

	<b>Executive Committee</b> <b>28<sup>th</sup> June 2017</b>	<b>Agenda Item No.</b> <b>5</b>
<b>Title</b>	St Mary's Lands Masterplan and Update on Progress of Delivery Plan	
<b>For further information about this report please contact</b>	Chris Elliott 01926 456003 Chris.elliott@warwickdc.gov.uk	
<b>Wards of the District directly affected</b>	Aylesford and Saltisford	
<b>Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?</b>	No	
<b>Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number</b>	Executive meeting 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2016 min 65 Executive meeting 8 <sup>th</sup> March 2017 min 108 Executive meeting 06 <sup>th</sup> April 2016, min 132 Executive meeting 3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2015, min 34 Full Council 19 <sup>th</sup> November 2014, min 50 Executive meeting 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2014, min 56 Executive meeting 16 <sup>th</sup> April 2014, min 189 Executive meeting 11 <sup>th</sup> September 2013, min 55 Executive meeting 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2013, min 13 Executive meeting 12 <sup>th</sup> December 2012, min 107	
<b>Background Papers</b>	Previous reports – will fill in later	

<b>Contrary to the policy framework:</b>	No
<b>Contrary to the budgetary framework:</b>	No
<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes
<b>Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)</b>	Yes
<b>Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken</b>	No
Not overall but specific work has been done of the proposed cycleway element.	

<b>Officer/Councillor Approval</b>		
<b>Officer Approval</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>
Chief Executive	06/06/17	Chris Elliott
Head of Service	06/06/17	Tracy Darke, Rob Hoof, Rose Winship, Marianne Rolfe
CMT	06/06/17	Chris Elliott, Andrew Jones, Bill Hunt
Section 151 Officer	06/06/17	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	06/06/17	Andrew Jones

Finance	06/06/17	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	06/06/17	Noel Butler
<b>Consultation &amp; Community Engagement</b>		
The proposed masterplan is the outcome of an extensive consultation process undertaken since 2015 with the St Mary's Lands Working Party as the co-ordinating body.		
<b>Final Decision?</b>		Yes except for recommendation 2.3
<b>Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)</b>		
A further report on implementation of the hotel proposal will be made to the Executive		

## 1. **Summary**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the masterplan for the St Mary's lands area of Warwick following the undertaking of research work on the need for and impact of a hotel as part of the elements of a masterplan for the whole area.
- 1.2 In addition, the report also provides a further update on progress of the agreed Delivery Plan for this area. A few relatively minor decisions are needed to help further progress implementation of the Delivery Plan.

## 2. **Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the research reports attached at Appendices 1 and 2 on the need for and impact of a hotel are noted.
- 2.2 That the Masterplan at Appendix 3 is adopted.
- 2.3 That a further report is brought to the Executive on how the hotel proposal may be brought forward for delivery.
- 2.4 That progress on the implementation of the Delivery Plan as set out at Appendix 4 is noted and more specifically that:
  - i) The preferred route of the footpath/cycleway as shown on Plan 1 is agreed and appropriate legal agreements are entered to enable it to happen and to be maintained;
  - ii) The car park design for the extension of the Saltisford Brook car park as shown at Plan 2 be approved for the purposes of public consultation and that the response to the public consultation be subject to a further report in due course;
  - iii) The new entrance proposal to be funded by the Jockey Club shown at Plan 3 and supplemented by The District Council is supported;
  - iv) The land shown on Plan 4 is leased to Racing Club Warwick on terms to be agreed along with other alterations to the Jockey Club's lease boundary to enable the proposed Multi use Games Area (MUGA) to be implemented;
- 2.5 That up to £26,000 be moved from improving toilets in the area to assist with repairing the roof of Racing Club Warwick's (RCW) clubhouse subject to that sum being repaid from grants to be raised by RCW and the usual rules that the Council applies to RUCIS grants.
- 2.6 That £34,000 is made available from the Community Project Reserve to fund staff time from Plincke to deliver the remainder of the agreed Delivery Programme for 2017/18.
- 2.7 Subject to 2.5 being agreed, that an exemption from the Code of Procurement Practice under clause 6.4 be agreed to allow Plincke to carry out the work set out in Appendix 5 for the period to June 2018.
- 2.8 That an online competition is run for a new name for the St Mary's Lands Park and the results are fed back to the Executive.

### **3. Reasons for the Recommendation**

#### **Recommendation 2.1**

- 3.1 At its meeting on 30th November 2016, the Executive received a report on the public consultation of the proposals that were proposed to form the master plan for the St Mary's lands area of Warwick. Except for one element, the proposals had high levels of support. The one area that did not was the proposal for a hotel at the southern end of the Grandstand area. The public reaction questioned the need for, and the economic impact of, a hotel. Consequently, the Executive agreed to commission research work that would assess the need for, and the economic impact of, a hotel.
- 3.2 Following a procurement exercise GL Hearn and Bridget Baker Consulting were jointly appointed to undertake that work. Their report is attached as Appendices 1 and 2 to this report. The research demonstrates very clearly that there is a significant gap in the hotel market for Warwick which a hotel on the St Mary's Lands area could fill. The research further demonstrated that there would be a significant economic benefit locally from such a proposal. On this basis, the Working Party was happy to endorse the inclusion of a hotel at the southern end of the Grandstand area within the proposed masterplan.

#### **Recommendation 2.2**

- 3.3 Attached at Appendix 3 is the resultant masterplan, including the hotel proposal. The preparation of a masterplan for the St Mary's Lands area is Council policy as explained at paragraph 4.3.3 of this report. The masterplan if agreed by Council will form part of the Council's planning policy framework used for determining planning and related applications as well as providing a framework for investment decisions by the Council and its partners.

#### **Recommendation 2.3**

- 3.4 Bringing forward a hotel on the site will not be straight forward. A land use allocation within a masterplan does not of itself guarantee delivery of the proposal. It is therefore suggested that a report be brought to the Executive on how the hotel proposal may be brought forward for implementation.

#### **Recommendation 2.4**

- 3.5 Since it was agreed in November 2016 and further funding was agreed in March 2017, work has been ongoing in respect of the implementation of the agreed Delivery Plan. Attached at Appendix 4 is an update on progress to date. There are however, some specific issues that require decisions which are set out in the following paragraphs.

##### Footpath/cycleway

- 3.6 The National Cycleway route 41 runs through Warwick but has a gap on Hampton Road. The masterplan work has found an opportunity to make good that gap which will also provide benefits locally as a safe route to school as well as providing overall a much better link from the Hampton Road car park to the bottom of Linen Street and from there to the town centre making it just a 10-minute walk. This is relevant in the context of the Council's work on car parking generally (see the item on this agenda relating to Car Parking Strategy) and the issue of replacing Linen Street car park.

- 3.7 Discussions have been ongoing for almost a year but a consensus has emerged for a footpath/cycleway to take a preferred route from the current end of the cycleway on Hampton Road, across the Council owned car park to the canter track and then eastwards down the canter track to the entrance to the racecourse. This is shown on Plan 1. From there a route will be incorporated into the car park design work along Saltisford Brook to the bottom of Linen Street and from there northwards along the existing access road to Birmingham Road.
- 3.8 Whilst the work is largely on this Council's ownership part is within the lease of the Jockey Club and so an appropriate legal agreement will need to be made to enable this work to occur. The Jockey Club is supportive of the proposal.

#### Saltisford Brook Car Park

- 3.9 Part of the masterplan proposals envisage that the existing Saltisford Brook car park be modified and extended and to provide a safe footpath/cycleway link as described in the immediately preceding paragraphs above. Plan 2 illustrates the current scheme design which it is proposed should be subject to public consultation before proceeding to a formal planning application. The scheme is currently unfunded but it was agreed in November 2016 to consider funding for it as part of the 2018/19 financial year's work. This work should also complement the work being developed in respect of the options for Linen Street car park replacement.

#### New Entrance

- 3.10 The Jockey Club have submitted and have had its plans approved for a new entrance and concourse to the racecourse. The adjoining public space will also be improved with a contribution previously agreed by this Council. This represents a significant investment by the Jockey Club in Warwick Racecourse. The approved plans are shown at Plan 3.

#### Racing Club Warwick MUGA

- 3.11 Another part of the masterplan envisages a MUGA on land adjoining Racing Club Warwick which the club would run. Most of the land in question is not subject to any lease and so it is proposed that the land shown on Plan 4 is included within the lease with Racing Club Warwick. The club is seeking grant aid for the construction of the MUGA. Any issues of rent will be addressed as part of the forthcoming rent review. A small modification will also be required to the lease with the Jockey Club to allow this to happen.

#### Recommendation 2.6

- 3.12 RCW has prepared grant submission to assist with improvements to the clubhouse and to attract money to pay for the MUGA. However, the clubhouse roof has been the subject to serious leakages in the recent heavy rains. Patching up has been undertaken but is not now sufficient. The leaking roof is now threatening the club from operating its clubhouse activities upon which it relies to generate funds for the club to operate. RCW has approached the Council to see if it could loan the money to make good the roof. This has been considered but will take too long a time to conclude so it is suggested that instead, the Council could move £26,000 it has already allocated to improve toilets in the area, including at the club, to pay for the roof on the condition

that the club amends its grant submission to pay for the toilet improvements. In this way a repair to the roof can be undertaken rapidly and the area can still get the toilet improvements. This would be administered in the same way as RUCIS grants including obtaining 3 quotes for the works.

### **Recommendations 2.6 and 2.7**

- 3.13 Although progress is clearly being made, experience of the last year has demonstrated that the Council's progress is impeded by the lack of resource available to deliver the agreed delivery plan. This derives from the complexity of the scheme as a whole and the amount of effort put into supporting the relationships between a large numbers of organisations involved. Now, the staff resource deployed is a small amount of the Chief Executive's time; an amount of time from the consultants Plincke (which will run out at the end of June) and small amounts of other officers' time.
- 3.14 It is proposed that the contract with Plincke be extended to provide an enhanced amount of officer time (see Appendix 5) for the year to June 2018. It was not anticipated that this would be necessary but it is clear that progress will slow considerably if this issue is not addressed. This approach has the benefit of using people who are already familiar with the scheme and the partners' involved; but does not involve the Council taking on more employment responsibilities. It is estimated that this will cost £34,000 and can be funded from the Community Projects Reserve which has £264,000 currently unallocated.
- 3.15 This step does require an exemption from the Council's Code of Procurement Practise under Clause 6.4. The Procurement Manager has been consulted and agrees that in this case additional services are required which were not included in the original contract and which are strictly necessary but for which competition for the contract cannot be separated without significant inconvenience and delay.

### **Recommendation 2.8**

- 3.16 The Working Party has discussed how the area could be better promoted so that the aim of making it a destination park can be achieved. A recent discussion found that the name St Mary's Lands was not necessarily conducive to concise marketing and indeed in reality many people wonder exactly where it. The area has other name references including "Warwick Common". The Working Party propose therefore that the Council support running a community online competition to agree a name for the park. The results of this exercise would-be feedback to the Executive to make the final decision.

## **4. Policy Framework**

### **4.1 Fit for the Future (FFF)**

- 4.1.1 The FFF Programme is designed to deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for Warwick District and to that end amongst other things it contains a number of significant projects. St Mary's Lands is one of the Council's key projects in the FFF Programme. Therefore, this report should be the way forward for implementing one of the Council's key projects.

- 4.1.2 The FFF Programme has 3 strands and the impact of this report's proposals in relation to each of them is as set out below:

## Service

Maintain or Improve Services – the proposals may allow for the area overall to be enhanced and more specifically enabling the existing facilities and services to continue to be operated and indeed to be enhanced.

## People

Engaged and Empowered Staff – the proposals will be helpful in engagement terms as they will involve a range of staff across the Council and to empowerment since they will be helping to deliver schemes of direct benefit to the local community.

## Money

Achieve and Maintain a Sustainable Balanced Budget – the proposals may help the Council in addressing its financial revenue situation via making better use of its physical assets.

### 4.2 Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)

4.2.1 The Council has approved a Sustainable Community Strategy for Warwick District (SCS) which has Prosperity as one of its five key themes. Under this theme priorities relevant to St Mary's Lands are:

- Ensuring effective promotion of the district to attract growth;
- Making better use of public assets to increase financial rewards;
- Incentivising growth of existing businesses and attracting inward investment.

To do this the Council has committed itself, among other things, to:

- Using public land/assets to stimulate growth;
- Ensuring a co-ordinated approach to inward investment.

4.2.2 The proposals are especially important to this theme given the significant impact it has on Warwick town's local economy by the numbers of visitors it could attract each year.

4.2.3 The proposals are also relevant to the SCS in respect of its Health and Well Being theme since many of the organisations' activities encourage people to participate in sporting and cultural activities, especially for younger and older people. Moreover, the SCS seeks to aid those areas of social and economic deprivation in the District to improve them to the level of the District overall. The Forbes Estate is part of one such area of deprivation. This is also likely to aid the Council's Safer Communities work.

4.2.4 Part of St Mary's Lands is also designated as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and all of it is part of a Conservation Area. There is also a significant Listed Building (the grandstand). Hill Close Gardens immediately abut St. Mary's Lands and is a popular visitor attraction. The Gardens are Listed Grade II\* on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens, making the gardens of more than local significance. Consequently, the area is important to the Council's SCS agenda relating to promoting Sustainability. No impacts are likely in respect of the SCS's Housing theme.

### 4.3 Local Plan

4.3.1 The Council has also agreed a strategy statement "The future and sustainable prosperity for Warwick District" which amongst other things seeks to:

- Support the growth of the local economy; and
- Maintain and promote thriving town centres.

4.3.2 The Council has determined that a spatial masterplan should be developed for St Mary's Lands via public consultation as it recognised that it is an essential community amenity that needs to receive the necessary investment to enable its attractions and operations to prosper.

4.3.3 The Local Plan - Publication Draft has a specific proposed policy for St Mary's Lands as follows:

*"3.142 The Council will therefore work with the operators of the Racecourse to bring forward a Masterplan for the area which;*

- *ensures the ongoing vitality and viability of the Racecourse;*
- *protects and enhances the significance of the Listed Building and Conservation Area and their setting;*
- *retains the land for public recreation;*
- *protects and enhances biodiversity within the Racecourse as well as links to the open countryside and other areas; and*
- *restricts uses to those associated with visitor accommodation, recreation, leisure and horse racing"*

This requirement picks up the non-Local Plan overall strategy for St Mary's Lands adopted in 1998 and the regeneration master plan agreed in 2004 which have both been reviewed as part of this work.

### 4.4 The Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy

4.4.1 The Strategy highlights the need to support community football pyramid teams such as RCW with adjustments to facility provision where required. This is underpinned by a priority across the district to retain the number of grass pitches, improve the quality of these pitches, and provide more mini and junior pitches to meet demand now and in the future.

## 5. **Budgetary Framework**

5.1 The Community Projects Reserve has £264,000 unallocated and so could fund the additional work to help ensure the effective delivery of the scheme.

5.2 All other costs (including the £26,000) for the scheme are within the budget agreed in 2016 and in March 2017. The proposals for 2018/19 will need to be considered as part of the budget proposals for that financial year.

5.3 The report on bringing forward the hotel proposal will also cover the issue of whether any additional costs are likely to be incurred.



## **6. Risks**

- 6.1 The most significant risk at present relates to the lack of staff time to properly progress the Delivery Plan. It is proposed that this be addressed by recommendation 2.6/2.7.
- 6.2 There is a risk that RCW may not get their grant aid but this is considered a small risk as other grants could be applied for if it was unsuccessful. On the other hand, not doing as suggested in recommendation 2.5 runs the real risk that the clubhouse becomes inoperable.

## **7. Alternative Option(s) considered**

- 7.1 The Council decide not to include the hotel proposal within the masterplan. However, the evidence collected points to there being significant benefits that could be accrued by the local community, the local economy and the Council and so it would not make sense to exclude the hotel proposal from the master plan.
- 7.2 The Council has already agreed that a masterplan should be prepared for the St Mary's Lands area so it would not make sense, especially after having undertaken so much work, to not proceed to adopt the masterplan. The Council could also decide to vary the masterplan but as it has been based on a considerable amount of public support there are no reasons to suggest variations.
- 7.3 The Council could decide not to request a further report on how to bring forward a hotel proposal for implementation but if that decision were taken it rather begs the question of why support a hotel in the first place. As support for a hotel is proposed it therefore rather makes sense to then go into detail as to how it may be brought forward.
- 7.4 The Council could decide not to support any part of recommendation 2.4 but as this broadly notes progress being made an alternative decision would be churlish. Similarly, the specific decisions needed on the footpath/cycleway; the consultations on car park re design and the lease for the MUGA are all points of detail necessary to implement decisions the Council has already made. There aren't other options if the Council wants to do these specific things.
- 7.5 The Council could decide not to move £26,000 as proposed but this would make the risk highlighted in paragraph 6.2 likely to be realised.
- 7.6 An alternative way for the Council to address the lack of resource would be to either accept a slow pace of delivery with the risk that some projects may not come to fruition at all or that the Council employ an additional member of staff temporarily. Based on a similar Project Officer post this might cost the Council £35-40,000 but would lose the benefit of Plincke's knowledge and experience of the scheme.
- 7.7 The Council could decide not to support a community competition about the renaming of the park but the approach has the support of the Working Party which includes local Councillors.