

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Housing & Major Projects Scrutiny Panel	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	21 January 2014	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
TITLE:	MOD Sites Update	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: None		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 After a long presence in the city, the Ministry of Defence is now in the process of leaving Bath. It has already begun to relocate staff to its site at Abbey Wood. The Council is keen to ensure that all three sites are regenerated as housing led development sites. They should contribute to achieving the aspirations of the local communities as well as meeting the wider objectives of the Bath and North East Somerset Core Strategy.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Housing & Major Projects Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel is asked to note the progress on the MOD sites.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 3.1 There are no direct resource implications arising from this report.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The redevelopment of the former MOD sites, guided by the Council's agreed Concept Statements, will create new communities, and will protect the most important parts whilst delivering viable social, economic and environmental benefits.

4.2 All development schemes will be the subject of detailed planning applications for consideration of the Council as the Local Planning Authority. Decisions will therefore be taken in accordance with the appropriate statutory and regulatory guidance in due course.

5 THE REPORT

5.1 After a long presence in the city, the Ministry of Defence is now in the process of leaving Bath. It has already begun to relocate staff to its site at Abbey Wood. Disposal of its Foxhill, Warminster Road and Ensleigh sites concluded in March 2013.

5.2 The sites were acquired by:

- Foxhill: Curo
- Ensleigh: Spitfire Developments - a subsidiary of IM Properties Plc
- Warminster Road: Square Bay

5.3 The Council is keen to ensure that all three sites are regenerated as housing led development sites. They should contribute to achieving the aspirations of the local communities as well as meeting the wider objectives of the Bath and North East Somerset Core Strategy.

5.4 To achieve this, the Council worked with the MoD and key stakeholders to produce Concept Statements for each of the three Bath MoD sites.

CONCEPT STATEMENTS

5.5 Each Concept Statement guides how the regeneration of the site will protect the most important parts and deliver viable social, economic and environmental benefits. They outline:

- The vision for the site;
- The key planning and community priorities and requirements in their regeneration;
- How developers should engage with local communities once the sites have been sold and the design and planning of the sites begins.

5.6 The Concept Statements are based on sound evidence. They set out realistic requirements and priorities for developers to take into account in any future proposals. As part of their preparation, they were appraised for economic viability, and stakeholder engagement played an important part in shaping them.

5.7 The programme of stakeholder and community consultation was built into the process the drafting.

5.8 On 12th September 2012, the Concept Statements were endorsed by the Council for development management purposes, to inform the production of the Council's emerging Placemaking Plan. This provides the Council with a robust and sound policy position in ongoing discussions with developers. It sent a clear

message to prospective purchasers and developers as to the Council's requirements and expectations.

5.9 The consultation (during April/May 2012) enabled residents, community groups and businesses local to the sites to comment on the draft documents. Through this process, developers and investors have been strongly encouraged to be fully aware of the consultation comments, aspirations and concerns that were raised.

5.10 The Council's cabinet also considered the Concept Statements. It considered issues that were raised during the consultation process, including educational provision and our targets in relation to sustainable construction. The Cabinet endorsed the revised Concept Statements following consideration of the consultation comments.

MOD Site Update

5.11 **Ensleigh:** The site comprises 10.35 ha, and occupies an exposed and prominent location on the Lansdown plateau. The surroundings are generally open in appearance: land to the west is used as sports fields; the eastern and southern parts of the site are located on or close to the crest of a ridge, beyond which land slopes steeply toward Bath. The site is located adjacent to the Green Belt and Cotswold AONB and sensitive to a number of important viewpoints.

5.12 The Council's Vision for this site is set out in the Concept Statement. It is for:

- delivery of a scheme that responds to the challenging requirements of such a visible and sensitive site.
- development that delivers significant numbers of high quality homes and achieves a contribution towards meeting the city's overall housing needs.
- a housing led development that delivers viable community facilities and generates public transport demand that help to make the development more sustainable, and helps to enable people to make more sustainable lifestyle choices.

5.13 The Council expects that the development will include a range of following key components, including:

- Approximately 350 new homes in a range of types and sizes, including 35% affordable housing;
- A new single form entry primary school (unless suitable alternative provision can be identified);
- Up to 2,000 sq. m of employment floor space;
- Small scale retail facilities should be sought on the site
- integrated formal open space;
- natural open space, including landscaping;
- A financial contribution to identified infrastructure, including a financial contribution towards provision of replacement employment provision to be allocated within the Bath area.

- 5.14 Following disposal by the MOD the holding has been split into two sites, one south of Granville Road (to be developed by Skanska) and the other north (to be developed jointly by Linden Homes and Bloor Homes). A detailed planning application for 39 homes (including 13 affordable) on the southern site was granted permission in December 2013 subject to conditions and s.106 agreement. The development will provide a mix of 1 and 2 bedroom flats and 4 and 5 bedroom houses. The affordable homes comprise (2 x 1 bed, 10 x 2 bed, 1 x 3 bed (wheelchair accessible) flats). Skanska have announced that they are disposing of their UK residential portfolio and so at this time it is not known who will implement the permission.
- 5.15 Pre-application discussions on the northern site have taken place and Linden/Bloor have held a public consultation event. The final mix of land uses on the site and number and type of homes has not yet been finalised and no formal application has yet been submitted. However, it is anticipated that the scheme will provide around 250 homes with a mix of 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 bedroom homes (including affordable homes) and an 'Extra Care' facility (not Care Home) to provide affordable housing for older people, plus potentially small-scale retail space. An application is expected in early 2014.
- 5.16 A number of public consultation events have been undertaken by the applicants, outlining initial proposals. The feedback will be used to refine proposals, as well as formal pre-application feedback.
- 5.17 **Warminster Road:** The site comprises 7.0 ha and occupies a highly prominent location between the Warminster Road (A36) and the Kennet and Avon Canal. The A36 is a key approach route to the city and provides the principal access to the site.
- 5.18 The Council expects that the development will include a range of following key components, including:
- Approximately 100 new homes in a range of types and sizes, including 35% affordable housing;
 - A new primary school (unless suitable alternative provision can be identified);
 - Circa 0.35 ha of integrated formal open space;
 - Circa 0.35 ha of natural open space, including structural landscaping;
 - Circa 0.07 ha of allotments;
 - An aspiration for new bridges over the canal and railway.
 - A financial contribution to identified infrastructure.
- 5.19 The Concept Statement sets out the potential planning obligations which the Council will expect prospective developers to enter into in order to secure the necessary supporting infrastructure.
- 5.20 As with the MOD Ensleigh Site, there have been a number of community meetings and exhibitions, outlining initial proposals and seeking views on the development of the site.
- 5.21 Pre-application discussions are on-going between the Council and the developers Square Bay over the layout, extent and form of the proposed development and its response to the site's sensitive context, and prominence of the site in citywide views.

5.22 A planning application is expected to be submitted within the next 3 to 4 weeks.

5.23 **Foxhill** site comprises 18.9 ha and occupies a location that is embedded within the residential neighbourhoods of Combe Down and Foxhill 2 km south of the City Centre. The land slopes gently from south to north and is bounded to the north by a tree lined escarpment, which forms part of the Bath skyline and slopes steeply down to the City Centre. To the south the land is bounded by Bradford Road.

5.24 The Foxhill site was acquired by Curo. A separate report on this agenda updates on Curo developments, including Foxhill.

6 RATIONALE

6.1 The report is for noting. Consideration of the schemes as planning applications will be necessary when they are submitted, assessed against the relevant material considerations including the Concept Statements.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 None.

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Development Management – relevant case officers.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

Contact person	<i>Jonathan Medlin 01225 477593</i>
Background papers	<i>MOD Concept Statements (see www.bathnes.gov.uk)</i>
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	