

# OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

**District:** Oxford City

Application no: 16/03006/FUL-2

**Proposal:** Mixed use phased development comprising residential (Use Class C3), hotel (Use Class C1), retail (Use Class A1/A3/A4) with associated car parking, demolition of car park, high level walkway and public house, public realm improvements, landscaping, highways and refurbishment of car parks and enhancement to shopping centre entrances. (amended

information)(amended plans).

Location: Templars Square, Between Towns Road, Oxford.

# **Purpose of document**

This report sets out Oxfordshire County Council's view on the proposal.

This report contains officer advice in the form of a strategic localities response and technical team response(s). Where local member have responded these have been attached by OCCs Major Planning Applications Team (planningconsultations@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

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information)(amended plans).

**Location:** Templars Square, Between Towns Road, Oxford.

# **Strategic Comments**

#### **Comments:**

The County Council supports the improvement and development of the city's district centres as sustainable development locations which are well connected to sustainable transport networks and provide a range of services and amenities within easy walking and cycling distance of the populations they serve.

The County Council therefore supports the principle of this development and considers that proposals to provide higher density residential development with low or no car parking is suitable given the area is highly accessible and parking controls can be introduced.

The County Council now removes the transport objection to this proposal. Full details are provided in the officer comments below.

Officer's Name: Amanda Jacobs
Officer's Title: Senior Planning Officer

**Date:** 21 April 2017

**District:** Oxford City

Application no: 16/03006/FUL-2

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information)(amended plans). **Location:** Templars Square, Between Towns Road, Oxford.

# **Transport**

# **Recommendation:**

No objection subject to conditions

# Key issues:

- The County Council, City Council and developer will need to agree a way to secure specific funding towards a Controlled Parking Zone and delivery of public realm and transport improvements in the context of the CIL regulations.
- The County Council has put forward a number of further comments on the public realm and highway proposals which will need to be incorporated into final designs linked to the Section 278 Agreement.

# Legal agreement required to secure:

The applicant is required to enter into a Section 278 Agreement (of the Highways Act 1980) linked to proposed public realm and highway changes on Between Towns Road and Barns Road and any other highway changes required to mitigate the impact of the proposed development. As part of the Section 278 Agreement, the applicant is required to submit drawings for technical approval from the Highway Authority.

A Section 278 Agreement must be entered into between the applicant and the County Council in order to secure funding of £92,000 towards the implementation of a Controlled Parking Zone.

It should be noted that a S278 agreement secured through a S106 agreement will not be possible in this case as this would contravene the CIL regulations. The S278 agreement will therefore need to be entered into prior to grant of planning consent.

A Section 106 Agreement must be entered into between the applicant and the County Council in order to secure funding of £34,848 for bus stop poles, flags and Real-Time Information displays (four of each). This does not include the cost of four new and replacement Landmark advertising shelters, similar to what is currently provided in Headington and Summertown district centres, which must be agreed separately with Oxford City Council.

A cost of £4,000 to carry out statutory consultation to amend the Traffic Regulation Order for the double yellow lines along Between Towns Road, and relocate the pedestrian crossing and introduce a loading bay on Between Towns Road, must be met through a Unilateral Undertaking.

Travel plan monitoring fees of £1,240 are also required.

## **Conditions:**

#### Road Construction, Surface and Layout

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, full specification details of Between Towns Road, Barns Road and Hockmore Street including construction, surfacing, layout incorporating additional cycle lanes and cycle priority at junctions, drainage and road markings, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter and prior to the first occupation of Phase 1 of the development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, to ensure a satisfactory standard of construction and layout for the development and to comply with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

#### **Travel Plan**

The submitted travel plan will be revised in line with comments made on it and resubmitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval before first occupation.

The submitted travel plan statement for the proposed hotel will be revised and resubmitted for approval by the Local Planning Authority before first occupation of the site.

Prior to first occupation a Travel Information Pack shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The first residents of each dwelling shall be provided with a copy of the approved Travel Information Pack.

Reason: In the interests of sustainability, to ensure a satisfactory form of development and to comply with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

#### Residential Cycle Parking Provision

Prior to the first use or occupation of the development hereby permitted, covered cycle parking facilities shall be provided for site D and F in accordance with details which shall be firstly submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the covered cycle parking facilities shall be permanently retained and maintained for the parking of cycles in connection with the development.

Reason: In the interests of sustainability, to ensure a satisfactory form of development and to comply with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

#### **Hotel Cycle Parking Provision**

Prior to the first use or occupation of the development hereby permitted, covered cycle parking facilities shall be provided for the hotel in accordance with details which shall be firstly submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the covered cycle parking facilities shall be permanently retained and maintained for the parking of cycles in connection with the development.

Reason: In the interests of sustainability, to ensure a satisfactory form of development and to comply with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

## Car Parking Signage/Guidance System

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, full specification details of car parking signage/guidance shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter and prior to the first occupation of Phase 1 of the development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety and to mitigate the impact of the development on the surrounding network.

#### **Swept Path Drawings**

Before the development permitted is commenced a swept path analysis shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority to demonstrate that a 12.5m public transport vehicle can safely and easily make a U-turn when using the Between Towns Road bus turning area.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety.

#### Plan of Disabled Car Parking

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, a plan showing car parking provision for disabled vehicles to be accommodated within Site D, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, and prior to the first occupation of the development, the parking spaces shall be laid out, surfaced, drained and completed in accordance with the approved details and shall be retained for the parking of vehicles at all times thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, to ensure the provision of off-street car parking and to comply with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

#### **Drainage**

Development shall not begin until a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro-geological context of the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed. The scheme shall also include:

- Discharge Rates
- Discharge Volumes
- Maintenance and management of SUDS features (this may be secured by a Section 106 Agreement)
- Sizing of features attenuation volume
- Infiltration in accordance with BRE365
- Detailed drainage layout with pipe numbers
- SUDS (list the suds features mentioned within the FRA to ensure they are carried forward into the detailed drainage strategy)
- Network drainage calculations
- Phasing

Reason: To prevent flooding affecting the highway

## **Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)**

A Construction Traffic Management Plan should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and agreed prior to commencement of works. This should identify;

- The routing of construction vehicles and management of their movement into and out of the site by a qualified and certificated banksman,
- Access arrangements and times of movement of construction vehicles (to minimise the impact on the surrounding highway network),
- Details of wheel cleaning / wash facilities to prevent mud, etc from migrating on to the adjacent highway,
- Contact details for the Site Supervisor responsible for on-site works,
- Travel initiatives for site related worker vehicles,
- Details of times for construction traffic and delivery vehicles, which must be outside network peak and school peak hours,
- Engagement with local residents and neighbours.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to mitigate the impact of construction vehicles on the surrounding network, road infrastructure and local residents, particularly at peak traffic times.

# **Informatives:**

None

## **Detailed comments:**

The following should be read in conjunction with the County Council's previous response which was submitted in January 2017.

#### Public realm and highway works

Public realm and highway works in the vicinity of the site are proposed to improve the street scene and accessibility to the site for all modes and to better integrate the site with the immediate surrounding area. These improvements must be designed and built wholly at the developer's expense and delivered as part of the development so they are fully available before completion. This requirement will be enforced through a S278 agreement.

In response to comments made by the County Council a number of changes have been made to the highway and public realm proposals along Between Towns Road and Barns Road. Updated proposals are shown in 'Landscape & Public Realm Ground Level GA Plan (Revision H)'. The County Council has further comments on the updated proposals, as set out below, and expects these to be incorporated at detail design stage.

#### Cycle lanes

Proposals now include 2m advisory cycle lanes in both directions adjacent to the development on Between Towns Road. Further improvements are however required to continue cycle lanes up to, and where possible, through junctions to reaffirm cycle priority and safety. Suggested improvements include:

 Extending the eastbound cycle lane further back to the Crowell Road signal junction and given the potential for (disabled) vehicles to park on this section of Between Towns Road consideration should be given to providing a short section of segregated cycle lane that would then re-join the carriageway before the pedestrian crossing. This will require suitable transition between on- and off-carriageway cycling to ensure cycle safety and convenience.

- In terms of the eastbound approach to the Between Towns Road/Barns Road roundabout there may be the potential to provide both an ahead and central cycle lane to help cyclists approaching and travelling through the roundabout. This would be similar to what is provided at The Plain Roundabout in central Oxford, which has had a positive impact on cycle priority at the junction.
- The westbound cycle lane should be extended to the Crowell Road signal junction, albeit the narrow footway and traffic lanes means it may only be possible to do this as far as Banjo Road without a more fundamental junction improvement scheme.
- In addition to the above, cycle solar studs on both sides of Between Towns Road should also be considered in order to emphasis cycle priority. Again, this has been implemented at The Plain and is also part of the County Council's Access to Headington proposals.

The County Council's transport strategy identifies both Barns Road and the entire section of Between Towns Road as either Cycle Super or Cycle Super Route. The County Council may therefore also request CIL funding from Oxford City Council in order to upgrade further sections of these corridors and more specifically, routes beyond the scope of the development's proposals.

#### Disabled parking

The proposed 20mins parking bays on Between Town Road (next to the taxi rank) should instead be for disabled parking only with all other retail parking taking place off-street. This will provide some disabled parking where it is likely to be needed and will also reduce the potential for disabled parking on Between Towns Road e.g. on double-yellow lines.

Improvements to the bus stop facilities on B4495 Between Towns Road

It is expected that the developer will upgrade bus stops and facilities so they are a higher specification than currently provided i.e. similar to what is provided in Summertown and Headington district centres.

As 4 stops are proposed (and required) this means 4 new and replacement shelters (assuming the existing ones cannot be reused), 4 poles and flags and 4 Real-Time Information displays. These will need to be to 'premium' route standard.

Bus stop clear ways will require formal statutory consultation and will need to include the bus turn-around to ensure this is not used inappropriately.

Updated swept path drawings are also required to confirm that buses can still U-turn with more recent alterations made. This is conditioned.

#### Traffic impact

In its initial response the County Council raised concerns over the potential for proposals to have a negative impact on traffic flows on Between Towns Road and Barns Road in particular. The revised plans submitted now include a number of measures to help keep traffic moving, which is considered important given Barns Road is a Rapid Transit route, for example.

Proposals are shown in 'Landscape & Public Realm Ground Level GA Plan (Revision H)', and include widening approaches at the Between Towns Road / Barns Road mini-roundabout and extending the left-turn filter lane for access into the Barns Road car park. These measures along with improved signing (see comments on VMS below) will help to reduce the potential for additional congestion to occur as a result of more intensive use of the Barns Road car park.

In the county council's original response concerns were also raised about the impact of additional development traffic on the operation of the Between Towns Road / Crowell Road traffic signal junction, given traffic modelling undertaken in support of the application confirmed that two arms would be operating over 90% saturation (and so beyond a level of saturation that is considered to be acceptable). In response the transport consultant confirmed that they had modelled the right turn movement out of Templars Shopping Park every cycle despite the fact that it only appears when called. The model has now been updated to reflect more closely on-street behaviour and as a result this predicts that the junction's level of saturation would not exceed 90%, which is considered more acceptable. Nonetheless, it is possible to see a further improvement with minor alterations to signal timings which the county council can implement should the development go ahead.

It should also be noted that the traffic impact assessment has not considered the positive impacts that are expected as a result of the development and so assumes a worst case scenario. For example, public realm and alterations to parking on Between Towns Road are likely to reduce 'edge friction' which is currently caused by on-street parking on both sides of the road. Improvements to public transport, walking and cycling and the introduction of a Controlled Parking Zone will all help to remove some traffic from the area and reduce the potential for any further growth in background traffic.

#### Variable Message Signing

As commented previously, the County Council supports proposals to improve car park signage, particularly if this helps to make more efficient use of all car parks and reduces the potential for any blocking back onto the highway (given the potential for car parks to operate close to capacity more frequently).

Limited details have been submitted as to what exactly is being proposed and it is not clear at this stage whether VMS or a more basic car park guidance system would be more suitable. Detailed proposals are therefore required before the County Council can consider proposals properly and improvements must be designed and built wholly at the developer's expense and to the County Council's specifications and standards.

#### Residential car parking

As noted previously, the County Council does not consider that use of the 29 parking spaces allocated within the Barns Road car park to flats at Site A would be convenient for residents of those flats and consequently are not likely to be well used. However as noted above, with the highways mitigation measures now proposed, and provided that appropriate on-street parking controls are installed, it is not considered that the demand for retail parking during peak times would be likely to lead to a significant detrimental impact on traffic flows. Therefore, the County Council does not object to the proposed allocation of residential parking spaces.

A single disabled parking space is to be provided within the car park at Site A. This space is appropriately located in close proximity to the entrance of the accessible apartment at that site.

The refurbishment of the Barns Road and Knights car parks (Hockmore Street) does not form part of this application. Consequently it is not clear how many disabled parking spaces are to be provided within those car parks for both the residential and commercial side of the development.

The Adopted Parking Standards SPD sets out that, for commercial uses, 5% of parking should be designated for disabled people.

Details on the number of disabled spaces and their layout for the residential units at Site D are required and this has been conditioned.

#### Need for a Controlled Parking Zone

The applicant proposes a low-car scheme which includes car-free elements however without suitable parking controls in place, the low car nature of the development cannot be enforced. The development would therefore be likely to lead to an increasing demand for overspill onstreet parking which in turn is likely to lead to detrimental impacts on the safe and convenient operation of the highway and would be unacceptable. Furthermore, without parking controls the potential for peak spreading identified within the TA would be less likely to occur which would result in increased traffic and overspill parking associated with the development during the busiest times.

Also, as noted in the County Council's previous response to the application, the proposed flats at Site F are not to be provided with any dedicated parking spaces and as such should be considered a 'car free' development. Policy HP16 of Oxford City Council's Sites and Housing Plan outlines that permission will only be granted for car-free or low-car developments such as this where they are located within a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ). This is required in order to ensure that the low-car or car-free nature of the development can be enforced. Therefore, since Site F is not to be provided with any dedicated parking spaces, the development would be contrary to Policy HP16 in the absence of suitable parking controls to prevent unacceptable overspill parking.

As noted in the sections above, the County Council would not be opposed to the proposed allocation of parking spaces for the residential units and the reduction of parking available for retail uses on the basis that parking restrictions could be implemented locally in order to control the parking demand.

With this in mind the County Council requests a contribution of £92,000 from the applicant in order to install a CPZ. This is required both to ensure that the development is policy compliant and as direct mitigation against the development's likely highways impacts. Without this County Council considers that the development's impact would be severe and would object to the application.

#### Parking layout

We note that the parking layout has been reviewed in order to meet the minimum dimensions required under the County Council's Design Guide for New Residential Developments as far as possible.

#### Residential cycle parking

We note that the layout of the cycle parking in the southwest corner of Site A has been reviewed in order to improve accessibility.

We also note that the cycle parking provision for Site F has been relocated to a communal storage area on the first floor. The County Council considers that this is an improvement to the previous proposals for cycle storage to be accommodated within each individual flat. As with the cycle parking at Site D, which is located within the basement, residents would be required to access the cycle store via a lift.

The County Council has requested that a ramp is provided for access to these cycle parking areas. However, if this is not possible due to site constrains, a lift can be considered acceptable provided that lifts have minimum dimensions of 1.2 by 2.3 metres, with a minimum door opening of 1000mm in order accommodate all types of cycle.

Furthermore, best practice guidance also sets out that where cycle parking is located inside a building it should have wide doorways and spacious corridors. Accessing the parking area should involve passing through no more than two sets of doors, with a recommended minimum external door width of 2 metres. Any door to a cycle parking area should be automated – push button or pressure pad operated for ease of use.

It would appear that the plans may need some further alterations to accommodate these measures and so detailed plans of residential cycle parking have been conditioned.

#### Public / Retail cycle parking

The application form suggests that the level of public cycle parking to be provided for the Shopping Centre will remain unchanged, and whilst we note that use of existing cycle parking spaces around the Centre is variable i.e. spaces on Crowell Road and Barns Road tend to be less well used compared to spaces on Between Town Road, the redevelopment and improved cycle facilities and public realm are likely to result in more users cycling to the Centre. An increase in more conveniently located cycle parking spaces is therefore considered essential to accommodate the likely increase in demand for cycle parking and every opportunity must be taken to provide additional spaces when working through the detailed design of the public realm and highway improvements.

In addition, the Adopted Parking Standards sets out that one cycle parking space per five staff, plus one space per one resident staff, should be provided for at the hotel. This is conditioned.

## **Travel Plan**

An updated residential travel plan has been submitted along with a travel plan statement for the proposed hotel. The updated travel plan is contained in the form of a technical note. Further comments are below and final travel plans have been conditioned.

From the travel plan point of view nothing has been submitted for the A1, A3, A4 element of the scheme. As such details of the GFA for this element should be provided to help us to assess if there will be a travel plan requirement.

- Para 2.3.5 as this is a residential travel plan it should be focusing on residents. This paragraph mentions customers of A3 units? We have no details of what A3 units are planned as part of this development. We will need these details to assess if there will be a travel plan requirement, this should be expressed in terms of the GFA of these elements.
- Commitment to conduct a new baseline survey and review the Travel Plan in light of the survey results within three months of occupation or, for residential developments, once a certain percentage of the site is occupied. Please include the proposed build rate for this development in the travel plan and the likely number of occupiers.
- Template of residents' travel survey questions to be included in the appendix.
- The Travel Plan should also contain a commitment to monitoring of the Travel Plan at least every two years (for example, in Years 1, 3 and 5 or for longer if requested), The survey results should be analysed and submitted to Oxfordshire County Council within one month of the survey completion.
- Clear targets should be set to reduce the percentage of site users travelling to / from the site by SOV to initial baseline survey. These targets should be set to increase the percentage of travel by other modes including walking, cycling, public transport and car share. The combination of these targets for each mode should add up to 100% in total. Until the first survey has taken place 2011 Census data already included in the plan can be used to set the baseline.
- Details of planned parking provision for the development for vehicles as well as cycles.
- The action plan will need to include a mixture of short, medium and longer term objectives which form a credible package of measures that will enable the travel plan to achieve its aims / objectives.
- Travel plan actions should be S.M.A.R.T.
- Details of how the Travel Plan Coordinator will be identified and recruited and details of what their role will be should be included.

#### Drainage

Development shall not begin until a surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro-geological context of the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This has been conditioned.

All the surface water discharges go to Thames Water's surface water sewers which are near capacity therefore reductions to these sewers are essential.

Officer's Name: Stewart Wilson

Officer's Title: Principal Transport Planner

**Date:** 13 April 2017

**District:** Oxford City

Application no: 16/03006/FUL-2

**Proposal:** Mixed use phased development comprising residential (Use Class C3), hotel (Use Class C1), retail (Use Class A1/A3/A4) with associated car parking, demolition of car park, high level walkway and public house, public realm improvements, landscaping, highways and refurbishment of car parks and enhancement to shopping centre entrances. (amended

information)(amended plans).

Location: Templars Square, Between Towns Road, Oxford.

# **Economy and Skills**

# **Recommendation:**

No objection subject to conditions

## **Key issues:**

- The construction of the proposed development will create around 153 FTE jobs per year in construction and a further 57 FTE jobs through the hotel and A3 floor space
- The level of employment generated on this strategic development site will require the developers to prepare and implement a Community Employment Plan

## Legal agreement required to secure:

# **Conditions:**

 The developers will be required to prepare and implement, with local authorities and skills providers, a Community Employment Plan (CEP) that will seek to mitigate the impacts of development through ensuring that local people can better access the training (including apprenticeships) and job opportunities arising from the development. CEP's should relate to outcomes from both the construction and the end user phase.

# **Informatives:**

## **Detailed comments:**

The documents submitted in support of the planning application notes the creation of around 153 FTE jobs per year in construction and a further 57 FTE jobs through the hotel and A3 floor space.

The Socio-Economics in the Environmental Statement also note that the site is on the edge of one of the most deprived areas of the country – Blackbird Leys. This development lends itself to the creation of employment opportunities in the local area, which is of potential benefit to local residents.

The Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP) and partners have agreed, through the City Deal and Strategic Economic Plan to deliver significant levels of economic growth

Oxfordshire has made progress through programmes including <u>Oxfordshire Business</u> <u>Support</u><sup>1</sup>, the <u>Oxfordshire Apprenticeship programme</u><sup>2</sup>, <u>O2i</u><sup>3</sup> and <u>Invest in Oxfordshire</u><sup>4</sup>.

Recent policy initiatives relating to skills development are contained in:

- The Oxfordshire City Deal
- Oxfordshire European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) Strategy
- Strategic Economic Plan the refresh of which is currently underway

The Oxfordshire Skills Strategy has the following key strategic priorities to 2020:

- To meet the needs of local employers through a more integrated and responsive approach to education and training
- Creating the 'skills continuum' to support young people through their learning journey
- Up-skilling and improving the chances of young people and adults marginalised or disadvantaged from work
- To increase the number of apprenticeship opportunities
- To explore how we can better retain graduates within Oxfordshire to meet the demand for the higher level skills our businesses need

#### **Employment and skills planning justification**

Oxfordshire has a 'tight labour market', comprising of one of the lowest national claimant counts for Job Seekers Allowance<sup>5</sup>, alongside 'pockets of deprivation' in which there are relatively high levels of unemployment. Improving local skills and employment outcomes will not only drive forward the local economy, but will have far reaching effects in improving the social and economic outcomes of individuals currently marginalised from the workforce.

The Government advice on planning policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework states that 'significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system'.

Seeking commitments to the development of skills and the provision of job opportunities through Community Employment Plans (CEP's) can help to achieve this vision and to ensure that developments contribute to economic growth.

Through CEP's, Local Planning Authorities can work together with the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Skills Board and partners to ensure the maximum benefits in terms of new jobs. Thereby fully utilising the potential within the planning system to support and drive sustainable local economic growth.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Oxfordshire Business Support is the Growth Hub for Oxfordshire, providing business support, specialist advice and guidance

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The Oxfordshire Apprenticeship programme promotes apprenticeships to employers and potential apprentices. It supports employers through the process of taking on an apprentice.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> O2i Opportunities to Inspire builds links between employers and education across Oxfordshire in order to inspire the future workforce. It offers an online platform so that volunteers from any sector can discover opportunities to inspire and inform young people

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Invest in Oxfordshire provides tailored assistance to place and grow businesses in Oxfordshire

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> JSA claimant count in February 2016 for Oxfordshire was 2,695 (rate of 0.6)

As well as supporting sustainable economic growth, CEP's provide the opportunity to more closely align the new jobs created from a major development, the local labour market and skills providers. Thus ensuring maximum benefits in terms of new jobs, apprenticeships, traineeships, work experience and local supply chains.

Officer's Name: Sarah Beal

Officer's Title: Economic Development Coordinator

**Date:** 06 April 2017