

Joint Executive (Cabinet) Committee

Forest Heath & St Edmundsbury councils

West Suffolk
working together

Title of Report:	Former Castle Hill Middle School: Development Brief	
Report No:	CAB/JT/19/014	
Report to and date/s:	Joint Executive (Cabinet) Committee	12 March 2019
	SEBC Council	19 March 2019
Portfolio holder:	Councillor Susan Glossop SEBC Portfolio Holder for Planning and Growth Tel: 01284 728377 Email: susan.glossop@stedsbc.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Julie Baird Assistant Director (Growth) Tel: 01284 757613 Email: Julie.baird@westsuffolk.gov.uk	Chris Rand Principal Planning Delivery/Specialist Officer Tel: 01284 757352 Email: chris.rand@westsuffolk.gov.uk
Purpose of report:	To inform Members of the progress of the former Castle Hill Middle School Development Brief process; to outline the outcomes of consultation into the draft development brief and consequential amendments to the document; and to recommend its approval.	
Recommendation:	It is <u>RECOMMENDED</u> that subject to the approval of SEBC Council, the development brief for the former Castle Hill Middle School, Haverhill, as contained in Appendix A to Report No: CAB/JT/19/014, be adopted as informal planning guidance.	
Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i>	<i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i> Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/> No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

<p><i>The decisions made as a result of this report will usually be published within 48 hours and cannot be actioned until five clear working days of the publication of the decision have elapsed. This item is included on the Decisions Plan.</i></p>			
Consultation:		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The public consultation took place between 23 October 2018 and 23 November 2018 and included a public drop-in event at Haverhill Arts Centre on 30 October 2018. 	
Alternative option(s):		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not to prepare a development brief. This option would result in the uncoordinated approach to the development of the site. 	
Implications:			
Are there any financial implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any staffing implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any ICT implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any legal and/or policy implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the Development Brief is adopted it will become non-statutory planning guidance. 	
Are there any equality implications? <i>If yes, please give details</i>		Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process is subject to the council's Statement of Community Involvement. The public consultation and community engagement sought to engage the local community 	
Risk/opportunity assessment:		<i>(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)</i>	
Risk area	Inherent level of risk (before controls)	Controls	Residual risk (after controls)
Failure to adopt the draft development brief could inhibit the council's ability to shape the nature and content of planning applications for the development of the site.	Medium	Adopt the development brief as non-statutory planning guidance.	Low
Ward(s) affected:		Haverhill North, Haverhill West and Haverhill South Wards	
Background papers: <i>(all background papers are to be published on the website and a link included)</i>		1. Haverhill Vision 2031 Development Plan document adopted 2014 and associated maps: https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/Planning_Policies/local_plans/upload/HH-Vision_2015v8-hi-res-compressed.pdf	

	<p>2. Haverhill Inset Map: https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/Planning_Policies/St_Edmundsbur_y_planning_policies/upload/Haverhill-Inset-3.pdf</p> <p>3. Key to Inset Maps: https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/Planning_Policies/local_plans/upload/Policies-Map-Key-Pages-1-2-updated-April-2015-2.pdf</p>
<p>Documents attached:</p>	<p>Appendix A – Draft Former Castle Hill Middle School Site Development Brief document</p> <p>Appendix B – Report on Final Consultation of the Development Brief for the Former Castle Hill Middle School</p> <p>Appendix C – Summary of questionnaires</p>

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendation(s)

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The adopted Haverhill Vision 2031 Local Plan document allocates the site of the former Castle Hill Middle School as a site suitable for development with housing with an indicative capacity of 25 dwellings (Policy HV5c).
- 1.1.2 Despite being the site of a former school which was destroyed by fire, the allocated housing relates solely to part of the playing field to that school and is therefore classified as greenfield. This came about because the site of the former school buildings is located on the School Lane frontage adjacent to two primary schools and unrelated to existing surrounding residential development, whereas the former playing field located to the west of the former buildings has a frontage to Chivers Road and adjoins existing residential development. The area of the allocation is equivalent to the area of the former school buildings. The background explanatory text to Policy HV5 explains that the area occupied by the former school buildings will need to be made available as recreational open space prior to the housing being developed to offset the loss of playing field.
- 1.1.3 Prior to commencing work on preparation of the development brief, Ingleton Wood as agent for the developer (Barley Homes), undertook an initial consultation event on 14 June 2018 together with extensive engagement with the local community and key stakeholders. This then helped inform the preparation of the draft development brief.
- 1.1.4 A large part of the brief identifies the constraints and opportunities affecting the site. These include identification of existing natural greenspace and features, the relationship with surrounding development, site levels and opportunities for vehicular access and the relationship with the adjoining land which will form recreational open space. A key element is the policy requirement to provide a pedestrian and cycle access linking the site and Chivers Road with the existing schools which are currently accessed solely from School Lane. This is achieved through the central spine of the site and will have a fundamental influence on the layout of the site and the adjacent recreational open space.

1.2 Draft Development Brief consultation and amendments

- 1.2.1 The draft development brief has been prepared in accordance with the Council's adopted protocol. It has been the subject of public consultation undertaken by Ingleton Wood from 23 October to 23 November 2018 including a public exhibition and drop-in session at Haverhill Arts Centre. Consultation with Statutory bodies was undertaken during the same period. A copy of the Development Brief Consultation Report prepared by Ingleton Wood is attached at **Appendix B**.
- 1.2.2 More than 18 people attended the drop-in session and 7 written responses were received. The main areas of concern related to vagueness in respect of the future use of the area to be created as recreational open space and off-site traffic conditions, particularly the junction of Chivers Road with Burton End. Both of these areas fall outside the scope of the development brief and

the control of the developer, but are, nevertheless addressed in the Consultation Report. The future use of the recreational open space will be determined by Suffolk County Council who own the land and the suggestions received in response to this consultation will assist in bringing that land forwards. However, the document has been amended to make specific reference to the opportunity to protect and enhance the Forest School site for the benefit of the local schools.

- 1.2.3 The comments relating to a requirement for significant off-site highway works are beyond the scope of this development brief and have not been endorsed by the Highway Authority. However, the provision within the site for a footpath and cycle link to School Lane and the two existing schools could have a positive impact on traffic movements, providing a safe and convenient pedestrian link to the schools from the Chivers Road area. This will provide a direct shortcut and avoid the need to walk along Burton End, the main link between the A1017 Haverhill Bypass and the town centre.
- 1.2.4 The draft revised development brief incorporating post-public consultation amendments is attached at **Appendix A** of this report. Post public consultation additions are shown underlined and deletions are shown ~~struckthrough~~.
- 1.2.5 Details of all of the responses received are attached at **Appendix C** together with broad details of the location of respondents. Analysis of those responses and consequential changes to the document are contained within sections 4 and 5 of the Consultation Report (Appendix B).
- 1.2.6 Adoption of the draft Development Brief will be a key element in the delivery of sustainable development at the former Castle Hill Middle School.