

CABINET

21 NOVEMBER 2017

PUBLIC CONSULTATION OF STROOD WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT BRIEF 2017

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| Portfolio Holder: | Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE, Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships Councillor Jane Chitty, Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation |
| Report from: | Richard Hicks, Director of Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive |
| Author: | Beth Westwood, Principal Regeneration Project Officer Janet Elliott, Regeneration Programme Manager |

Summary

This report seeks permission from Cabinet to publicly consult on the draft 2017 Strood Waterfront Development Brief (appendix A), this will be carried out in line with the council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

This report summarises the key purposes and principles proposed in the draft 2017 Development Brief. The aim is for the Development Brief to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), after public consultation, as outlined in Option 1. The document is proposed to refresh the 2006 Strood Riverside Development Brief.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 Once adopted the 2017 Strood Waterfront Development Brief (as per appendix A) is intended to provide supplementary planning advice, expanding on Policy S1 – Development Strategy in the Medway Local Plan 2003. It has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The Medway Local Plan 2003 is the current development plan for the authority and therefore forms part of the council's policy framework. As it is intended to adopt the 2017 Development Brief as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), it will be part of the development plan.

1.2 This report seeks permission to publicly consult on the 2017 Development Brief for 8 weeks, prior to seeking adoption from Cabinet in May 2018.

1.3 The Development Brief has been prepared within existing budgets.

2. Background

2.1 The council produced a Strood Riverside Development Brief in 2006, setting out the design principles and guidelines for land to the north of the railway line along Canal Road, and how development could come forward on the site. There have been considerable changes locally and nationally since 2006 and this policy basis needs to be updated to reflect current conditions and opportunities.

2.2 This updated policy will support the council's ambitions to realise the regeneration opportunities presented by these exceptional sites in Strood, to secure investment and deliver quality development that boosts the area's economic, environmental and community wellbeing.

2.3 The proposed 2017 Development Brief outlines the council's ambition for two of its prime regeneration sites; the former Civic Centre and Strood Riverside sites. Kingswear Gardens, jointly owned by Moat and Orbit, is also included within the 2017 Development Brief. Officers are in discussions with both housing associations considering and supporting options for a possible comprehensive redevelopment in the future.

2.4 The draft 2017 Development Brief sets principles for the redevelopment of the third party land along Canal Road and to the north-east of the former Civic Centre site. Together these sites present a rare opportunity to help establish Medway's modern waterfront, as vibrant commercial and community spaces.

2.5 The draft 2017 Development Brief outlines a scheme centred around sustainability, high quality housing development, public realm and connectivity to the town centre and to the rest of Medway (e.g. river walk), thereby helping Strood to realise its potential.

2.6 There are three specific objectives for the 2017 Development Brief to address:

1. Update the relevant planning policy applicable to the site- current expectations for the redevelopment of Strood Waterfront exceed those previously envisaged, with regard to quantum and design principles.
2. Establish a coherent set of land use and design parameters to guide the future regeneration of the site.
3. Facilitate and shape the redevelopment of Strood Waterfront, ensuring its long-term physical, social, economic and environmental regeneration.

2.7 The proposed 2017 Development Brief seeks to establish a clear and positive policy context. Whilst setting design parameters, the council is aware of the need for commercial viability, ensuring market confidence and deliverability.

2.8 The draft 2017 Development Brief has been tested for commercial viability and transport issues have been considered. Opportunities for transport

improvements will be established in the emerging evidence base for the new Local Plan.

2.9 In order to deliver a comprehensive Development Brief and Masterplan, the draft 2017 Development Brief has considered the current pressure on the highways and the impact of additional housing units. A full Transport Assessment will need to be carried out by the developer, as part of the planning application stage. An analysis of the existing transport conditions has identified that:

- The surrounding road network is congested during peak hours.
- The proposed development is uniquely located within an urban area which has good links to sustainable transport and where day-to-day facilities and amenities are within easy walking distance, therefore the development can utilise these sustainable transport links.
- Residents living in close proximity to a train station generally have lower levels of car ownership, emerging trends and technologies can be used to further lower parking provision.

2.10 A combination of infrastructure improvements can justify lower parking standards and modal shift to sustainable modes of transport could mitigate the impacts of development. A developer will need to consider mitigation measures fully, as part of a Transport Assessment.

2.11 The Strategic Transport Model, which is being developed by Medway's Planning and Highways team, will also play an important role in verifying solutions. This model will provide the context of other developments, including Rochester Riverside, Temple Marsh etc, so that a holistic approach can be taken with identifying transport solutions.

2.12 Heritage, environment, planning principles, land use and the design of the proposed flood risk management works have also played an important role in forming the draft 2017 Development Brief.

2.13 The flood defences, which are planned to commence in 2018, will facilitate the redevelopment of the sites. The draft 2017 Development Brief has been twin tracked with the design of the flood defences, to ensure the interface can be advantageous to both designs.

2.14 Development quantum:

- Former Civic Centre: 564 residential units, complemented with commercial and community land uses.
- Strood Riverside: 602 residential units, complemented with community land uses.
- Kingswear Gardens: 445 residential units.

3. Options

3.1 The draft 2017 Development Brief supports the council's aspiration to redevelop Strood Riverside and former Civic Centre sites. The Development Brief establishes the parameters in which the delivery of a high quality residential led mixed use development is possible. In order to adopt this, as a Supplementary Planning Document, it is essential to publicly consult on the 2017 Development Brief. Options 1 and 2 below outline ways forward for the

formal adoption of the 2017 Development Brief. Option 3 will carry no planning status:

Option 1

Approval to commence public consultation in December 2017, with the intention for the SPD to be adopted in 2018.

This will ensure there is minimal delay between the construction of the flood defences and the appointment of a developer, as the SPD will be in place. The policies in the Development Brief are linked to the 2003 Local Plan, however references and links are also made to the emerging Local Plan, bridging the gap between policies.

Option 2

Delay until new Local Plan has been adopted (circa 2019), enabling the Development Brief for Strood Waterfront to be linked to the policies in the new Local Plan.

This will delay the marketing of the site, as an SPD provides vital planning and design guidance for developers.

Option 3

Produce a non-SPD Planning Guidance document.

With no planning status, this would not provide sufficient weighting to compel developers to adhere to its principles.

4. Advice and analysis

- 4.1 In order to meet the council's objectives, to proceed with bringing forward the council sites for redevelopment, it is recommended Option 1 should be progressed.

| Task | Dates |
|--|----------------------------|
| Submit SPD to Cabinet | November 2017 |
| Public consultation of masterplan. | December 2017/January 2018 |
| Review comments, publish executive summary | February 2018 |
| Changes to SPD | March 2018 |
| Submission to Cabinet for adoption | May 2018 |

- 4.2 Option 2 would significantly impact the programme, therefore it is suggested that the Development Brief is linked to the 2003 Local Plan.
- 4.3 Option 3 would only be a planning guidance document, instead of an SPD. Whilst it would provide guidance to development partners, it would carry no planning status. Therefore, Option 1 is the preferred approach.

- 4.4 The report recommends delegated authority is given to the Director of Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive, to approve any necessary minor amendments to the draft 2017 Development Brief, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships and Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, to agree any necessary minor amendments to the draft 2017.
- 4.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment will be carried out during the consultation stage and will support the subsequent Cabinet report when a recommendation is made to adopt the final version of the Strood Waterfront Development Brief 2017.

5. Risk management

| Risk | Description | Action to avoid or mitigate risk | Risk rating |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|--------------------|
| Poor response to the consultation | If a low volume of feedback is received from the public consultation event, residents' interest may not be accurately represented. | A consultation plan has been drawn up. The consultation process will be advertised and surveys will be readily accessible, to engage with a variety of stakeholders. | D2 |
| Sites not being progressed | Without appropriate and sufficient planning guidance to support the site's potential development quantum, the sites may not reach their potential value. | The adoption of the Development Brief as an SPD would provide planning guidance, de-risking the site for a potential developer and greatly assisting with the marketing of the sites. | D1 |
| Poor quality development | Without a formal adopted planning document, it is difficult to assure a high quality development across the sites. | The adoption of the Development Brief as an SPD establishes the high quality design parameters to be adhered to. | D2 |

6. Consultation

- 6.1 In order for the Development Brief to be adopted as an SPD, public consultation for a 6 week period needs to be carried out. It is proposed that an 8 week consultation period is held from December - January 2018. A consultation plan has been drawn up to ensure that there is effective engagement with stakeholders, statutory consultees, and local residents and businesses.

- 6.2 Officers have carried out early consultation to inform the draft Development Brief. In association with consultation on the emerging Medway Local Plan, high level consultations with residents, including Kingswear Gardens, businesses and other stakeholders, were also carried out to identify local issues that could inform the emerging planning and design principles for Strood Waterfront. Feedback received was supportive of regenerating these sites.
- 6.3 Third party landowners, within the redline boundary identified within the 2017 Development Brief, will be notified of the consultation timeframe, events and how to participate within the consultation.
- 6.4 Consultation for the flood defences is being carried out as part of the planning application. The application outlines that the improvement to the standard of flood defences to facilitate future development.

7 Financial implications

- 7.1 The draft 2017 Development Brief has been prepared within existing budgets. The purpose of the Development Brief is to achieve high quality developments, which will realise the value of these sites, providing an income stream to the council.

8 Legal implications

- 8.1 The Development Brief is intended to provide supplementary planning advice, expanding on Policy S1 – Development Strategy in the Medway Local Plan, 2003. It has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. In order for the Development Brief to be adopted as SPD, the document must be publicly consulted upon for a minimum 6 week period, after being approved by Cabinet for consultation. The final version, taking account of views received during the consultation will then be reported back to Cabinet, with the intention that it is adopted as a supplementary planning document, and form part of the council's development plan.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 Cabinet is asked to approve option 1 (consultation on the proposed Strood Waterfront Development Brief 2017, with the intent it will become a Supplementary Planning Document), as set out in section 3 and 6 of the report and consider the outcome of public consultation, by way of a report back to Cabinet to agree the final version of the SPD.
- 9.2 The Cabinet is asked to delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration, Culture, Environment and Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships and Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation, to approve any necessary minor amendments to the draft Strood Waterfront Development Brief 2017.

10. Suggested reasons for decision(s)

- 10.1 Publicly consulting on the Strood Waterfront Development Brief 2017 is necessary in order for the Development Brief to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document, forming part of the council's development plan, and allow the marketing of the sites at Riverside and Civic to proceed and bring forward homes at pace.

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Appendices (Supplementary Agenda No.1)

Appendix A - Strood Waterfront Development Brief 2017

Background papers

1. Strood Riverside Development Brief 2006
http://www.medway.gov.uk/PDF/strood_riverside_development_brief.pdf
2. Medway Statement of Community Involvement, 2014
<http://www.medway.gov.uk/pdf/Medway%20SCI%202014.pdf>