

## Agenda Item 26

Cabinet

30 November 2011

11/1110



### Exmouth Regeneration – Project prioritisation

#### Exempt Information

**Para 3 Schedule 12A information relating to the finance or business affairs of any particular person**

#### Summary

The masterplanning work currently being undertaken in Exmouth, has involved a lot of work and consultation with the local community in bringing forward a blueprint for future development in the town and on the seafront. This masterplan will provide a planning context for any future development.

The masterplan process has established a vision for town and potential projects have emerged to help achieve this vision. A number of these projects affect land which the Council own and it must now be decided whether or not the Council wishes to assemble opportunities on land it owns to attract private investment and bring much required regeneration and vitality to our municipal spaces.

To bring forward these projects, further work will be required prior to being in a position to deliver. Given that there is a certain level of expectation amongst both the local community and developers that the Council will be a position to move forward subject to the endorsement by Development Management of the Masterplan as a supplementary planning document to the new LDF/Local Plan, it is recommended that Members now make it a priority to make the necessary preparations.

#### Recommendation

**1) Members commit to bring forward the delivery of projects as identified in the report over a phased period of 4 years**

##### a) Reasons for Recommendation

The reasons for reaching the recommendation is set out in the main body of the report.

##### b) Alternative Options

The Council does not enable any of the projects identified in the masterplan to be delivered.

**c) Risk Considerations**

The projects will require full backing and support from Council Members, in particular Exmouth Members, along with a good deal of grit and determination to be seen through to delivery: Some will involve quite complex and new issues to deal with for both Members and Officers and the Council should expect to have to deal with opposition from members of the community who will be frightened of change and object strongly, despite the great deal of work that has been done to date to bring the community along with us during the process to date.

**d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations**

Exmouth Regeneration forms part of the Council's Corporate Plan Priorities. The Exmouth sites have been the subject of considerable public interest and officers have been holding discussions with commercial developers for many years. Having now worked closely with the local community to develop a masterplan, there is an expectation that the Council will now turn the vision into reality.

The commitment required to bring forward the projects identified in this report, both staff time and financial, will be significant and it is difficult to provide detailed estimates at this stage. However, a budget is proposed of £700,000 over a four year period to provide a working pot from which to draw and bring projects forward. £377,000 is currently allocated in the Capital Programme for Exmouth regeneration projects, (excluding The Strand Enhancement). It is proposed that regular reports could be brought forward to enable Members to monitor project progress and expenditure. Officers will expect to work on the basis that the projects should wash their own face financially, but Members should expect some cross subsidy to be proposed where capital is levered from some projects to help subsidise the less commercial aspirations of others.

**e) Date for Review of Decision**

March 2012

**1 Main Body of the Report****1.0 Background**

- 1.1 Work undertaken over the last 18 months to develop a vision for the future development of the town and seafront with the local community, has enabled the drafting of a masterplan and the identification of several projects to assist the delivery of the vision. A number of the projects identified affect land that the Council owns or in which it at least has a controlling interest. A summary of these projects is attached at Appendix 1. Members will see that 3 priority projects have been identified by LDA Design as those likely to make the most substantial contribution towards achieving the Vision for Exmouth. However, this is not to say that they're the projects which the Council should try and bring forward first, or that the economic climate is currently right to bring those forward.
- 1.2 Two of the projects identified are already in progress. These include the Orcombe Point Hub and Imperial Recreation Ground Enhancements.
- 1.3 The remaining projects affecting Council owned land will require further positive action by the Council to enable them to come forward. It is assumed that staff resource will not be

in place to bring all these projects forward at the same time. They have therefore been considered by all but two of the Exmouth Ward Members at a meeting held 5 October 2011 and prioritised as follows:-

Estuarieside Transformation  
Exmouth Splash (Queen's Drive)  
Camperdown Creek Regeneration  
The Elizabeth Hall Site  
Pierhead and Mamhead/ Mamhead Slipway Improvements  
Foxholes Hub & Car Park  
New London Inn Quarter

- 1.4 This was a helpful exercise to inform officers of local member views and will assist in our focus on project delivery. The project list is not sequential and the order in which projects can be delivered will be affected by various factors, including planning issues, other landowners, Council tenants, the economic climate and our desire to realise value from District Council land assets.
- 1.5 An overall estimate of the initial funding required to bring forward these projects is £700,000 over 4 years. This figure will be refined as we develop further detail around the tasks involved in taking forward masterplan projects. £377,000 is already held against the capital programme at the moment in addition to moneys identified for the Strand Enhancement. The detail and implications for each of these projects and the wider regeneration agenda, including costs, will be considered by Members at a future date as they develop. In the meantime, a brief background and key issues relating to each are set out below.

## **2.0 Estuarieside Transformation**

- 2.1 The mixed use development proposed provides for the transport interchange and the road improvements key to improving the arrival point to Exmouth. With the provision of a supermarket to not only assist the future economic sustainability of the town centre, (in part by diverting spend from the Salterton Road Tesco Store into the town centre and increasing pedestrian footfall), but also to lever in capital to deliver the wider benefits of a holistic scheme, Exmouth Members have identified this as the first priority project. There is still supermarket interest in the site, but the market won't last forever and it advised that we act as quickly as possible to capitalise on the possible benefits of this interest to bring the much needed enhancement to this very tired and municipal looking area.
- 2.2 In terms of issues around the site, they are many and the work required to overcome them all should not be underestimated. However, tentative work has already begun: County Highways are currently working up designs for a transport interchange, LED have worked up initial plans to bring the leisure centre up to date and a great deal of work has been undertaken with the Rugby Club to identify possible sites for relocation. Stagecoach too have also been looking at relocation options for the bus depot.

### 2.3 What needs to happen next?

- 1) Working in partnership, DCC and EDDC need to undertake a range of studies which could support any planning applications and give the confidence to the market required to bring development forward.
- 2) DCC and EDDC work with Members to define and refine their requirements and objectives
- 3) DCC and EDDC agreed heads of terms in relation to the way the partnership will be formed between them. This will include issues such as land ownership implications, sharing of risk and any capital receipts/ future revenue streams
- 4) Further work on feasibility, along with a delivery and phasing strategy.

### 3.0 Exmouth Splash (Queen's Drive)

3.1 The Council is under increasing pressure now from tenants needing to know what the future holds for them: Members may recall that a resolution was made by the Council in 2005 to establish a development brief for the area. Since that time, the Estates team has tried to hold the tenants and their leases in abeyance but, unless we have a strategy established within the year, the Council could be forced to renew leases coming up for renewal and the opportunity lost until at least 2021 or beyond.

3.2 The current offer at Queen's Drive, for both residents and visitors alike, is tired and outdated and arguably the built environment does not reflect well on either Exmouth or the Council. Comprehensive rather piecemeal development for the area is key to creating a truly exciting recreation attraction that will raise the profile of the Seafront.

### 3.3 What needs to happen next?

- 1) The Council undertake a range of studies to support any planning application for redevelopment
- 2) An cost indication from County Highways is sought in relation to road re-alignment
- 3) Discussions furthered with existing tenants – future aspirations and requirements
- 4) Work with Members to define and refine their requirements and objectives
- 5) Delivery routes and partnership options to be explored
- 6) Appointment of architects to work up a scheme

### 4.0 Camperdown Creek Regeneration

4.1 Identified by Exmouth Members as the third priority project, this will link in with the work on the Estuaryside Transformation. The Sea Scouts and Sea Cadets are in particularly poor premises at the moment and are running out of patience! The Council is under increasing pressure with the Sea Cadets lease due for expiry next year and both tenants would like to be provided with some certainty over whether or not the Council is going to bring forward redevelopment or whether longer leases can be granted to enable them to apply for grant funding to improve existing premises. Informal discussions have led to an intimation from both that they would agree to sharing the Sea Scouts site on the Recreation Ground, but not a building.

4.2 Other issues on the site would be around relocation of the Council's own Depot, (on which work has commenced under the Asset Management Plan's Depot Review), relocating the South West Highways Depot and working up a scheme that brings in enough value to create the public realm enhancements and key links through to the harbour and the estuaryside as identified through the consultation work with the community.

4.3 What needs to happen next?

- 1) The Council undertake a range of studies to support any planning application for redevelopment (extension to contract for Estuaryside Transformation studies)
- 2) Discussions furthered with existing tenants – future aspirations and requirements
- 3) Tenant and Council's own operational relocation options explored
- 4) Work with Members to define and refine their requirements and objectives
- 5) Delivery routes and partnership options to be explored
- 6) Appointment of architects to work up a scheme

## **5.0 The Elizabeth Hall Site**

5.1 Identified as a priority project by LDA Design Consultants owing to its potential to possibly provide a landmark development to attract more visitors to the Seafront but most crucially, to strengthen the pedestrian link between the Seafront and the Town Centre via Bath Road.

5.2 Historical aspirations of the Council to see the site redeveloped have led to local concerns around the loss of the community hall facility for the town and in particular, a site for a popular weekend car boot sale.

5.3 What needs to happen next?

- 1) The Council establish a development brief incorporating a planning position statement to accompany a marketing exercise
- 2) Discussions with current users around alternative premises/ options for existing activities
- 3) Work with Members to define and refine their requirements and objectives
- 4) Marketing campaign launched to seek expressions of interest in the site

## **6.0 Pierhead and Mamhead/ Mamhead Slipway Improvements**

6.1 A key area in need of enhancement as the most Western point of the seafront and the entrance to the harbour/ marina area and identified as priority 5 by Exmouth Members. This project has scope to support the creation of a landmark building to entice people to the area, create a welcoming and attractive arrival/departure point for visitors and residents, including those using the Starcross Ferry and Stuart Line Cruises, improve public access to the water and reconfigure the public realm to improve pedestrian and cycle links.

6.2 Key to a successful enhancement of the area would be partnership working with Devon County Council, and two private landowners.

### 6.3 What needs to happen next?

- 1) The Council commence discussions with key partners to establish aspirations and options with a view to agreeing heads of terms for a development partnership.
- 2) The Teignbridge consultants are requested to work up a more detailed scheme for discussion with all stakeholders
- 3) Workshops with water users, tenants and residents in vicinity
- 4) Work with Members to define and refine their requirements and objectives
- 5) Work up costs and scheme for public works including enhancements to the slipway, pedestrian footpath, cyclepath and highway.
- 6) Subject to the above, obtain necessary studies required to bring forward a planning application for the redevelopment of the area.

### 7.0 Foxholes Hub and Car Park

7.1 This project is predicated on a re-routing of the road through the car park to create a pedestrianised hub of activity around the existing new RNLI building, Foxholes Cafe, Public Conveniences and Beach Rescue building which would then all front directly onto the beach. It is considered that this could possibly be funded from the development of housing or visitor accommodation to the rear of the car park.

7.2 The Beach Rescue Club are keen expand their existing premises and have been requested to await the outcome of the masterplanning process and a decision on whether the Council will wish to enable this more holistic approach to the redevelopment of the area before submitting a planning application or requesting approval to vary their lease.

7.3 The key benefits of this scheme would be improvements to the entrance to the coast path, complementation of the Jurassic Coast Interpretation enhancements to Orcombe Point and that through pedestrianisation, there would be a safer route between the beach and facilities.

### 7.3 What needs to happen next?

- 1) A cost indication from County Highways is sought in relation to road re-alignment
- 2) Discussions furthered with existing tenants – future aspirations and requirements
- 3) Work with Members to define and refine their requirements and objectives
- 4) Architect appointed to work up initial scheme for discussion and consultation
- 5) The Council undertake a range of studies to support any planning application for redevelopment
- 6) Delivery routes and partnership options to be explored

## 8.0 New London Inn Quarter

- 8.1 This project proposal brings with it new town centre shopping streets, mixed use development and a multi-storey car park. Although the GVA Grimley revised retail report has confirmed additional capacity comparison shopping in Exmouth, until the other landowners are satisfied that the area is not suitable for a supermarket based scheme, it is unlikely that they will be interested in forming a delivery partnership. While still a priority in the sense it would make a substantial contribution towards achieving the Vision for Exmouth, it is recommended that work is brought forward at a later stage.

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### Legal Implications

Legal advice will be required at a number of stages throughout this project: planning/s106/Community Infrastructure Levy implications, project management, procurement and outsourcing, as appropriate. There are no other legal implications at this stage.

### Financial Implications

There is £377k in the current programme for 3 projects. This is now out of date and will need reallocating for Exmouth regeneration as whole once priorities and detailed budgets of the 7 projects are known.

### Consultation on Reports to the Executive

N/A

### Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Summary of project opportunities identified within Masterplan

### Background Documents

- Further information relating to the Masterplan work, including a copy of the consultation draft, may be found at [www.exmouthmasterplan.co.uk](http://www.exmouthmasterplan.co.uk)

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Cabinet  
30 November 2011