



WNDC Board Report by Director of Regeneration and Development

Paper Reference: 2010-05-06-01

Agenda Item: 6

6 July 2010

Subject: Regeneration Overview Report

Advice: That the Board:

1. **Note** the content of the report.

Summary:

- This report provides an update and overview of regeneration and development projects.
- Key highlights:
- The first meeting of the Northampton Station Steering Group has taken place and has approved the basis of the station design.
- The Stronger Communities Fund Panel has approved funding for 12 new projects across West Northamptonshire totalling nearly £115,000.
- The formal process for procuring a private sector development partner for the Moat Lane project has started.

1. Castle Station

- 1.1 The first Project Steering Group took place on 11 June 2010. The Steering Group is made up of Network Rail, Northampton Borough Council, Northamptonshire County Council, Northamptonshire Enterprise Limited, Government Office for the East Midlands, East Midlands Development Agency and the Department for Transport. The consultant team of Hyder Consulting and BDP Architects were in attendance..
- 1.2 The alternative station design being developed was presented to the project Steering Group. It is more prominent and avoids the need for a temporary station, reducing the overall project cost. The Steering Group approved the alternative which will be progressed into a full outline design.
- 1.3 Non-intrusive surveys have commenced on site. Ground investigations, required to inform the outline designs, are due to start in June slightly behind schedule.
- 1.4 Footbridge options are being re-assessed by Network Rail and their design consultants in order to satisfy London Midland that potential alternatives that avoid the need for a temporary footbridge have been fully considered. This work will be completed in June.
- 1.5 Network Rail have prepared a draft Planning Strategy setting out how requirements for consultation with stakeholders and the public will be satisfied under Permitted Development. The Strategy will be developed jointly through a small working group involving; WNDC, NBC, NCC and Network Rail.
- 1.6 London Midland have completed installation of a temporary, 120 space, car park deck at the station.
- 1.7 Funding was discussed by the Steering Group and it was acknowledged that the funding environment has become much more difficult. NCC confirmed that the Regional Funding Allocation is no longer an option for the scheme. The Steering Group agreed that funding, based on the undoubted increased revenue streams resulting from the project, should be actively explored and a further working group has been established to explore options.

2. Stronger Communities Fund

- 2.1 The first panel of 2010/11 met on Friday 18 June 2010 and considered 17 new applications and 1 deferred application from 2009/10. Of the 17 applications; 12

projects were approved, 4 were deferred for further information and 1 was declined. The deferred application from 2009/10 was also approved. A total of £114,798 was approved by the panel.

2.2 Of the 17 applications that were considered 6 applications were from Daventry, 6 from Northampton, 2 from South Northamptonshire and 3 covering West Northamptonshire as a whole. 4 applications were from within the new extended boundary area.

2.3 The 12 projects that were approved by the panel are as follow:

Northampton	
Abbey Centre Baptist Church	£10,000
Northampton Junior Rugby League Football	£4,100
Synergy Forum Northampton	£9,998
Umbrella Fair Organisation	£10,000
Westone Action Group	£9,000
Daventry	
Daventry Town Bowls Club	£6,000
Long Buckby Sportsfield Committee	£10,700
Moulton Players	£10,000
West Haddon Pre-School	£10,000
South Northamptonshire	
Helmdon Acorns Pre-School	£10,000
West Northamptonshire	
Community Landscape Archaeology Survey Project	£5,000
Fiori Musicali	£10,000

Deferred Application	
Rugby & Northampton Athletics Club	£10,000
TOTAL	£114,798

3. Avon Nunn Mills

- 3.1 The Land Owner Steering Group continues to meet to discuss strategic issues relating to the regeneration of the site. The Strategic Development Framework which has been prepared to guide future development aspirations has now been finalised and is being used to take forward discussions with landowners regarding the scale and nature of development across the site.
- 3.2 The planning application for the Ransome Road site from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is being processed and is likely to be reported to Committee in the summer.
- 3.3 A Programme Board comprising officers from WNDC, Northampton Borough Council and Northamptonshire County Council has been established in order to co-ordinate the public sector input to the development.

4. Becket's Park

- 4.1 The project continues to make excellent progress. The programme of works is on schedule with a marina completion date of March 2011.
- 4.2 The planning application for the facilities building was submitted to WNDC during May and was validated on the 26 May 2010. It is hoped that the application will be determined by the end of July. The construction tender for the facilities building will be advertised July 2010.
- 4.3 The first Construction Futures student has successfully completed her four week work experience on the marina site. WNDC's Construction Futures team continue to work closely with the Environment Agency and the main contractor Jacksons to source and provide further trainees.
- 4.4 WNDC's Horizon project has supported the Becket's Park Partnership to secure £20,000 from Marks & Spencer's via Groundwork UK to run a community facilities improvement project in Becket's Park. Northampton Borough Council has committed

£5,000 revenue funding and WNDC has committed £20,000 capital funding through S106. This part of the project is being managed by NBC.

4.5 Five artists were interviewed during week commencing the 7th June to deliver the project. The preferred artist is Joel Parkes who will be working with the partners and the local community to develop and deliver the commission.

5. London Road/Ransome Road Junction Improvements

5.1 Following the change in government, the project, which forms part of the larger Brownfield Initiative with the Homes and Communities Agency, is subject to a further review by the Treasury. As a result, NCC have been instructed by WNDC to stop any further GAF funded work on the project until a funding decision is made. This continues to delay work on the project and a start to the construction of the improved junction.

5.2 WNDC are mitigating against potential delays by preparing the Funding Agreement with NCC in advance of the Treasury decision. The agreement will be based on a revised scheme proposal issued by NCC on the 20th May. This includes a revised cost estimate, programme and risk register that reflect the project status on that date.

5.3 The HCA are progressing negotiations with Netto on the land sale contract, however, this has been complicated by the recent acquisition of Netto by Asda. Discussions continue to be positive.

5.4 The HCA have submitted an application to extend the current Planning Consent for the junction improvements due to the delays described above.

6. Northampton Waterside

6.1 The planning application for use of the site of the former United Social Club as a temporary car park is being processed with a view that the site will be available for use within the next 3 months.

6.2 The Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Development recently met senior executives at National Grid to discuss taking forward the earlier agreement with WNDC regarding how both parties might work together to plan for the redevelopment of the Gas Holders sites. Progress is subject to the operational requirements of the gas supply business. This is currently being reviewed and further discussions will take place with a view to agreeing a redevelopment strategy that

accommodates the requirements of the gas supply business and the need to secure an early redevelopment of the site.

7. Grosvenor Greyfriars Development

7.1 Discussions with Legal & General have taken place regarding the redevelopment of the Grosvenor Centre and it is anticipated that pre-application discussions on the plans for the scheme will start in the Autumn with a view to a formal planning application being submitted in the Spring of 2011.

8. Upton Lodge Farmhouse

8.1 The refurbishment works of the farmhouse and bungalow are now complete and the Contractor, Ayres and Gardener, are working closely with YMCA on snagging. The twelve bedroom residential facility has been completed to a very high standard which is extremely welcoming for the young people. The first set of residents will be moving into the farmhouse by the end of July 2010.

8.2 On the 24th June a staff team of approximately forty from Johnson Diversey helped young volunteers from YMCA clear and re-plant the walled garden. Johnson Diversey were WNDG's 2009 runners up in the Community Investment Award category of the Business Excellence Awards run by Northamptonshire Newspapers.

9. Sandy Lane Improvement North

9.1 The construction of this new road by Northamptonshire County Council is well underway. Contractors are making good progress on site and work is due to be complete by the end of March 2011.

10. Construction Futures

10.1 The work of Construction Futures continues to attract significant interest, with WNDG's Chief Executive invited to speak about the project's work at the Westminster Briefing Conference 'Building a strong, sustainable construction industry: developing partnerships, committing to people'. In addition a number of positive articles have appeared recently in national regeneration and trade journals.

10.2 The project has also confirmed construction training requirements within a number of recent planning approvals, including a total of 40 training weeks generated by the recent approval of a new BREEAM "Excellent" Aldi store in Towcester. Similar arrangements have recently been agreed for a number of other developments,

- including a new housing site and the demolition and replacement of a factory (both in Northampton).
- 10.3 To date Construction Futures has negotiated over 1400 construction training weeks, working closely with WNDC's planning officers to generate maximum social and economic advantage from our development control powers.
- 10.4 A number of significant new projects are currently under discussion. Construction Futures are currently in negotiation with a major developer regarding the provision of construction training services for a 900,000 sq foot distribution and office building in DIRFT. The planned project would also see a significant tie in with local schools and the Sustainable Construction iNet, exploiting the learning opportunities offered through the construction and operational processes of a huge BREEAM "Excellent" building.
- 10.5 Finally, as part of the response to the recent evaluation of the first phase of Construction Futures, the project's business plan and governance arrangements are currently being reviewed. The intention is to enhance the project's performance and take more advantage from the partnerships and positive working relationships developed with both our public and private sector partners.

11. Moat Lane and the Watermeadows

- 11.1 With the first phase of works to Moat Lane now complete and open to the public (including the Watermeadows), the emphasis within the project has now shifted to securing private sector investment in the scheme.
- 11.2 The process of securing a private sector partner is now formally underway, with the Public Public Partnership (PPP) opting for a Competitive Dialogue approach. The Prior information Notice in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) has been published and an advertisement placed with the Estates Gazette for the forthcoming Developers Day (taking place on 9 July and with WNDC represented by the Chief Executive).
- 11.3 These activities have already generated significant interest, with a number of enquiries received from major developers and an upsurge in traffic on the WWW.Moatlane.org website and the downloading of site plans and documents.

11.4 The Pre Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) will be distributed immediately afterwards and process of initial short listing will begin in August. The intention is to progress towards a single preferred bidder by the Spring of 2011.

11.5 Meanwhile SNC and its advisors continue to liaise with WNDC's planning officers on the Moat Lane planning application. The scheme remains on track for submission within WNDC's Business Plan target date.

12. iCon

12.1 Works to the timber frame on the incubator block and the 'glu-lams' to the showcase block have progressed well and are continuing to programme. The steel frame for the lift is installed and the block work to the basement plant area and the kerbing and drainage ducts have now completed.

12.2 On 14th June 2010 written formal agreement on the claim for an Extension of Time was sent to Winvic in response to the delays caused by the service diversions. The revised completion date for Section 1, practical completion of the building works, is the 9th March 2011 and for Section 2, certification of the BREEAM Excellent rating, it has been agreed that this will complete no longer than 6 weeks after the 9th March 2011. It has also been agreed, with Winvic, that there will be two "Show Incubator Units" available to show prospective tenants, as from the end of January 2010.

12.3 Agreement on the detailed design continues via regular Contractor / Client meetings. Subsequent change instructions have been issued to Winvic. Good progress has been made on the scope of the enhanced fit out items; however, confirmation is still required on a small number of the soft Fit-out items.