

BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL RESPONSE TO ID/7

Issue 2: Is the spatial strategy for the delivery of housing & jobs justified & are there reasonable prospects for delivery consistent with national advice?

Sub Matter: Keynsham

7.1 Are there reasonable prospects of the planned scale of housing within Keynsham being delivered as planned (explored more fully below)?

7.1.1 The responses to questions 7.2 and 7.3 below demonstrate that there are reasonable prospects of the planned scale of housing within Keynsham being delivered as planned.

7.1.2 Topic Paper 7 (CD6/S8) sets out the evidential basis for the capacity and deliverability of sites within Keynsham. This statement does not seek to repeat CD6/S8. However, since the publication of CD6/S8 in August 2011, additional information has become available and this is included in this response.

7.2 What is the evidential basis for the SHLAA trajectory for delivery of the sites at South West Keynsham and Somerdale?

K2 (South West Keynsham - SHLAA reference K2)

Site K2B

7.2.1 The developer of the site (Taylor Wimpey) included an *Implementation Strategy* (CD4/O13) as part of planning application 09/04351/FUL (approved by the Secretary of State on appeal), detailing phasing and delivery mechanisms for K2B (the eastern parcel of the K2 site). This strategy shows that construction of K2B is expected to take place over an anticipated seven year period, which is reflected in the SHLAA trajectory (CD4/H14). This equates to the delivery of approximately 40 dwellings per annum. CD4/H14 anticipates delivery to begin during financial year 2012/13 with completion in 2018/19.

7.2.2 The *Boyer Planning Proof of Evidence* (CD4/O14) for the K2B appeal (09/04351/FUL) on behalf of Taylor Wimpey gave an update on the Implementation Strategy for the site, which states:

“The information concerning implementation remains relevant at the present time. The one potential difference is in respect of the build programme identified therein. This, and the 7 year construction period estimated at that time, was on the basis of the difficult housing market as existed reflecting general economic conditions prevalent in 2009. As the buoyancy of the housing market improves, the build period is expected to

reduce. The phasing identified reflects what could be considered to be a 'worst case scenario' in terms of duration of the build programme".

- 7.2.3 With Taylor Wimpey/Boyer Planning considering their seven year phasing schedule for K2B to be a 'worst case scenario', the Council is confident that the trajectory outlined in the SHLAA (CD4/H14) is deliverable, and that the site should form part of the Council's 5 year housing supply.

Site K2A

- 7.2.4 Topic Paper 7 (CD6/S8) clarified that B&NES Council Property Services has been in detailed deliberations with consultants over the previous 18 months evaluating the best strategy in bringing site K2A (the western parcel of the K2 site) to the market. This involved awaiting the resolution of the appeal by Taylor Wimpey on the K2B site which was subsequently granted approval by the Secretary of State on 22/7/11.
- 7.2.5 With the issues facing K2B now resolved by the granting of planning permission, B&NES Council Property Services can now confirm that K2A (with the exception of the employment land element which will be disposed of separately) will officially go to the market in early 2012 with the intention of selling to a housing developer. As the site is already allocated within the Local Plan the Council will not be seeking planning permission prior to the site going to the market. The Council acknowledged the importance of progressing this site at the Housing and Major Projects Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (November 15th 2011). The report to the Panel (CD4/H17) recognised that it is essential to the SHLAA trajectory that the Council now progresses K2A and that it begins to deliver within the next couple of years.
- 7.2.6 With various housing developers either owning or having an option to purchase the majority of the Green Belt land surrounding Keynsham (as evidenced by the SHLAA: CD4/H14), illustrating the interest the housing industry has in the town, the Council is confident that a developer will be secured for the site. The advice of Property Services is that they expect a large amount of interest from developers as K2A is a greenfield site, allocated in the Local Plan, and with the benefit of close proximity to both the Bristol and Bath property markets. When selecting the developer for K2A, the Council will place great weight on selecting a developer that can bring the site forward quickly.
- 7.2.7 The SHLAA trajectory (CD4/H14) takes this into account by anticipating that delivery of K2A will begin during 2013/14 with completion in 2017/18, delivering around 50 dwellings per annum. This broadly reflects the 'worst case scenario' rate of completion that Taylor Wimpey proposes for site K2B.

Somerdale (SHLAA reference K1)

- 7.2.8 A planning application for the Somerdale site is expected to be received by the Council in autumn/winter 2012 (see response to 7.3). The SHLAA trajectory (CD4/H14) reflects this by anticipating that the first year of delivery will be in

2014/15. CD4/H14 estimates that delivery of the development will be phased over a period of eight years, delivering 75 dwellings per annum. This is a slightly higher rate of delivery than that anticipated for the K2 sites, reflecting that some of the dwellings delivered will be flats within a conversion of the factory buildings.

7.3 What progress has been made on bringing forward the mixed use development proposed at Somerdale and the proposals at the town centre/Town Hall site?

Town Hall/Centre redevelopment site¹ (SHLAA reference K13a)

- 7.3.1 The report to the Housing and Major Projects Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (CD4/H17) confirmed that the project is on programme and budget.
- 7.3.2 The Council's Cabinet met on the 7th December 2011 and confirmed the Council's commitment to the delivery of the site. The Cabinet agreed to appoint a delivery partner and submit a planning application for a mixed use scheme providing offices, retail, and a library/one-stop shop.
- 7.3.3 The Cabinet report (CD4/UDL20) gives details on the delivery of the site, identifying the necessary funding package to deliver the scheme by utilising the Council's own internally available cash balances. Cash flow assumptions indicate that these funds can be made available to the project for the life of the assets being financed. 19 companies expressed an interest in tendering for the project. 6 companies were shortlisted to tender for the project and all submitted a tender on 4th November 2011. The delivery partner will be appointed in January 2012.
- 7.3.4 A Community Focus Group was established in November 2010 to work in conjunction with the Council, acting as a sounding board during the initial design of the Town Hall scheme and providing a link to the community. Public consultation took place during September and October 2011 over the course of six days. Over 1,000 people attended the consultation. The Cabinet Report (CD4/UDL20) describes the consultation process in more detail. A final round of public consultation occurred on the 9th and 10th December 2011.
- 7.3.5 The Cabinet Report (CD4/UDL20) states that a planning application is anticipated to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority in January 2012. Two pre-applications have already been submitted. The design development has been influenced by the comments provided from the consultation and the LPA's Development Team. Detailed planning approval is anticipated in July 2012, with work beginning on site in August 2012.

¹ For further information see the project website:
<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/environmentandplanning/majordevelopments/Pages/KeynshamRegenerationProject.aspx>

- 7.3.6 The Cabinet Report (CD4/UDL20) states that positive negotiations are continuing with two potential retail anchor tenants. DTZ have been appointed to lead these negotiations.
- 7.3.7 The project is expected to be complete in summer 2014.

Riverside (SHLAA reference K13b) and Fire Station (SHLAA reference K13a)

- 7.3.8 Topic Paper 7 (CD6/S8) stated that the autumn 2011 consultation on the Town Hall site would also include options for the Riverside building. As stated above, this consultation took place in September and October 2011 and included an indicative masterplan which included the Riverside site and the adjacent Fire Station. The resulting urban design strategy ensures that Riverside and the Fire Station site can be delivered following construction of the Town Hall site.
- 7.3.9 The Council owns the Riverside building, and leases the building to property company Topland. The Council will vacate Riverside in 2014 in order to occupy the new Town Hall building. The Council is therefore in negotiations with Topland over the future of the Riverside site. These negotiations are ongoing and will not be concluded by the time of the Hearings.
- 7.3.10 The Cabinet Report (CD4/UDL20) states that the Council has explored a number of options for the potential use of these sites. The suggested uses comprised residential and office space, with options for sheltered housing accommodation, student accommodation, retail and possibly a hotel. In the opinion of B&NES Council Property Services, a majority use for residential purposes will be essential to the future of the site to allow the refurbishment or wholesale redevelopment to be viable and deliverable. The Council has already undertaken soft market testing to judge market interest on the uses and discussed these with potential end users. This has resulted in definitive interest in respect of sheltered housing accommodation together with additional town centre residential development comprising apartments and townhouses.
- 7.3.11 Notwithstanding the above, the SHLAA trajectory (CD4/H14) takes a cautious approach to the Riverside and Fire Station sites. CD4/H14 currently anticipates that 35 residential units will come forward on the Riverside site during 2021/22. The Fire Station site is estimated to yield around 20 units during 2021/22. However, depending on the mix of uses incorporated into the scheme there could be a higher housing potential. CD4/H14 will be updated in the future following the completion of negotiations between the Council and Topland. However, it is clear the delivery of these sites is not included in the Council's 5 year supply of housing.

Somerdale (SHLAA reference K1)

- 7.3.12 The report to the Housing and Major Projects Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel (CD4/H17) states that Kraft (the owners) are still progressing their sale of the

Somerdale site. Three parties were short listed in July 2011, and Kraft are currently finalising their agreement with a development partner. The Council understands that the announcement of the development partner is imminent and is likely to take place before Christmas 2011. Kraft anticipates that a planning application will be submitted in autumn/winter 2012. This supports the SHLAA position that there is scope for commencing delivery within the next five years. See paragraphs 7-21 of Topic Paper 7 (CD6/S8) for more information on delivery of the site.

7.4 Is public funding required to bring forward these 2 schemes and if so what is the commitment or expectation of such funds being available and by when?

- 7.4.1 Public funding is being used to bring forward the Town Hall scheme in the form of the Council's own internally available cash balances which have been budgeted for the life of the project (as explained in paragraph 7.3.3). Public funding from other sources is not required to bring forward the site.
- 7.4.2 Public funding is not required to bring forward the Somerdale site.
- 7.4.3 However, to ensure that development of the sites is best aligned with the provision of the necessary infrastructure, public funds can be made available for forward funding infrastructure provision. This accords with strategic objectives 1, 5, 6 and 7 of the Core Strategy. The Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has identified in their new Revolving Infrastructure Fund a total of £5.8million for Keynsham Town Centre and Somerdale with a view to this being repaid through S106 or CIL receipts. The infrastructure requirements for the two sites are likely to include on and off site highway works, a new primary school, improvements to the railway station, and pedestrian/cycle links to the town centre and the existing National Cycle Network.
- 7.4.4 The Revolving Infrastructure Fund, totalling £50m across the West of England, is made up of funding allocated to the West of England Partnership from the Government's Regional Growth Fund (£39m) and Growing Places Fund (£11.3m). The LEP will be progressing "due diligence" with DCLG with the aim of commencing operation of the fund during 2012.
- 7.4.5 The £5.8m identified for Keynsham in the Revolving Infrastructure Fund is in addition to the £0.3m of HCA funds identified through the West of England Local Investment Plan (CD4/I4) for site preparation and planning, as shown in Table 6 of the Core Strategy and infrastructure item KI.1 of the Infrastructure Delivery Programme (CD4/I6). These HCA funds are also available for forward funding infrastructure provision².

² See BNES/7, question 4.5 for further explanation

7.5 Are there any other strategic opportunities for development in Keynsham (excluding the Green Belt discussed under Issue 3) which should be highlighted in the plan?

7.5.1 CD4/H14 does not identify any other strategic opportunities for development within Keynsham (excluding the Green Belt) that are suitable, available and achievable which are not already highlighted in the plan.