

Subject:	St Aubyns Planning Brief		
Date of Meeting:	15 January 2015 – Economic Development and Culture Committee		
Report of:	Executive Director Environment, Development & Housing		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Clare Flowers	Tel: 29-0443
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Ward(s) affected:	Rottingdean Coastal		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 The report seeks formal approval for a planning brief that has been prepared for the former St Aubyns School, Rottingdean and which has been subject to a public consultation exercise that has informed the final brief. The former school site boundary includes all land which falls within the curtilage of the Grade II listed school building situated within Rottingdean Conservation Area with its ancillary playing field to the east.
- 1.2 The planning brief seeks a high quality and sustainable redevelopment in the heart of Rottingdean Village which respects the character of the existing heritage assets and the public recreation opportunities arising from the existing open space. The 'St Aubyns Planning Brief' is attached as Appendix 2. A copy of the St Aubyns Planning Brief Consultation Report is attached as Appendix 3.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Economic Development & Culture Committee approves the St Aubyns Planning Brief as a material planning consideration in the assessment of development proposals and planning applications relating to the site.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The former school site and playing fields were purchased in April 2012 by the Cothill Educational Trust (CET), an educational charity which runs a number of independent preparatory schools across the UK. St Aubyns school finally closed its doors in April 2013.
- 3.2 During the summer of 2013, Rottingdean Parish Council approached BHCC for a partnership approach in the creation of a Planning Brief to guide future redevelopment of this heritage asset with its ancillary playing field. City Planning officers worked with Rottingdean Parish Council, the landowner and local ward councillors in the creation of a draft planning brief. This document was taken to

the Economic Development & Culture Committee on 19 June 2014 which agreed that the draft brief could be used as the basis of a public consultation exercise.

- 3.3 The public consultation exercise was undertaken between 8 Sept and 17 Oct 2014 and a number of revisions have been incorporated within the final planning brief in recognition of concerns and opinions raised by these responses, summarised in the consultation report (Appendix 3).

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 An alternative option is to “do nothing” i.e. not to produce a planning brief. This option has been discounted because of the recognised need to address the future redevelopment of the vacant site in a comprehensive manner which befits its heritage sensitive and central location within Rottingdean Village. This has highlighted the need for planning guidance to provide clarity to developers regarding the appropriate scale of development, potential land uses and other material planning issues with regard to any future proposals and planning applications for this site.
- 4.2 The planning brief does not preclude the future use of the site for educational purposes, although discussions were held with the council’s Head of Education Planning and Contracts who confirmed that the St Aubyns site is unlikely to be called upon to make up for any shortfall in local authority school place provision further to the agreement by Children & Young Peoples Committee in Oct 2014 to expand Saltdean Primary School to meet an increase in the primary school places required in the wider local area.
- 4.3 English Heritage supports the planning brief as a ‘very useful framework for managing future change at this site’. Removing heritage objectives to allow for a more comprehensive site redevelopment would therefore be inappropriate to the heritage assets present within and around the site.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The public consultation exercise took place between 8 September and 17 October 2014. A public exhibition was held locally at the public library in Rottingdean and took place between 29 September and 4 October 2014. The draft brief and all exhibition materials were made available in electronic form via the council’s Consultation Portal.
- 5.2 The main concern raised through public responses was the ability of the existing traffic infrastructure to cope with any significant new residential development in this location. The brief has been amended to address this concern through the requirement of a robust traffic assessment as part of a development scheme which should demonstrate that there will be no accident or congestion problems and that local plan transport policies including the parking standards set out in SPG4 are met. Highways Authority comments include a requirement for transport modelling to assess the individual and cumulative effects from development proposals here.

- 5.3 70% of responses concerning the future use of the chapel wanted to see a continuation of its use as either a chapel, a museum (including a First World War museum), as a community facility and / or an art gallery and 73% of responses concerning the playing field suggested that it should be made available for public use.
- 5.4 English Heritage comments agree that the brief has identified the important heritage issues that would need to be taken into account when developing this site and that the design principles contained therein set appropriate parameters for a scheme that respects the heritage features. Sport England supports the approach of preserving or enhancing the existing open space for public use in order to secure improvement in the health and social well-being of the community.
- 5.5 All comments and responses are analysed in the St Aubyns Planning Brief Consultation Report (Appendix 3). The consultation report summarises the issues and themes raised within the public consultation response; how these have been considered and where changes have been made in response to these issues in the final brief. The principles of the Community Engagement Framework and Standards have been incorporated into the consultation exercise. Key stakeholders, amenity and interest groups and relevant statutory consultees including English Heritage, Sport England and the Highways Authority were contacted individually via email and their comments have been received. Their comments have been noted and incorporated into the revised report.
- 5.6 All householders in Rottingdean were notified by letter of the public consultation exercise and the public exhibition, the consultation dates and deadlines and ways to respond and were made aware that the exhibition material was also available to view and comment upon via the council's consultation portal. Site notices were put up around the site advertising the public exhibition which took place in at the public library in The Grange, Rottingdean. Further to a press release, an article in the Argus in June 2014 publicised the forthcoming public consultation exercise.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 This planning brief establishes development principles which recognise the character of the existing heritage assets and the recreational potential of the existing playing field, to facilitate the delivery of a high quality and sustainable redevelopment of this site within Rottingdean village. The brief builds upon a previous draft approved for a public consultation exercise by this committee in June 2014. The consultation responses have informed the preparation of the final 'St Aubyns Planning Brief'.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 Rottingdean Parish Council have paid for the public exhibition costs and other costs have been met from Planning's existing revenue budgets.

Finance Officer Consulted: Jeff Coates

Date: 03/12/2014

Legal Implications:

7.2 Although the Planning Brief is not a statutory planning document and cannot be given full statutory weight in the determination of relevant planning applications it is nonetheless a material planning consideration to be taken into account in the determination of such applications.

7.3

There are no adverse human rights implications arising from this report.

Lawyer Consulted:

Name Hilary Woodward

Date: 4/12/14

Equalities Implications:

7.4 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) of the Planning Projects service was undertaken in 2010. This included good practice in relation to the preparation and consultation on planning briefs. An EQIA has also been conducted in support of the Proposed Submission City Plan Part 1 Feb 2013, which has involved an extensive consultation programme. Officers have followed this best practice to ensure that the consultation on the draft brief does not exclude people from the process and encompasses hard-to-reach groups

Sustainability Implications:

7.5 The planning brief refers directly to the need for future proposals and planning applications to comply with the requirements of Supplementary Planning Document 08 – Sustainable Building Design - and appropriate City Plan/Local Plan policies. The retention and reuse of a locally listed but vacant heritage asset will make a sustainable and positive contribution to the character of the Rottingdean Conservation Area

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Implications Appendix
2. St Aubyns Planning Brief
3. St Aubyns Planning Brief Consultation Report

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. St Aubyns Planning Brief
2. St Aubyns Planning Brief Consultation Report
3. Rottingdean Conservation Area Character Statement 2012

Background Documents

4. Rottingdean Conservation Area Character Statement 2012
5. Brighton & Hove Local Plan 2005
6. Submission City Plan Part 1 Feb 2013
7. Schedule of Proposed Modifications to the City Plan Part One Oct 2014
8. National Planning Policy Framework 2012
9. Planning Practice Guidance 2014

Implications Appendix

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 1.1 The planning brief advocates the retention and reuse of the former St Aubyns school site to bring it back into active use. The redevelopment of this important heritage site should therefore help to prevent the building from being squatted and/ or vandalised in the future

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 1.2 There is a risk that planning briefs may advocate development options which are unviable to develop and thereby fail to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework. It is considered that the planning brief contains sufficient information on the wider site constraints and opportunities for a future redevelopment of the site where, if demonstrated as necessary, the proposed quantities of development required to make proposals viable and deliverable exceed the main development area as shown on Fig 6 (the constraints and opportunities for development) of the planning brief

Public Health Implications:

- 1.3 The planning brief advocates development of the site to be of the highest possible standard and a development objective is to preserve or enhance existing open space for public use. If the site is to bring forward residential development, the brief requires all residential units to be built to lifetime homes standards and, in line with the Local Plan/ City Plan, 40% affordable housing units. Where appropriate, financial contributions will be sought from developers, to mitigate the impact of development on the local area e.g. through health, education, transport contributions etc.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 1.4 The preferred development options contained in the brief advocate the reuse and retention of both the Grade II listed and curtilage listed heritage assets and emphasises the site's positive contribution to the character of Rottingdean Conservation Area

Then (to follow): Appendix 2 – St Aubyns Planning Brief
Appendix 3 – St Aubyns Planning Brief Consultation Report