

East Herts Council

Council

Date of Meeting: 29 January 2020

**Report by: Cllr Haysey, Leader of the Council and Cllr Goodeve,
Executive Member for Planning and Growth**

**Report title: Mangrove Road (HERT5), Hertford, Masterplanning
Framework**

Ward(s) affected: All

Summary

- To enable Members to consider the Masterplanning Framework for Mangrove Road (HERT5), Hertford.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:

- (a) That the Masterplanning Framework for the Mangrove Road (HERT5) site, Hertford, as detailed at Appendix 'A' to this report, be agreed as a material consideration for Development Management purposes.**

1.0 Proposal(s)

- 1.1 The Masterplanning Framework sets a vision for the future development of the Mangrove Road strategic allocation, Hertford. The Document reflects the policy requirements of policies HERT5 and DES1 of the East Herts District Plan, 2018 and it is therefore recommended that the Masterplanning Framework be agreed as a material consideration for Development Management purposes.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The East Herts approach to Masterplanning was first presented to the District Planning Executive Panel in September 2017 (and agreed by Council on the 18th October 2017). The report sets out a series of steps that describe the various stages involved and processes expected for each of the District Plan strategic allocations. Whilst not a one-size-fits-all approach, the process is based upon a collaborative approach to identifying and resolving issues, creating a vision for what the site aspires to achieve, testing design options and consulting upon preferred solutions. The output of this process is a masterplan framework or masterplan which is presented to members for consideration.
- 2.2 In order to embed the Masterplanning process in the District Plan, Policy DES1: Masterplanning requires all 'significant' development proposals to prepare a masterplan setting out the quantum and distribution of land uses; access; sustainable high quality design and layout principles; necessary infrastructure; the relationship between the site and other adjacent and nearby land uses; landscape and heritage assets and other relevant matters. Furthermore, the masterplan should be collaboratively prepared and informed by public participation. Finally, Policy DES1 states that in order to ensure sites are planned and delivered comprehensively, any application for development on part of the site will be assessed against its contribution to the masterplan as a whole.
- 2.3 The masterplan should therefore provide sufficient information to inform the preparation of detailed aspects of the site at the planning application stage. The level of detail required for the masterplan will depend upon the likely form of delivery of the site. For example, where delivery is expected by one party who has been involved throughout the Plan-making stages, a masterplan framework may be prepared, which provides key parameters and aspirations which form the basis of detailed design determined through a planning application process at a later stage.

2.4 For each of the strategic sites allocated in the District Plan, a Steering Group has been, or will be established. This will comprise East Herts councillors, town and parish councillors, representatives of the local community and other interested groups where appropriate. The Steering Group is a sounding board for key issues and depending upon specific circumstances, for discussing detailed design elements whilst preparing the planning application through to when construction is underway. In respect of the HERT5 allocation, Shaping Hertford is the appropriate Steering Group for progressing this Masterplan Framework.

3.0 Considerations

3.1 The land at Mangrove Road, Hertford is a strategic allocation within the adopted East Herts District Plan under Policy HERT5.

3.2 Policy HERT5 sets out the proposed land uses and other policy requirements as well as a requirement that a masterplan is produced in a collaborative manner with stakeholders. The policy allocates the site for around 50 dwellings.

3.3 The site covers a total area of 4.87 hectares with the developable area covering 2.67 hectares of the eastern part of the site. The western part of the site remains within the Green Belt; by limiting development to the eastern half of the site only, the Hertford Green Finger is preserved between HERT5 and Hagsdell Stream including the higher and lower level tree belts.

3.4 In terms of site-specific matters, as a smaller site of around 50 dwellings, its only requirement in terms of community facilities is to provide a play area within the site and the upgrade of the pedestrian and cycle way along Mangrove Road to Simon Balle School. It will contribute towards other local provision through S.106 agreement/s in due course through the planning application process.

3.5 It will also be expected to meet all other relevant HERT5 policy criteria, addressing issues such as transport (both locally and wider/strategically); access; and, wider opportunities to link into

pedestrian, cycleway and bridleway networks.

3.6 The Masterplanning Framework document found at Appendix A sets out a vision and framework to address these matters, the sections can be summarised as follows:

- Following an introduction, page 5 sets out the vision for the site with particular emphasis upon high quality design, landscaping, and green infrastructure links to the Green Finger to the west of the site.
- Pages 6-11 identify and summarise the background and contextual information influencing the site; this includes the site's location in Hertford, the planning policy context and historic built environment.
- Pages 12-16 provide an analysis of the existing site itself, and identify the opportunities and constraints, and the potential landscape aspirations that have influenced the framework.
- Pages 13-20 summarises the consultation and engagement stages undertaken and how this influenced the masterplan framework as a whole. There is more detailed information on the engagement on this masterplan found at paragraph 3.8-3.14 in this report.
- Pages 21-23 present the final Masterplan Framework as a collective result of the previous sections and the engagement and consultation. Page 23 displays the final Masterplan Framework building on the framework presented at the previous Shaping Hertford meeting (page 21).
- Pages 24-30, the final section of the framework, focuses upon design and landscape aspirations of the site taking inspiration from the immediate area to the site.

3.7 Policies DES1 and HERT5 in the District Plan identifies collaborative preparation and public participation as a key element of masterplanning. Below is a detailed summary of the engagement undertaken during the masterplan process.

Engagement:

- 3.8 Throughout the Plan-making stage a number of meetings have been held with officers to discuss a wide variety of matters. Following the Plan-making stage, Officers have met regularly with CALA Homes and other parties as programmed in the Planning Performance Agreement. These initial discussions have helped to inform the Masterplanning Framework.
- 3.9 As noted in paragraph 2.4 (above), every strategic site is expected to engage with a Steering Group and in the case of HERT5 'Shaping Hertford' was recognised as the appropriate group to enable the site to discuss detailed matters. This group comprises Officers from East Herts and Hertfordshire County Council, a number of Executive Members and local ward councillors, as well as representatives from Hertford Civic Society and Oak Grove Residents Association alongside other community representatives specific to the HERT5 site as well.
- 3.10 Two meetings with Shaping Hertford took place in total, the first on 2nd September 2019 where initial, broad masterplan ideas and details on the vision and design aspirations were presented and then discussed. After the presentation, wider issues were discussed such as highways congestion and speed, alongside detailed site-specific matters such as potential overlooking of neighbours, the retention of trees and the management of the open space.
- 3.11 Following this, a public consultation event was undertaken on 16th October 2019. The exhibition was publicised by way of individual leaflets delivered to 1,484 residential households and 30 businesses. The evening itself saw a total of 127 people attend the event, feedback was received in various mediums as noted on page 18 of the Masterplan Framework. As well as answering closed-questions, the most common representations and issues raised related to access, traffic, the speed limit and other local amenities. After this the most common topics related to green space and ecology.
- 3.12 CALA Homes also met with those residents of Ashbourne Gardens who's residence are located immediately adjacent to

the sites northern boundary, recognising that this site boundary had particular sensitivities to the development of this site – the treatment of the boundary was discussed with the residents. The discussions and outcomes of this meeting are highlighted on page 19 of the Masterplan Framework.

- 3.13 The second and final Shaping Hertford Meeting took place on 19th November 2019 where further details were discussed and an updated masterplan was presented. Discussion centred around the use, ownership and access to the green finger to the west of the site; as well questions that related to the landscaping of the site and the retention of trees generally.
- 3.14 Some of the themes and topics discussed cannot necessarily be addressed comprehensively through the masterplan process. Where this is the case, officers and the developers will continue to work through the planning application process on these issues.

Conclusions

- 3.15 It is the view of Officers that the Mangrove Road Masterplanning Framework provides a sound basis upon which to move forward to prepare a detailed planning application. When considered against District Plan policies DES1 and HERT5, the document provides a framework that addresses the necessary requirements and main issues of significance in relation to the site. It simultaneously provides the necessary flexibility to allow further details to develop within the framework's vision up to, and through, the planning application stage.
- 3.16 The engagement and collaborative requirements of a masterplan set out in policies DES1 and HERT5 have been comprehensively fulfilled by the Masterplanning Framework. Officers will continue to work with the applicant and other stakeholders to ensure that the best possible outcomes are achieved on this site.
- 3.17 The Master Plan Document contains a vision and series of objectives that reflect the requirements of Policy HERT5, and

with appropriate implementation, particularly in regards to sustainable design and landscaping, these ambitions will be achieved on the site. It is therefore recommended that the Masterplanning Framework as detailed at Essential Reference Paper 'A', be agreed as a material consideration for Development Management purposes¹.

4.0 Options

4.1 The District Plan requires strategic sites to undertake a masterplanning process.

5.0 Risks

5.1 As the masterplanning process is a policy requirement within the District Plan, the Council needs to ensure that officers and members are engaged fully in the process and see the masterplans through the democratic reporting process.

6.0 Implications/Consultations

6.1 The masterplanning process includes public engagement and steering group meetings with members and local representatives.

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

No

Environmental Sustainability

No

Financial

No

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

No

Human Rights

No

Legal

No

Specific Wards

Hertford Castle Ward

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 East Herts District Plan October 2018 – Chapter 7 - Hertford,
<https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/districtplan>

7.2 Appendix A: Mangrove Road Masterplanning Framework

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¹ A material consideration is a matter that should be taken into account in deciding a planning application or on an appeal against a planning decision.