

*Report Number: SWT 27/20*

## **Somerset West and Taunton Council**

### **Executive – 28 January 2020**

#### **Land South of Manor Farm, Langaller, Masterplan and Development Guide**

**This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Member Mike Rigby**

**Report Author: Andrew Penna, Garden Town Coordinator**

#### **1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The Council are committed to preparing Development Guides and Masterplans for key development sites in the Garden Town to ensure that new development is of a high design quality and is comprehensively delivered.
- 1.2 The Land South of Manor Farm, Langaller is part of the Monkton Heathfield development area, allocated in the Core Strategy, Policy SS1. The former TDBC resolved that the area, which was identified wholly for employment development in the Core Strategy, could be part developed for housing to address the likely shortfall in housing numbers in the Monkton Heathfield policy area and, guarantee delivery of the employment area.
- 1.3 The planned development will deliver new housing including affordable housing contributing to the trajectory and supply in the town. New local employment areas will be brought forward, together with open space. Significant areas for tree planting are also identified.

#### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that:
  - (a) The draft Masterplan and Development Guide be published for stakeholder and statutory consultation; and
  - (b) That, subject to there being no issues raised requiring substantive changes during the consultation, the Head Strategy and the Portfolio Holder for Planning be authorised to approve the document for Development Management decision making and to inform and guide pre-application discussions with prospective developers and landowners.

#### **3 Risk Assessment (if appropriate)**

- 3.1 No specific risk but failure to bring forward housing could put at risk housing and affordable housing.

## **4 Background and Full details of the Report**

- 4.1 The Council are committed to preparing Development Guides and Masterplans for key development sites in the Garden Town to ensure that new development is of a high design quality and is comprehensively delivered.
- 4.2 The South of Manor Farm Langaller Land was identified for employment development through the former Taunton Deane Local Plan, the Core Strategy and a Development Guide for the Monkton Heathfield (phase 1) prepared in 2004. The employment land is identified in the Core Strategy, Policy SS1 and reflected in the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan (SADMP) adopted in 2016.
- 4.3 The site is shown on the Plan at Appendix A.
- 4.4 The northern fields (10ha) were granted planning permission in 2006 for B1, B2 and B8 development as part of the Outline Planning permission for MH1. The main access roundabouts were constructed as part of the Eastern Relief Road (A38). Despite this the land has not come forward for commercial development.
- 4.5 The remaining southern fields, 10 ha, remain allocated, but undeveloped for employment development.
- 4.6 Policy SS1 will not deliver 4500 homes envisaged for the whole Monkton Heathfield policy area. This is largely as a result of lower density development than was anticipated when the policy was adopted, at a time when national minimum density standards were in place.
- 4.7 The former TDBC Scrutiny Committee considered the implications of this and other changes to SS1 brought about by changes in National policy and the development of the first phases of the MH development area in January 2019. The Councils previously published Employment Land Study (November 2018) identified that overall there is a surplus of identified employment land, but also highlighted that there is an ongoing demand for smaller scale employment sites aimed at the local market.
- 4.8 In order to address this likely shortfall in housing delivery at Monkton Heathfield, and delivery issues around employment land, TDBC resolved to release some of the Employment land, south of Manor Farm Langaller for residential use including affordable housing and the delivery of significant areas for green infrastructure.
- 4.9 The South of Manor Farm land at Langaller offers the opportunity to deliver additional housing within the SS1 Policy area, whilst securing the delivery of the employment land. The TDBC Scrutiny Committee resolved in January 2019 to support these principles, including preparation of a Masterplan and Development/Design Guide.
- 4.10 The draft document has been prepared by Thrive Urban Design consultants on behalf of the Council.
- 4.11 The draft document sets out a comprehensive development and design guide based on the Council's adopted Development Plan policies, the Garden Town Vision and the recently approved Garden Town Design Charter and Checklist.

- 4.12 The development of the land fits closely with a number of key themes from the Corporate Strategy (see below)
- 4.13 The land is almost wholly owned and/or controlled by housebuilders and an employment land specialist developer, allowing for the area to be delivered comprehensively. The developers are committed to delivering the employment land, with a focus on smaller business units for the local market, in tandem with phased delivery of the housing area. This will be secured through a S106 Agreement to be secured at planning application stage.
- 4.14 The development will deliver 250-300 new homes, with 25% of those affordable, in line with adopted policies.
- 4.15 Significant areas of green infrastructure will be delivered including tree planting as part of the 'Green Necklace' envisaged for the MH area in the Core Strategy. The Green Wedge, put in place to keep the open corridor along the M5 and the perception of openness between Monkton Heathfield and Creech St Michael will be maintained.
- 4.16 A future application will be subject to Design Review to provide assurance that the scheme delivers high quality development in line with our Garden Town aspirations.
- 4.17 The local community have been engaged in the preparation of the Guide, together with key stakeholders like County Council Highways and the developers.
- 4.18 The document is formed of three Sections in order to be easily accessible online and to make it more user-friendly.
- 4.19 Part one sets out the background, planning policies, information on the Garden Town and sustainability, including Climate change, together the requirements for a future application.
- 4.20 Part 2, set out as Appendix B, sets out site context appraisal, context and the Draft Masterplan.
- 4.21 Part 3 sets out Masterplan detail and Design Guidance. Parts 1 and 3 can be accessed from the link below:
- [Part One](#) and [Part Three](#)
- 4.22 A draft Concept Masterplan for the remainder of the SS1 policy area, including the second phase of Monkton Heathfield – 1500 homes and related infrastructure is under preparation. First drafts of both are set out as appendices C and D.
- 4.23 The accompanying Design Guidance and detailed Masterplans for SS1/MH2 will follow in February/March 2020. Both will be subject to ongoing consultation with local communities and the Developer Consortium during preparation.
- 4.24 Following Executive it is proposed to carry out further stakeholder and statutory consultation on the South of Manor Farm document, in particular with the two Parish Councils, before the Masterplan and Development Guide is approved for Development Management decision making.

## **5 Links to Corporate Strategy**

- 5.1 The Guide seeks to deliver development which meets a number of objectives of the Corporate Strategy.
- 5.2 Tree planting and measures like grey water recycling and provision of electric charging points in new homes will help to address climate change. The Guide provides a clear vision and delivery plan for a key site in the Taunton Garden Town. The development of the site will ensure the provision of adequate and affordable employment land to meet different business needs, with a focus on the local market.
- 5.3 The site will deliver green open spaces and parks, enhanced public spaces, as well as additional opportunities to safely walk or cycle in order to encourage active and healthy lifestyles. The development of the site will increase the number of affordable and social homes in Taunton.

## **6 Finance / Resource Implications**

- 6.1 The budget for the preparation of the Masterplan and Guide for Manor Farm and the preparation of the Masterplan and Guide for the next phase of the Monkton Heathfield development are in place. The project is overseen by the Garden Town coordinator and the Head of Strategy.

## **7 Legal Implications (if any)**

- 7.1 None.

## **8 Climate and Sustainability Implications (if any)**

- 8.1 The climate emergency, and our response to it, is a strong theme running throughout the document. The proposed development aims to mitigate the climate emergency and adapt to its effects. It covers issues including reducing carbon emissions through walking, cycling and public transport, the creation of new open spaces and recreation areas, opportunities for tree planting and new allotments, the energy efficiency of buildings, opportunities for renewable energy and ensuring provision of electric charging points, biodiversity enhancements, tree planting and flood risk/sustainable drainage.
- 8.2 Detailed guidance is provided on the sustainability of proposed new homes through good design and best practice construction methods.
- 8.3 More generally, the site lies within the Garden Town, in a sustainable location with access to public transport and footpath/cycleway networks and nearby local facilities like shops and schools, all of which help to minimise the need to travel by private car. The location of new businesses, focused on the local employment market, next to new homes offers the opportunity for people to live and work close by.

## **9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications (if any)**

- 9.1 None.

## **10 Equality and Diversity Implications (if any)**

10.1 The Core Strategy is underpinned by an Equalities Impact Assessment.

**11 Social Value Implications** (if any)

11.1 None

**12 Partnership Implications** (if any)

12.1 None.

**13 Health and Wellbeing Implications** (if any)

13.1 The site will deliver green open spaces and parks, enhanced public spaces, as well as additional opportunities to safely walk or cycle in order to encourage active and healthy lifestyles.

**14 Asset Management Implications** (if any)

14.1 None.

**15 Data Protection Implications** (if any)

15.1 None.

**16 Consultation Implications** (if any)

16.1 The local community have been engaged in the preparation of the Guide, together with key stakeholders like County Council Highways and the developers.

16.2 The two Parish Councils, Creech St Michael and West Monkton have formed a Joint working Panel to review the document and participate in the preparation of the SS1 and MH2 Masterplans.

**17 Scrutiny Comments / Recommendation(s)** (if any)

17.1 None

**Democratic Path:**

- **Scrutiny / Corporate Governance or Audit Committees – No**
- **Cabinet/Executive – Yes**
- **Full Council – No**

**Reporting Frequency:**  **Once only**

**List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)**

Appendix A	Land South of Manor Farm, Langaller: Site Location Plan
Appendix B	Draft Masterplan and Development Guide, Part 2
Appendix C	Draft SS1 Policy area Masterplan
Appendix D	Draft MH2 Concept Plan

## Contact Officers

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