



## AGENDA ITEM:

### SUMMARY

<b>Report for:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>27 March 2018</b>
<b>Part:</b>	<b>1</b>
If Part II, reason:	

<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Two Waters Masterplan</b>
Contact:	<p>Cllr Graham Sutton, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration</p> <p><b>Responsible Officer:</b> James Doe, Assistant Director, Planning, Development &amp; Regeneration</p> <p><b>Authors:</b> Nathalie Bateman, Team Leader Strategic Planning and Regeneration  Shalini Jayasinghe, Strategic Planning and Regeneration Officer</p>
Purpose of report:	To present to Cabinet the Two Waters Masterplan Guidance for their review and recommendation to put forward the document for adoption by Council as a Planning Statement.
Recommendations	That Cabinet recommends to Council that the Two Waters Masterplan Guidance (Appendix 1) be adopted as a Planning Statement until the new Dacorum Borough Local Plan is in place when it will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.
Corporate Objectives:	<p><u>Affordable Housing</u></p> <p>The Two Waters Masterplan Guidance will help deliver affordable housing through development and sets out guidance for its delivery in accordance with DBC's Core Strategy policy CS19.</p> <p><u>Building Community Capacity</u></p> <p>The Vision for the Two Waters Masterplan Guidance centres on creating a sustainable community balancing national</p>

	<p>pressures for delivering housing and development with local needs and sets out guidance for developers and potential developers to regenerate the area and develop in a manner that builds local community capacity.</p> <p><u>Delivering an Efficient and Modern Council</u></p> <p>The Vision for Two Waters Masterplan Guidance sets out to deliver development that is modern and efficient for the enjoyment of those living and working in the Borough which will be enabled through the guidance provided for development coming forward in the area.</p> <p><u>Ensuring Economic Growth and Prosperity</u></p> <p>The Two Waters Masterplan Guidance sets out a Vision, Objectives and Guidance to steer development that ensures economic growth and prosperity through high quality mixed use development around transport hubs and in close proximity to the town centre, as well as the provision of improved infrastructure including transport. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and/or S106 contributions will enable the provision of improved infrastructure and community facilities that facilitates economic growth and prosperity.</p> <p><u>A Safe, Clean and Enjoyable Environment</u></p> <p>The Two Waters Masterplan Guidance sets out a framework for the delivery of a safe, clean and enjoyable environment.</p>
<p>Implications:</p>	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>No financial implications involving direct spend for the Council arise from the completed Masterplan Guidance.</p> <p>The Two Waters Masterplan Guidance is a planning policy document and will be used to steer development that reflects local aspirations and secures benefits for the wider community. It will also be used to help generate investment in the area and to secure developer contributions such as CIL/S106 obligations or other mechanisms in place, and to leverage investment from stakeholders to improve infrastructure and contribute towards DBC's regeneration objectives for the area to benefit the wider community.</p> <p>The majority of the development in the Two Waters area will be delivered by private developers.</p> <p>There are a number of DBC owned land assets both within the wider Two Waters area and specifically within the key Development Sites. These include but are not limited to the Car Wash site at the Plough Roundabout, land on Site 4 (currently used by Sunnyside Rural Trust), Lawn Lane playing field (all within Development Site 4) and Frogmore Paper Mill.</p> <p>In addition, suitable infrastructure, particularly around</p>

<p>Value For Money Implications'</p>	<p>improvements to public and sustainable transport infrastructure and parking, will need to be delivered to support new development in the area. It is expected that this will be funded or at least part funded through CIL/S106 obligations or other developer contributions. Appropriate funding sources will need to be sought for any shortfall in funding.</p> <p><u>Value for Money</u></p> <p>The Two Waters Masterplan Guidance will help to steer development that reflects local aspirations and secures benefits for the wider community. It will also help to generate investment through developer contributions such as CIL/S106 or other mechanism in place and leverage investment from stakeholders to improve infrastructure and contribute towards benefitting the wider community delivering value for money.</p>
<p>Risk Implications</p>	<p>A full risk assessment has been carried out as part of the Project Initiation Document (PID) for the Local Planning Framework. These risks are reviewed monthly through Rocket, the Council's Performance Management System and reported each year through the annual Authority Monitoring Report (AMR). Identified risks include failure of external agencies or consultants to deliver on time, change in Government policy and team capacity.</p> <p>There are significant additional risks that would arise from not having a masterplan in place for the area. These would relate to a lack of up-to-date site specific guidance upon which to base planning decisions within the Two Waters area, and the likelihood of a significant increase in speculative planning applications (and potentially appeals), particularly for housing development in the key development sites of the area, which would prove hard to defend. There would also be financial implications i.e. extra costs associated with planning appeals and inquiries.</p>
<p>Community Impact Assessment</p>	<p>An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out for the Core Strategy, which sets the context for the detailed proposals and policies within the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD). An independent Sustainability Appraisal Report which accompanies the Site Allocations DPD considers equalities issues separately. It concludes that the Site Allocations DPD avoids any discrimination on the basis of disability, gender or ethnic minority. A Community Impact Assessment is currently being undertaken to cover all planning guidance and policies.</p>
<p>Health And Safety Implications</p>	<p>This document is a strategic planning document and sets out flexible guidance for development coming forward within the Two Waters area. The Health and Safety impacts of any detailed proposals coming forward will be assessed at project stage.</p>
<p>Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments</p>	<p><b>Monitoring Officer:</b></p> <p>The Masterplan will provide a framework which can be used to guide development in the area. It should enable a more</p>

	<p>consistent approach to decision making and thus avoid unnecessary appeals and legal challenges.</p> <p><b>S.151 Officer</b></p> <p>No further comments to add.</p>
Consultees:	<p>Mark Gaynor, Corporate Director (Housing &amp; Regeneration), DBC  Mark Brookes, Solicitor to the Council, Legal Governance Management, DBC  James Deane, Corporate Director (Finance &amp; Operations), DBC  David Skinner, Assistant Director (Finance &amp; Resources), DBC  Ben Hosier, Group Manager (Commissioning, Procurement &amp; Compliance), DBC  Steve Barnes, Parking Services Team Leader, DBC  Corporate Management Team (CMT), DBC  Strategic Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee (10 October 2017)  Public &amp; Stakeholders - Please refer Consultation Statement (Appendix 2)</p>
Background papers:	<p>Two Waters Strategic Framework (2015)  Consultation Statement (Appendix 2)  Two Waters Draft Masterplan Guidance Evidence Base – available at <a href="http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/regeneration">www.dacorum.gov.uk/regeneration</a>  Strategic Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee (10 October 2017) –papers and minutes</p>
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	<p>CIL Community Infrastructure Levy  DBC Dacorum Borough Council  DPD Development Plan Document  HCC Hertfordshire County Council  MHCLG Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government  PID Project Initiation Document  SPAEO SC Strategic Planning and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p>

## Background

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) commissioned consultants BDP to build on the Two Waters Strategic Framework (November 2015) and prepare a Two Waters Masterplan Guidance report for the Two Waters area.
- 1.2 Located to the south of Hemel Hempstead town centre and situated between the train stations of Hemel Hempstead and Apsley and the Plough Roundabout, the defined Two Waters masterplan area covers an area of approximately 124 hectares.
- 1.3 There is a significant amount of underused land within the Two Waters area. Dacorum's housing targets in the adopted Dacorum Core Strategy (2013) are already high and based on draft Government policy, are likely to rise by a

significant level. Given the Borough's extensive Green Belt, there is a need to consider positively the contribution that previously developed sites, particularly those with high accessibility and close to public transport interchanges, can make to boost the housing supply. These issues are themes being put forward by the Government in its draft National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG, March 2018).

- 1.4 This masterplan guidance report creates opportunities to guide much needed new homes, employment, community services and improve the environment in a manner that benefits the community. It also creates opportunities to deliver sustainable development focused on public transport, walking and cycling to ease traffic congestion in the area, as well as guide infrastructure improvements to support the new housing.
- 1.5 The Two Waters Masterplan Guidance is underpinned by a robust high level evidence base comprising:
- an urban design, transport and movement, and viability baseline analysis;
  - development of a masterplan to test feasible development capacities and design principles; and
  - a viability and transport appraisal of the masterplan.

The Masterplan Guidance Evidence Report online at [www.dacorum.gov.uk/regeneration](http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/regeneration).

- 1.6 DBC has undertaken significant public consultation including public exhibitions and workshops and online consultation on the draft document as well as meetings with key stakeholders and landowners, all of which have informed the development of the Masterplan Guidance. The Consultation Statement is available at Appendix 2.

## **2. Aims and scope of the masterplan guidance**

- 2.1 The Two Waters Masterplan Guidance will guide future development in Two Waters and play an important role to ensure that development and changes in the area are planned and designed in the best possible way to ensure we have an attractive, sustainable and balanced town, fit for the future.
- 2.2 The Two Waters Masterplan Guidance will inform emerging planning policy including the content of Dacorum's new Local Plan. It is envisaged that the Two Waters Masterplan Guidance will be initially adopted by Council as a Planning Statement and will then be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) supporting the new Dacorum Local Plan.
- 2.3 The Masterplan Guidance scope:
- Is a flexible strategy that seeks to guide development that will create a place that reflects local aspirations and secures benefits for the wider community.
  - Outlines the strengths, weaknesses, constraints and opportunities and a vision and objectives for the area.
  - Provides overarching guidance that will help to shape development in the whole area.
  - Identifies four key Development Sites and outlines key proposals, design guidance and development requirements for each of these four sites.

- Outlines development requirements for the remediation of contaminated land, affordable housing provision, use of open space, transport, access and movement and parking improvements.

## **Out of scope**

### 2.4 The Masterplan Guidance does not:

- Provide detailed designs for any sites. These will come forward through the planning application process.
- Prescribe detailed transport solutions. High level transport data has been used by BDP and their transport sub-consultants to undertake assessments to inform the level of development proposed in the Masterplan Guidance, their impact on traffic levels and a range of proposals for each site to mitigate impact. This work is outlined in the Two Waters Masterplan Guidance Evidence Base available at [www.dacorum.gov.uk/regeneration](http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/regeneration). The detail of all development, with necessary transport improvements, will need to be developed at the planning application stage and/or through wider work such as Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC) South West Herts Growth and Transport Plan.

2.5 Whilst the four key development sites have been specifically identified as the focus of new development, it is accepted that further development is likely to come forward in the wider Two Waters area. Any such development will be governed by the overarching guidance principles.

## **3. Development of the Two Waters Masterplan Guidance**

3.1 There is a very high housing need within Dacorum. The precise level of this need is still being clarified. Dacorum's own assessment, calculated through its Strategic Housing Market Assessment indicated a figure of 756 homes per annum (17,388 over the 2013 – 2036 period). The Government's standard methodology (which is due to be confirmed shortly through the new National Planning Policy Guidance) is expected to indicate a level closer to 1,000 additional homes per year (23,000 over the same time period). This compares to the current annual target in the Core Strategy of 430 homes / year.

3.2 Two Waters is an important strategic location and has the potential to accommodate new development that promotes a sustainable mix of land uses. Maximising the potential for the construction of new dwellings within more urban areas such as Two Waters, serves both to concentrate development in strategic areas around transport hubs and town centres, as well as to reduce the possible impact and loss of Green Belt and greenfield land for development.

3.3 As outlined in the Introduction section above the Two Waters area represents an opportunity for development. However it is crucial that development is planned, well designed, sustainable and appropriate for the area and balances the different priorities.

3.4 The Two Waters Masterplan Guidance has been developed through a comprehensive and iterative process employing urban design principles, high

level transport and viability assessments and stakeholder and public consultation.

3.5 The feasibility of different forms of development was tested through the process of preparing the Masterplan Guidance. Early iterations of the masterplan tested much higher development capacities than those proposed in the current Masterplan Guidance but these were considered inappropriate forms of development due to:

- Negative impacts on views and townscape due to building heights and dominance of taller buildings.
- Poor relationships between existing and proposed buildings due to increased density.
- Negative impacts on the local highways network due to increased vehicle movements.
- Negative impacts on viability due to the requirement for underground car parking.
- Views expressed through public consultation and steering group meetings.

3.6 The final version of Two Waters Masterplan Guidance presented here represents what is considered an appropriate form of development balancing the variety of complex factors including national and local policy, townscape context, views and characters of the area, sensitive land uses and boundaries, the local highway network, viability assessments, urban designs principles and views expressed through the Steering Group and public and stakeholder consultation.

3.7 In particular, following the final round of consultation, maximum building heights in isolated areas on Site 1: Hemel Hempstead Station and Surrounding have been reduced from eight to six storeys. Guidance for the majority of development on this site including those adjacent to London Road remains at up to four storeys.

3.8 In addition, following the final round of consultation and as a result of further work with HCC which identified that the site was not suitable based on its flood zone status, the option of a potential school on Site 4 has been removed from the Masterplan Guidance. DBC will continue to work with HCC to identify options for providing new primary school places for the proposed new residential development in the area.

#### **4. Referral from the Strategic Planning and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee (SPAEOSEC) to Cabinet**

4.1 Following public consultation on the draft Two Waters Masterplan, the draft Two Waters Masterplan along with the results of the consultation were presented to SPAEOSEC on 10 October 2017.

4.2 A referral was made by the Committee to Cabinet on the basis about the impact of the level of development, congestion and infrastructure and public responses around these issues. Minute 123 of the Committee meeting on 10 October 2017 refers.

4.3 Taking on board comments made by the SPAEOSEC, amendments have been made to the masterplan to address concerns where possible, given the scope of the Two Waters Masterplan Guidance.

- 4.4 In particular, maximum building heights in isolated areas on Site 1: Hemel Hempstead Station and Surrounding have been reduced from eight to six storeys. Guidance for the majority of development on this site including those adjacent to London Road remains at up to four storeys.
- 4.5 The option of a potential school on Site 4 has been removed from the Masterplan Guidance. This is a result of both the public consultation and further work with HCC that identified that the site was not suitable based on its flood zone status.
- 4.6 We will continue to work with HCC to identify options for providing new primary school places for the proposed new residential development in the area.
- 4.7 Similarly Officers will continue to work with HCC regarding transport measures particularly through their South West Herts Growth and Transport plan development.
- 4.8 Officers are also working and will continue to work with Environmental Health to look at further enhancing work on mitigating and improving air quality issues in this area.

## **5. Ongoing partnership working**

- 5.1 Whilst the Two Waters Masterplan Guidance provides guidance for development in the area, DBC will need to continue to work in partnership with stakeholders for the delivery of supporting infrastructure.
- 5.2 DBC will continue to work closely with HCC on their emerging South West Herts Growth and Transport Plan and Local Transport Plan to address the traffic management issues in the area; this may include further work to explore opportunities for more efficient public and shared transport systems and multi modal transport interchanges in the Borough to improve connections to and from key destinations.
- 5.3 DBC will also continue to work with HCC to address the educational needs that will arise in the area due to the proposed development in the Two Waters area.
- 5.4 DBC will work with Environmental Health and wider stakeholders to improve air quality in the area, which is an important issue for this part of Hemel Hempstead.
- 5.5 DBC will further work with organisations and developers to deliver the necessary infrastructure and leverage additional funding where required to deliver improvements for the area.

## **6. Next steps**

- 6.1 Subject to Cabinet approval and Council approval thereafter, the final Two Waters Masterplan Guidance will be adopted as a Planning Statement and will be a material consideration in the planning process.
- 6.2 It is envisioned that the Two Waters Masterplan Guidance will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) supporting the new Dacorum Local Plan in due course.