

Report on the Master Plan for the Premdor/Rockways Development at Sible Hedingham		Agenda No: 5
Corporate Priority:	Housing and Transport meet local needs, business is encouraged and local economy prospers and the environment is clean and green	
Report presented by:	Emma Goodings	
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Background Papers: BDC Core Strategy 2011 LDF Sub Committee minutes 25 th July 2012 Premdor/Rockways draft Masterplan June 2012 Public consultation responses, including a petition.	Public	
Options: To approve or not approve the Premdor/Rockways Masterplan as planning guidance in the determination of planning applications	Key Decision: NO	
Executive Summary: The former Premdor and Rockways premises were identified in the Core Strategy as a site for regeneration. A draft masterplan for the site was produced and was the subject of public consultation in June and July. Following the responses received during this consultation, amendments have been made to the masterplan including safeguarding 0.2ha of land for a new doctor's surgery/health centre to serve the villages of Castle and Sible Hedingham. This is proposed as the final masterplan to be considered for approval by the Members.		
Decision: That it be Recommended to Cabinet and to Council that the Premdor/Rockways Sible Hedingham Masterplan be approved as guidance in the determination of planning applications.		
Purpose of Decision: To agree or not agree the Council's position on the Premdor/Rockways site masterplan which will inform the determination of planning applications received on the site.		
Corporate implications [should be explained in detail]		
Financial:	Community benefits and infrastructure requirements will be linked to future development	
Legal:	The masterplan and its consultation must be carried out in line with regulations, in order to be approved by the Council as planning guidance.	
Equalities/Diversity	Proposed development and protection of the environment will have an impact on equalities/diversity	
Customer Impact:	The redevelopment of the site will have an impact on the residents, especially those that live in close proximity of the site	
Environment and	The masterplan proposes to develop the land in line with	

Climate Change:	sustainability principles, including improvements to the local wildlife site
Consultation/Community Engagement:	The masterplan has been the subject of a 4 week consultation. A public exhibition has been held and the document has been available on the Council's website
Risks:	That the masterplan will not be approved by the Council which could delay a planning application for the site
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1. Introduction

1.1 The BDC Core Strategy, adopted in 2011, identifies Sible Hedingham as one of the six Key Service Villages within the District. Paragraph 4.20 states that; *“More limited development to serve the local area, or deal with specific local issues such as the regeneration of important sites, can be located in the Key Service Villages”* To this end paragraph 6.13 stated: *‘In order to promote the economic viability of the Key Service Villages, the Council will promote the regeneration of the following areas in two of the Key Service Villages.’* This identified the former Premdor site and adjoining Rockways premises as a regeneration area in Sible Hedingham, with uses to include housing, employment, a doctors surgery, riverside nature reserve and open space and allotments.

2. The Masterplan

2.1 A draft masterplan was produced earlier in the year, which was subject to a four week public consultation period in June and July 2012. An exhibition and a public meeting, organised by the Parish Council, were held in the village and a total of 53 responses were received to the consultation. The Parish Council received a further 38 responses to its own questionnaire.

2.2 The Council has listened to the comments made during the public consultation period by the statutory consultees, the Parish Council and local residents as well as those expressed at the LDF Sub Committee meeting on the 25th July 2012. Amendments have been made to the masterplan to take into account these comments and a final masterplan has now been produced, which is included in Appendix 1 of this report.

2.3 The masterplan proposes around 230 dwellings on the site of the old Premdor and adjacent Rockways factory, as well as significant amounts of open space, in particular through public access to the Hedingham Station Marsh Local Wildlife Site, a work hub, space for a new health centre and the creation of new footpath/cycleways and new crossing points on Station Road and Swan Street.

2.4 The main changes between the draft masterplan and this one are;

- The safeguarding of an area of 0.2ha for the provision of a doctor's surgery/health centre to be delivered by Mid Essex NHS.
- The text sets out in more detail the design of the LEAP and informal open space at the centre of the site and makes clear that this area will be fenced to ensure

that there is no conflict with the open culvert in this location. An artist's impression, of how this part of the site may look, is also included.

- The table setting out the infrastructure requirements and delivery from the area has also been updated to take into account the most recent information. It specifies that the site will be delivering the following infrastructure provision;
 - 30% affordable housing across the site
 - Provision of 0.1ha of land and construction of a work hub/enterprise centre
 - Provision of 0.2ha of land to be safeguarded for a health centre and used in the interim by the Parish Council
 - Refurbishment of the old bank building and provision of a community park adjacent to Swan Street
 - A financial contribution to education as requested by Essex County Council
 - River Chancel restoration on culverted channel running under the site
 - Contribution requested by Essex County Council for the provision of extra land for early years/childcare places
 - Public open space, play and recreation areas in line with the standards set out in the Council's Open Space SPD
 - Enhancement of the local wildlife site (Hedingham Station Marsh)
 - A contribution to allotments offsite, in line with the standards set out in the Council's Open Space SPD
 - Financial contribution requested by Essex County Council for the provision of public transport and other highway improvements
 - Public realm improvements such as street furniture and trees to be included on the site
 - A footpath and a footpath/cycleway through the local nature reserve and further pedestrian links through the site and to new crossing facilities in Swan Street and Station Road.

2.5 These contributions are in line with the requirements set out in Table 2 of the Core Strategy in relation to the regeneration of this site and in the Council's adopted policies relating to affordable housing and open space. Bloor Homes, who are developing the Premdor part of the site, are confident that all of these requirements can be delivered.

3. Alternative Option

3.1 The District Council has received correspondence from the agent acting for the proposed developer of the Rockways part of the site, included in Appendix 2, stating that they may wish to promote an alternative option to housing for this part of the site, which would contain;

- A limited amount of residential development on the frontage of Station Road
- A registered care home

3.2 The option of a care home on the site had been considered previously by the District and Parish Council and was considered to be a good option, as this would provide further employment on the site. The Market Position Statement, produced by Essex County Council and previously reported to this sub committee in June, noted that the District was meeting its identified needs in terms of care home places. However, this provision is mainly located in the main towns and the existing care home in Sible Hedingham is over-subscribed. The letter states that this proposal could provide up to 60 full and part-time jobs at a variety of skill levels.

3.3 Sible Hedingham Parish Council have been informed of the proposed alternative development of Rockways for a care home. At their meeting on the 10th September the Parish Council unanimously supported a proposed care home which they felt would make a good facility and provide employment.

3.4 It is considered therefore that the option of a care home on the Rockways part of the site, would be a viable alternative to the residential development set out in the masterplan, subject to design and layout work. However, it should be noted that this proposal would reduce the level of 'normal' residential dwellings on the site by around 30, with a corresponding decrease in affordable housing provision.

3.5 If this option were to be progressed, the Council would expect the applicant to engage in a significant level of public consultation before the submission of an application.

Recommendation

To approve the Premdor/Rockways, Sible Hedingham Masterplan, including the alternative option of a registered care home on the Rockways part of the site, as planning guidance in the determination of planning applications.