

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Cabinet
Date:	29 September 2020
Title:	Waterside Vision
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

Contact name: David Fletcher

Tel: 01962 846125

Email: david.fletcher@hants.gov.uk

Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to brief Cabinet on the progress made to date on the Waterside regeneration proposals, to seek endorsement of the collective vision for the Waterside and to seek approval for the County Council to be a co-signatory to the published version of the Waterside vision statement.

Recommendation(s)

2. That Cabinet approves the Waterside Vision statement.
3. That Cabinet authorises the Leader to sign the final published version of this statement on behalf of the County Council, in conjunction with the Leader of New Forest District Council and the Chair of the New Forest National Park Authority.

Executive Summary

This paper seeks to:

2. Set out the background to the Waterside regeneration proposals and progress made in relation to the potential individual developments and wider associated infrastructure.
3. Summarise the content of the Waterside vision statement.
4. Explain the significance of the endorsement of the vision statement by the County Council and the other local authorities associated with the area.

Waterside Regeneration – Background and Progress

5. The Waterside area, to the west of Southampton Water and running from Totton to Fawley, is the most urbanised, industrial and densely populated sub-area of the New Forest. It also represents one of the most significant regeneration opportunities in the South of England and is home to a number of key assets and sites which are described below.

6. Marchwood Military Port, the UK's only combined military and commercial port is operated by Solent Gateway under a 35 lease from the MOD. A masterplan has been developed for the 225-acre site, with a potential investment of up to £400M to grow commercial uses. The site benefits from extensive developable land and existing rail and port connectivity. Solent Gateway's aim is to submit a planning application and secure planning consent in 2021.
7. The main landside operational area of the Port of Southampton is located within the City of Southampton, but the port operators Associated British Ports (ABP) owns a significant land holding within the Waterside at Dibden Bay. The draft Port of Southampton Masterplan (2016) concluded that the Port of Southampton needs to expand within its land holdings on the Waterside. Any such development will be subject to the NSIP (nationally significant infrastructure projects) planning process with the outcome determined by Central Government. It should be noted that it is the intention of a number of local stakeholders, including ABP, Solent LEP and the County Council, to prepare a competitive bid for Freeport status later in 2020, which is likely to encompass both the existing Port of Southampton, the strategic land reserve held by ABP on the Waterside, and the other Waterside sites including Marchwood Military Port, Exxon Mobil and Fawley Waterside.
8. The area is also home to ExxonMobil, owners and operators of the Fawley refinery, the largest integrated refining and chemicals facility in the UK, and the largest heavy industrial employer in Hampshire. The site accounts for 20% of the UK's refining capacity, is the country's last manufacturer of lubricating oils and manufactures a wide range of speciality petrochemicals such as synthetic rubber. Exxon Mobil has an ongoing major investment programme of around £700m which will help secure around 2000 jobs.
9. To the south of the refinery is the former Fawley Power Station, one of the largest brownfield regeneration opportunities in the south of England. The vision for Fawley Waterside is a new 'smart town', with 1500 new homes and deep-water access to enable the development of a commercial centre of excellence in marine and maritime innovation. On 27 and 28 July 2020 respectively, New Forest District Council and New Forest National Park Authority resolved to grant outline planning consent for the development, conditional on the section 106 agreement being finalised.

Role and Contribution of Hampshire County Council

10. Hampshire County Council has played a significant role in progressing the regeneration of the Waterside both as a whole and in relation to the individual sites described above.
11. The County Council has several statutory roles in the context of the Waterside – in relation to highways, flood management, minerals & waste planning, local education and countryside access/public rights of way. From an Economic Development perspective the County Council has also contributed to the efforts to promote the collaborative partnership of public and private sectors, the creation of a coherent vision for the Waterside, and the development of a robust economic case to underpin the case for significant infrastructure investment.
12. It should also be noted that, of course, the County Council also has a stake as a landowner (on a leasehold basis) and operator through the Calshot Activities

Centre, and on that basis has been a key consultee in relation to the Fawley Waterside development. A marine management plan is to be agreed and established between Fawley Waterside and the County Council as a condition of the recently secured outline planning consent.

13. For the Waterside, the A326 is the main road that provides strategic access to/from the M27 and onto the M3 and to Southampton, with a high level of outward and inward commuting resulting in significant congestion at peak periods. It is recognised that substantial investment is required to improve the transport infrastructure, and in particular the A326 to enable the development opportunities outlined above to be fully realised.
14. In terms of the southern section of the A326, the County Council is leading on bringing forward delivery of improvements to 8 junctions along the A326 corridor, which would be required as mitigation for the completed development at Fawley Waterside, with £5.7M being secured from the Solent LEP and the balance of £2.4M being provided by Fawley Waterside.
15. In terms of the northern section of the A326, the County Council as Highway Authority is carrying out a multi modal assessment and developing preferred schemes and also preparing the strategic outline business case for a Large Local Major Scheme funding bid to the Department for Transport. Improvements, with anticipated costs of up to £140M, are likely to include cycling and walking upgrades alongside improvements to junctions and the upgrade of some of the single carriageway sections of the highway to dual carriageway between the A326 at Marchwood and the M27 at Junction 2. It is anticipated that the strategic outline business case will be submitted in early 2021.
16. The County Council as Highway Authority is also working with Network Rail and the Department for Transport to review the evidence and feasibility for reinstating passenger rail services on the Waterside railway line between Totton and potentially as far south as Cadland Road. The work informed the recently successful bid for DfT's Restoring your Railway Fund. The Strategic Outline Business Case will be submitted in November 2020. Totton Level Crossing is a critical issue and discussions are ongoing with interested parties regarding opportunities and potential for improvements.

Waterside Vision Statement – Purpose and Content

17. The primary purpose of the Vision statement is to establish a commonly shared and endorsed vision for the regeneration and economic potential of the Waterside area. This in turn provides a strong foundation for proposals and funding bids for specific elements of the vision. It is acknowledged that the process of bringing the Vision forward has taken longer than intended, which largely reflects the complexity of the local government geography and responsibilities, requiring three separate bodies to come together and agree a collective position through each authorities formal governance processes, to enable a comprehensive Local Government response.
18. For example, ABP is engaged in dialogue with the Department for Transport in relation to the Port Economic Partnership announced last year, a key 'ask' within which is support for the proposed major investment in the A326 (see

above), and of course being in a position to evidence collective political support for the vision is a robust backdrop for such discussions.

19. In addition, the County Council as Highway Authority is of course also in dialogue itself with the DfT in relation to multi modal transport improvements, including to the A326 and the strategic outline business case, and this business case is supported by the Vision document.
20. For Fawley Waterside, the recent securing of a resolution to grant outline planning consent is a major step forward, and collective endorsement by the local authorities of this vision can only assist in further generating investor confidence.
21. As referenced above, any competitive Freeport proposals developed by Solent LEP, ABP and others will undoubtedly be strengthened with this collectively endorsed vision in place.
22. In terms of content of the vision statement, see Appendix 1 - this includes:
 - a) The Waterside regeneration opportunity in a national context;
 - b) Introduction to the area and socio-economic profile;
 - c) The anticipated outcomes of the vision – economic, social and environmental
 - d) The key asks/needs to facilitate realisation of the vision.

Consultation and Equalities

23. Public consultations will be undertaken in relation to planning applications which relate to individual elements of the Waterside regeneration proposals, for example for Fawley Waterside (outline planning now secured) and in due course the proposed improvements to the northern section of the A326 and the investment proposed at Marchwood Military Port (both anticipated in 2021).

Recommendations

24. That Cabinet approves the Waterside Vision statement.
25. That Cabinet authorises the Leader to sign the final published version of this statement on behalf of the County Council, in conjunction with the Leader of New Forest District Council and the Chair of the New Forest National Park Authority.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u> Freeports consultation - https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/freeports-consultation	<u>Date</u> 10 Feb 2020

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Please note that this report relates to an overall vision for the Waterside regeneration area, and is therefore assessed to be neutral in terms of impact on persons with protected characteristics.

However, it should be noted that any future decisions which relate to specific sites and/or developments will be subject to site specific environmental impact assessments.