

STADIUM VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the responses received following public consultation on the Stadium Village Draft Development Framework and to seek Committee's comments on the revised Development Framework.
- 1.2 The Committee's comments will be reported to Cabinet on 10 March 2010 when agreement will be sought to approve the Stadium Village Development Framework as a Supplementary Planning Document.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Sunderland arc's Business Plan (2009) proposes that the Stadium Village area is developed for mixed-use leisure-led development.
- 2.2 Alteration Number 2 to the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) sets out adopted planning policy for the central area of Sunderland, including the designation of Stadium Park and Sheepfolds (collectively known as Stadium Village) as comprehensive development sites. Policy EC5A of Alteration No 2 requires the City Council to prepare a broad framework for each site.
- 2.3 Site specific policies for Stadium Village are set out in policies NA3A.1 and NA3A.2, these policies also indicate that a comprehensive masterplan should be prepared to cover both Stadium Park and Sheepfolds in order to ensure the integration of these sites. Stadium Park is identified as a leisure-led mixed-use site whilst for Sheepfolds the plan indicates that the council will support a comprehensive approach to mixed-use development.

3.0 Consultations on the draft Stadium Village Development Framework

- 3.1 Members will recall that an initial draft Stadium Village Development Framework and accompanying Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment were subject to a public consultation between 7 January and 17 February 2009. Since this time a healthy interest has been expressed by the private sector to develop an indoor real snow Ski Centre within

Stadium Village on Site C, which was selected through discussion for a large leisure use in the amended draft framework.

- 3.2 Given the potential scale and attraction of this facility for the Sunderland and the North East Region, legal advice was taken with regard to the content of an amended draft development framework and the need for further consultation. It was considered necessary to make specific reference to the aspiration to develop a snow slope on Site C, reflecting market interest, within the amended draft development framework and Sustainability Appraisal in order to give stakeholders and the public the opportunity to make representations on this specific proposal.
 - 3.3 Accordingly, Cabinet approved an amended draft Stadium Village Development Framework for the purposes of consultation at its November 2009 meeting. The framework and accompanying Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment were subject to a public consultation between 11 November and 22 December 2009.
 - 3.4 During this period all information relating to the consultation, including the draft Stadium Village Development Framework was made available online at www.sunderland.gov.uk/stadiumvillage.
 - 3.5 Letters were delivered to all households and businesses within the Stadium Village area and its immediate surroundings. The letter notified recipients of the consultation period, invited them to see the main proposals plan at exhibitions displayed at the Sunderland Civic Centre main reception, Sunderland Aquatic Centre, Washington Millennium Centre, the Hetton Centre and Leechmere Independent Living Centre. The letter also notified them that officers from the City Council and Sunderland arc would be on hand to discuss their views at the Sunderland Aquatic Centre (17, 26 November and 7 December 2009) and the Hetton Centre (1 December) as well as by appointment at Sunderland Civic Centre (during normal office hours). Comments slips were enclosed which could be returned by freepost and summary brochures of the framework were available at all venues as well as all local libraries across the city. Responses could also be made by email or by completing an online consultation form at the website www.sunderland.gov.uk/stadiumvillage.
 - 3.6 Statutory and formal consultees including a range of businesses, organisations and other individuals were consulted by letter asking them to respond formally.
- 4.0 Consultation Responses and Changes to the Development Framework**

- 4.1 In total 173 responses were received as a result of the consultations, 142 expressing support, 15 objecting, 6 supporting some elements and objecting to others, 5 providing comments expressing neither support nor objections and 5 making no observations.
- 4.2 12 responses were received from statutory and non-statutory consultees. These were generally supportive of the draft Stadium Village Development Framework. Consideration of representations submitted by the Environment Agency, Natural England, the Highways Agency and English Heritage have resulted in minor changes to sections of the framework.
- 4.3 The representations received, together with the City Council's response to them and details of any necessary changes to the development framework are available in the Member's library.

5.0 Key Consultation Issues

5.1 Stadium Village Parking

Issues were raised during the consultation in relation to problems of matchday parking on residential streets. A shortage of available car parking spaces and disabled car parking spaces at the Aquatic Centre was also repeated as an issue in particular in relation to match days.

5.2 Council response

Parking issues were also raised during the initial public consultation on the development framework (7 January and 17 February 2009). Since this time the City Council and Sunderland Football Club have:

- Agreed that disabled spaces immediately adjacent to the North West Corner of the Stadium (located opposite the Aquatic Centre) can be used on non-match days by Aquatic Centre users
- Changed traffic signs to show drivers that parking spaces adjacent to Black Cat House can be used by Aquatic centre users (on non-match days)

These steps have resulted in a lower number of comments being submitted in respect of day-to-day parking for the Aquatic Centre; however match day parking and a shortage of disabled parking remains an issue.

- 5.3 As set out in the Cabinet Report on the previous public consultation (November 2009), parking at the Aquatic Centre was considered through the reserved matters planning application for the site when it was concluded that available parking at Stadium Village was sufficient. On non-match days in addition to the parking available adjacent to the Aquatic centre, 566 spaces are available in the car park adjacent to Black Cat House (not including 187 spaces used by Sunderland AFC). Spaces also exist to the west of Stadium Way. Car parking is also available adjacent

- to the West Stand of the Stadium of light where 388 spaces are available. In addition to the existing disabled car parking to the north of the Stadium, an additional 7 disabled car parking spaces were provided specifically for the Aquatic Centre.
- 5.4 The above mentioned car parks are owned by One North East and are subject to a 125 year lease to the Sunderland AFC. This lease gives exclusive use to the Football club on match days and on a specified number of event days. There is also a Memorandum of Agreement between the Football club and the Council. This Agreement establishes that no special event is to occur at the Aquatic Centre at the same time/day as a match at the stadium. The Council manages the Memorandum of Agreement through its role as a member of the Stadium Safety Advisory Group Committee, which oversees matters in relation to safety on match days. The management of match day parking at the Stadium of Light and around the site will be kept under review with the football club.
- 5.5 In considering parking at the Aquatic Centre, regard was also had to the fact that the Stadium Park site has good public transport links. In addition to the available car parking on the site, two Metro stations and a number of bus routes serve the local area.
- 5.6 Any future development at Stadium Village will be subject to Policies T2 and T23A of the UDP Alteration No.2. Policy T2 requires a transport assessment and seeks to ensure that public transport is promoted. Policy T2 also requires that non-residential schemes prepare a travel plan to encourage greater use of public transport. Policy T23A sets out car parking standards and seeks to encourage increased use of public transport.
- 5.7 In light of existing planning policies, the good local public transport links and the extent of the existing car parking that is available, it is considered that car parking provision for the Aquatic Centre will be kept under review as the whole of Stadium Village is developed out in the future. It is acknowledged that careful consideration needs to be given to addressing parking needs on the basis of end user demand as and when development takes place. In particular the parking requirements around the aquatic centre should be carefully considered when the remainder of site A is developed
- 5.8 Massing and Scale in relation to surrounds
Concerns were raised by English Heritage and a member of the public regarding the potential scale of future development on site C and the impact that any large scale development may have on the nearby Listed Buildings and surrounding townscape. This issue is now particularly

relevant given the proposal for an indoor Ski Slope at Site C. Accordingly the issue is dealt with in more detail below.

5.9 Council Response:

The City Council and Sunderland arc have aspirations to secure a real snow Ski Centre within Stadium Village. Feasibility work has been undertaken and strong interest has been expressed by private sector developers and operators.

- 5.10 During the preparation of the amended draft development framework, a detailed site options analysis was undertaken to identify the most appropriate location for a Ski Centre within the Stadium Village site boundary. This analysis identified Site C as the best location particularly in terms of deliverability and physical impact on its surroundings. The amended draft Development Framework identifies a Ski Centre for Site C with a maximum height of up to 46m, considered to be the optimum height in achieving a balance between commercial viability of the scheme and minimising the impacts on the surrounding built environment.
- 5.11 It is recognised that the development of a building of the required scale and massing on Site C would need to be carefully considered in relation to the surrounding townscape and in particular the nearby Grade II* Listed Monkwearmouth Station Museum, the Grade II Listed Hebron Church (both located on North Bridge Street to the east of the site) and Grade II Listed Wearmouth Bridge and Monkwearmouth Railway Bridge to the south-east of the site. The relationship with the candidate World Heritage Site at St. Peter's also needs to be carefully considered.
- 5.12 The development framework sets out design principles to guide future masterplans for Stadium Village establishing the need for a high level of architectural design across all buildings. The framework sets parameters for the scale and massing of development proposals and in doing so particularly emphasises the need for development proposals on site C to respond to the setting of the Listed Buildings in and around the Stadium Village area.
- 5.13 To assist in this process a Ski Slope Design Code has also been prepared which sets out more detailed design guidance for developers bringing forward proposals for a ski slope development on Site C in order to achieve a high quality built form, and mitigate any adverse impacts upon the surrounding townscape and historic environment. Detailed guidance is provided in relation to the scale and massing of proposals, the elevational treatments and use of materials, the building frontages and design of the public realm. This Code will be used to assess submissions for the site prior to identifying a preferred developer as well as supporting the assessment of subsequent planning applications.

5.14 As part of the submission of a planning application for site C, the developer will be required to prepare a Heritage Statement. The Heritage Statement must include consideration of the potential impact of the proposed development on the historic environment and the Listed Buildings and demonstrate how these impacts will be mitigated. Applicants will be required to fully justify why any impacts on the historic environment should be acceptable in the context of national, regional and local policies relating to the management of change in the historic environment.

5.15 Overall it is considered that sufficient mechanisms are in place in the development framework, Design Code and planning application process to ensure that impacts on the setting of the surrounding townscape and historic environment will be fully considered and assessed by developers preparing development proposals and robust proposals to mitigate the impacts will be put in place.

5.16 Sustainability

Concerns were raised over the sustainability of the proposed Ski Slope and whether there is an opportunity to deliver heat source sharing between the Aquatic Centre and Ski Centre.

5.17 **Council Response:**

In general all new developments add to the carbon footprint to some degree (unless the schemes are carbon neutral). However, there are a number of mitigation measures that can be put in place to improve sustainability and reduce the environmental impact of the proposed Ski Centre.

5.18 The Stadium Village Development Framework sets development principles for the entire Stadium Village site and sets out a number of criteria which are designed to ensure that all new development meets current legislation that is in place to reduce the environmental impact of new development. These requirements include:

- 1) Achieving a BREEAM rating of very good (BRE Environmental Assessment Method). This is the recognised method for the environmental assessment of buildings and sets the standard for best practice in sustainable design
- 2) The use of water conservation methods and rainwater recycling techniques to reduce water consumption
- 3) The provision of a minimum of 10% energy supply from renewable energy generated on site

- 4) The use of sustainable drainage systems
- 5.19 The development of Site C will also require developers to comply with One North East's quality standards which serve to reinforce the development framework. These include:
- 1) Achieving a BREEAM rating of 'excellent'.
 - 2) A 22% reduction in carbon emissions above those required by Building Regulations.
 - 3) Green Travel Plans to be prepared for all appropriate schemes to ensure measures are put in place to reduce dependency on the car.
 - 4) Developments must derive at least 10% of the value of materials from recycled and reused content.
- 5.20 The Ski Slope Design Code also reflects ONE North East's quality standards relating to sustainability and in addition sets the requirement for potential developers to consider the feasibility of transferring waste heat energy to other energy users in and around the site. This process has successfully been used in other recently completed indoor Ski Centres. Potential developers will also be required to consider implementing a strategy allowing for the monitoring of energy consumption for individual areas of the building and ensure that the most sustainable building materials are used for construction of the building. The extent to which proposals satisfy the criteria of the Design Code including environmental performance will help to determine the selection of a preferred developer for the site.
- 5.21 In addition to the technical specifications of the building it is considered that the regionally central location of the site allows access by more sustainable modes of transport other than the car. The site is served by two nearby Metro stations and is easily accessible by bus or by foot. Most other facilities of this nature in the UK are located 'out of town' resulting in the majority of visitors travelling to them by car. Locating the Ski Centre in this accessible location will allow many visitors to travel by a range of transport modes, reducing the dependency on the car and reducing carbon emissions from car journeys.
- 5.22 With the requirements of the development framework, the site Design Code and One North East's Quality Standards the Council is confident that all reasonable steps to reduce the carbon footprint of the proposed Ski Centre as well as other buildings on the Stadium Village site will be accommodated.

6.0 Reasons for Decision

- 6.1 The adoption of the Stadium Village Development Framework as a Supplementary Planning Document will help facilitate the planning and regeneration of Stadium Village in accordance with the planning policies for the area. The framework is available for use by developers as a basis for preparing detailed proposals for Stadium Village and would be afforded weight as a material consideration when determining future planning applications.

7.0 Alternative Options

- 7.1 The alternative option is not to adopt the Stadium Village Development Framework. The consequences of this are likely to be an uncoordinated approach to the redevelopment of this area, resulting in a poor urban structure, poor access and movement arrangements, haphazard distribution of amenities and open space and a lost opportunity to create a comprehensively planned, attractive, sustainable, high quality environment. This option would also be contrary to policy (EC5A) in UDP Alteration No 2 for Central Sunderland which has been adopted by the council.

8.0 Recommendation

The Committee is recommended to consider the amended Stadium Village Development Framework and refer its comments to Cabinet for consideration

9.0 Background Papers

- a) Amended Stadium Village Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document, 2010
- b) Amended Stadium Village Supplementary Planning Document Sustainability Appraisal Report, 2010
- c) Stadium Village Supplementary Planning Document Task 1 Appropriate Assessment, Regulation 48 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c) Regulations 1994, 2009
- d) Sunderland Stadium Village Ski Centre Design Code, December 2009.
- e) Schedule of Representations received during public consultation and the City Council's response.