

This report will be made public on 15 July 2013

Folkestone

Hythe & Romney Marsh
Shepway District Council



www.shepway.gov.uk

Report Number **C/13/13**

To: Cabinet
Date: 23 July 2013
Status: Key Decision
Head of Service: Jeremy Chambers, He Strategic Projects
Cabinet Member: Councillor John Collier, Property Projects

SUBJECT: PRINCES PARADE PROJECT UPDATE

SUMMARY:

This report outlines the progress made regarding the Princes Parade project since Cabinet last considered this matter on 19 December 2012. The report provides Cabinet with the results of the second stage consultation and a revised plan to take the project forward.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations as set out below because:

- a) It is an appropriate stage in the project for Cabinet to be updated;
- b) Cabinet is asked to agree the revised project plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report C/13/13.
2. To authorise the Head of Strategic Projects to continue with the project as outlined in section 4 of this report.
3. That the Head of Strategic Projects provides a further report to Cabinet at the next appropriate stage in the project.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Princes Parade comprises approximately 7.2 hectares (17.9 acres). It is approximately 1,250 metres long and varies in width between approximately 80 metres at the eastern end to 180 metres at the western end. The site is located between Princes Parade and the Hythe Royal Military Canal and is abutted by a children's play area to the east and the Hotel Imperial Golf course to the west.
- 1.2 Following successfully defeating a costly and time consuming village green application for the site, consideration was given to fencing the site in order to protect the site from further attempts to restrict its future use and potential value. The cost of fencing the site would have been considerable and officers were asked, as an alternative to fencing, to commission a study to clarify the potential for meeting community needs, including leisure facilities, education, the range of natural, formal and play related public open spaces and any housing or commercial activities at the site.
- 1.3 A budget of £160,000 was made available for the project study and approved by council as part of the budget on 22 February 2012 (report A/11/22 refers). A balance of £78,000 remains in the project budget.
- 1.4 The council's vision is to link the coastal strip between Battery Point in the east and the Hythe Imperial golf course to the west, to the Royal Military Canal by providing a linear strip of parkland akin to the Coastal Park in neighbouring Folkestone. Additional community benefits for the redevelopment could include housing, a new swimming pool and a replacement school for Seabrook Primary. Additional community benefits include publicly accessible open space at other locations across the site.
- 1.5 The principle objectives of the project brief are as follows:
 - Secure an allocation for residential use in the Shepway Site Allocation DPD;
 - Improve the setting for the Royal Military Canal;
 - New public park;
 - New water sports facility;
 - Enhance the promenade and beach for public use;
 - Possible site for replacement public swimming pool;
 - Possible site for the relocation of Seabrook Primary School.
- 1.6 At its meeting of 19 December Cabinet received a 10 minute presentation from representatives of the consultant team detailing the results of the first stage of the consultation.
- 1.7 Initial public consultations were held over the summer 2012. The purpose was to clarify the potential for meeting community needs, including leisure facilities, education, the range of natural, formal and play related public open spaces and any housing or commercial activities at the site. The consultant team undertook initial consultation with key stakeholders and the community on the future of Princes Parade. Key feedback from the initial consultation was:

- Enhance open space and public use
- Improve access to site and landscape
- Include a variety of open spaces
- Leave the site as it is
- Improve canoe club facilities
- Swimming pool location – opposed and support
- Potential for café or restaurant
- Opposition to housing at site
- Opposition to flats or high value homes
- Focus on local residents for any homes
- Low density and heights for any homes
- Respect the heritage setting
- High quality design and materials

1.8 A baseline environmental report and a consultation report were also considered. A copy of both reports in full can be accessed on the council's website at the following address:

<http://www.shepway.gov.uk/content/view/201481/54/>

2. SECOND STAGE CONSULTATION

2.1 The second stage of consultation set out a series of scenarios for future activities at Princes Parade. These included different extents of site use, balances of open space and active use and locations across the site. The purpose was to understand the potential of the site, the effect of different approaches to the site, and to gather opinion from a range of stakeholders, residents and businesses.

2.2 This report details the feedback from the second stage of consultation on the project. The consultant project team has already undertaken public consultation during the summer of 2012 to find out what local think people about the area. Following this, a number of ideas were prepared, including key principles which should shape the future of the site and a number of scenarios to demonstrate what these could mean.

2.3 The consultation process for stage two of the project ran from Friday 8 February to Friday 8 March 2013 and was designed to provide a range of opportunities and formats through which local community members and stakeholders could review scenarios for the Princes Parade site and provide feedback on these.

2.4 The consultation activities for stage 2 of the consultation process included:

- A project website;
- A Saturday market stall consultation on Hythe High Street;
- A two week library exhibition;
- An evening drop-in session at Seabrook School; and
- Stakeholder discussions.

- 2.5 By providing a range of formats and opportunities for comment, the consultation was designed to draw out opinion and feedback from a broad section of the local community.
- 2.6 A project website with a pdf report of the exhibition panels and an online interactive version of the questionnaire was launched on Friday 8 February 2013. This enabled people to view the scenarios information in their own time at home. The website was also used to advertise the consultation events.
- 2.7 A market stall consultation was held on Saturday 9 February 2013 in Hythe town square outside Aldi supermarket from 11.00am to 1.00pm. Information on the potential scenarios for Princes Parade was exhibited on large banners in a marquee, with questionnaires available for people to give their feedback on the scenarios and to provide further comments. Project team members from GVA and Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners were on hand to answer any questions.
- 2.8 The market stall consultation was advertised on the project website, in the local newspaper and through posters in the local area. During the consultation session, approximately 150 people visited the stall to view the information on the scenarios and provide feedback.
- 2.9 Following the market stall consultation on 9 February 2013, the exhibition materials were moved to Hythe Town Library, along with questionnaires and a box in which people could deposit these. Two copies of the stage two project report were also available. This summarised the consultation feedback from stage one of the project and the key issues for Princes Parade, along with the scenarios. The exhibition was located in the main library area, close to the entrance and remained there until Monday 4 March 2013.
- 2.10 A drop-in consultation session was held at Seabrook Primary School on Monday 4 March 2013, from 3.30pm to 7.30pm. Project team members from GVA and Allies and Morrison Urban Practitioners were on hand to answer any queries on the project and the information in the exhibition. Questionnaires were available for people to complete at the venue or to take away and return. Approximately 100 people attended the school drop-in session.
- 2.11 A series of stakeholder discussions were held, which enabled the team to follow-up with stakeholders who were involved during stage one of the project and to engage strategic consultees. The stakeholder meetings included:
- Monday 4 March 2013, 11.00am - Hythe Town Councillors
 - Monday 4 March 2013, 2.00pm – Seabrook Primary School head teacher and governors
 - Wednesday 13 March 2013, 11.30am – English Heritage (on site)
 - Wednesday 13 March 2013, 2.00pm – Hythe Town Councillors
 - Wednesday 13 March 2013, 3.00pm – Hythe Civic Society

2.12 Over 500 questionnaires were distributed at drop-in events and during the exhibition period in the library. 402 questionnaires were completed, including 262 online responses and 140 paper copy responses. Over 250 people attended drop-in events

2.13 ***Cabinet will receive a 10 minute presentation from the consultant project team on the results of the second stage consultation.***

2.14 A full copy of the consultation report can be viewed on the Council's website at:

[www.shepway.gov.uk/princes parade](http://www.shepway.gov.uk/princes%20parade)

3. CURRENT PROJECT PLAN

3.1 The planned next stage of the project was to consider a preferred option. This preferred option stage would've involved the following: the identification of a preferred scenario by the consultant team and a recommendation to the council; the rationale for the recommendation; further evolution of the proposal, with further information on relevant open space, community infrastructure, leisure, housing or commercial proposals; a further round of consultation with stakeholders and the public for comments on this direction.

3.2 The preferred options stage would have been followed by a final report with recommended next steps as they relate to the planning policy making process. This would've been followed by an outcome, i.e. a clear base of current and relevant information regarding conditions, opportunities and constraints at Princes Parade, rationale for and description of a recommended scenario for future use and activities at the site and clear next steps for the council.

4. PROPOSED REVISED PROJECT PLAN

4.1 The following paragraphs set out a series of next steps to establish the direction for Princes Parade. As the consultation and options process has progressed, it has become clear the future use of the site is linked to, and has consequent implications, for other sites within the District. Options for Princes Parade potentially include a relocated swimming pool and provision of a new primary school, along side any other residential or commercial development that may be appropriate.

4.2 There is the linked potential for sites to be vacated or deemed surplus to community infrastructure requirements if Princes Parade progresses to include a new pool and school. The linked sites in question include:

- Existing swimming pool site;
- Site reserved for the pool at the quarry development;
- Site previously reserved for a primary school at Eversley Road;
- Existing Seabrook Primary School site.

4.3 Discussions on the future of these sites are at various stages of evolution.

- 4.4 Each of these sites may contribute to the delivery of community infrastructure at Princes Parade, variously through:
- Capital receipts to Shepway District Council;
 - Capital receipt to Kent County Council;
 - Capital receipt to Church of England;
 - Development contributions secured through planning at these sites.
- 4.5 It is now appropriate for the Council to refine its understanding of the relationship between future community infrastructure at Princes Parade and its relationship with: on-site development; linked site contributions; other funding requirements.
- 4.6 At the same time, recent consultation on the future of Princes Parade has raised questions regarding the delivery strategy for the options. There is a misconception among some that any activities within Princes Parade are entirely ring-fenced financially.
- 4.7 The following sets out a series of steps to bring various discussions and work streams. The intention is to provide a clear basis for Council decision making and to establish the Council's preferred direction as a basis for representations to the Site Allocation Town Planning process by the Council as a landowner.

Step 1 - Definition of Preferred Direction

A. Clarifying Land Use Directions

Clarification of interest from Seabrook Primary school and Kent County Council allowing scenarios to be advanced with or without which include the school;

Confirmation of the Council's position on Princes Parade as an appropriate site for the swimming pool;

Identification of minimum open space land areas;

Identification of housing capacity given other uses and site constraints;

Definition of outputs and outcomes – facilities, service provision, housing, economy;

Definition of site development framework and development capacities.

B. Potential Development Costs / Cost Estimates

Site preparation and environmental works;

Utilities;

Highways, public realm and open space;

School budget;

Swimming pool budget;

Residential development costs;

Commercial development costs;

C. Confirmation of Community Infrastructure Funding Sources

Kent County Council education funding;

Existing S106 contributions to education;

Leisure facility funding;

Existing S106 contributions to leisure.

D. Potential Property Disposal Receipts (Based on Site Capacity Concepts and Development Appraisals)

Existing school site;
Undeveloped Kent County Council school site;
Existing swimming pool site;
Princes Parade residential / commercial extents.

E. Additional Potential Community Infrastructure Funding

S106/CIL – development at existing school site;
S106/CIL – development at undeveloped Kent County Council school site;
S106/CIL – development at existing swimming pool site;
S106/CIL – land no longer used for pool at quarry site;
S106/CIL – development at Princes Parade.

F. Sources and Cost Analysis by Activity Stream

Education;
Swimming Pool;
Open Space;
Residential / commercial development at Princes Parade.

G. Integrated Delivery Analysis

Overall mixed use scheme viability;
Overall funding balance, deficits or surpluses;
Overall funding balance, deficits or surpluses by use / activity;
Identification of sources for any gaps;
Outline delivery strategy, sequence and timing;
Appropriate delivery models – self development, contractor JV, developer JV, sale ;
Contractor driven, developer driven.

Step 2 - Reporting of Findings

Report to Shepway officers;
Report to Kent County Council officers;
Report to Shepway leader / portfolio holder / informal cabinet;
Decision to proceed.

Step 3 - Publication of Preferred Direction for Consultation

Proposed Princess Parade Scheme;
Outline delivery strategy and funding sources;
Assumptions and implications for linked sites;
(Commercial matters and land values as confidential)

Step 4 - Formal decision

4.8 The following is the minimum timescale to achieve the revised project plan:

Step	Minimum time required
1. Definition of Preferred Option	6 weeks
2. Report of Options	4 Weeks

3. Publication of Preferred Option	6 Weeks
4. Formal decision	4 weeks
Total:	20 weeks

4.9 This timeframe could lead to a formal Council decision in the autumn resolving its preferred direction for Princes Parade as landowner.

4.10 If Cabinet is minded to agree the recommendations contained in this report, the Head of Strategic Projects will meet with the consultants to agree the further details of the revised project plan.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 This report is prepared to update Cabinet on the work carried out so far as part of the overall project.

5.2 Cabinet will receive a 10 minute presentation from the consultant project team on the results of the second stage consultation. Results from the consultation have demonstrated the wide spread of local opinions and that there is no one singular view about Princes Parade. Three key messages have been identified:

- All of the questions in the consultation feedback have shown strong support for a new swimming pool. When combined with the call for new community and leisure activities this accounted for 30% of the comments received in question 3, greater support than for any other topic. A new pool was also the highest single priority for question 2.
- Feedback from the consultation demonstrated the strong voice against any development at Princes Parade. 'Do nothing' was the second highest priority for question 2. 'Leave it as it is' was the third most regular comment made in response to question 3.
- The consultation has clearly shown that Princes Parade is seen as a valuable portion of green space in Hythe, with regular comments such as 'Preserve the countryside character', create new green spaces and parks', and 'protect existing wildlife'.

5.3 Cabinet is asked to note the contents of this report and to confirm that work on the project continues to the next stage, as detailed in section 4 of this report.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

6.1 A summary of the perceived risks follows:

Perceived Risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative measures
The range of options for the site is not compatible with public opinion.	Medium	Medium	Further consultation with public to inform options appraisal. All

			possible options to be considered. Clear and robust decision making associated with each option.
Public opinion becomes entrenched in its opposition to any form of development on the site.	High	Medium	Known objectors to be actively involved during consultation.
Preferred option is not accepted by stakeholders.	High	Medium	Clear rationale and evidence base for preferred option.

7. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

7.1 Legal Officer's Comments (PW)

All the legal issues that arise have been addressed in the main body of the report.

7.2 Finance Officer's Comments (MF)

The remaining budget for the project study is outlined in paragraph 1.3. If the project progresses, a financial appraisal of the options will be reported as per paragraph 4.7, Step 2 of this report.

7.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (JC)

There are no diversity or equality implications within the report.

8. CONTACT OFFICER AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

Jeremy Chambers, Head of Strategic Projects
 Tel: 01303 247385
 E-mail: jeremy.chambers@shepway.gov.uk

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report.

None

Appendices:

Appendix: Princes Parade Site Allocation Study