

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

FROM: Head of Natural and Built Environment

REPORT NUMBER: **J36**

TO: STRATEGY COMMITTEE

DATE OF MEETING: 18 June 2009

SUDBURY TOWN CENTRE BUS STATION SITE- TIMESCALE/EARLY STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION STAGE FOR DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report provides an update in respect of the Sudbury Town Centre/Bus Station site Development Brief (the area is shown on the attached plan). It seeks agreement to the proposed timescale and process and the criteria against which options for the Sudbury Town Centre/bus station site (allocated under Policy SD06 in the Adopted Local Plan) will be assessed, as part of the consultation with stakeholders.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the timescale and process set out in Appendix A be agreed.
- 2.2 That the criteria set out in paragraph 5.9 be agreed as a basis for assessing options as part of the stakeholder consultation.

The Committee is able to resolve this matter.

3. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The progression of the Stakeholder Consultation on the Sudbury Town Centre/Bus Station Development Brief raises no direct financial implications and the work is being paid for by external Haven Gateway Partnership Funds.

4. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 This report is most closely linked with the Council's Significant Business Risk No. (5 - capacity). Key risks are set out below:

Risk Description	Likelihood	Seriousness or Impact	Mitigation Measures
Risk that prolonged timescale would result in the project not being delivered	C- Significant	2 - Critical	Progress with stakeholder consultation to move forward with the preparation of a Development Brief for the site.

Risk Description	Likelihood	Seriousness or Impact	Mitigation Measures
Risk that delay in delivery will result in losing the Haven Gateway Partnership Funding allocated for this project	C- Significant	2- Critical	Ensure that the Development Brief is prepared in accordance with timescale to secure funding to assist with implementation
Risk that Suffolk County Council will go ahead with a minimal upgrade of the existing Bus Station which would provide limited improvement and hinder the opportunity for comprehensive re-development of the site.	D- Low	2- Critical	Ensure a comprehensive Development Brief is prepared in Partnership with SCC and in accordance with the timescale.

5. **KEY INFORMATION**

Background

- 5.1 The area of Sudbury Town Centre including Hamilton Road and the Bus Station is allocated in the Adopted Local Plan under Policy SD06. The overriding policy context for this is for redevelopment for mixed use featuring retail, leisure or other commercial uses, with the acceptance that residential development could be part of the scheme.
- 5.2 This area has been promoted as a retail / commercial redevelopment area for some years. It represents a focal point between the traditional retail core and an area occupied by two main supermarkets, public transport nodes, the leisure centre and much of the off-street car parking serving the town centre. The Local Plan makes a commitment to preparing a Development Brief for the site to ensure integrated, viable and sustainable future development for the area. The preparation of the Development Brief is a key action in the Council's One Year Delivery Plan and will contribute to the achievement of the Council's strategic priority of "A Strong and Sustainable Babergh Economy".
- 5.3 Funding has been awarded from the Haven Gateway Partnership Fund as part of the New Growth Point Fund, recognising the importance of town centre renaissance at the heart of the Spatial Objectives. This has enabled the Council to appoint an Urban Design Consultant to bring in the specialist skills to input into a Development Brief. The funding will also enable the Council to contribute towards negotiations and land assembly to aid delivery of an agreed scheme, as required.

- 5.4 The site includes the Bus Station which Suffolk County Council has a commitment to improve, with a budget allocated to implement this in the current financial year. However, it is important that the redevelopment of the whole site is looked at comprehensively, and that any proposals for the bus station are integrated with the redevelopment of the site as a whole. The District Council and County Council are therefore working in partnership in preparing a development brief for the site.
- 5.5 The development brief is being prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), within the Local Development Framework. The timescale and stages for this reflect the legislative steps required for preparing SPD, as well as respecting the time scale for the allocated budgets for implementation of this work, both from the Haven Gateway Partnership and Suffolk County Council. The timescale and process, upon which officers have consulted with the Political Leaders Group, is illustrated in detail in the table in Appendix A. This sets out the stages of preparation, who is to be involved and when, and in particular when and how Ward Members and Strategy Committee will be involved in the process.
- 5.6 The timetable illustrates that the next stage is to undertake discussions with stakeholders as informal consultation. The stakeholders are listed in the timetable and will include; Sudbury Town Council, Sudbury Chamber of Commerce, Sudbury Market Town Partnership, Sudbury Society, Bus Operators, Companies and Users, Landowners and Occupiers on the site and adjoining the site and the Borehamgate shopping centre owners.
- 5.7 Considerable background work has enabled several options to be established to form the basis of discussions with the key stakeholders. One of the key considerations for this site is ensuring that a scheme has a realistic potential to be delivered. One aspect of this, will be to approach redevelopment in a phased way. It is recognised that the development brief must look at comprehensive redevelopment of the whole site, however, some elements may require a longer timescale to consider and resolve detailed issues. It is important that any such issues do not delay the opportunity to move forward in respect of the rest of the site. For this reason, the Lloyds Bank Garden is recognised as having potential to make a positive contribution to the area, but the detail is to be explored at a later phase. It is recognised that there are serious limitations in respect of opening this up as public open space, due to the fact that it is surrounded by a listed wall and has no natural surveillance which would be essential if its use were to be encouraged. It is considered that the complexities associated with this could hold up progress on the remaining area.

Objectives of the Project

- 5.8 The intention is that the development brief contributes to Babergh's Strategic Objectives, in particular, to "A strong and Sustainable Economy" by meeting a number of key objectives as summarised below;
- To establish an integrated vision for the area;
 - To provide a framework for development, attractive to developers and their customers and create a new urban quarter of Sudbury;
 - To establish a key link between the primary traditional retail core of the town centre (Market Hill) with two major stores and significant areas of car parking serving the town centre;
 - To ensure that the development framework allows for the redevelopment of a the bus station accommodating the needs of the operators and users;

- To promote the correct balance and mix of uses which complement each other, enhance the commercial, social and environmental characteristics of the area and contribute to a mixed, diverse and safe town centre and night time economy;
- To develop a scheme that has the support of key stakeholders and landowners to enhance the deliverability of the re-development;
- To ensure that development is of a scale and design of a high quality that respects the residential amenity of nearby existing dwellings, as well as any new residential elements developed as part of the mixed use scheme;
- To promote, enhance and expand the role of Sudbury as an important, commercial, tourist and social centre;
- To enhance the built environment of the area and to protect those elements of high quality or architectural or historic interest;
- To maximise the potential existing open spaces and landscape qualities (including protected trees) within the site can make to the quality of the environment;
- To ensure the area is accessible to all. To fully integrate wider opportunities to address transport / highway problems in areas associated with or nearby the site. E.g. an improved Bus Station may have wider implications re road improvements/ traffic flow etc which are beyond the site area. This should be addressed comprehensively to make overall town centre work with the redevelopment of this site as part of it.

Suggested Criteria (for assessing different scheme options)

5.9 As part of the stakeholder discussions it is suggested that each option, together with any further options that may come forward are assessed against the standard criteria, which is essentially linked to the extent to which the objectives could be met by the schemes. This will assist with identifying the extent to which various schemes are possible. The criteria for assessing the options are listed below;

1. Bus Station

- a. Is the proposed location of the bus station accessible to the Town Centre and in close proximity to the railway station?
- b. Does the proposed location of the bus station allow for pedestrian access and avoid conflicts between movements of pedestrians, buses and other traffic?
- c. Does the proposal provide access to buses to adequately serve those people using them (Do buses stop, where people using them, would like them to?)
- d. Does the provision made for buses meet the current and projected needs of the companies and operators?

2. Traffic

- a. Does the layout proposed lead to any traffic problems in relation to all users of Great Eastern Road and the surrounding junctions?
- b. Does the proposed layout provide significant improvements to access/crossing points/Shared surface/and safety for those using the area in and around the site?

3. Pedestrian Access

- a. Does the proposal provide adequate pedestrian priority through the site?
- b. Does the layout provide a clear distinction between pedestrian area, bus areas and parking throughout the site?

4. Public Realm

- a. Does the proposal create a new exciting area for Sudbury Town centre? Does it create a new quarter for Sudbury?
- b. Does the proposal provide enough opportunities to contribute to the “public Realm” for this part of Sudbury?
- c. Does the proposal make a positive contribution / enhancement to the street scene within the site and on Great Eastern Road?

5. Mix of Uses

- a. Are the range of uses proposed for the area suitable for Sudbury Town Centre?
- b. Is the nature, scale and location of the proposed land uses acceptable to the surrounding residential development?
- c. Are there any other uses appropriate in this area of Sudbury?

6. Deliverability

- a. Are there any obstacles which could make it difficult for the scheme to be delivered?
 - Land assembly;
 - Junction / highway improvements off the site;
 - Consequential traffic implications elsewhere to enable implementation;
 - Consequential requirements for bus demand e.g Stops beyond the site;
 - Other issues.

6. APPENDICES

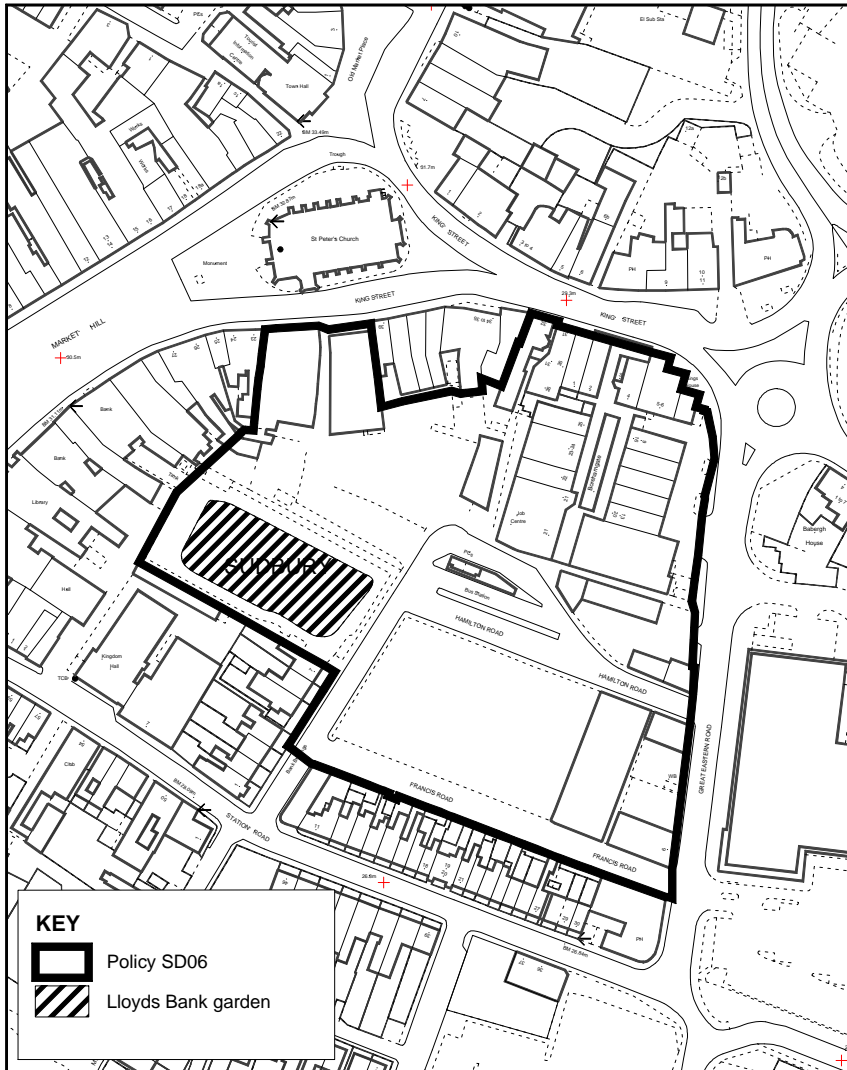
- (a) Timescale / Process Table

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS REFERRED TO:

Babergh Local Plan Alteration No.2 Adopted June 2006.
Integrated Development Programme Haven Gateway Partnership

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KEY



Policy SD06



Lloyds Bank garden



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SCALE 1:1250

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APPENDIX A

SUDBURY TOWN CENTRE / BUS STATION SITE –Timescale / process for preparation of a development Brief

Party	Target date	Content / method / Purpose	Responsibility BDC/ SCC	Date set / completed
Landowners	March- End of April	Meetings/ discussions of Early ideas	BDC and SCC Officers	In Progress
Informal Member Group (Sudbury Memebrrs)	Early-Mid April	Briefing on progress, process and timetable	BDC/ SCC Officers	27.04.09
Technical Officer Group	End of May	Consider outcome and refine options-agree content for preliminary stakeholder consultation. Agree criteria for assessing options	BDC / SCC Officers	2/6/09
Informal Member Group	June	Briefing on content to be presented for Stakeholder discussions and background to assessment criteria.	BDC / SCC officers	Date to be arranged
Purdah restrictions				
Suffolk CC and Babergh DC- Members Strategy	June -Post County Council Elections	Briefing on content to be presented for Stakeholder / discussions/ Consultation. Decision on timescale / process/ criteria.	BDC / SCC Officers	18 th June Strategy. SCC date to be arranged
Invite Subury Town Council for briefing prior to meeting other stakeholders			tba soon after 18 th June	
Stakeholders- Preliminary Consultation / Discussions- During July				
to include all groups below to inform content / process and timescale for preliminary discussion- End of June onwards date to be arranged- Meet together and consider individual meetings if requested				
Sudbury Town Council	Early July	Attend meeting of STC / Presentation of options/ discussions / invite comments / ideas / alternatives	BDC and SCC Officers	Date to be arranged
Sudbury Market Town Partnership	Mid July	Attend meeting of SMTP / Presentation of options/ discussions / invite comments / ideas / alternatives	BDC and SCC Officers	Date to be arranged

Sudbury Society	Mid July	Attend meeting of SS / Presentation of options/ discussions / invite comments / ideas / alternatives	BDC and SCC Officers	Date to be arranged
Sudbury Chamber of Commerce	Mid July	Attend meeting of Chamber of Com / Presentation of options/ discussions / invite comments / ideas / alternatives	BDC and SCC Officers	Date to be arranged
Bus Operators and Companies and users	Mid July	Meet as a group / presentation and discussion	BDC and SCC Officers	Date to be arranged
Occupiers and Owners of adjacent properties	End of July	Meet as a group presentation and discussion	BDC and SCC Officers	Date to be arranged
Borehamgate Owners	End of July	Meeting presentation and discussion	BDC and SCC Officers	Date to be arranged
Technical Officer Group	Early August	Consider outcome from preliminary consultation and amend and agree formal consultation options and format details.	BDC and SCC Officers. Invite Paul Simon re media / press role for public consultation	Date to be arranged
Informal Member group	Early August	Consider outcome from preliminary consultation and amend and agree formal consultation options and format details.	BDC and SCC Officers	Date to be arranged
Suffolk DC and Babergh DC- Members- Strategy	September	Report and presentation of options and content for public consultation. Decision on Options for formal consultation	BDC and SCC officers	17th September BDC Strategy. SCC date to be arranged
Invite Sudbury Town Council for a briefing prior to wider consultation			tba soon after 17th Sept	
Formal Public Consultation- Statutory Consultees and General Public- 6 weeks To End October / November				
Statutory Consultees for SCC and BDC (Final list to be agreed)	October	Letter and notification of exhibitions	BDC and SCC Officers	Date to be arranged
Pre- exhibition by invitation (BDC, SCC elected Members, Stakeholders listed above	Early October	Exhibition in Town Centre Venue to present options / justification/ pros and cons etc	All Members of technical Officer Group	Date to be arranged

and adjoining Parish Councils				
Public Exhibition	October/ Various dates and times	Exhibition in Town Centre Venue to present options / justification/ pros and cons etc. Include Questionnaire for responses. (Include a press release or other media action appropriate (to be discussed in detail PS with Working Group Members)	BDC and SCC Officers	Date to be arranged
Technical Officer Group	November	Consider responses and prepare final SPD based on outcomes and assessment	BDC and SCC Officers	Date to be arranged
Management Team	December	Report on proposed option(s) for the Development Brief	BDC Officers	21.12.09
Informal Member Group	December	Report on responses and briefing on final SPD based on outcomes and assessment	BDC and SCC Officers	Date to be arranged
Suffolk DC and Babergh DC- Members	January 2010	Report to appropriate Committees to agree / adopt Final SPD. Decision to Adopt selected option as SPD- (Development Brief)	BDC and SCC Officers	14th January 2010 BDC Strategy. SCC date to be arranged