

15 December 2014

Agenda Item: 6b

REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR TRANSPORT, PROPERTY & ENVIRONMENT

PROPOSED URBAN EXPANSION AREA EAST OF GAMSTON – UPDATE

Purpose of the Report

1. To note the latest update in connection with the proposed Urban Expansion Area east of Gamston.

Information and Advice

2. Some information relating to this report is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Having regard to the circumstances, on balance the public interest in disclosing the information does not outweigh the reason for exemption because divulging the information would significantly damage the Council's commercial position. The exempt information is set out in the exempt annex.
3. In October 2012 Rushcliffe Borough Council (RBC) submitted part 1 of its Local Plan (the Rushcliffe Core Strategy) to the Secretary of State for examination by a Planning Inspector. The Rushcliffe Core Strategy is the Council's strategic planning policy document which includes proposals for major development sites in a number of locations across Rushcliffe.
4. RBC's earlier Local Plan was that around 9,600 new houses should be built by 2026. The Inspector has however concluded that this plan does not identify enough new homes to meet the identified housing needs of the Borough and in addition, a comprehensive review of the Green Belt should be undertaken.
5. In order to enable RBC to undertake the additional work required to address these issues, the Inspector suspended the examination of the Core Strategy until October 2013. As a consequence, RBC published its revised proposals for consultation, including at least a further 3,550 houses (in addition to the original 9,600) to be planned by 2028.
6. As reported to Committee on 7 August 2013 the Council made a joint response with other landowners on the Rushcliffe Borough Council's (RBC) Core Strategy consultation document dated June 2013.

7. RBC's revised proposals include a large site east of Gamston centred on the airport extending to over 300 Ha, as a new strategic mixed use development allocation, including the delivery of around 2,500 homes by 2028, and with capacity to provide around a further 1,500 homes post 2028. The County Council own some 55 Ha of land in this area.
8. Work is ongoing jointly with the other landowners to contribute to the evidence base to inform the allocation decision in order to optimise the chances of securing an allocation in the adopted RLP Core Strategy. The details of that ongoing process were reported to Committee on 19 May 2014. Since the matter was last reported, the Council has continued to engage in this process as detailed below.
9. Following publication of the Planning Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions an Examination in Public Hearing was held over several sessions in July 2014. The consortium was represented by a Planning Advocate (Spawforths) at four of the sessions comprising:-
 - Session 2: Spatial Strategy and Housing (Matter 2 Questions 1-4 and 10-15)
 - Session 3: Spatial Strategy (Matter 2 Questions 5-10)
 - Session 5: Green Belt (Matter 3)
 - Session 12: East of Gamston / North of Tollerton (Policy B)
10. The feedback from the planning advocate is that there were no insurmountable issues raised at these sessions which would render the Plan unsound. There will be further Proposed Modifications to take into account the representations at the Examination in Public and therefore another period of public consultation. The timescale for this will be relatively short and will not delay the Planning Inspector's decision which should still be made within the next few weeks
11. The consortium has been collaborating on the basis of memorandums of understanding to achieve a planning allocation. The project will soon be moving into a new phase which will require a more structured legal agreement. In the meantime, there is preparatory work being done which will lay the foundations for the next phase. These include submitting a pre-planning application, a land use master plan (which has greater detail of the net to gross development areas) and the production of a more detailed land ownership plan. Consortium members are also considering how the delivery phase of the project should be implemented. The details of any proposed formal development agreement between the County Council and other landowners will be brought before Committee in due course, but as of now there is little further to report.
12. At its meeting on 15 September 2014, Committee approved the conducting of a formal procurement exercise to identify a potential development partner to work with the County Council on the delivery of this project. This is a complex procurement exercise which is now underway. A draft Procurement document has been prepared covering the contractual framework for any development partnership, financial requirements

and which seeks a Partner with the experience and financial robustness necessary to undertake a contract of this scale. The procurement document is currently being reviewed by the Council's Legal Services and Procurement teams and the procurement exercise itself is likely to commence early in 2015, with outcomes being reported to Committee by late Spring 2015.

13. It is anticipated that further updates will be provided to Members on a regular basis, to tie in with key project milestones. The next of these are likely to be:-
- a. when the Report of the Planning Inspector is published (the timing on this is uncertain, but is expected by early 2015 at the latest).
 - b. once the outcome of the development partner procurement exercise is concluded, Members will be asked to approve the appointment of a development partner and the final form of the development partnership agreement (spring 2015).
 - c. when there is greater clarity as to the structure of any formal "consortium" of landowners relating to the delivery of this scheme.

Other Options Considered

14. Not applicable

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

15. To update Members regarding progress on the proposed Gamston Urban Expansion Area.

Statutory and Policy Implications

16. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) To note the latest update in connection with the proposed Gamston Urban Expansion Area.

Jas Hundal

Service Director – Transport, Property & Environment

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Ian Brearley 0115 977 4840

Constitutional Comments (EP 11.11.2014)

17. This report is for noting only.

Financial Comments (TR 11.11.2014)

18. As this report is for noting only, financial comments are not required.

Background Papers and Published Documents

19. None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

20. Ward(s): Ruddington, West Bridgford Central and South
Member(s): Councillor Steve Calvert, Councillor Liz Plant, Councillor Reg Adair