

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-014-2012/13
Date of meeting: 10 September 2012



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Asset Management and Economic Development
Subject: Development and Design Brief -St John's Road area, Epping
Responsible Officer: Colleen O'Boyle (01992 564475)
Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470)

Recommendations:

- (1) To note the content and results of the consultation exercise and its impact on the Brief;**
- (2) To agree the Development and Design Brief prepared by Allies Morrison Urban Practitioners;**
- (3) To authorise the Portfolio Holder to make any drafting changes and to present the final Brief to the Council on 27 September 2012;**
- (4) To note the additional feasibility study in relation to the Epping Hall leisure use; and**
- (5) To recommend the Development and Design Brief to Full Council on 27 September 2012.**

Executive Summary:

The Council, together with Essex County Council commissioned Allied Morrison Urban Practitioners to produce a Development and Design Brief for an area of St John's Road which was predominantly in public ownership. The draft report which is presented for Cabinet approval and recommendation is the culmination of initial stakeholder workshops, project Board meetings, a traffic impact study, an area specific retail study, planning policies, financial appraisals and an extensive consultation process.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The purpose of preparing a design and development brief has remained consistent throughout the process and it is worth setting it out again exactly as it was agreed by Cabinet in March 2008.

"To provide an indicative physical structure of the public spaces, streets, buildings, servicing and parking areas for all potential development sites, and explain how this structure will enhance the public realm and the conservation area, and improve linkages and routes within and into/out of the area. It would also indicate the range of proposed uses and where necessary, the phasing of all development sites. The development and design brief is intended to:

- (i) *ensure an integrated planned approach;*
- (ii) *clarify the land use and planning policy requirements affecting the area as a whole and its context in the wider area;*
- (iii) *clarify the development constraints to inform investment decisions about development sites, land disposals, acquisitions and lease arrangements;*
- (iv) *stimulate interest among land owners, developers and prospective occupiers so as to bring sites forward for development whilst at the same time explaining development constraints and expectations they will have to resolve; and*
- (v) *provide guidance to Council officers and Members to assist in the determination of planning applications.”*

Other Options for Action:

To acknowledge the work undertaken to date but not proceed to agree a Brief. This may lead to criticism for wasting time and resources from not only the public but also fellow landowners.

To ask for further work or studies to be undertaken subject to timescales and cost being agreed

Report:

1. In March 2008 the Council decided, for the reasons outlined above, to pursue a development and design Brief for the St John's area, Epping in conjunction with the other public sector landowners, Essex County Council and Epping Town Council.
2. The County Council owns two thirds of the land, with the Town and District owning approximately a sixth each.
3. Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners (AMUP) were engaged to produce the Brief and Steve Walker of AMUP is in attendance to present the Draft Brief for approval.
4. At the outset there were stakeholder meetings which contributed to the various options that formed part of the consultation process. The consultation was extended and extensive, using various media, locations and specially manned sessions.
5. Details of that consultation are contained within the attached Brief and the responses from the public have certainly shaped the Brief.
6. In addition, the Intermodal traffic report, the financial appraisal work of Malcolm Hewines (formerly CBRE) , the planning policies and views of our own planning officers , together with an area specific report from Roger Tym Associates on retail have all been considered and are reflected in the Brief.
7. The Draft Brief has been shared with the Town and County Councils and their views sought. Timing pressures will determine whether this is by a late report or orally.
8. The Town Council have indicated their wish to explore the feasibility of provision of a leisure facility incorporating the Epping Hall. At the request of the Leader, AMUP have been instructed to acquire an expert assessment of this using either Town Council land only or

Town Council and some County Council land.

9. The cost of this work was quoted at £9,741 and as such is within officer delegated authority. The Director of Corporate Support Services has commissioned the work and an oral update will be given on the outcome.

10. If the Draft Brief is agreed by Cabinet it will then be referred to Full Council on the 27 September for adoption as non-statutory planning guidance. It will have the status of a material planning consideration in the assessment of any future planning applications for the site.

Resource Implications:

The additional £9,741 for the feasibility study involving Epping Hall can be met from existing budgets.

Legal and Governance Implications:

None.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

None at this stage.

Consultation Undertaken:

Covered in detail in the Brief.

Background Papers:

None.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

Failure to agree a Brief will limit the Council's ability to facilitate development which fulfils the original aims of the project.

Equality and Diversity

Did the initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Council's general equality duties, reveal any potentially adverse equality implications? No

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
N/A.

How have the equality implications identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group?
N/A.