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| To: | | | | Shareholder and Joint Venture Group |
| Date: | | | | 23 September 2019 |
| Report of: | | | | Jane Winfield, Regeneration and major projects service manager |
| Title of Report: | | | | Quarterly progress report relating to Barton Park development |
| Summary and recommendations | | | | |
| Purpose of report: | | This report provides an update into the activities of Barton Oxford LLP (BOLLP) over the quarter and progress of housing delivery at Barton Park. | | |
| Recommendation(s):There is a resolution to: | | | | |
|  | Note the contents of the report and the not for publication commercial appendix. | | | |

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| Appendices | |
| Appendix 1 | Not for publication commercial sales and marketing information. |

**Introduction and background**

1. Cabinet resolved on 10 July 2019 to require quarterly reports to the Council’s Shareholder and Joint Venture Group on the overall progress of the Barton Park development.  It further resolved that those quarterly reports should include information on overall delivery of housing, with particular reference to social rented homes and the financial performance of the project in general. This is the first such report to the Shareholder and Joint Venture Group.
2. It was further agreed that the Shareholder meeting would have an expanded remit to receive reports from companies and joint ventures which do not have shareholders, (such as Barton Oxford LLP).

# Progress Update

# Infrastructure

1. Whilst the infrastructure works are completed, practical completion has not yet been achieved. Since the last report, Thames Water has signed off the drainage remedial works and the review of the Health and Safety file for the infrastructure works is completed. There have been a couple of issues of damage to the road infrastructure around the A40 junction and these will need to be repaired before practical completion is agreed. The requisite materials have been ordered and works are likely to take place in September.

# First Tranche ( Hill - 237 units )

1. In July it was reported to Cabinet, that 35 of the 95 units had been handed over. Since the last report no further homes have been handed over, 12 units were scheduled for transfer in June / July and these have all been rescheduled for September. There have been a number of issues identified at the completion inspections, for example in block D2, the lift was not working. The replacement hydraulic pump is coming from Italy and is delayed. Once the part is delivered in late September the lift will be commissioned and the block available for handover**.** In addition, Hill have reported a shortage of labour during the summer months .A further 7 units are on track for handover at the end of October and up to 22 by financial year end ( March 2020) .
2. Overall, 115 units have been completed with a further 80 under construction .It is understood that sales on 60 units have completed.

# Second Tranche ( Redrow – 207 units )

1. The decision notice approving Redrow’s planning consent was issued on 16th August. Redrow are on site ahead of programme and anticipate first completions in mid-2020. Redrow continue to discuss the programme of handover for the social rental element with Oxford City Housing representatives. A website has been set up and the public has the opportunity to register interest. Redrow expect the first 20 units to be complete in June 2020, of which 12 will be social rent.

# Future Phases

1. Delivery of further tranches involves sales and marketing of land parcels , the information is commercially sensitive and further details are contained in the not for publication appendix.

# Community Facilities

1. Oxfordshire County Council has gained planning consent for the school and have contracted with Bowmer and Kirkland for the construction. There is a planned 46 week delivery programme with a scheduled start on site of 2 September 2019. Handover of the completed building is planned for 20 July 2020 ahead of opening in September. BOLLP will be liaising closely with Bowmer and Kirkland and Redrow as the first phase of Redrow’s construction is adjacent to the school site.
2. The lease between BOLLP and Oxfordshire County Council for the school site has been completed.
3. There will be further negotiations with Oxfordshire County Council around any abnormal construction costs which might be sought from BOLLP.
4. The lease between the City Council and BOLLP and the sublease from the City Council to the football clubs are close to being agreed and will be completed in the next reporting period.
5. Whilst practical completion for the pavilion was achieved there have been a number of snagging items and these are currently being rectified. Examples of the snagging items include defective door locks, a roof leak and poor cleansing standards. The snagging items are proving particularly challenging for both the clubs and BOLLP.
6. The adult sports pitch has been problematic most recently with subsidence linked to drainage and weather conditions. Works to the drainage runs are completed and the affected areas reseeded. Regular watering has been undertaken and will continue as required. The pitch is improving rapidly. The first matches of the season have taken place, with no further complaints about the pitch. Both BOLLP and the City Council are keeping in close contact with the clubs to update on progress.
7. The school pitch will be available outside school hours for use by the clubs. The school pitch is a 9 x 9 pitch as per planning consent. The clubs have expressed a desire for an 11 x 11 pitch. ODSL will inspect the pitch week commencing 16 Sep 2019 and will endeavour to mark out an 11 x 11 pitch. Going forward, this will need to be agreed with the academy running the school and use will be covered by a joint use agreement.
8. The fencing around the 3G pitch is now completed which has allowed the linear park to be informally opened along with the spine road from Barton Village Rd to the car park adjacent to the pavilion . The linear park provides a first class environment with fitness trails and exercise equipment which is now available to Barton Park residents and the general public.
9. There have been reports of anti-social behaviour on the linear park adjacent to Hill’s tranche that has already been opened. This has been reported to PCSO’s and security increased around this location.

# Public Art

1. Public art is a requirement of the s106 agreement , which states that a public art strategy is to be provided to the Local Planning Authority . The S106 does not place a value on the cost envelope for public art and there is currently a disagreement between BOLLP and the community around this budget. The Regeneration and Major Projects Service Manager is currently looking to clarify this budget. Both BOLLP and community consultees agree, however, that the public art contribution should produce something of use for Barton Park residents and residents of adjacent communities (IE not a statue on the linear park).
2. Public art consultants had consulted on three options, with the favoured option being a “green room”. Despite detailed value engineering the consultants were unable to develop a proposal that could be delivered in budget. The further options would require significant outlay on design and costing which would further deplete the available budget for construction.
3. An alternate proposal is now being suggested by BOLLP which is the provision of themed planter based garden areas across Barton Park. It is proposed that planning, design, production and installation of the hard structures will be undertaken by RAW. An Oxford based charity, RAW specialises in the use of waste timber to produce furniture and other products. In addition RAW has a policy of employing local people identified as lacking the opportunities afforded to other elements of society. A further option is that the design of planting plans, planting and ongoing involvement of the local community is undertaken by Edible Oxford another Oxford based charity. Edible Oxford specialise in the installation of planting schemes to create durable, edible landscapes on land that would otherwise be unplanted or planted with generic bedding plants. In addition Beautiful Barton will be engaged in this element of the project.
4. Once the proposal is fully developed, there will be community engagement through a series of workshops covering planting, maintaining and using the resultant produce. BOLLP’s strategy is threefold and involves, firstly, identifying land available for use, secondly, procuring a design and delivery partner to cover planning, design and production of the hard structures, and thirdly procurement a delivery partner to cover plant planning, planting and the ongoing process of informing and connecting with the local community. BOLLP will engage and liaise closely with City’s Locality Officer as part of the process.
5. The BOLLP Board approved this approach, and noted that a planter could also be provided on Council owned land close to Barton Neighbourhood centre and close to the primary school. In addition it was suggested that a sinking fund would be required to offset future costs. The revised proposal was taken to BICEP week commencing 2 September 2019. The proposal was not universally accepted , with ongoing queries around cost and budget . The Regeneration and Major Projects Service Manager will need to liaise closely with the Locality Officer, BOLLP and the community to gain traction . A meeting is scheduled at Barton Park on 13 September to attempt to gain acceptance of the proposal .

# Sustainability & Regeneration

1. BOLLP is committed to ensuring contractors and housebuilders working at Barton Park meet key employment performance indicators set within the Barton Park Community Employment Plan (CEP). Planned works undertaken by CA Blackwell are now largely complete and Redrow are yet to make a meaningful start on site. The only large scale employer currently on site therefore is Hill.
2. Key local employment data whereby the criteria are that employees have an Oxfordshire postcode, provided by Hill for Q1 2019 is as follows:

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| Quarter | Total Labour Days | Target Labour Days | Target % | Actual Labour Days | Actual % | % +/- Target |
| Q4 2018 | 7,540 | 754 | 10% | 687 | 9% | -1% |
| Q1 2019 | 5,241 | 524 | 10% | 295 | 6% | -4% |

1. Key youth employment data whereby the criteria are that employees are aged 18-25, provided by Hill for Q1 2019 is as follows:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Quarter | Total Labour Days | Target Labour Days | Target % | Actual Labour Days | Actual % | % +/- Target |
| Q4 2018 | 7,540 | 1,508 | 20% | 630 | 8% | -12% |
| Q1 2019 | 5,241 | 1,048 | 20% | 278 | 5% | -15% |

1. It is apparent that the percentages achieved by Hill are below CEP requirements. This is something BOLLP will raise with Hill to better understand the challenges facing them in achieving these targets. In addition, Redrow are due to start on site imminently as are Bowmer and Kirkland, Oxfordshire County Council’s contractor responsible for delivery of the school. BOLLP will ensure in both cases that the organisations are aware of the CEP targets and are working toward achieving the desired outcomes.
2. There is a wider suite of measures included in the CEP and BOLLP has agreed that these will be shared at the next Board Meeting and will also be presented to the Shareholder and Joint Venture Group. The measures include school visits and training opportunities, apprenticeships etc.
3. A relatively low unemployment rate in the City coupled with wide construction employment opportunities regionally, mean that local trade employees are difficult to recruit. It is suggested that the City Council with Oxford Direct Services Limited and the Housing Companies may be able to support a programme of apprenticeships on a revolving site basis. This will be discussed with the Council’s Economic Development Officer.

# Environmental Matters

1. As mitigation for loss of a small area of protected grass land BOLLP has agreed to support grassland owned by Oxford Preservation Trust. The agreement includes supporting clearance and dredging. Preparation is now complete for BOLLP to commence works. The works are designed to enhance the site and comprise the dredging of existing drainage runs, installation of new drainage runs and installation of fencing where required. Completion of dredging and fencing works will mark the completion of BOLLP works at Marston Hamm.

# Bus Link / Northway link opening

1. An update is awaited from Oxfordshire County Council on the tendering of the bus route, they had not progressed this when last contacted. After a couple of items are replaced on the junction which are due to happen imminently, Oxfordshire County Council will consider the works to be complete and so BOLLP can complete the Stage 3 Road Safety Audit and the bus link to Northway can be opened. This is expected to occur in late September / October2019.

# Financial Implications

1. Changes to the scheme appraisal are contained in Appendix 1.

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| **Report author** | Jane Winfield |
| Job title  Service area or department  Telephone | Regeneration and Major Projects Service Manager  Regeneration and Major Projects  01865 252551 |
| e-mail | jwinfield@oxford.gov.uk |