

WNDC Board Report

Report by Director of Regeneration and Development

Paper Reference: 2011-02-07-02

Agenda Item: 7

17 May 2011

Subject: Daventry Regeneration and Planning Overview

Advice: That the Board

1. **Note** the progress that is being made on regeneration and planning projects in Daventry

Summary:

- The investments made by WNDC and our public sector partners to help catalyse the growth and regeneration of Daventry have resulted in significant levels of activity
- A number of significant planning applications which will transform Daventry's town centre and commercial and retail offers will be received by WNDC over the next few months
- The Daventry ICON is now open for business with an extensive programme of both community and business launch events confirmed
- Discussions are ongoing with developers seeking to build new homes and related infrastructure in and around Daventry
- The Department of Education has recently issued a Statement of Intent to bring a 600 place University Technical College to Daventry

1. Town Centre Planning Applications – Forward Programme

- 1.1 A number of keenly anticipated planning applications are forecast to be submitted to WNDC over the next few months. These include:
- Sites 3 and 6 – Outline Planning Application expected before the end of May
 - Canal Arm – Detailed Planning Application expected before end of May
 - Site 1 – Detailed Planning Application expected in July
 - Site 5 – Outline Planning Application expected in the Autumn
- 1.2 Underpinning each of these applications is a shared commitment from both the public and private sectors towards the economic regeneration of Daventry Town Centre; the confirmation of Daventry as a sub-regional centre; encouraging people to work, visit and shop in the town centre; make effective and appropriate use of land; and deliver high quality and sustainable development.
- 1.3 WNDC has worked closely with its public sector partners (particularly Daventry District Council) to pave the way for these developments, making use of our Growth Area Funding to secure key sites and building; improve road access and in doing so opening up retail development opportunities such as the Abbey Retail Park; relocate a number of existing community buildings; and funding the plans and studies essential in such a large scale and ambitious programme of regeneration.

2. Sites 3 and 6

- 2.1 Daventry District Council are expected to submit an Outline Planning Application for Sites 3 and 6 (which incorporate the area known as the Water Space located off Eastern Way and the area known as the Learning Quarter) in May.
- 2.2 The proposed uses for the 11.3 ha include a mixture of leisure, residential, employment, community and educational facilities as well as mooring basins which will link to the proposed Daventry Canal Arm. Some 360 new homes and 13,000 sqm of office space are planned, together with a family pub, restaurants, cafes, etc.

3. The Canal Arm

- 3.1 DDC are expected to submit a Detailed Planning Application before the end of May to create a new arm linking the Grand Union Canal (north east of Daventry Reservoir) to a terminus basin within Site 3 of the proposed town centre developments.
- 3.2 This 3.2km long arm will terminate in a series of three basins forming part of Site 3, mixed use development.
- 3.3 The proposed route of the canal arm follows the south and eastern sides of Daventry Reservoir and will have a towpath along its length, sections for boat mooring and planted margins to provide habitat for aquatic plants and animals.
- 3.4 It is likely that there will be 7 locks over the length of the arm to accommodate a level difference of 20.5 metres, although a flight of 4 of the locks may be replaced by a boatlift that would be an opportunity to create a tourist attraction of regional and perhaps national importance.

4. Site 1

- 4.1 Henry Boot Developments Limited (DDC's appointed private sector development partner) is preparing to submit a Detailed Planning Application for Site 1 – the town centre site north of High Street and which includes land at Primrose Hill Car Park, Daventry Library and Chapel Lane Car Park.
- 4.2 A victim of the market downturn which has significantly delayed progress on this application, Henry Boot Developments have now returned to profitability and are keen to press ahead with what will be a major overhaul of Daventry's retail offer.
- 4.3 The scheme incorporates some 10,000 sqm of new, high quality development including retail space and a new library (which is significantly larger and more efficient than the existing building).
- 4.4 WNDC's innovative use of GAF funding to relocate Northamptonshire County Council's Children and Young People team (which had shared the existing library building previously) to bespoke offices in DDC's Lodge Road building has meant the new library can be planned specifically for library and related cultural and community uses and without the constraint of having to accommodate a service which, by definition, needs secure access.

5. Site 5

- 5.1 Henry Boots Developments are expected to submit an Outline Planning Application this autumn. The proposed development includes approximately 26,000 sqm of floorspace delivering a range of retail outlets (including food, non food, bulky goods and open retail). In addition a number of restaurant and café uses are proposed, including a drive through facility.
- 5.2 The development includes new surface level car parking and will require the realignment of some aspects of the existing highway in and around this end of Eastern Way.
- 5.3 The relationship between Site 5, Site 1 and in particular Sites 3 and 6 is critical in regeneration and urban design terms. Taken together the developments represent a significant increase in the commercial and retail floorspace of Daventry. Ensuring high quality, coherent urban design and sustainability standards throughout needs to be central to all these proposals. To help with that process WNDC's planning officers have drafted a common set of aims and objectives to take us through these next few busy months which enshrine those aspirations which all parties (including DDC, Henry Boot Developments and their respective advisors) will be invited to help shape and adopt.

6. iCon Environmental Innovation Centre, Daventry

- 6.1 The iCon is now "open for business" with the first tenants moving in early May. As the building has moved closer to completion it has attracted significant national and trade press, resulting in a high number of enquiries for both lettable space and conferencing facilities.
- 6.2 In recognition of the prominence of the iCon on the Daventry skyline, a series of launch events have been arranged which seek to encourage as many local people and businesses into the building as possible. An 8 day programme of community events begins on the 21st May with a major concert by local orchestra Fiori Musicali. Other events throughout the week include photographic exhibitions, tours of the building for local school children, a martial arts display evening, a Sunday afternoon event by

- the Daventry Players and culminates with a final concert which has been jointly organised by Daventry Choral Society, Daventry Brass and Daventry Music Centre.
- 6.3 The formal business launch event takes place on June 30th with a major conference organised by the Northampton Institute for Urban Affairs on “From Challenge to Opportunity - New Business and the Low Carbon Economy”. Up to 150 delegates are expected to attend the event with a number of high profile speakers and participants already confirmed (including Pro Logis, the Guardian, dcarbon8).
- 6.4 The formal transfer of the building to the University of Northampton has now been completed, with the iCon already figuring prominently in the University’s marketing and promotional materials. The iCon represents the second innovation centre (the Portfolio Centre was the first) delivered for West Northamptonshire through a WNDC – University of Northampton collaboration and with the financial support of local organisations such as NEL and regional bodies such as emda. Evidence of the strength of that relationship, and the growing role of the University of Northampton in the regeneration of West Northamptonshire’s towns, can be seen in the proposals currently being developed for a Northampton Innovation Centre which, like the iCon, could be owned and managed by the University.
- 6.5 Although the iCon is now likely to exceed the environmental targets set for it at design stage, further enhancements are possible and are being actively pursued. Elevate, a regeneration consultancy retained by WNDC to project manage the iCon build process, is currently working with WNDC and the University to secure additional ERDF funding and a University capital contribution towards the fitting of a photo voltaic (PV) array on the roof the building. As a result of the Feed in Tariff scheme, PVs may well both reduce the carbon footprint of the iCon and generate a secure source of income over an extended period of time. The early signs on this proposal are positive and an outline bid is currently being prepared for both emda and the University’s Estates and Finance Committee.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 WNDC and its partners have worked together over the past few years to help deliver DDC’s and local people’s aspirations for Daventry. This investment of time and funding

is already making a significant contribution to the future wellbeing of the town in terms of its retail and commercial offer, as a high quality employment location, improved community infrastructure and enhanced public realm. There are a number of initiatives already on the ground and operating in Daventry (e.g. the iCon Environmental Innovation Centre, Abbey Retail Park, new community buildings such as the Scout building, etc.).

7.2 However, it is clear that over the next few months a number of decisions critical to the continued delivery of those aspirations will need to be made. WNDC will be determining planning applications which have the potential to add thousands of square metres of new retail space to the town centre and generate hundreds of jobs, while DDC's plans for the Water Space will transform the built environment of Daventry Town Centre. Of particular importance is the Department of Education's decision on the location of its first round of University Technical Colleges, with Daventry continuing to be presented as a front runner.

Daventry Regeneration Sites Forward Plan

MILESTONE:	YEAR	QUARTER	TARGET DATE
Daventry Canal Arm			
Submission of Planning Application	2011/12	Q1	31/05/2011
Completion of Application Validation and Statutory Consultation Period	2011/12	Q2	05/07/2011
Completion of Planning Application Assessment	2011/12	Q2	19/08/2011
Committee Resolution Attained	2011/12	Q2	13/09/2011
Daventry Site 5			
Submission of Planning Application	2011/12	Q2	30/09/2011
Completion of Application Validation and Statutory Consultation Period	2011/12	Q3	04/11/2011
Completion of Planning Application Assessment	2011/12	Q3	25/11/2011
Committee Resolution Attained	2011/12	Q3	15/12/2011
Daventry Sites 3 & 6			
Submission of Planning Application	2011/12	Q1	29/04/2011
Completion of Application Validation and Statutory Consultation Period	2011/12	Q1	03/06/2011
Completion of Planning Application Assessment	2011/12	Q2	01/07/2011

Committee Resolution Attained	2011/12	Q2	13/09/2011
Daventry Sites 1			
Submission of Planning Application	2011/12	Q2	15/07/2011
Completion of Application Validation and Statutory Consultation Period	2011/12	Q2	19/08/2011
Completion of Planning Application Assessment	2011/12	Q2	09/09/2011
Committee Resolution Attained	2011/12	Q3	15/12/2011