

Agenda Item 6

Forward Planning
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Report

Subject : Churchfields Project Initiation Document and authorisation to proceed with the project

Report to : The Cabinet

Date : Monday 28 April 2008

Authors : David Milton and Elizabeth Burt

Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Tourism Councillor Edge

1.0 Report Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet's approval of the Churchfields Project Initiation Document and gain authorisation to proceed with the project.

2.0 Purpose of the Planning Initiation Document

2.1 The purpose of the Project Initiation Document is to define and specify basic project dealing measures required to start the project and set out a timetable of key milestones.

2.2 The Salisbury Vision Area Development Framework is nearing completion and in terms of a development strategy for the Churchfields employment area, the consultants have recommended that this area be transformed into a new mixed-use city quarter, with a significant part being residential supported by appropriate office and hotel uses.

2.3 This is a rare and exciting opportunity to redevelop a large area of Salisbury city into a vibrant mixed-use development. The urban renaissance of this important area of the city will make it a more desirable place to live, improve connections, particularly to the rail station, and will contribute to meeting the housing requirements within the city. It will also provide the opportunity to deliver eco-homes, which promote the highest levels of sustainability. Leisure and recreation facilities for the local community will also form part of the development and will contribute to enhancing and facilitating access to surrounding areas, particularly the Water Meadows.

2.4 The Vision Project Board has established a sub-group that will take the lead on developing a project plan for its delivery. The inception meeting of this sub-group was held on the 15th March 2007 and they are now awaiting authorisation to proceed.

2.5 This project requires fundamental planning policy change to allow it to come to fruition. The existing employment uses on the site are safeguarded by policy and currently no residential use would be permitted. As part of the emerging Core Strategy, the Economy Addendum Topic Paper (2008) identifies that the most suitable site for the existing uses on Churchfields to locate to would be to Greenfield land at Harnham. The policy change required for the project can only be delivered through the Local Development Framework (LDF).



Awarded in:
Housing Services
Waste and Recycling Services



- 2.6 As part of the Core Strategy 'Our Place in the future' Consultation, which took place in the summer of 2007, it asked respondents whether they agreed or disagreed with the redevelopment of Churchfields Industrial Estate with a mix of residential-led purposes and finding better sites for the existing businesses (Option 42). In response to this, 74.2% of people either agreed or strongly agreed with this option and only 9.3% of people either disagreed or strongly disagreed. Comments were also received from respondents including "Re-site businesses to proper out of town sites", "Redevelop Churchfields for a mixture of offices, homes and small businesses and hotels" and "Businesses must be sited away from existing residential areas".
- 2.7 The results of the consultation show that the majority of respondents support the redevelopment of Churchfields for alternative uses and due to this; the option of redeveloping this site has been carried forward into the Core Strategy Preferred Options, which is currently out for consultation. Furthermore the supporting evidence, which has been used to inform the Core Strategy (contained within the Topic Papers and Topic Paper Addendums), recognises that the current site of Churchfields for industrial uses is not considered to be the most appropriate location within the city and these uses would benefit from relocation. The Economy Topic Paper Addendum (2008) recommends that Churchfields should be relocated to Greenfield land at Harnham, which is considered to be the most suitable location due to its proximity to the city centre, existing infrastructure and the flat nature of the land, which is required by industrial uses.
- 2.8 The long term aspirations for the Vision need to be delivered via the Salisbury and Wilton Action Area Plan (SWAAP) and work on this has already commenced in line with the timetable outlined in the Local Development Scheme. The first stage of this Development Plan Document is to commence the research, which will include the proposals for Churchfields. From this research and evidence gathering, an Issues and Options paper will be prepared setting out a number of options for the future of Salisbury and Wilton. This document will be formally consulted on towards the end of 2008. From this consultation, a Preferred Options document will be produced setting out the preferred future plans for Salisbury and Wilton over the next 20 years. This document will be formally consulted on at the beginning of 2009. After this stage a final submission document will be produced and consulted on and the document will be submitted to the Secretary of State in late 2009 with the examination taking place in 2010. The final Inspectors Report will be produced in late 2010 and the document will then be recommended to Cabinet for approval and then if approved, recommended for adoption by Full Council.
- 2.9 Key tasks that form the delivery for Churchfields need to be aligned with the LDF to ensure they can be delivered in accordance with planning policy.

3.0 Authority to proceed with the Churchfields project

- 3.1 The project will result in the relocation of inappropriately sited businesses and associated HGV traffic to provide for a new mixed-use quarter that meets housing need and provides the opportunity to meet the requirements of office employers and other growing economic sectors. Evidence used to inform the Core Strategy has highlighted that there is a need to ensure that office space continues to be located in the city centre and that Salisbury City is the main focus for housing growth to 2026, being that it is identified as a Strategically Significant City within the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West.
- 3.2 Authority is sought to proceed with the project and plan for its implementation in line with the LDF process.
- 3.3 There needs to be some note of caution raised in relation to the uncertainty over the LDF programme that Unitary Status has introduced. Unitary integration has introduced risks over timetabling of the LDF and staff resources to deliver this project. There is also a work stream seeking to see how the LDF work from across Wiltshire can be unified into one, but there are risks of delay due to a staggering in how far the other authorities are behind with their process.

4.0 Recommendation:

That Members accept the Project Initiation Document as the start of the process of implementing the Churchfields proposal and authorise officers to carry on with the project.

5.0 Background Papers:

Core Strategy Preferred Options (2008) Written by the Forward Planning Team, Salisbury District Council

Economy Addendum Topic paper (2008) Written by the Forward Planning Team, Salisbury District Council

Our Place in the Future Consultation Methodology and output report (2007) Forward Planning Team, Salisbury District Council

Our Place in the Future Consultation document and questionnaire (2007) Written by the Forward Planning Team, Salisbury District Council

Vision for Salisbury Area Development Framework. Final Report (April 2007) Gillespies in association with Alder King, White Young Green, BDOR, DTZ Consulting and Savills on behalf of Salisbury District Council, South West RDA and Wiltshire County Council.

Churchfields Project Initiation Document. Written by David Milton, Forward Planning and Conservation Team Leader.

Local Development Scheme: A timetable for the production of the Local Development Framework (January 2007) Written by the Forward Planning Team, Salisbury District Council.

6.0 Implications:

- **Financial:** None at this stage, however the implementation of the Churchfields project will require significant funding from both public and private sources.
- **Legal:** As set out in the report
- **Human Rights:** None at this stage
- **Personnel:** None
- **Community Safety:** None at this stage
- **Council's Core Values:** Excellent service, thriving economy, fairness & equality, open council & willing partner, communicating with the public, supporting the disadvantaged, protecting the environment
- **Ward(s) Affected:** Fisherton and Bemerton Village

Project: Churchfields

Programme Board/Strategic Owner: Pam Fox

Project Manager/Project Owner: David Milton

Project Team Members:

Cllr John Walsh
Neil Philpott (Chair, Churchfields Business Action Group)
Eric Teagle Head Forward Planning and Transportation
Andrew Reynolds Head of Strategic Housing
Clare Mawson, Economic Development Manager
Graham Creasey, Property Manager
Hannah Barker, Senior Project Manager
Nick Darbyshire, Operations Manager, Environmental Services
Gary Tomsett, Principal Environmental Health Officer,
David Milton & Elizabeth Burt, Forward Planning
WCC representative(s) TBC

1. Project Justification/the strategic purpose of the project

Salisbury Vision, Area Development Framework is nearing completion and in terms of a development strategy for the Churchfields employment area the consultants are recommending that the following be pursued:

"Transformation of the Churchfields Industrial Estate into a new mixed use city quarter in close proximity to the rail station. A significant part will be residential supported by appropriate office and hotel uses"

Vision for Salisbury, Final Report May 2007, (page 94), author, Gillespie's

The Vision Project Board has taken steps to establish a sub-group that will take the lead on developing a robust and fully resourced project plan for the delivery of this project. The sub-group has been set up and held its inception meeting on the 15th March 2007.

2. Rationale

Relocation of inappropriately sited businesses and associated HGV traffic to provide for a new quarter that meets housing demand and provides the opportunity to meet the requirements of office employers and other growing economic sectors

3. Desired Outcomes

The following outcomes are identified as being the success criteria at the outset of the project:

- Delivering the residential led mixed use redevelopment of Churchfields
- To ensure project alignment with the Local development Framework to ensure there is adequate and appropriate land available to ensure a successful decant for existing employers in and around Salisbury
- To achieve high quality development which sympathetically capitalises on the sites assets such as proximity to water meadows, town path, Harnham and the Cathedral Views
- Provides at least 2 green links form the east and west of the River Nadder to contribute towards the environmental and ecological aspirations of the Vision
- Includes the incorporation of a central green to act as a focal point and encourage vitality
- Includes a mix of heights

- Plans in and makes features of key vista to the Cathedral
- Makes a significant contribution to the aims of sustainability by a range of measures such as use of grey water recycling, solar power, combined heat and power and so on.
- Safeguards and where possible enhances the natural environment.
- Delivery of the project and adequate decant land for employment is embedded within policies of the Local Development Framework
- Prior to the requisite policy change to deliver the substantive ideas, that short-term improvements be identified and implemented that can address a number of the ongoing problems affecting the functioning of the estate.

4. Project Specification and Key Milestones

By necessity this project requires fundamental planning policy change to allow it to come to fruition. The existing employment uses on the current site are safeguarded by policy and currently no residential would be permitted. Furthermore no alternative sites for a decant have yet been identified. This policy change cannot be delivered in a piecemeal or ad hoc manner and must properly be made through the Local Development Framework

It is clear that the longer terms aspirations for the Vision need to be delivered via the Salisbury and Wilton Action Area Plan (SWAAP) and that work has already started in assembling the evidence base and commissioning consultants to carry out vital studies into Salisbury such as the Housing Needs Study, Strategic Landscape Assessment and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. These studies will indicate the number of houses and jobs required, where new development can be accommodated and may be used to redesignate Churchfields. All of these are prerequisites to delivering this part of the Vision.

Therefore key tasks are based on aligning this project with the LDF and ensuring it becomes 'mainstreamed' within that process. To ensure that happens the following milestones have been identified:

Tasks	Lead	Date	Complete
Approval of Salisbury LDS - (timetable for delivering LDF) with GOSW, including Salisbury and Wilton Action Area Plan	DJM	January 2007	✓
Inception meeting of Churchfields Vision Sub-group	DJM	March 2007	✓
Commence dialogue with land owners	DJM	March 2007	✓
Incorporate Churchfields proposals in Core Strategy Issues and Options consultation, using Our Place in the Future as the vehicle	DJM	24 July - 5 th Oct 2007	✓
Start to address short-term improvements to Churchfields, fly parking and state of the roads	EB	August 2007	✓
Consider adoption of Project Initiation Document which align and mainstreams delivery of Churchfields project within the LDF process	Cabinet	April 2008	
Produce project plan and critical path for long-term delivery aligned with LDF process	DJM/EB	May 2008	
Adoption of Core Strategy	DJM	September 2009	
Adoption of Salisbury and Wilton Action Area Plan to deliver policy change and new employment allocation	DJM	December 2010	
Master planning of Churchfields Quarter in partnership with potential investors	DJM	Complete by	

The following table distils the key stages of the LDS and aligns them with measures necessary to mainstream delivery of the Churchfields project.

LDF Stage	Date	Churchfield alignment	Complete
Core Strategy Issues and Options	Jul – Oct 07	Ensure Churchfields is included in Issues and Options as key project	✓
Core Strategy Preferred Options	Oct 07 – April 08	Assess early response and appetite for Churchfields project and consult in more detail	Current
Core Strategy final submission	Mar – Jul 08	Dependant on outcome of consultation and level of support, include Churchfields as future project forming part of the wider Salisbury Vision	
SWAAP research and pre-consultation	Aug 07 – Apr 08	Build on baseline vision data to present a case for the Churchfields Project	
SWAAP Issues and Options	May – Oct 08	Ensure Churchfields is included in Issues and Options as a key project with a detailed commentary of how it will be implemented and its relationship to other key Salisbury Vision projects and employment land allocation	
SWAAP Preferred Options	Nov 08 – Apr 09	Assess response and level of support for Churchfields and the proposed implementation plan and consult in more detail	
SWAAP final submission	May – Sept 09	Include Churchfields in SWAAP as a firm commitment with detailed implementation plan and schedule of delivery	
Post approval of SWAAP and Core Strategy	Oct 09	Produce detailed Masterplan for site, employment land allocation and delivery timetable for the implementation of Churchfields project	

7. Budgets and Resources

The costs of embedding delivery of this project through the LDF project can be resourced from existing budgets and teams. Furthermore it is envisaged that the master planning of the site should be prepared by officers in conjunction with prospective developers.

8. Project Timescale

As per the Local development Scheme detailed above

9. Monitoring

The Vision Board on a regular basis will monitor project.

10. Communication

Communicated through the LDF and Vision communication plans

11. Risks

Unitary integration has introduced risks over timetabling of Local Development Framework and Staff resources to deliver this project. It is considered that business continuity with regard skills and knowledge; within the Salisbury area is essential if this project is to be successfully delivered.