

Executive

Redevelopment Of Bryan House, Chapel Street, Bicester

1 December 2008

Report of Head of Planning and Affordable Housing Policy

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval to the publication, following public consultation, of Informal Development Principles to guide the redevelopment of the site.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended:

- (1) To approve the publication of an Informal Development Principles document, which has been amended in response to public consultation, for the redevelopment of Bryan House, Chapel Street, Bicester.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the background to the preparation of Informal Development Principles for the redevelopment of Bryan House Chapel Street, Bicester, the responses received to consultation and the amendments made to the document as a result. It recommends that the Informal development Principles should be approved as a material consideration in the determination of applications on the site.

Proposals

- 1.2 To approve the Informal Development Principles for the redevelopment of Bryan House.

Conclusion

- 1.3 That the Executive approve Informal Development Principles to guide the redevelopment of Bryan House.

Background Information

- 2.1 Bryan House, Chapel Street is owned and managed by Sanctuary Housing Association. It falls short of current standards of accommodation and the Housing Association intends to redevelop it with affordable housing to meet local needs. Chapel Street public car park is located immediately to the east of Bryan House on land cleared of housing in the mid 20th century, since which time it has created an unsightly gap in the street frontage. Part of the site is located within Bicester Conservation Area, where the Council has a duty to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.
- 2.2 The Head of Planning and Affordable Housing Policy considered that the redevelopment of Bryan House opened up the opportunity to
- restore the historic Chapel Street frontage, through the redevelopment of residential accommodation by Sanctuary Housing Association on Council owned land
 - relocate public car parking on land currently owned by the Housing Association, which would then be screened between the redeveloped frontage and the redeveloped Bryan House
 - deliver Affordable Housing to meet local needs. The site will include temporary accommodation for households eligible for assistance under homelessness legislation and is required to deliver the Council's Temporary Accommodation strategy..
- 2.3 The Head of Planning and Affordable Housing Policy accordingly prepared draft Informal Development Principles setting out how this could be achieved. The document has been the subject of public consultation and the comments received are reported below.

Key Issues for Consideration/Reasons for Decision and Options

- 3.1 The draft document envisages a continuation of the Chapel Street frontage on the current Chapel Street (south) car park and part of Chapel Brook (north) car park with terraced dwellings of a scale and of traditional materials sympathetic to the street scene. A mixture of new houses and flats would be provided on the site of Bryan House with residential car parking located in a courtyard between these, utilising the existing access to Bryan House. Public car parking and parking allocated to the Willows would remain on the Chapel Brook (north) car park. No buildings other than Bryan House would be demolished and it is the intention that the number of public car parking spaces remains the same as at present. The banks of the Town Brook would be made more informal, softened with planting, and the culverted Back Ditch would also be opened up, enhancing biodiversity. The site is a tight one, highly constrained, and delivering all these objectives is not straight forward.
- 3.3 The document was subject to public consultation from 16 April to 8 May 2008. Comments received are reported at Appendix A, together with the changes that have been made to the document in response.
- 3.4 Generally the intentions of re-instating the historic street frontage and opening up the canalised water courses were welcomed by respondents. Key issues only are drawn to Members' attention below.

- 3.5 The Environment Agency initially objected to the proposal on the grounds that the site lay within the notional flood plain of the River Bure. However, the production of a Flood Risk Assessment and lengthy negotiations resulted in the EA accepting that the site would not flood and the EA has now withdrawn its objection on fluvial matters. The details of the requirement for a dry access, a safe overland flood route, ground floor levels and the submission of a sequential test with an application for the site have been included in the amended Informal Development Principles.
- 3.6 The family of the owner / occupier of 70 Chapel Street expressed concerns about loss of daylight to the kitchen window in the gable of the property. The Head of Planning and Affordable Housing Policy has visited the property with the family. It is considered by HPAHP and the family that the loss of one new dwelling, pulling the development further away from the gable of no 70, the retention of car parking immediately adjacent to no 70 together with a reduction of height of the nearest new dwelling from 2 1/2 storeys to 2 storeys would be an acceptable compromise.
- 3.7 The owner / occupier of an adjacent property, Monks Retreat, was also present at the meeting and expressed concerns about loss of privacy. There are no windows to the property that would be affected, other than a conservatory, and it is loss of privacy to the garden that is of concern. The occupant considers that the measures outlined above, including a restriction on living rooms to the ground floor in proximity to his property floor would also adequately address his concerns.
- 3.8 Sanctuary Housing Association initially expressed its concern that requiring the retention of public car parking reduces the capacity of the site. However, following the production of an indicative master plan by the Head of Planning and Affordable Housing, included in the document, the Association appears satisfied with the capacity and has instructed its architect to proceed on that basis.

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

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| Option One | Approve the amended informal Development Principles as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications on the site. |
| Option Two | Approve the Informal Development Principles with further amendments. |
| Option Three | Not to approve the document. |

Consultations

Letters were sent to

- the Housing Services Manager, Sanctuary Housing Association,
- the Association's architect,
- Oxfordshire County Council,
- Mouchel Parkman on behalf of the County Council,

- Bicester Town Council,
- Bicester Historical Society,
- the Environment Agency,
- The Vale Housing Association re The Willows,
- The Manager, The Willows,
- numbers 1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 38, 40, 42, 70, 84 Chapel Street,
- Tresco, The Bungalow, Manick, Upards, Chapel Street,
- 1, 2, 3, 4 Chapel Mews,
- The Manager Saxon Court,
- The Manager St Edburgs, 29 Old Place Yard,
- 1, 2, 3, 4 Priory Terrace,
- Bassett Lodge, The Mill, The Old Priory and Priory Lodge, Priory Lane.

Responses were received from

- Sanctuary Housing Association and its architect,
- The Vale Housing Association,
- Oxfordshire County Council,
- The Environment Agency,
- Bicester Historical Association,
- Priory Lane Residents Association,
- neighbours at 70 Chapel Street and 4 Priory Terrace.

The consultation responses are listed at Appendix A, together with the changes that have been made to the document as a result.

Implications

Financial:	<p>There are no financial implications for this authority arising from this report. If the number of car parking spaces remains approximately the same, revenue should not change.</p> <p>Comments checked by Eric Meadows, Accountant 01295 221552.</p>
Legal:	<p>Transfer of land ownership between the Council and Sanctuary Housing Association will be required. There are no other legal implications for this authority arising from this report.</p> <p>Comments checked by Sue Christie, Assistant Solicitor 01295 221690</p>
Risk Management:	<p>The approval of the Informal Development Principles assists the Head of Planning Control and Major Developments in ensuring a high quality proposal, which preserves and enhances Bicester Conservation Area.</p> <p>Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management and Insurance Officer 01295 221566,</p>

Wards Affected

Bicester Town

Corporate Plan Themes

Theme 6: Protect and Enhance the Local Environment
Theme 10: Focus on Cherwell's People

Executive Portfolio

Councillor Michael Gibbard
Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix A	Consultation responses and amendments made to the document
Appendix B	Informal Development Principles document
Background Papers	
None	
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