

Bath & North East Somerset Council	
MEETING:	Planning, Transport and Environment Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel
MEETING DATE:	13 March 2012
TITLE:	MoD site Concept Statements
WARD:	Bath Wards
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM	
<p>List of attachments to this report:</p> <p>APPENDIX 1: Overview of MoD Concept Statements</p> <p>APPENDIX 2: Overview of proposed public consultation on MoD sites concept statements</p>	

THE ISSUE

To update the Planning, Transport and Environment Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel on the preparation of Concepts Statements for the Ministry of Defence (MoD) sites at Ensleigh, Foxhill and Warminster Road in Bath. This is in response to their proposed redevelopment in light of the MoD's announcement of their forthcoming disposal.

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning, Transport and Environment Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel is asked;

a. to note that;

- the Council's planning requirements for the MoD sites will be set out in Concept Statements for each site prior to their disposal in March 2013.
- these Planning requirements must reflect the Council's corporate objectives
- the timetable for preparation of the Concept Statements reflects the disposal programme and entails public consultation for a 6 week period during April and May and endorsement in July 2012.
- the three sites generate circa 20% of Bath's housing requirement within the Draft Core Strategy in the period up to 2026.
- the Planning, Transport and Environment PDS Panel will have the opportunity to comment on the emerging Concept Statements at its meeting in May, and

b. to comment on the above process.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The process of drafting the three Concept Statements is being carried out within existing Council budgets (Local Development Framework budget) or is being funded from Directorate reserve drawdowns.

It is not currently envisaged that the Council will need to make a contribution to the redevelopment of these sites, other than that referred to in paragraph 3.1 above, for the preparation of Concept Statements. However, it is important that the council undertakes a prioritisation of its s.106 Developer contribution requirements in the development of the sites.

3.3 Based on the SHLAA density the three sites have the capacity of generating up to £10.5 million pounds in New Homes Bonus

3.4 However any variation in the SHLAA figures that arise from the preparation of the Concept Statements, including the Public Consultation process, will need to be addressed. Accordingly an appropriate financial model will need to be put in place to access such variations following the consultation process but prior to Cabinet endorsement of the statements.

THE REPORT

Introduction

1.1 The MOD has announced that its sites at Ensleigh, Foxhill, and Warminster Road are surplus to requirements for military use. Relocation of staff to MOD Abbey Wood has already commenced with the MOD expecting to have vacated the sites by March 2013, although a portion of the Ensleigh site is anticipated to remain in active MOD use until approximately 2018. The MOD intends to start marketing the sites from September 2012.

Importance

4.2 The three MOD sites are of significant importance to Bath and North East Somerset in terms of housing delivery. The sites are identified within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) as providing circa 20% of Bath's housing units as set out in the Council's Draft Core Strategy in the period up to 2026. The sites provide a significant opportunity to address housing need issues within Bath, together with having the potential to create strong vibrant communities.

Statement of Intent

4.3 Due to the strategic nature of the sites the MOD are finalising a Statement of Intent (SOI) with Bath & North East Somerset Council to work together to achieve both organisations objectives. For the M.O.D, this is;

- a. To optimise the disposal receipt for the sites
- b. To ensure site disposal by March 2013 in accordance with MOD requirements

4.4 For Bath & North East Somerset Council, this is;

- a) To optimise the development potential of the sites, having regard to the Council's Planning and Economic Development policies for the City.
- b) To promote a housing led mixed-use development of the sites which will assist in delivering Bath and North East Somerset's strategic housing and, employment objectives, including local affordable housing needs, and address wider environmental, social and community issues as outlined in the Draft Core Strategy and so contribute to its objectives.
- c) To consult with and consider local community views and needs
- d) To mitigate local labour market and transportation impacts and support bids for funds to promote local employment growth
- e) To support the objectives of the Economic Strategy
- f) To underpin the Growth Agenda

Project Governance

4.5 A steering group has been formed that includes senior representatives from the MOD, Bath & North East Somerset Council and the Homes and Communities Agency. The role of the Steering Group is to provide overall project direction to the project and to make or ratify key project decisions.

4.6 A cross -service project team has been created to co-ordinate the preparation of a Concept Statement for each site.

Concept Statements: Contents and Objectives

4.7 For sites such as these, the Council would normally prepare formal planning policy through a Development Plan Document (DPD) but because there is insufficient time in the disposal timescale to complete this statutory process, the Concept Statements are being prepared. However, the Concept Statements are the first stage in the preparation of the Council's Placemaking Plan (Site Allocations DPD) and their preparation will be subject to the initial stages of statutory Plan preparation, including public consultation. This will provide sufficient planning weight to provide a basis for on-going discussions with developers.

4.8 The Concept Statements will set out in a concise manner:

- The aspirations for each site,
- The key planning priorities and requirements for new development,
- The process setting out how developers (once the sites have been sold) should engage with local communities.

- 4.9 Further information about the role and purpose of the Concept Statements is set out in Appendix 1

Concept Statement Verification

- 4.10 As the Concept Statements will ultimately drive the value of the three sites, it is important to ensure the MoD remain committed to partnership working and support the content of the Statements. Accordingly a verification process has been agreed with the MoD.
- 4.11 The MoD has agreed to provide its own resources for the verification of the Councils baseline analysis together with resources to support community and stakeholder consultation, where appropriate.

Timescales

- 4.12 A project plan has been agreed with the M.O.D that will enable the three Concept Statements to be prepared and by the Council to meet with MoD's disposal timescales.

Key dates taken from the more detailed project plan are ;.

- Currently: Evidence collation and options testing
- April: Cabinet considers draft Concept Statements for public consultation
- April to May: Public consultation (Including consideration by PTE Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel 15 in May
- May to July: Revision and finalisation
- July: Cabinet endorsement of Concept Statements

5 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.
- 5.2 It should be noted that the Concept Statements will not be formal Development Plan Documents and hence cannot be accorded the full weight of adopted Planning Policy. However their preparation is the first part of preparing the statutory Placemaking Plan which will afford them sufficient planning weight at this stage.

6 EQUALITIES

- 6.1 An EqIA has been completed on the process outlined in this report and no adverse or other significant issues were found. Preparation of the Concept Statements will entail undertaking an EqIA.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 *Ward Councillor; Cabinet Member; Parish Council; Town Council; Trades Unions; Overview & Scrutiny Panel; Staff; Other B&NES Services; Service Users; Local Residents; Community Interest Groups; Stakeholders/Partners; Other Public Sector Bodies; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer*

7.2 A consultation strategy is being prepared for consideration by Cabinet in April alongside the draft concept Statements. This will reflect the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and will include consultation with residents, business, and other stakeholders. An overview of the consultation strategy is set out in Appendix 2.

8 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

8.1 *Social Inclusion; Customer Focus; Sustainability; Human Resources; Property; Young People; Human Rights; Corporate; Health & Safety; Impact on Staff; Other Legal Considerations*

9 ADVICE SOUGHT

9.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer (Divisional Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

Contact person	<i>Glen Chipp; Strategic Director for Service Delivery.</i> <i>John Betty: Strategic Director for Development and Major Projects</i>
Background papers	<i>B&NES Draft Core Strategy</i> <i>B&NES Strategic Housing land Availability Assessment 2011</i>
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

MoD Concept Statements: An Overview

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 A co-ordinated, vision-led approach between interested parties is essential to enable high quality redevelopment of the MoD sites.
- 1.2 The purpose of the **concept statements** for each of the three Bath MoD sites is to capture:
 - The aspirations for each site.
 - The key planning priorities and requirements for new development.
 - The process setting out how developers should engage with local communities
 - The process for the formulation of masterplans and/or design codes as appropriate.
- 1.3 This approach will help to provide an understanding between the Community, the Council, the Landowner and the Developer on development expectations. It acts as a framework to shape the Development Management process, providing the context for future masterplanning/or design codes work by developers, and informs the approach to site disposal, marketing, and other non-planning elements.
- 1.5 The production of concept statements for the MoD sites is proposed as a model for delivering high quality development. They will inform the site allocations element of the **Placemaking Plan**, due for Issues and Options scheduled for public consultation in Autumn 2012. The Placemaking Plan enables the delivery of the Core Strategy to enable growth, provide suitable protection for the District's assets as well as responding to the Localism agenda. The Placemaking Plan will have full planning weight once adopted.

2.0 Rationale

- 2.1 The quality of development within the city impacts on Bath's reputation and on its ability to deliver priority objectives such as the 'City of Ideas'. A joined up, vision-led approach between interested parties has been central to the success of highly regarded developments elsewhere, and is considered important to enable appropriate re-development of the sites.
- 2.2 Clear articulation of the expectations will provide greater certainty and reduce risks for potential developers, as well as providing site disposal benefits.

3.0 Scope

- 3.1 Development parameters and planning expectations may include:
 - a. Design quality (approach and aspirations)
 - b. Building height parameters
 - c. Broad mix of uses
 - d. Strategic open space and green infrastructure required
 - e. Key ecological issues
 - f. Key historic environment considerations
 - g. Views to be maintained or created.
 - h. Sustainable construction and design considerations
 - i. Access and movement
 - j. Relevant financial contributions and infrastructure requirements

OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON MOD SITES CONCEPT STATEMENTS

Consultation period	
18 th April – 30 th May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme of press releases • Website information • LDF newsletter / Ward Councillor newsletter • Inform public about process and Council's response to MoD sites / invite to community exhibitions • Documents online / printed and available in key locations • Questionnaire - online / printed and available in key locations • Four staffed community exhibitions at the MoD site locations and in central Bath
Post Consultation period	
30 th May – site disposal (Sept)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website – Feedback • Revision, endorsement, and launch of Concept Statements • Site Disposal begins, with next phase of PR and Communications strategy to ensure objectives achieved.