

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Cabinet	
MEETING DATE:	11 April 2012	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2383
TITLE:	Draft Concept Statements for MoD sites in Bath	
WARD:	All Bath Wards	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix 1: draft Concept Statements for MoD Foxhill (TO FOLLOW)		
Appendix 2: draft Concept Statements for MoD Warminster Road (TO FOLLOW)		
Appendix 3: draft Concept Statements for MoD Ensleigh (TO FOLLOW)		
Appendix 4: proposed public consultation strategy on MoD sites concept statements		

1 THE ISSUE

1.1 The MOD has announced that its sites at Ensleigh, Foxhill, and Warminster Road in Bath are surplus to requirements for military purposes. In response the Council has been working with the MOD to prepare Concepts Statements for each site in order to guide their redevelopment and the disposal process. The draft Concept Statements will be published for public consultation before their finalisation and endorsement by the Cabinet.

2 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The Cabinet agrees that:

- 1) the draft Concepts Statements for the MoD sites at Ensleigh, Foxhill, and Warminster Road in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 are approved for public consultation,
- 2) delegated authority is granted to the Divisional Director of Planning & Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning, to make minor textual amendments prior to publication of the draft Concepts Statements for public consultation, and
- 3) the proposed public consultation strategy in Appendix 4 is approved

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 The preparation of the three Concept Statements is being funded from Planning Service Placemaking Plan budget in the Local Development Framework budget. Any additional funding required will be drawn from Development & Major Projects reserves subject to the appropriate approvals for the use of these reserves.
- 2.2 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 2.1 above, for the preparation of Concept Statements. However, the Council will need to prioritise the infrastructure provision to be supported by developer contributions. The draft Concept Statements start this process by identifying key infrastructure requirements associated with the development of each of the three sites.
- 2.3 Based on the (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment) SHLAA the three sites have the capacity of generating up to £10.5 million pounds in New Homes Bonus under the current regime. The future use of any New Homes Bonus receipts arising will be considered by the Council as part of the medium term service and resource planning process in the appropriate financial year.

3 CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

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

Build a stronger economy by:

- a) optimising the development potential of the sites, having regard to the Council's planning and economic development policies for the City.
- b) supporting the objectives of the Economic Strategy and underpin the Growth Agenda

Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone and creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live by:

- c) promoting 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.
 - d) consulting with and consider local community views and needs
 - e) mitigating local labour market and transportation impacts and support bids for funds to promote local employment growth
- 3.3 For the MOD, Statement of Intent is to ;
- a) optimise the disposal receipt for the sites

- b) ensure site disposal by March 2013 in accordance with MOD requirements

4 THE REPORT

Introduction

- 4.1 The three MOD sites are of significant importance to Bath and North East Somerset in terms of new housing supply. They form a key part of the Core Strategy approach of focussing development needs on brownfield land to limit urban expansion onto greenfield sites. The sites are identified within the SHLAA as providing around 20% of Bath's supply in the period up to 2026.
- 4.2 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.

Project Governance

- 4.3 An officer 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.
- 4.4 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

- 4.5 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 assessment of evidence and public consultation. This will provide sufficient planning weight to provide a basis for on-going discussions with developers.
- 4.6 The Concept Statements are not detailed site briefs or masterplans. Instead, they set out the high level development principles to assist developers in the formulation of proposals for each site. The Concept Statements will highlight the relevant evidence base as well as highlighting what further work is required. They will assist developers in what is required to create sense of place and quality whilst also maximising the development potential of each site.
- 4.7 The Concept Statements will set out in a concise manner:
 - The aspirations for each site,
 - The key planning priorities and requirements for new development as they relate to each site,

- The process setting out how developers (once the sites have been sold) should engage with local communities.

4.8 Preparation of the Concept Statements is intended to provide developers with greater certainty by identifying a clear process towards gaining planning permission. They set out the tools that the Council can offer to applicants to enable the delivery of a managed planning process.

Partnership working

4.9 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. In addition to the Statement of Intent (section 3 above), a verification process has been agreed with the MoD.

4.10 The MoD has agreed to provide its own resources for the verification of the Council's baseline analysis together with resources to support community and stakeholder consultation, where appropriate.

Timetable

4.11 A project plan has been agreed with the MOD that will enable the three Concept Statements to be prepared and agreed by the Council to meet with MoD's disposal timescales. Key dates 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 in May)
May to July:	Revision and finalisation
July:	Cabinet endorsement of Concept Statements

5 RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 The report author and Lead Cabinet Member have fully reviewed the risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations, 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 Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed. No adverse or other significant issues were found.

6.2 The following impacts have been identified that have a positive impact on all groups and the community as a whole.

- Positive impact for all of increased housing opportunities including affordable homes.
- Increased housing to reinforce local centres
- Increased connectivity to and from areas of housing, employment and neighbourhood centres.
- Implementation of Core Strategy Policies PC43 and PC84 which will have a positive impact for all as reduces carbon emissions with benefits for health and wellbeing, and where heritage assets are made more energy efficient there will be cost savings.

6.3 In accordance with the B&NES Statement of Community Involvement, the public consultation process will ensure that relevant target groups (in this case young people, faith, ethnic and language groups, disabled people, small business owners and residents have the opportunities to engage in the process

7 RATIONALE

7.1 Preparation of Concept Statements will assist in setting out the Council's development requirements and priorities clearly and at an early stage in the disposal of the MoD sites. This provides clarity for any prospective site purchasers and will assist in the redevelopment process. There is insufficient time to prepare a formal Development Plan Document in the disposal process.

8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 Adoption of a statutory Development Plan Document or Supplementary Document: Whilst the Concept Statements represent the start of a statutory plan-making process, there is insufficient time available to complete the preparation of Statutory Planning Documents.

8.2 Preparation of a Masterplan/development brief: This would entail a level of detail premature at this stage in the development process and commit the Council to unwarranted cost.

8.3 Do nothing: This will result in lack of clear planning guidance and lack of clarity of corporate priorities. This will be of detriment to the site disposal process, result in lack of clarity for developers and to guide the site disposal process and could inhibit the Council achieving its corporate objectives.

9 CONSULTATION

9.1 *Ward Councillor; Cabinet members; Parish Council; Overview & Scrutiny Panel; Staff; Other B&NES Services; Local Residents; Community Interest Groups; Youth Council; Stakeholders/Partners; Other Public Sector Bodies; Charter Trustees of Bath; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer*

9.2 The proposed public consultation strategy on the draft Concept Statements is set out in Appendix 4.

9.3 At their meeting on 13th March, PTE Scrutiny Panel gave their approval to the process as set out in this report

10 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

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

11 ADVICE SOUGHT

11.1 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	David Trigwell (Divisional Director, Planning and Transport Development) 01225 394125
Sponsoring Cabinet Member	Councillor Tim Ball (Cabinet Member for Homes and Planning)
Background papers	B&NES Core Strategy (Submission Version 2011) B&NES Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2011
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	