

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda
Item No.

Report of Corporate Director for Place

to
Cabinet

on

20th September 2016

Report prepared by:
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for Planning & Building Control

Joint Development Brief for Land at Fossetts Way Place Scrutiny Committee Executive Councillor: Cllr Flewitt

A Part 1 Public Agenda Item

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek Members agreement for the Development Brief for the land at Fossetts Way and its adoption as Corporate Policy.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members note the content of this report and agree that the following recommendation be presented:
- I. To agree that the development brief is in accordance with the corporate vision and objectives of Southend Borough Council and that the brief be adopted as corporate policy.**
 - II. To delegate to the Corporate Director for Place in connection with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Public Protection to make any minor amendments to the wording of the document as required.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The NHS acquired 5.8ha (14.8acres) of vacant land at Fossetts Way in 2001 with the intention of developing it as a Diagnostic Treatment Centre. Planning permission was granted for the centre in 2005, but it was never taken forward.
- 3.2 In the Autumn Statement 2014, the Government announced an increased ambition for public sector land and committed to releasing enough land for up to 150,000 homes between 2015 and 2020. The site in question is unused public sector land. The Government has encouraged NHS Trusts to dispose of such land, however it seems progress in doing so has been slow, as Trusts have been reluctant to relinquish their land holdings. The Infrastructure Act 2015 now allows for the HCA to assemble unused public land for disposal on behalf of the Government. It is the Trust's desire to oversee the disposal of the land

and therefore retain receipts within the Trust and therefore Southend. The Trust faces a challenging timetable by which to do this.

- 3.3 At present the land is identified as 'safeguarded land' to meet the long terms development needs of the borough. In order to achieve best value for the land, the Trust is seeking an indication from the Council as to what type and scale of development may be acceptable.

4. Preferred Option

- 4.1 Whilst the preferred approach would be to deal with this site through the local plan process (see paragraph 4.4) for the reasons set out in this report, officers recommend the adoption of a joint development brief in order to guide the future development of the site. It is proposed that a brief be adopted as 'corporate policy'. A brief would enable the Council to set out the parameters for the future development of the site and the document would serve as a material consideration when future planning applications for the site are considered.

- 4.2 The content of the brief has been developed jointly by the Trust and Council officers. Key points are summarised as follows:

- The brief will not be a statutory document and does not form part of the Southend Development Plan. It should be read in conjunction with the adopted Development Plan.
- The site, along with neighbouring land to the east and west (Fossetts Farm), was removed from the Green Belt in March 1999 and designated as 'safeguarded land', largely for future employment needs.
- The site remains capable of development and that a high quality residential-led mixed use scheme, which could also include a range of small scale supporting community uses is appropriate.
- All development must meet Southend's Development Plan policies, should seek to address the need for family housing in the borough and provide open space.
- The scale should generally be 2 - 3 storey.
- The development proposals should provide parking in line with the latest applicable standards.
- 30% affordable housing and CIL contributions will be required.
- A high quality design approach will be expected, which should be highly sustainable including minimising the use of natural resources, the integration of renewable energy, sustainable transport measures and ecology.

- 4.3 The draft development brief is attached as **Appendix 1**.

Other Options

Local Plan Review

- 4.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that planning permission for the permanent development of 'safeguarded land' should only be granted following a Local Plan review which proposes the development. The local plan-making process would allow for development to be planned at the strategic level to ensure that there is a balance of land uses, which provide for the needs of the local and wider community now and in the future in the most sustainable locations. The Local Plan review process is likely to take approximately 24 – 36 months, which would not assist the Trust in being able to dispose of the site prior to it being disposed centrally (as discussed in 3.2 above). Given the likely timetable for disposal the preparation of a brief has been necessary in the circumstances.

Do Nothing

- 4.5 The land would either be sold as employment land by the Trust and a future buyer would then likely seek a change of use to achieve greater values; or the land would be disposed of centrally at a later date. The Council may not have the opportunity to guide the future development of the site without a brief.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 To enable a set of development parameters and the vision for the future of development of the site to be conveyed, in the interests of bringing the site forward as a development that will meet local needs, provide a high quality development, and to be developed in a manner that takes account of other development proposals and strategic planning issues in the Borough.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

The proposed policy will support the following Corporate Priorities for 2016/17:-

Prosperous: Maximise opportunities to enable the planning and development of quality, affordable housing.

Healthy: Work with the public and private rented sectors to provide good quality housing.

6.2 Financial Implications

Any financial contributions received through S106 agreements and CIL will be spent on enabling the Council to deliver affordable housing and infrastructure within the Borough.

At this stage these sums have not yet been determined but will be identified as the Development proposals progress.

6.3 Legal Implications

In terms of planning legislation, a Corporate Policy will be given less weight than an adopted planning policy. However, a Corporate Policy will constitute a material consideration in the determination of any planning applications; and until such time that the Local Plan review is concluded.

6.4 People Implications

None.

6.5 Property Implications

None.

6.6 Consultation

No public consultation required as the document is not proposed to be adopted as a formal planning document. Consultation will take place at planning application stage in accordance with the Southend on Sea Statement of Community Involvement.

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

The proposed Corporate Policy seeks to ensure an equitable approach to housing and infrastructure delivery.

6.8 Risk Assessment

There is a risk that the site could be developed in isolation, whereas as part of the Local Plan review option it could be considered alongside neighbouring sites. However, this point is raised within the brief.

6.9 Value for Money

The proposed Corporate Policy is an important means of ensuring value for money for the wider community from development.

6.10 Community Safety Implications

None.

6.11 Environmental Impact

Consideration as to Environmental impacts and Habitats' screening is required at planning application stage.

7. Background Papers/Reference Documents

None

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 Draft Joint Development Brief for Land at Fossetts Way.