of the outline planning consent Crest has now acquired the site and served notice on the first tranche of businesses. These stand on the route of the access to the Bluebell Way and primary school construction site. Other businesses are not affected yet but will be over the next three years.
- 10.13 The City Council will continue to support businesses which wish to relocate with advice and information about other possible opportunities but financial decisions will remain a matter for the businesses themselves.

Conclusion

- 10.14 After the long drawn out process of negotiating the Section 106 agreement and issuing the outline planning consent it is very welcome that the first steps in the development process 'on the ground' are now been taken. The first reserved matters applications will be submitted as soon as pre-application stages have been concluded and these will then proceed to formal consideration by the City Council's Planning Committee. This should mean that the first housing starts are made by mid 2019. In the meantime, highway works will be underway and Whiteley Town Council will be kept fully informed of progress and will continue to advise on issues and priorities.

11 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 11.1 There are no other options to be considered.

12 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Committee Reports:-

NWDF8 – 11th July 2018

Other Background Documents:-

None