

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Cabinet	
MEETING DATE:	11 July 2012	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2448
TITLE:	Redevelopment of Somerdale	
WARD:	Keynsham North	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
None		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 Kraft have appointed Taylor Wimpey as preferred developer for the Somerdale site who, under the terms of their mutual contract, are required to submit a planning application by 30th November 2012.
- 1.2 The Council's adopted Local Plan and draft Core Strategy set out the current and draft planning policies for the redevelopment of the Somerdale site.
- 1.3 The Cabinet wishes to highlight the existing and proposed policy planning policies and to confirm its corporate intentions for the site in the event that planning permission is granted in due course.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet:

- 2.1 Notes the evidence base that supports the Draft Core Strategy in relation to development at Somerdale, summarised in paragraph 5.13.
- 2.2 Agree that officers should engage with the developer to encourage a development of appropriate quality that not only meets the requirements of the adopted Local Plan but also supports the delivery of the Draft Core Strategy and meets the needs of the local community.
- 2.3 Note the economic and employment opportunities for the site and the working party established between the Council's Economic Development team and Keynsham Town Council to demonstrate and stimulate business demand (see paragraph 5.17)

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The officer time/ costs required to engage with Taylor Wimpey and Kraft for Somerdale is covered by the existing salary budgets in the Development & Regeneration team. This amounts to approximately £10,000. The developer will cover the staff costs associated with the formal pre-application planning process.
- 3.2 The development is private-sector led and it is not currently envisaged that the Council will need to make a financial contribution to the redevelopment of the site, other than that referred to in paragraph 3.1.
- 3.3 As part of the standard Planning process, it can be expected that the proposals for the development of this site will deliver financial and physical contributions in line with the Council's Planning Obligations SPD and/or CIL provisions
- 3.4 Based on the SHLAA density the site has the potential capacity of generating between £4m to £6m in New Homes Bonus. However, any variation in the SHLAA figures that arise from the planning process will need to be addressed. 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. The New Homes Bonus is an annual revenue receipt for 6 years after the delivery of new homes.

4 CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- *Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live* - Securing an optimal mixed-use development at Somerdale 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.
- *Building a stronger economy* - Development at Somerdale will respond to the Council's planning and economic development policies for Keynsham and support the objectives of the Economic Strategy and underpin the Growth Agenda. In particular it will support delivery of the Economic Strategy action to bring forward new employment space in Keynsham agreed at Cabinet in November 2011.

5 THE REPORT

- 5.1 The market town of Keynsham is about to embark on a programme of unprecedented change. The Council sees its potential and is working on strengthening the heart of the town centre with a £34million project to transform the southern end of the High Street to provide new shopping opportunities and new public realm as well as new Council offices and facilities.
- 5.2 Beyond the northern end of the High Street, adjacent to the railway station is Somerdale. With its remarkable landscape setting, industrial heritage and inherent character, this is a once in a lifetime regeneration opportunity, where there is an opportunity for an exceptional mixed housing and employment development to be built in keeping with the special environment and history of the site.

- 5.3 Kraft appointed Taylor Wimpey in January 2012 as the preferred developer for the site.
- 5.4 Taylor Wimpey and their team of consultants have been developing ideas for the site and undertaking relevant technical studies that will in due course inform the anticipated planning applications. In addition they are undertaking various stakeholder workshops and have held a public exhibition on emerging proposals which around 900 people attended.
- 5.5 It is anticipated that planning application(s) will be submitted by 30 November 2012.

Council Policy

- 5.6 The Bath and North East Somerset Local Plan was adopted in 2007 and remains the current statutory Development Plan for the District. All applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.7 In the Local Plan, Somerdale is allocated as General Development Site K.1 and is subject to a list of 16 Development Requirements.
- 5.8 In the consideration of any application for planning permission the emerging Core Strategy will be given appropriate weight as a material consideration alongside the Local Plan.
- 5.9 The Core Strategy, when finally adopted will replace the Local Plan as the principal local planning policy document. However, at the present time, whilst the Draft Core Strategy represents the most up to date statement of current Council aspirations, it can only be given limited weight in the determination of planning applications.
- 5.10 The Draft Core Strategy sets out the Council's vision for Keynsham:
- 'Keynsham is a historic town that occupies a strategically important location between Bristol and Bath and is therefore well placed to improve and attract investment. It will continue to act as a market town and service centre for the surrounding area. In responding to the loss of a major employer, it will evolve as a more significant business location. Keynsham will retain its independence and its separate identity within an attractive rural setting. It will become a more sustainable, desirable and well-connected place in which to live and work, with an enhanced town centre, inspired by its heritage, cherished rivers, park and green spaces'.
- 5.11 Policy KE1 of the Core Strategy identifies the key opportunities being the Town Centre and Somerdale and sets out placemaking principles to guide future development.
- 5.12 As part of the evidence base to this policy, B&NES consulted on a regeneration strategy for Keynsham in 2010. The overall strategy for the town centre looks to:

- Strengthen the shopping experience
- Create new jobs

- Improve the Park by linking the existing Memorial Park to the Hams.

5.13 In considering the role of Somerdale within the regeneration strategy and the wider Core Strategy, it is anticipated that Somerdale will:

- Deliver new housing – 650-700 new homes, with 35% affordable housing that is pepper-potted throughout the housing development.
- Deliver employment land / premises to create 1000 new jobs
- Be unmistakably and identifiable as Somerdale, but be integrated with the existing town.
- Create a new primary school and early years facility
- Re-provide the Fry Club and associated sports pitches
- Take the opportunity to deliver a site that meets the highest level of sustainable transport, in particular:
 - Take advantage of the adjacent rail station
 - Deliver new cycle links to both within Keynsham and further afield to Bristol and Bath
 - Provide appropriate and safe access
 - Ensure sufficient penetration of the site for bus services.
- Enhance Keynsham's green infrastructure and open up access to the river and the Hams.
- Evoke the history of the site – from early Roman through to chocolate manufacture, telling the story of Somerdale and its setting
- Fully explore the potential of retaining the existing buildings. Any replacement buildings need to be of exceptional quality and should take reference from the height, scale and character of the building
- Respond to the Council's commitment of reducing the area's CO2 emissions by integrating sustainable design and construction within the development at Somerdale including the incorporation of district heating infrastructure
- Retain and enhance the avenue of trees in Somerdale Road.

5.14 In order to promote the Bath and North East Somerset Economic Strategy, Cabinet wish to encourage:

- A new commercial market for Keynsham attracting the Higher Value Added sectors
- A range of housing types and sizes that supports the overall vision for the site and the potential employment offer.

Next Steps

- 5.15 Taylor Wimpey have indicated that they intend to submit proposals for the development of the Somerdale site for consideration through the Council's Planning Pre-Application process ("Development Team"). These submissions are expected during this summer, and the developers wish this process to have been concluded in time for their proposed submission of formal Planning applications before the end of November 2012.
- 5.16 Development Team advice and comments will be given to Taylor Wimpey on the basis of the perceived planning merits of their submissions in the light of the Local Plan and also with appropriate regard to the emerging Core Strategy. However, any pre-application advice must always be given Without Prejudice to the formal consideration of an application for Planning permission, as it is only at that stage that all material considerations – including for example the comments of statutory consultees and other external organisations, as well as the views of local residents – become clear and can be taken into account. It will be for the Council's Development Control Committee to decide whether to grant planning permission, having been provided with a comprehensive report evaluating the planning merits of the submitted scheme.
- 5.17 The Council's Economic Development team has established a working party with Keynsham Town Council to develop and implement an action plan to demonstrate business demand for the site. This will be ready in time for the submission of the planning application. Actions will include proactive marketing of the site to end users, developers and agents and demand surveys of businesses across the West of England.
- 5.18 In the event of planning permission being granted, Officers will work with the developer to promote the site as a business location, working with partners within West of England to encourage new business investment in Keynsham.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 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.
- 6.2 Any unresolved technical issues will be addressed in the normal way through the planning process, and it is not possible at this relatively early stage to advise further on risks that may emerge in connection with this site.

7 EQUALITIES

- 7.1 At this stage of the project, proposals for engagement with the developer are still emerging. An Equalities Impact Assessment of the scheme will be scheduled at an appropriate stage of the process.

8 RATIONALE

- 8.1 The report aims to clarify the relevant existing and emerging planning policies and evidence base for the redevelopment of Somerdale.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 An option for Taylor Wimpey to submit a Development Brief for endorsement by B&NES was resisted as there is no mechanism within the Council for this to happen within the timetable established by Taylor Wimpey.

10 CONSULTATION

- 10.1 Ward Councillor; Cabinet members; Town Council; Overview & Scrutiny Panel; Other B&NES Services; Local Residents; Community Interest Groups; Stakeholders/Partners; Other Public Sector Bodies; Section 151 Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer
- 10.2 Public consultation on the Regeneration Strategy for Keynsham Town Centre took place in July 2010.
- 10.3 The draft Core Strategy has followed a rigorous consultation process.
- 10.4 Regular meetings of the Keynsham Development Advisory Group (a forum for officers, ward Members and Town Councillors) take place where Somerdale is discussed.
- 10.5 Business demand Working Group between the Council's Economic Development Team and Keynsham Town Council
- 10.6 Presentation to the Local Development Framework Steering Group took place on 23rd May 2012.
- 10.7 Taylor Wimpey has begun their consultation with the local community on their emerging proposals for the site.
- 10.8 There will be a statutory consultation period once the planning application(s) have been submitted.

11 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

- 11.1 Sustainability; Human Resources; Young People; Human Rights; Corporate; Health & Safety; Impact on Staff; Other Legal Considerations

12 ADVICE SOUGHT

12.1 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	Emily Price 01225 477668
Sponsoring Cabinet Member	Councillor Tim Ball
Background papers	B&NES Adopted Local Plan B&NES Draft Core Strategy (Submission Version 2011) B&NES Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2011 Economic Regeneration Delivery Plan for Keynsham, Cabinet Report, March 2011 Delivering Sustainable Economic Growth cabinet paper, November 2011
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	