

This Report will be made public on 30 January 2017

**Folkestone**

Hythe & Romney Marsh  
Shepway District Council



Report Number **C/16/102**

**To:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 7 February 2017  
**Status:** Key Decision  
**Head of service:** Andy Jarrett – Head of Strategic Development Projects  
**Cabinet Member:** Councillor David Monk – Leader of the Council

**SUBJECT:** Princes Parade Planning Application

**SUMMARY:**

The report sets out the detail and nature of a planning application to be submitted to the local planning authority for land in the ownership of Shepway District Council at Princes Parade, Hythe.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

To allow an application for planning permission to be submitted for mixed use development on the Princes Parade site, in accordance with the resolution of Cabinet on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. To receive and note report C/16/102.
2. That the Head of Strategic Development Projects commissions, manages and oversees the submission of an application for planning permission based on the principles set out in Section 4 and 5 of the report and the illustrative masterplan and drawings attached in Appendix 3 and 4, in consultation with the Leader of the Council.
3. That, at the appropriate time, a legally binding covenant be drawn up to protect the proposed parkland and open space from any future development proposals not directly related to the site's leisure objectives.

## **1. Background and Context**

- 1.1 At its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016 Cabinet considered report C/16/98 that provided an update on recent decisions related to the replacement of Hythe Swimming pool and set out options for the use and extent of uses to be incorporated into an application for planning permission for land at Princes Parade, Hythe within the ownership of Shepway District Council.
- 1.2 It was agreed that Option 1 be used as the basis for the preparation of the planning application. This option consisted of the following land uses:
  - Provision for the Hythe and Saltwood Sailing Club.
  - Land for between 124 and 178 dwellings (based on residential densities ranging from 35 to 50 dwellings per hectare).
  - A site for the proposed enhanced Affordable Recreation Centre (ARC).
  - An area of high quality open space.
- 1.3 The indicative layout also showed the leisure centre located at the western end of the site. The purpose of the Land Use Options appraisal was to test the overall capacity of the site to accommodate a range of different uses with the precise location of particular land uses being determined through more detailed analysis.
- 1.4 It was also agreed that the application should seek to include other uses to increase the level of vibrancy on the site and the surrounding area, such as bars, cafes, a seafood restaurant, ice cream kiosks etc.
- 1.5 The inclusion of the Hythe and Saltwood Sailing Club within the scheme followed an approach to the Council from members of the club expressing the wish that provision be made within the masterplan to allow the club to relocate from their current site. However, following an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Club on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2016, the club informed the Council that it no longer wished to be considered for inclusion within the scheme. Preparation of the planning application has therefore progressed based on the remaining land uses identified above.

## **2. Progress to Date**

- 2.1 The resolution of Cabinet on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016 required that a further report setting out the details and nature of the planning application be presented to Cabinet prior to its submission.
- 2.2 Following the decision of Cabinet to proceed with the preparation of the planning application a comprehensive consultant team was formed in order to assist with the preparation of the application. The team includes the following skills/expertise:
  - Master-planning and architecture

- Town planning and planning application preparation
- Environmental impact assessment
- Leisure centre design and implementation
- Heritage
- Highways and transportation
- Ecology
- Contamination and ground conditions
- Utilities
- Flood risk and drainage
- Landscape and visual impact
- Lighting and illumination
- Topography
- Viability

2.3 In addition extensive pre-application discussions have been undertaken, and will continue to take place until the point of submission, with key stakeholders including Shepway District Council Planning Services, Historic England, Kent County Council Highways and Transportation and the Environment Agency.

### **3. Pre-application consultation**

3.1 Pre-application consultation events were held on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2016, at Seabrook Church Hall, and on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016 at Hythe Town Hall. At each exhibition details of the draft masterplan and the draft design for the Affordable Recreation Centre were presented. Members of Shepway District Council's Strategic Development Project Team and the consultant team were available to answer questions. The exhibition boards are attached as Appendix 1.

3.2 A questionnaire was circulated that asked the questions listed below and provided an opportunity for further comment (up to 250 words):

- *What do you think are the key aspects we need to consider when developing Princes Parade?*
- *How would you like to see the plan improved?*

3.3 A summary of the key responses from the consultation is set out below:

- 520 people attended across the two days, 199 in Seabrook and 321 in Hythe, with a number of people attending both events
- 339 feedback forms were received
- 18% of respondents were supportive of the development
- 21% of respondents did not indicate either way - but many of them were supportive of developing the leisure centre and reducing heights of the development overall
- 61% of respondents were against the development

#### **Key themes or concerns raised:**

- The swimming pool needs to be developed quickly and needs to be affordable
- More affordable homes are needed
- Not enough parking is shown
- No changes should be made to the road
- Last area of green in the area
- Too many developments in the area - keep this as open space or develop into a coastal park
- Impact on current infrastructure, heritage, wildlife, contaminated land, and traffic
- Development needs to be built elsewhere (do not build here).

3.4 The results of this consultation are being used to inform the final design of the scheme (as reflected in the attached illustrative masterplan) and incorporated into the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which will be submitted with the planning application.

3.5 In addition the proposals, presented in this report, were considered by the Princes Parade Working Group on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2017. Their recommendations are set out below:

a) The Recreation Centre specification:

- i. 1 x 25m x 6 lane competition equipped swim pool*
- ii. Spectator seating (100 person)*
- iii. 1 x 4 lane x 12m teaching pool (visible from the café seating area)*
- iv. Swim village changing / Dry Change facilities*
- v. 100 station fitness gym (overlooking the sea)*
- vi. 3 x Fitness Studios*
- vii. Sports fixtures / fittings / equipment throughout building*
- viii. Café / vending area / Kitchen*
- ix. Staff Management / admin suite / staff changing facilities*
- x. Adequate storage for all activity areas / First Aid room*

b) The Recreation Centre to be located towards the east of the site with the pools facing north;

c) The Recreation Centre design to be stepped with a low sloping pool roof, to be of high quality design incorporating materials to reflect its historic and coastal environment;

d) The illustrative masterplan to reflect the approach of the emerging masterplan with the main through road to the north of the site, and to include 150 high quality homes including 30% affordable dwellings, strategic open space of at least 49 hectares (including improvements to the promenade and canalside), generous provision for pedestrians, cyclists and public car parking. The building line to sit at least 12 metres from the edge of the seawall; and

- e) A further report be brought to Cabinet dealing with options for construction and operation of the Recreation Centre and the method of disposing of land for housing.

#### **4. Format and Scope of the Proposed Planning Application**

- 4.1 It is proposed that the application will consist of one of the following options:
- A single 'hybrid' application that seeks full planning permission for the Affordable Recreation Centre and outline planning permission for the residential and open space elements of the scheme; or
  - Two separate planning applications consisting of a full application for the Affordable Recreation Centre and an outline application covering the residential development, commercial development and remaining areas of open space.
- 4.2 The precise nature of the applications will be determined following further discussions with the local planning authority.

#### **5 Proposed Detail**

- 5.1 It is proposed that the key components of the application for planning permissions are therefore as follows:

##### **Illustrative Masterplan**

- 5.2 An illustrative masterplan for the scheme is attached as Appendix 2, the key elements of which are:
- The location of the Affordable Recreation Centre to the eastern end of the site with the associated car parking located to the west of the ARC.
  - 150 residential units (including 30% affordable housing in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CSD1<sup>1</sup>).
  - Open space provision including improvements to the promenade and canal side, a substantial area of open space to the west of site and other areas of strategic open space located centrally and to the eastern end of the site.
  - A linear park linking the western area open space to the central area of open space.
  - Partial relocation of the road towards the north of the site allowing part of the development to front the sea with the creation of an enhanced pedestrian and cycle-friendly promenade.
  - Public parking provision integrated into the scheme.
  - Residential properties decreasing in height towards the back near the canal.
  - Two residential areas, one located to the east and one located to the west of the central area of open space. Each area to have a distinctive

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<sup>1</sup> To include a broad range of tenures including social rented and intermediate housing such as shared ownership.

character determined through individual parameter plans and design codes.

- The location of the building line at least 12 metres from the edge of the seawall.

### **ARC Design and Specification**

5.3 A concept design for the proposed Affordable Recreation Centre is attached as Appendix 3. It is proposed that the design be high quality and of a stepped form with a low sloping pool over the swimming pools. The external materials will be chosen to reflect its historic and coastal location (for example rock, shingle and timber).

5.4 It is proposed that the final design be based upon the proposed facility mix supported by the Working Group as set out below.

- *1 x 25m x 6 lane competition equipped swim pool*
- *Spectator seating (100 person)*
- *1 x 4 lane x 12m teaching pool (visible from the café seating area)*
- *Swim village changing / Dry Change facilities*
- *100 station fitness gym (overlooking the sea)*
- *3 x Fitness Studios*
- *Sports fixtures / fittings / equipment throughout building*
- *Café / vending area / Kitchen*
- *Staff Management / admin suite / staff changing facilities*
- *Adequate storage for all activity areas / First Aid room*

5.5 The design of the Affordable Recreation Centre has sought to balance a number of issues including addressing local demand, replacing the aged Hythe Swimming Pool with a modern enhanced facility, minimising the impact of the new leisure centre by responding to the setting and planning constraints on the site (in particular the impact on the Royal Military Canal), and ensuring long term financial sustainability through the provision of an appropriate facility mix.

### **Parameter Plans**

5.6 A series of parameter plans will be included for the residential and open space elements of the scheme, as listed below:

- Land use and density, setting the extent of built area and open space
- Building heights
- Landscape and open space
- Access and circulation

### **Environmental Statement**

5.7 Given the scale and nature of the proposed scheme the planning application will be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment. An Environmental Statement (ES) will be submitted with the planning application covering the following areas:

- Cultural heritage
- Ecology
- Flood risk and drainage
- Geo-environmental
- Landscape and views
- Socio-economic
- Transport

5.8 In addition a lighting impact assessment will be included as an annex to the ES. The extent of the ES was agreed following the receipt of a formal scoping opinion from the local planning authority.

### **Further Information**

5.9 In addition to the documentation listed above it is proposed that the following documents be included with the planning application:

- Statement of Community Involvement
- Design and Access Statement incorporating high level design codes
- Planning Statement

5.10 The precise nature of the information to be included with the application will be refined following further pre-application discussions with the local planning authority.

## **6. Future Control of Public Parkland**

6.1 In May 2014 the Cabinet, when considering proposals for the redevelopment of Princes Parade decided that if the land were to be developed that, *“at the appropriate time, a legally binding covenant be drawn up to protect the proposed parkland and open space from any future development proposals not directly related to the site’s leisure and educational objectives.”*

6.2 During the consultation on the current plan a number of people have raised concerns that public open space provided by the current proposal could be lost to a future development. It is considered that in order to alleviate these concerns the earlier commitment could be restated as it applies to the current proposal, i.e. it would be adapted to remove reference to educational objectives as they are not relevant to the current proposal.

## **7. Next Steps**

7.1 Work is continuing on producing a whole life costing approach for the proposed development and a further report will be brought to Cabinet dealing with options for construction and operation of the Recreation Centre and the method of disposing of land for housing.

7.2 This report will include consideration of the potential procurement options including relevant frameworks such as SCAPE and the Southern Construction Framework, etc.

## 8. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

8.1 A summary of the perceived risks is as follows :-

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Scheme submitted to local planning authority is not financially viable.	High	Medium	Undertake a high level viability assessment in order to inform the proposed scheme and the Council's funding strategy.
Delays to the process of determining the application for planning permission, resulting in delays to delivery and start on site and additional cost.	High	Medium	Local planning authority to appoint a dedicated case officer.  Application to be progressed in accordance with an agreed Planning Performance Agreement that commits both the LPA and the applicant to meeting agreed performance standards.
Objection to the application from statutory consultees and other key stakeholders.	High	Medium	Seek a clear understanding of issues through pre-application discussions and address/mitigate as part of the development of the planning application.  Prepare a detailed response to any objections, at the earliest possible stage, and consider modifications to the scheme, where appropriate, to the concerns raised.

### Legal Officer's Comments (DK)

There are no legal implications arising directly out of the report. Cabinet should take into account when considering the recommendations that when implementing the Princes Parade Project (including the planning application), negotiations must continue with relevant stakeholders and



there will be requirement for competitive procurement of contractors for construction of the chosen development.

### **Finance Officer's Comments (LW)**

The cost of the preparing the planning application for this scheme is being contained within the approved capital budget of £0.5m. The financial implications for constructing and operating the new recreation facility and the methods of disposing of the housing land will be reported to Cabinet in 2017.

### **Communications (SS)**

The project has and will continue to generate a significant level of public interest. The progress of the project will be communicated via the dedicated website and other media channels.

### **Diversities and Equalities Implications (DS)**

There are no diversities and equalities implications directly arising from this report.

## **9. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officers prior to the meeting

Andy Jarrett – Head of Strategic Development Projects  
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The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 - Public Consultation Exhibition Boards

Appendix 2 – Illustrative Masterplan

Appendix 3 – Affordable Recreation Centre Concept Design