

Information/Discussion Paper

Overview and Scrutiny - 28th November 2022

Golden Valley local impact

This note contains the information to keep Members informed of matters relating to the work of the Committee, but where no decisions from Members are needed.

1. Why has this come to scrutiny?

- 1.1 This paper has been requested to highlight some of the key impacts of the Golden Valley development on local residents and explain how these risks are being addressed.

2. Summary of the Issue

- 2.1 The Golden Valley development will be one of Cheltenham's largest and most significant development opportunities over the coming decade. Its scale and ambition will have a transformative impact on the entire town and it will play a central role in delivering the Council's Corporate Plan.
- 2.2 The Council owns around 46 hectares of land, split between the Northern Parcel and the Southern Parcel. To help deliver its vision, the Council has entered into a Development Agreement with HBDXF (a Joint Venture between HBD and Factory). HBDXF are the lead delivery partner and responsible for the majority of activities in delivering the project, supported by the CBC team.
- 2.3 The benefits of the overall development are numerous and span multiple areas, including: economic development; new housing; social inclusion; addressing the climate emergency and financial security for the Council.
- 2.4 Notwithstanding the above, there will be a number of negative impacts on the local communities, including Springbank and Hester's Way, particularly in relation to construction activity. Many of these impacts will be unavoidable. However, in its role as responsible development partners, HBDXF and the Council have a duty to ensure that these impacts are understood and, where possible, mitigated.
- 2.5 The 'delivery phase' of the project began with the signing of the Development Agreement in June 2022. Since this point, the focus of the HBDXF and Council project teams has been on progressing the initial 'concept' designs for the scheme, with a focus on the Innovation Centre that will be located at the site entrance serviced by Telstar Way. These designs are still at an early stage and will evolve in the coming months as the project progresses.
- 2.6 Given that the delivery of the project is still in its infancy and there has been limited interaction with the community to date, the project team appreciate that they do not

know all of the impacts that the development is likely to produce. The nature of these impacts will also change as the project evolves and in response to feedback from key stakeholders (including the Planners and local residents). Accordingly, this paper does not provide prescriptive solutions for how each impact will be addressed, instead it outlines the philosophy and process that the project team is engaged in to ensure the impacts on the local residents are understood and appropriately managed.

3. Summary of evidence/information

Identifying key impacts on the community

3.1 For the purpose of this paper, impacts can be considered as either:

1. **Development Impacts.** These are the permanent impacts that are attributed to the way in which the land is used. In the case of Golden Valley, this includes the change from an agricultural use to residential and commercial development.
2. **Construction Impacts.** These are the temporary impacts that are attributed to the construction process. It is anticipated that the construction process at Golden Valley could take over a decade to complete. However, the location, intensity and impact of this work will vary as different buildings are constructed.

3.2 The current analysis of impacts on the community is based principally on historic stakeholder feedback and the expertise and experience of the project team. A summary of the known impacts at this point is provided below:

Development impacts

- 1 Loss of existing recreation space and visual amenity
- 2 Change of the use and character of the neighbourhood
- 3 Stress on current parking provision
- 4 Additional pressure on local services (schools, doctors etc.)
- 5 Additional traffic (and potential to become a rat-run)
- 6 Potential gentrification of the area and associated impact on the existing community

Construction impacts

- 7 Noise and dust
- 8 General increase in health and safety risks
- 9 Stress on current parking provision
- 10 A negative impact on house values
- 11 Construction working hours

How these impacts will be addressed

The statutory processes

3.3 A key mechanism for identifying and mitigating these impact will be the Planning system itself. Planning is principally concerned with Development Impacts and will require all proposals to evidence how they address key areas, such as additional traffic, whilst also providing the necessary infrastructure to support the development (eg new schools). This consideration provides expert analysis on the development proposals through a variety of consultees. The impact on local residents is a key consideration for Planners and will be central in their analysis.

- 3.4** Public consultation is also a fundamental part of the Planning process. Every Planning application submitted on Golden Valley will benefit from a pre-application consultation process as well as the opportunity to comment on applications once they are submitted. As there are likely to be a large number of different Planning applications on Golden Valley (potentially 10+ applications during the project lifetime), there will be considerable opportunity for concerns around the impact of the development to be raised and fed into the formal Planning process.
- 3.5** Building Contractors will also be required to provide a number of plans to evidence how they will deal with various issues before they are able to commence work. Many of these plans incorporate sections that are designed to mitigate the construction impact on local residents, such as the Construction Phase Plan (detailing Health and Safety requirements) and the Waste Management Plan.

Going the extra mile

- 3.6** The above statutory compliance provides a clear and accessible process for identifying and managing risks to the community. However, it has its limitations and will not on its own provide the exemplar project that is envisaged for Golden Valley. The project team have therefore identified a number of strategies through which they aim to provide better understanding, decision making and management of the impacts on the local community. These are outlined below:

Building strong communication networks

- 3.7** It is recognised that the identification and management of impacts and risks is an ongoing and iterative process that must be revisited regularly. For this reason, the first priority for the project team is to establish communication networks and channels that will function throughout the lifetime of the project and provide continuous feedback to the project team.
- 3.8** The communications channels will be developed in the coming months as the marketing strategy is developed further. There is already a strong online presence for Golden Valley (social media and website) that will be further refined to ensure it incorporates opportunity to feedback directly to the project team.
- 3.9** The digital strategy will be complemented through a 'boots on the ground' presence that will be dedicated to interacting with the local communities. HBDXF (The Council's Development Partner at Golden Valley) have recently appointed a Community Engagement Consultant to spearhead this work. CBC will also be appointing a Community Co-ordinator in the coming months to provide additional resource and support for the community.

Including community impacts in management processes and governance.

- 3.10** In order to comprehensively capture the risks presented by these impacts and to ensure the responses are appropriate, a risk register system is being utilised by the Council. This live document acts as both a register and mechanism for ensuring that risks (and the responses to these risks) are constantly assessed.
- 3.11** The risk register is reviewed on a monthly basis by the Programme Board to ensure it is current and effective. The Programme Board also judges the delivery of the project against the project Goals and Objectives. This includes the goal to 'Ensure effective Stakeholder Management' which relates, in part, to understanding how the development will impact on the local community and managing this appropriately.

Responsibility for delivery of this goal sits with the Director of Major Developments and Regeneration.

- 3.12** A dedicated Social Value Forum has been established with representatives of CBC (including the Strategy and Engagement Manager) and HBDXF to act as an advisory group. A key role for this group will also be to monitor progress against the Social Value Strategy provided by HBDXF, including the community engagement work that is central to its vision.

Stakeholder Consultation

- 3.13** It is envisaged that the project will undertake a rigorous Stakeholder engagement exercise to provide opportunity (over and above what is required from a statutory perspective) for the community to feedback to the delivery team and influence the project. A working group has been established between CBC, HBDXF and the consultant team to oversee and deliver the work.
- 3.14** In the short term, this will include, amongst other things:
- Engagement with key stakeholders to garner views and input on the development. This will include Ward Councillors and key community groups (eg Hesters Way Forum)
 - Public consultation open days to engage directly with local residents and interested parties.
 - 'Pop-up' information booths in the town centre to highlight the work and request feedback.

Responsive design

- 3.15** The above consultation process is being scheduled to ensure that the responses from the local community can be incorporated into the design. This is a conscious decision from the design team to ensure that due consideration is given to the feedback received and accordingly, it is hoped that a better design result will be achieved.
- 3.16** The ambition of the design team is to closely reflect in the final designs the vision outlined within the Golden Valley Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). As an Adopted Planning document, the proposals in the SPD have been developed following an extensive public consultation exercise. It is hoped that by incorporating the vision in the SPD, the development proposals will also be incorporating consultation that has already been undertaken.

Contractor management

- 3.17** Many of the most frustrating impacts of development arise out of the construction work. Whilst there are some statutory requirements that building contractors must adhere to, these are often insufficient in dealing with the concerns of residents.
- 3.18** CBC/HBDXF will ensure that all contractors are part of the Considerate Constructor's Scheme (CCS) to help promote good practice and mitigate the impact on residents. This includes monthly site visits by an inspector to rate the performance of the contractor and it demands that they abide by the Code of Considerate Practice.
- 3.19** CBC/HBDXF will also look for every contractor to provide a Construction

Management Plan that outlines how they will manage the impact of their activity on the local community. This typically includes sections on: scheduling the works; communication and coordination; site setup; access; neighbourly relations; traffic management; health & safety; noise & vibration, air quality & dust control.

Finally, the tender process for procuring a building contractors by HBDXF and CBC can be tailored to require respondents to outline their approach to mitigating impacts on the community. This opportunity will be considered with HBDXF once we are in a position to begin the procurement process and will involve the CBC Head of Construction (recently appointed) to ensure the right weighting is apportioned to this issue.

4. Next Steps - possible next steps for the committee to consider, e.g. potential witnesses, further report, site visit etc.

4.1 As outlined above, CBC and HBDXF continue to develop a number of processes to identify the impacts and manage them accordingly. Whilst there are number of processes and strategies that are currently set up, it is believed that actions planned in the coming months will provide a step-change in the ability of the project to team to effectively manage these issues. These actions include:

- Undertake stakeholder engagement activities and public consultation on the initial concept design work (masterplanning) to gain direct feedback from the community
- Appoint a Community Coordinator to work alongside HBDXF's Community Engagement Consultant to establish communication networks with the local community.
- Continue to run and develop the Social Value forum with particular focus on delivering the Social Value Strategy.
- Continue to review the developing design to ensure potential impacts on the community are understood and minimised where possible.
- Continue to collate known impacts through a risk register and ensure appropriate plans are in place for their mitigation.

Background Papers	N/A
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Accountability	Cllr. Mike Collins, Cabinet Member Cyber, Regeneration and Commercial Income