

WESTCROFT RESERVE SITE DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

Decision Taker: Councillor Legg (Cabinet member for Public Realm)

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Executive Summary:

This report seeks authorisation to undertake formal consultation on the Draft Westcroft Reserve Site Development Brief for an 8 week period between July and September 2014.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That the draft Westcroft Reserve Site Development Brief (as at the attached Annex) be approved for an 8 week consultation period between July and September 2014.

2. Issues

- 2.1 The Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) agreement requires MKDP to seek approval from MKC Cabinet for Development Briefs before marketing / selling any of the sites under its control.
- 2.2 Development Briefs are the key documents outlining MKC and local stakeholder aspirations and expectations for the site and will therefore have a key role influencing what a site is eventually developed for.
- 2.3 The purpose of this Brief is to provide strategic planning and design guidance appropriate for the development of this site in Westcroft.
- 2.3 The draft Brief has been informed by relevant stakeholder aspirations for the site, a desk top analysis of the site and a resulting understanding of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as well as an understanding and interpretation of the existing planning policy position. This together has informed a set of principles that will act as guidance and inform detailed proposals for the site.
- 2.4 The draft Brief outlines the 1.81 acre (0.73ha) site being allocated as a Reserve Site in the Council's adopted Local Plan. "Reserve Sites" is the term used to describe small sites in residential housing areas that are left undeveloped to accommodate unforeseen local needs. There is a range of uses to which these sites can be put e.g. private housing, social housing, sheltered housing (generally for the elderly in a managed way), specialist housing, hostels, meeting places, health centres, dental surgeries, workshops, places of worship and local shops. The Local Plan has not identified a proposed use for this specific site but many of the above uses are identified as suitable.

- 2.5 The Council have expressed the need for an Extra Care Facility for older people with Dementia and this is a use that could potentially be accommodated on the site in addition to a small amount of family housing for sale. These uses would accord with current Planning Policy.
- 2.6 The site is largely featureless, being covered by maintained grassland although it does have quite a significant slope towards its southern corner where Cranborne Avenue passes beneath the V1 (Snelshall Street). While the site is served by an existing bell-mouth off Cranborne Avenue it is surrounded on 3 of its 4 sides by 2-3 storey residential development. New development will therefore need to be sensitive to the proximity and context of existing residential properties. It should therefore, for example, be predominantly 2 storeys in height.

Consultation

- 2.7 The process of preparing the draft Development Brief has involved consulting with Cabinet, local ward members, cross party Planning Spokespersons, Shenley Brook End and Tattenhoe Parish Council and MKC Planning Officers as per the adopted protocol for preparing Briefs.
- 2.7.1 In terms of initial views sought particularly on stakeholder aspirations for the site, Shenley Brook End and Tattenhoe Parish Council did indicate that they would support the inclusion of an extra care facility for Dementia patients but also said the site should accommodate a Doctors Surgery and / or a Community Meeting Hall where there is an indicated shortage within the Parish Area. They also suggested that because of the convoluted access to the site by car that Cranborne Avenue should be opened to traffic under Snelshall Street.
- 2.7.2 No further comments were received at this stage of the preparation of the Brief
- 2.8 Formal consultation will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. It will take place for an 8 week period between July and September 2014. Consultation will involve:
- Copies of Development Brief displayed in the CMK and Westcroft Libraries as well as at the Council Civic Offices
 - Document published on Council's website, in the Members Weekly News, Council's Consultation Finder and the Staff Tuesday Bulletin
 - Copies/weblinks of Draft Development Brief sent to Cabinet Members, the three Party Planning Spokespersons, Tattenhoe Ward Councillors, Shenley Brook End Parish Council as well as adjacent residential landowners abutting the site,
 - Presentations (if requested) to Shenley Brook End and Tattenhoe Parish Council,
 - Briefings (if requested) with ward members and councillors
 - Seeking comment / views from Development Control Committee
 - The draft Development Brief will also be shared with any developers who express an interest in redeveloping the site

3. Options

- 3.1 The “do nothing option” is to not undertake formal consultation on the Draft Development Brief. This is not an option as it contravenes the Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) agreement which requires MKDP to seek approval from MKC Cabinet for Development Briefs before marketing / selling any of the sites under its control
- 3.2 The preferred option is to gain authorisation to undertake a period of formal consultation so that the Development Brief can be made available publicly for stakeholders and the local community to comment on, with a view to preparing a final Brief that reflects, where appropriate, stakeholder and community comments.

4. Implications

4.1 Policy

The draft Development Brief has been written to accord with NPPF, Core Strategy and Local Plan policies. It also supports the Corporate Plan themes of “Living in MK”, and “Cleaner, Greener, Safer and Healthier MK”

The Development Brief has furthermore been prepared in accordance with an adopted protocol for preparing development briefs for all sites in Milton Keynes.

It is not a Key Council Document, nor is it a Development Plan Document.

4.2 Resources and Risk

It is anticipated that the consultation process will be undertaken from within existing resources.

There are no known risks associated with the proposed consultation.

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|---|---------|---|------------------|---|------------------|
| N | Capital | N | Revenue | N | Accommodation |
| N | IT | N | Medium Term Plan | N | Asset Management |

4.3 Carbon and Energy Management

There are no known carbon and energy management implications associated with the proposed consultation.

4.4 Legal

Development Briefs prepared and approved by the local planning authority are a legitimate tool to inform developers and other interested parties of the opportunities and restrictions of a site in planning terms. While it is possible to approve a development brief as a supplementary planning document, this is not the case here and there is therefore no need to examine whether or not the document has complied with the regulations governing the adoption of supplementary planning document. Nevertheless an approved development

brief is capable of carrying weight in a planning determination and the extent to which it does is a question for the decision maker.

Once approved the Development Brief will be a material consideration in determining any forthcoming planning applications.

4.5 Other Implications

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|---|----------------------|---|----------------|---|--------------------|
| N | Equalities/Diversity | N | Sustainability | N | Human Rights |
| Y | E-Government | Y | Stakeholders | N | Crime and Disorder |

E-Government: The Development Brief will be made available on the Council website.

Stakeholders: Consultation with a wide range of stakeholders will be undertaken in accordance with statutory requirements and the MKC Statement of Community Involvement.

Annex: Draft Westcroft Reserve Site Development Brief