

Report to Cabinet

Subject: Top Wighay Farm Development Brief

Date: 2nd February 2017

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Wards Affected Newstead Abbey

Purpose

The purpose of the report is to bring the Development Brief for the Top Wighay Farm site to Cabinet for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document, following consultation in Autumn 2015.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Background

1. The Top Wighay Farm site is allocated as a strategic site for development in the Aligned Core Strategy which was adopted in September 2014. The existing development brief was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document in 2008 and covers only the portion of the site then allocated (for 595 dwellings). The Aligned Core Strategy expanded the allocation to encompass safeguarded land to the north of the previous allocation and, as such, a new development brief is required. The site was allocated for 1000 dwellings plus employment uses and future development will need to be supported by appropriate infrastructure. As a result of the more detailed planning and design work undertaken to inform the preparation of the development, it is now considered that the optimum site capacity is considered to be approximately 805 dwellings (in addition to the 38 dwellings already granted planning permission on part of the site to Strata Homes).
2. The key purpose of preparing a revised development brief is to help to achieve the range of uses and infrastructure to be provided, in order to guide the future development of the site. The development brief, when adopted as

a Supplementary Planning Document, will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications relating to the site.

3. The development brief will replace the existing Supplementary Planning Document adopted in November 2008.

Proposal

4. The draft development brief was consulted on between 18th September and 19th October 2015. A total of 29 responses were received from a number of organisations and local residents. The comments are summarised in the attached Statement of Representations which is attached as **Appendix A**.
5. The comments received have been considered carefully and have resulted in a number of changes being made to the development brief, as set out in the Statement of Representations and as shown (for ease of reference) in the strikethrough version of the development brief attached as **Appendix B**.
6. The key change to the brief arising from the consultation exercise is the clarification of the function of the brief through the addition of a new Chapter 8, which explains that the brief has been drafted to provide firm direction to individual site developers if the landowner chooses to develop the site by selling off land parcels to multiple parties. However, the landowner may choose to enter into a partnership with a single partner and thus to develop the site according to a single strategic masterplan incorporating the input of key local stakeholders. If this occurs, then there is the potential for the document to be interpreted more flexibly.
7. Other changes have been made to the brief by officers as minor corrections and updating, in particular to section 2.3 (which sets out the consultation process).
8. The preparation of the brief and the outcome of the consultation exercise have been discussed with key parties including Nottinghamshire County Council (as landowner), Ashfield District Council planning officers (as the adjoining local authority) and Linby and Papplewick Parish Councils.
9. The Top Wighay Farm Development Brief is now presented for adoption as a statutory Supplementary Planning Document. Following adoption, all respondents will be notified and the document will then be made available on the Borough Council's website and at the Civic Centre in Arnold in accordance with the Regulations.

Alternative Options

10. One alternative option is not to adopt the development brief as a

supplementary planning document. Whilst there is no requirement in national planning policy for a development brief to be prepared, they are useful documents for expanding on the relevant policy in the development plan (in this case the Local Plan and now the Aligned Core Strategy). In particular, for strategic sites such as Top Wighay Farm, they can help in ensuring that development that may come forward in a piecemeal manner is considered and delivered comprehensively.

11. Another alternative option is to adopt the brief as informal planning guidance rather than as a supplementary planning document. However, this would afford the document less status in future decision making than as a supplementary planning document.

Financial Implications

12. Costs associated with the previous consultation exercise were met from existing budgets. There are no additional costs associated with the adoption of the development brief. The Supplementary Planning Document replaces existing guidance.

Appendices

Appendix A – Statement of Representations
Appendix B – Strikethrough version of Final Development Brief
Appendix C – Final Development Brief

Background Papers

None.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to adopt the Top Wighay Farm Development Brief at Appendix C of this report as a Supplementary Planning Document and authorise its inspection by members of the public and other interested parties.

Reasons for Recommendation

To ensure that the Top Wighay Farm strategic site is considered and delivered comprehensively.