

Subject to approval at the next Subcommittee meeting

## SPECIAL BOGNOR REGIS REGENERATION SUBCOMMITTEE

14 December 2017 2017 at 6.00 pm

Present: - Councillors Hitchins (Chairman), Mrs Madeley (Vice-Chairman), Bence, Bower, Mrs Brown, Charles, Dillon and Wells.

Councillor Brooks was also present at the meeting.

### 14. APOLOGY

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor Maconachie.

### 15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were made:-

- Councillors Bower, Charles, Dillon, Hitchins and Wells declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 5, as Members of the Development Control Committee in the event of any discussion relating to planning applications on the site and they reserved their right.

### 16. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2017 were approved by the Subcommittee as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

*(Prior to consideration of the following item Councillors Bower, Charles, Dillon, Hitchins and Wells had declared a personal interest and remained in the meeting and took part in the debate and vote.)*

### 17. HOTHAMTON LINEAR PARK REGENERATION PROPOSALS

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Simon Davis, Urban Delivery, and Rob Beswick, BD Landscapes, who were in attendance to give a presentation on the design proposals for the Hothamton Car Park site as part of the Council's 'Garden by the Sea' regeneration scheme and to answer Members' questions.

Mr Beswick gave a presentation which expanded on the design report included in the agenda and Members were advised that RIBA Stage 2 had now been achieved. He went on to say that the team had been very aware of the historical context of the area and had worked in a collaborative way with local people using the area to come up with a simplified design to create a flexible space that could be used for a variety of community events and

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markets, etc. The play area was felt to be quirky to reflect the old hangar that used to be located at one end of the site.

The Chairman thanked Mr Beswick for his presentation and then, prior to consideration of the matter, reminded Members that the main report on the proposals was to be considered under open business, whilst Appendices C and D referred to in the report were commercially sensitive and contained exempt information as defined under paragraph 3 of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended. He was particularly keen to ensure that discussion on the proposals remained in the public domain to maintain transparency and urged Members not to stray into the detail of Appendices C and D as the meeting would then have to move into exempt business to exclude members of the public. It would then move back into open business to take the vote.

The Group Head of Economy then presented the detail of the report. Two options had been put forward for consideration with Option 1 being more extensive but coming in at an estimated cost of £4.29m. Option 2 provided fewer water-based uses within the design and was therefore less expensive at £3.53m. Members therefore had to come to a view about their support for such a level of investment in the scheme.

It had been made clear from the financial assessment that overall financial viability was significantly improved where the Council led on the delivery of the park and then sold the residential plots with the benefit of the park in place. This would help to achieve the mix of uses and quality of design and materials and limit the risk of any reduction in quality that might arise out of a value engineering exercise that a developer might seek to implement in order to create a viable project and maximise its developer profit. A Council led approach would also enable the retention of car park income and of the commercial income from concessions, etc, to finance the future management and maintenance costs for the park.

It was pointed out that such an approach would involve financial risks and a full business case would need to be prepared before any borrowing could be secured. The Council also had a good track record for obtaining external funding and every effort would be made to obtain such funding for this scheme. Option 2 was recommended for support.

The report outlined development costs; concept design specifications; potential and anticipated income streams for the Council; delivery options; and the next steps.

The Chairman thanked the Group Head of Economy for her informative report and the Subcommittee then agreed that the discussion would be held in line with the recommendations.

Members participated in a full debate on the merits of Option 1 and Option 2, with the majority supporting Option 2 as the best way forward. Issues were raised as follows:-

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- Electric car charging points – it was confirmed that all cabling had been extended within the scheme so that all spaces could have charging points when required in the future. The events area would have electrics and built-in anchor points for structures such as marquees.
- Sufficient car parking spaces were deemed critical for the town centre and as many as possible must be maintained. A query was also raised about the direction of parking and its relationship to the surrounding highway.
- Lessons needed to be learned from experience gained delivering the town centre public realm, particularly around pedestrianisation for sight impaired people and those in wheelchairs.
- Concern was voiced regarding the width of the park and the impact that might have on community events, markets, etc.
- Anti social behaviour had to be addressed
- Strong linkage between the park and Waterloo Square would be a benefit

Members supported recommendation 2 for the Council to build the park and secure a developer to build out the plots for the whole site; however, in the event that no agreement could be reached with the NHS, then to still proceed but with the Health Centre site excluded.

A Member comment was made that there should be no flats built at the site and there should be more provision made for entertainment for residents of the town and the surrounding area; however, there was no Council funding for such uses.

Although recommendation 3 was supported, a concern was raised that the planning application for the scheme would be submitted for consideration by the Development Control Committee without first coming back for consideration by the Subcommittee as it was felt that there could be many changes to the concept on the table at the present time. However, the overwhelming view was that there should be no further delay in moving the regeneration of the town forward.

With regard to recommendation 7, a request was made that the Chairman of the Subcommittee keep Members informed of any significant changes and amendments to the scheme designs.

Comment was made at recommendation 8 that there was a level of concern from residents with regard to the future provision of health services in the town should negotiations around the Health Centre allow development of this site. Clearly, the Health Trust / CCG would make this decision based on clinical need and the availability of adequate local provision

The remaining recommendations were supported without discussion.

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## The Subcommittee

RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL – That

(1) Park Option 2 (with fewer water-based uses within the design) be the preferred option;

(2) the Council progress with the development and implementation of Park Option 2a – *Council Builds Park and Secures Developer to Build Out Plots – Whole Site*. However, if discussions with the Community Health partnerships regarding the future use of the Health Centre cannot be quickly or satisfactorily concluded, Park Option 2b – *Council Builds Park & Secures Developer to Build Out Plots – Health Centre Excluded* – is substituted;

(3) authority be given to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to submit a planning application for the proposed new park and associated parking;

(4) budget provision for the project costs to reach planning application stage (up to £300k) be included in the budget for 2018/19. Also, funding be allocated for a three year period for a Project Officer role to progress the delivery of the key regeneration sites in Bognor Regis;

(5) authority be delegated to the Director of Place to commission any reports, studies or professional advice required to progress the delivery of the new park;

(6) the Council be encouraged to bid for, receive and use external grant funding that may fund (in part or whole) the delivery of the new park and parking;

(7) authority be delegated to the Director of Place, on consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Chairman of the Bognor Regis Regeneration Subcommittee, to make minor changes and amendments to the scheme designs, based on professional advice, as necessary and as the project evolves, subject to receiving the necessary planning approvals;

(8) authority be delegated to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Leader of the Council that, should negotiations with the National Heal Services progress and subject to the completion of a satisfactory business case, a bid be made to purchase the Health Centre site and, if accepted, to proceed with the purchase ; and

(9) authority be delegated to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to market the development site at Hothampton when the park has been

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developed to a key stage, or market conditions are deemed appropriate.

(The meeting concluded at 7.16 p.m.)