

To: Council

Date: 19th December 2011

Item No: *

Report of: Head of City Development

Title of Report: Barton Area Action Plan – Proposed Submission Draft

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: Following consultation on the Preferred Options for the Barton Area Action Plan (AAP) in summer 2011, draft planning policies have been prepared to guide development of the Land at Barton. The policies are set out in the Proposed Submission Barton AAP. This report seeks approval of Council to publish the Proposed Submission Barton AAP for public consultation early in 2012 and, subject to the outcome of the consultation, submit the draft AAP to the Secretary of State for formal examination.

Key decision: No

Executive lead member: Councillor Colin Cook

Policy Framework: The contribution of new housing from the Land at Barton and associated regeneration is fundamental to achieving the objectives of the Council's Corporate Plan (more housing, better housing for all) and the Oxford Sustainable Community Strategy (affordable housing). The production of the AAP will fulfil a key element of the Local Development Scheme and build on the strategic policies set out in the Oxford Core Strategy. This is also one of the five major regeneration projects identified in the Oxford Regeneration Framework.

Recommendation(s): Council is asked to:

1. approve the Proposed Submission Barton AAP and the proposed changes to the Oxford Proposals Map for public consultation for a period of 6 weeks in early 2012, subject to the satisfactory completion of the current transport and drainage modelling studies;
2. approve the supporting documentation listed in Annex 2, ie. Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulation Assessment, Equalities Impact Assessment and Pre-Options and Preferred Options consultation reports;

3. authorise the Head of City Development, in consultation with the Executive Lead Member, to make any necessary editorial corrections to the document, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment, and to agree the final wording and designed version before publication for public consultation;
4. approve the Proposed Submission Barton AAP as a material consideration in determining planning applications;
5. following public consultation, authorise the Head of City Development, in consultation with the Executive Lead Member, to make any minor changes to the document deemed necessary as a result of public consultation, and then to formally submit the Barton AAP to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for public examination.

Appendix 1 – Barton Area Action Plan Proposed Submission Document

Appendix 2 – List of Supporting Documentation for Approval

Appendix 3 – Risk Register

Introduction

1. The Core Strategy allocates 'Land at Barton' as a strategic housing site. Situated between the existing communities of Barton and Northway, the site is a once in a generation opportunity to provide large numbers of new homes – 800 to 1,200 – and associated facilities in the form of a thriving and vibrant new community that forms part of Oxford. The development also offers the opportunity to extend the benefits to existing neighbouring communities in the form of access to the new facilities and services, better links to the rest of the City and the surrounding countryside, and by bringing back into use pockets of neglected land. The site is being brought forward through an AAP. The AAP is a Development Plan Document that will form part of the Local Development Framework for Oxford.
2. The City Council has an ambitious timetable to start development early in 2014. The project is infrastructure-led and requires significant investment before serviced land is available for the first new homes. Certainty and timing of delivery are paramount. To minimise uncertainty, deliver the infrastructure needed to bring forward the site and to retain control to ensure a high quality development, the City Council as landowner has formed a joint venture company with an investment partner, Grosvenor Developments Limited. The joint venture company is Barton Oxford LLP.
3. This plan has been shaped by extensive consultation with a wide range of individuals, interest groups and organisations and the continuing involvement and advice of the Barton and Northway Working Group.

Consultation on the earlier Preferred Options document

4. Consultation on the Preferred Options document took place in May and June 2011. A wide range of tools were actively used to seek the views of others. We received over 400 responses to a leaflet/questionnaire (delivered to approx. 3,000 homes in Barton, Northway and Old Headington), 50 written responses and around 250 people attended four afternoon/evening drop-in sessions held in Old Marston, Northway, Barton and Old Headington. A meeting of the Barton and Northway Working Group was held to discuss the messages coming through the consultation and a stakeholder briefing was attended by 27 participants. The Barton project has 723 followers on Facebook and 214 on Twitter. We also used posters, set up a web page for the Barton project and answered individual requests for information. Overall, this demonstrates a substantial level of engagement between the Council and residents.
5. Three petitions have been received: one with 400 plus signatures from the Ruskin Fields Group; a second with 300 plus signatures relating to Barton Village Nature Park; and a third with 14 signatures in favour of housing on Ruskin Fields. We also received around 190 responses to a leaflet circulated by the Northway Residents Action Group, nearly all of which were in favour of a left-in/left-out junction for vehicle access from the ring-road to the development site.
6. Of those responding to the City Council's questionnaire, the highest percentage of respondents (24%) came from Barton. Together with Old Headington (23%), these two areas accounted for nearly half of all the questionnaire responses received. 13% of the questionnaire responses came from addresses in Northway.
7. Overall, there was support for the proposed vision and objectives and for the elements that it was proposed should make up the new development. There was also support for the principle of integration, but different views as to how this should be achieved. Detail on what the responses to the consultation told us is set out in the report on the Barton AAP Preferred Options consultation report. Since the end of the formal consultation there have been further meetings with groups in Barton, Northway and Old Marston.
8. The range of comments we have received have been taken into account in preparing the Barton AAP Proposed Submission document.

Content of the Proposed Submission document

9. The Proposed Submission document sets out:
- the vision for the Land at Barton
 - how the opportunities presented by the development can be used to ensure that existing neighbouring communities benefit from the changes
 - a series of principles and concepts to guide development
 - specific policies and infrastructure requirements
 - proposals to stimulate regeneration.

The AAP policy framework will form the basis against which future planning applications are judged.

10. The content of the Proposed Submission has been refined as a result of supporting documents. Members should be aware of these and have taken into account their content when deciding whether to approve the Proposed Submission. The supporting documents are listed at Appendix 2.

11. Policies are proposed to deliver:
- a new neighbourhood and new homes that are of the highest quality, creating an attractive, functional and sustainable place;
 - transformation of the ring-road to secure a reduction in traffic speeds to a maximum of 40 miles per hour and homes fronting its northern side;
 - physical integration with Barton, with the recreation ground retained but re-oriented to lie east-west, the land currently cultivated as allotments retained, and the uncultivated allotment land retained for community use or replaced elsewhere within the development site;
 - new public open space in the form of a linear park along Bayswater Brook;
 - a network of safe and easy-to-use footpaths and cycle ways, with new and enhanced links across the ring-road, including re-connecting the Stoke Place bridleway and enhancement of the existing crossing between Barton and Headington;
 - revised or new bus services;
 - a new at-grade left in/left out, right in/right out junction or signalised roundabout towards the western end of the strategic development site, with bus and emergency vehicle only movements between the development site and Northway and between the ring-road and Northway;
 - two further secondary all-vehicle access points from Barton;

- a minimum of 40% affordable housing for social rent;
 - a local centre with a supermarket and a multi-purpose community hub building (or buildings) incorporating a primary school.
12. There are two areas of on-going technical work to support the Proposed Submission document. The impact of the reduction in traffic speeds to a maximum of 40 mph, together with the local and wider impacts of the proposals for vehicle access and pedestrian and cycle crossings of the ring-road, are currently being tested through detailed transport modelling. The modelling is scheduled for completion in January 2012. Foul water drainage modelling is also underway and scheduled for completion in January. The Proposed Submission document will only be published for consultation once the modelling is complete and subject to it confirming that the relevant policies and proposals in the document are sound. The modelling will be published with the Proposed Submission document.
 13. The Preferred Options version of the document included a proposal put forward by Ruskin College for between 175 and 190 new homes on fields to the north of the College and south of the ring-road. The document did not take a view on the proposals but invited the public to comment. In the Preferred Options consultation only 27% of respondents said that they supported Ruskin's proposal. Since the Preferred Options consultation, Ruskin College have submitted further proposals together with supporting technical studies. However, the proposals and technical studies are not sufficiently robust to be included in the AAP. In particular, no workable vehicle access arrangement has been demonstrated and the proposals do not adequately reflect the requirement to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. To include the proposals in the Barton AAP would present a risk to the soundness of the AAP, and could hold up delivery of homes on the Land at Barton to the north of the ring-road. Therefore no land at Ruskin Fields has been allocated for development in the AAP.
 14. The version of the document attached to this report is not in its final designed format. Attached to the text is a map showing the AAP boundary and the spatial vision (referred to as Map 1 in the document), an illustration of one option for the main vehicle access (Illustration 9a) and a number of illustrative sections (Illustrations 1, 3, 5 and 7) showing the relationship between the strategic development site at Barton and surrounding areas. The spatial vision map brings together Maps 2, 4, 5 and 6. Map 3 shows the strategic development site as identified in the Core Strategy. Maps 7 to 10 show the site features and site context. All of the maps plus the attached and additional sections will be 'embedded' within the final designed version of the document.
 15. Behind this document sits an evidence base that has been compiled to provide background information and studies of the area to inform the

AAP process. The background documents are listed in the Proposed Submission document and are available on the City Council website.

AAP timetable and next steps

16. The AAP timetable reflects the City Council's ambition to see development on the Land at Barton commence early in 2014. The stage we are now at is 'Proposed Submission'. The italicised stages are provisional; as such they are subject to change.

Develop issues with community/stakeholders	January – June 2010
Consult on Issues document	June – July 2010
Produce Preferred Options document	August 2010 – March 2011
Publish Preferred Options document	May 2011
Consult on Preferred Options document	May – June 2011
<i>Publish Proposed Submission document</i>	<i>January 2012</i>
<i>Consult on Proposed Submission document</i>	<i>January – February 2012</i>
<i>Submit the AAP to the Secretary of State</i>	<i>March 2012</i>
<i>Hold examination hearing sessions</i>	<i>July 2012</i>
<i>Adopt DPD, following receipt of Inspector's Report</i>	<i>December 2012</i>

17. The Barton AAP Proposed Submission document will go on public consultation for six weeks in early 2012. It is anticipated that this will be at the same time as the consultation on the Sites and Housing DPD Proposed Submission document. This will reduce consultation costs and resources and will hopefully minimise confusion that might have occurred should the consultations have overlapped and been staggered.
18. Having already undertaken two consultations involving a wide range of people through public events, this next stage does not aim to widen the catchment of people involved but instead to focus on those who have already been involved or shown interest. In addition to statutory organisations, we will contact people and groups that were previously contacted and those who have responded to previous consultations.
19. The Proposed Submission consultation will ask consultees whether they consider the document to be 'sound'. Comments received will be considered and the Submission document will be produced and submitted to the Secretary of State in March 2012. The nature of a Submission document is that it should not include fundamental changes to policy approaches compared to the Proposed Submission but should instead be a refinement of policy wording.

20. After submission to the Secretary of State there will be an independent examination. Assuming the document is found 'sound' it will come back to Council once more, at adoption stage.

Level of risk

21. The contribution of new housing from the Land at Barton and associated regeneration is a key priority for the City Council, fundamental to achieving the objectives of the Oxford Corporate Plan, the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Core Strategy and the Regeneration Framework for Oxford. Failure to deliver housing at the scale intended will lead to significant problems in meeting the City's housing targets.
22. The risk register is attached as Appendix 3.

Sustainability Appraisal, including Strategic Environmental Assessment

23. To comply with European and British regulations, the Council is required to assess the significant environmental, social and economic effects of a Development Plan Document. A draft Sustainability Appraisal for the Barton AAP was published alongside the Preferred Options in May 2011 for public comment. Further significant changes to these options have been assessed, and are published as an update for consultation. The draft update to the Sustainability Appraisal will be published online (subject to final editorial changes), notification sent to all Members and a paper copy placed in the Members Room.

Habitat Regulation Assessment

24. As a result of the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) all development plan documents need to be assessed for their potential impact on the site. This is assessed under the Habitats Regulations. Members are requested to approve this assessment as part of this report.

Climate change and environmental impact

25. The AAP objectives seek to encourage a low carbon lifestyle by: encouraging people to walk, cycle and use public transport; providing new homes and buildings that use energy and water efficiently; and, by making effective use of renewable and low-carbon energy. The Sustainability Appraisal has considered the effects of the AAP policies on climate change and the environment. Overall, the policies are considered to have a beneficial impact on climate change.

Equalities impact

26. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out. A key theme of the Barton AAP is regeneration. Regeneration can help to tackle disparities in life chances by transforming deprived areas and

improving the lives of those living in and around them. The Equalities Impact Assessment shows that the policies and proposals in the Barton AAP will help address existing inequalities by increasing the availability of affordable housing, adding to the range of community and educational facilities and by linking people to economic opportunities. There is no evidence that there will be significant negative impacts. The Equalities Impact Assessment will be emailed to all Members with paper copies available in the Members Room, and will be published alongside the AAP.

Financial implications

27. The costs associated with the production of the AAP are being met through the current resources of the Planning Policy team and budget.
28. The AAP has a strong emphasis on deliverability and the policies reflect evidence on viability. Barton LLP will deliver the infrastructure to bring forward the strategic development site. The joint venture company is also designed to maximise flexibility, with the City Council able to take a share in the value created and recycle returns into the development.

Legal Implications

29. Following examination of the Submission DPD, the examination Inspector may find the document 'unsound'. Following adoption, a Development Plan Document can be legally challenged.

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List of key background papers:

Barton AAP Issues document, June 2010
Barton AAP Issues: report on public consultation, Sept. 2010
Barton AAP Preferred Options document, May 2011
Barton AAP Sustainability Appraisal, Dec. 2011
Barton AAP Preferred Options: report on Public consultation, Nov. 2011
Barton AAP Habitats Regulation Assessment, Dec. 2011

Other background papers are listed in Annex 5 of the Proposed Submission document

Appendix 2 – List of Supporting Information for Approval

The following documents have been made available for inspection in the Members area and made publicly available. In determining how the Barton Area Action Plan Proposed Submission document should be approved for consultation, Members are expected to have taken in to account the supporting information. In particular, Members are asked to approve the Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitats Regulation Assessment.

- Barton AAP Sustainability Appraisal, Dec. 2011
- Barton AAP Habitats Regulation Assessment, Dec. 2011
- Barton AAP Issues: report on public consultation, Sept. 2010
- Barton AAP Preferred Options: report on public consultation, Nov. 2011

Appendix 3 – Risk register

Risk ID	Risk						Corporate Objective	Gross Risk		Residual Risk		Current Risk		Owner	Date Risk Reviewed	Proximity of Risk (Projects/ Contracts only)
Category-000-Service Area Code	Risk Title	Opportunity/Threat	Risk Description	Risk Cause	Consequence	Date raised	1 to 6	I	P	I	P	I	P			
SRR-001 CD	Non-approval by Council	T	The Proposed Submission does not receive approval from Council to proceed to consultation.	Lack of agreement at Council.	Final adoption of policies for the delivery of the strategic development site at Barton likely to be delayed.	21/11/11	1, 2, 3, 5	3	2					Michael Crofton-Briggs		
CRR 002 CD 310	LLP technical studies timetable	T	Delays in completing outstanding technical studies.	Technical modelling work on transport and/or drainage takes longer than programmed.	Final adoption of policies for the delivery of the strategic development site at Barton likely to be delayed.	21/11/11	1, 2, 3, 5	3	2					Michael Crofton-Briggs		
CRR 003 CD	LLP technical study conclusions	T	Completed technical studies do not support key assumptions in draft document.	Technical modelling work conclusions not as currently anticipated.	Final adoption of policies for the delivery of the strategic development site at Barton likely to be delayed.	21/11/11	1, 2, 3, 5	3	2					Michael Crofton-Briggs		

CRR-004-CD	AAP being found unsound by the Examination Inspector	T	The Submission AAP will be examined by an independent Inspector. If the AAP as a whole is found unsound by the Inspector, significant changes would need to be made and the AAP re-submitted, considerably delaying adoption.		The AAP production process would need to start again which would be costly and delay meeting the Council's Corporate objectives.	21/11/11	1, 2, 3, 5,	4	2						Michael Crofton-Briggs		
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Action Plan

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Risk ID	Risk Title	Action Owner	Accept, Contingency, Transfer, Reduce or Avoid	Details of Action	Key Milestone	Milestone Delivery Date	%Action Complete	Date Reviewed
CRR 005 CD	LLP technical studies timetable		Reduce	Further technical work is required on transport and drainage. The LLP has commissioned these studies. Both work streams are scheduled to report in time for publication alongside the Proposed Submission document in Jan. 2012. Should either or both work streams be delayed, publication of the Proposed Submission document will also be delayed.	Satisfactory completion of the technical studies.	Early 2012		
CRR 006 CD	LLP technical study conclusions		Reduce	Further technical work is required on transport and drainage. The LLP has commissioned these studies. Should either or both studies not support key assumptions in the document, publication of the Proposed Submission document will be delayed, relevant sections of the document revised and Council's agreement sought for the revisions.	Satisfactory completion of the technical studies.	Early 2012		

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