

Heather House and Pavilion Building Update

Final Decision-Maker	Policy and Resources
Lead Head of Service	John Foster, Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Andrew Connors, Housing Delivery Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	Parkwood

Executive Summary

This Committee have previously approved the Council pursuing a comprehensive redevelopment of the Heather House and the Pavilion Building sites and various redevelopment options have been presented and considered. This resulted in the Committee approving scheme design options to be taken forward. Policy and Resources Committee approved the submission of a combined detailed planning application on the 10th February 2021 for both sites and going out to tender for the works contract and procurement of the management provider for the proposed new community centre.

The project team have since been working hard to complete the detailed design and survey work, stakeholder consultation, planning documentation and plans. A detailed planning application for both sites was submitted on the 13th January 2022. The report provides further details regarding the planning application, timetable and next steps.

Purpose of Report

To update the Committee on latest progress with the redevelopment of the Heather House and Pavilion Building sites and next steps.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

To note that:

1. The planning application has been submitted for the redevelopment of the Heather House and Pavilion Building sites.
2. Officers will now be preparing to go out to tender for the works contract and procurement of the management provider for the proposed new community centre.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
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Communities, Housing and Environment Committee	1 February 2022
Policy and Resources Committee	June 2022

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1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure • Safe, Clean and Green • Homes and Communities • A Thriving Place <p>Accepting the recommendations will materially improve the Council's ability to achieve Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure; Homes and Communities.</p>	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Cross Cutting Objectives	<p>The project will support the four cross-cutting objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage is Respected • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced • Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved • Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected 	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Risk Management	Already covered in the risk section.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Financial	<p>There is provision for this project within the approved capital programme. It should however be noted there is a funding shortfall in relation to the Council's criteria for investment in capital projects. This will need to be addressed before seeking approval for release of capital funding from Policy & Resources Committee.</p>	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Legal	No implications	Legal Team
Privacy and Data Protection	No implications	Policy and Information Team
Equalities	We recognise the recommendations may have varying impacts on different communities within Maidstone. Therefore, we will complete a separate equalities impact assessment.	Equalities & Communities Officer
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendations will have a positive impact on population health or that of individuals in an area of Maidstone where health inequalities are most stark.	Public Health Officer
Crime and Disorder	No implications.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Procurement	The Council will follow procurement exercises to appoint the necessary contractor and management provider to facilitate the delivery of the project. We will complete those exercises in line with financial procedure rules and applicable public contracts regulations and principles if applicable.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Biodiversity and Climate Change	<p>In terms of Biodiversity and Climate Change minor implications have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firstly, the new development and design should incorporate the council's commitment to net zero 2030 by moving away from fossil fuel heating systems, improve EPC ratings, and enhance biodiversity where possible. • Secondly, in terms of sustainable procurement measures should be taken to ensure contractors reduce waste, utilise sustainable materials and practices, reduce supply chain distances, as well as conserve as much biodiversity at site as possible during construction. 	Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finally, developing the MBC portfolio of housing will increase the CO2e of the council through the edition of gas and electricity usage in the new properties adding to MBC total Carbon Footprint. 	
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2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This Committee has previously approved taking forward scheme design options for a comprehensive redevelopment for both sites. Policy and Resources Committee approved the submission of a combined detailed planning application for both sites on the 10th February 2021. This also included going out to tender for the works contract and procurement of the management provider for the proposed new community centre. With a follow up report to be presented to the Policy and Resources Committee to approve the final scheme costs and necessary financial commitments associated with the development and management of the sites (including how the funding gap has been bridged), prior to any construction work taking place. It was pointed out that potential funders and management providers will want to see evidence that a project such as this is deliverable and has plans in place before committing any resource to it, hence why the approval was being sought at this early stage.
- 2.2 The project team have since been working hard to complete the detailed design and survey work, stakeholder consultation, planning documentation and plans which has resulted in the submission of a detailed planning application on the 13th January 2022. The planning drawings showing the site layout, floor plans and elevations for the new community centre and residential housing are shown at Appendix 1.

Design Principals

The design team have worked to develop the scheme to respond to the issues raised in both pre-application meetings and from stakeholder engagement. The proposals for both sites are high quality designs featuring robust materials that are durable and compliment the setting and reinforce the contemporary architectural theme. An energy consultant has been appointed to provide guidance on achieving the necessary thermal requirements and energy efficiency measures across both schemes.

- 2.3 The detailed well considered, site wide landscaping scheme will clearly define the boundaries between private, shared and public spaces enhancing the development and improving the surrounding environment.
- 2.4 Like many places throughout the country this area does have a historical issue with anti-social behaviour. In response to ASB issues we have liaised with the secured by design officer throughout the design process and acted upon his recommendations as the proposals have developed for both the residential development and the new community centre.

2.5 The following scheme design principles have been adopted within the planning application.

- A proposal that has been designed to respect the existing topography and the provision of a scheme that brings back into use an underused site.
- A development that rationalises the two dated buildings situated on Bicknor Road to create a better combined community resource that could provide a wider range of activity and potential outreach work to serve the local community.
- To significantly improve the image, visual appearance and public perception of the community centre and contribute towards the regeneration of the area.
- To provide a new modern multi-purpose community facility to accord with the latest accessibility and energy efficiency standards, resulting in lower long-term maintenance and running costs.
- A development that provides housing in a sustainable location (on brownfield land within the confines of an existing settlement).
- The provision of a development that has regard to the location of the site and optimises upon the close proximity of local facilities and transport services.
- The provision of a development that will respond positively and contribute to the surrounding built environment. Continuing to enhance an area of deprivation that has recently benefited from major regeneration programmes by Golding Homes and new developments in the surrounding areas.
- The ability to increase more usable open space provision by repositioning the new community centre further away from the area of ancient woodland on the southern/western boundary. Establishing the required buffer zone of 15m and giving back areas of existing small underused open space taken up on the Pavilion Building development site area.
- A proposal that will not involve the loss of any existing open space amenity land or the alteration of the existing play areas within the middle of the site of which are already benefiting from upgrade and improvement works that are not part of this application.
- Providing high quality family homes that meet Nationally Described Space Standards.

Pavilion Site

2.6 The submitted scheme seeks to demolish the Pavilion building and introduce a mixed tenure scheme of 11 residential houses (6 for market sale and 5 for market rent) incorporating private parking spaces and parking court, together with semi-public landscaped spaces, private rear gardens and home zone. A total of 22 parking spaces in accordance with parking standards are proposed to serve the new residential development.

2.7 All dwellings have been designed to accord with the Nationally Described Space Standards and provide flexibility to respond to the changing needs of their occupants over time. The following table shows the schedule of new accommodation proposed.

Type of Unit	Unit Size	Tenure	Number
3-Bed (5 Person) Terraced Houses	93m2	Market Rent	5
3-Bed (5 Person) Detached Houses)	99m2	Market Sale	3
4-bed (7 Person) Detached Houses	121m2	Market Sale	3
Totals			11

- 2.8 The proposed properties include a row of 5 terrace homes which face onto Bicknor road and mirror the rhythm of surrounding properties. Towards the rear of the site are 6 detached homes formed around an informal cul-de-sac, with each property benefiting from a view over the recreation ground. To make best use of the site whilst respecting the amenities of adjoining neighbours we have used the access road and parking areas to provide the necessary separation we have also carefully considered the location of window & door openings to control overlooking and protect resident privacy.
- 2.9 The 2 storey properties will accord with the heights of existing properties in the surrounding area. The proposal is set back from Bicknor Road to allow sufficient space for a well-considered landscaping scheme; this will enhance the development and integrate with the neighbouring green space.
- 2.10 The proposed layout of the houses will ensure that all dwellings benefit from a private rear garden with independent gated access. Separation distances between the proposed development and neighbouring properties is in accordance with Maidstone's Local Plan and accords with planning discussions during the preapplication phases. The residential scheme will benefit from 4 photovoltaic panels per home, these will provide renewable energy from sunlight.
- 2.11 As the number of dwellings proposed is over 10, there would be a requirement for 30% affordable housing, equating to 4 dwellings. As previously reported to this Committee, the scheme would unfortunately not be able to provide affordable housing as well as a new community centre due to the loss of surplus cross subsidy to help fund the new community centre.

- 2.12 An open book economic viability report has been submitted as part of the supporting documentation for the planning application that demonstrates that the affordable housing targets cannot be achieved in this case with the iterations of tenure and mix as mentioned in the Local Plan Policy.
- 2.13 The possibility of reinstating the provision of affordable housing will be fully explored to see if there are any s106 off-site affordable housing contribution sums and/or non-s106 affordable homes grant subsidy available from Homes England to provide further cross subsidy. This will be concluded before a final report is presented to the Policy and Resources Committee to approval the final scheme costs associated with the delivery of the scheme.

Heather House

- 2.14 The submitted application includes the demolition and re-provision of a new community centre which has been designed to accord with guidance produced by Sports England for community/village halls, together with Rugby Football Union design guide to changing rooms and clubhouses. The current and future needs of stakeholders are provided for and incorporated into the design where possible to do so taking into account the site space and financial viability constraints. It is expected that all the existing clubs can make use of the new facility with exception of the Maidstone Boxing Club, of whom as previously reported the Council are trying to assist in finding an alternative venue to support their future activities.
- 2.15 The proposed schedule of accommodation for room areas is set out below compared to what is existing.

Area	Existing Size	Proposed Size
Main Hall	257m ²	180m ²
Small Hall	103m ²	nil
Small Room (Boxing Club)	56m ²	nil
Storage	102m ²	52m ²
Kitchen	21m ²	14m ²
Bar/Communal Lounge	nil	58m ²
Manager's Office	16m ²	11m ²
Home/Away Changing Facility	nil	132m ²
Referee Changing Facility	nil	17m ²
WC/Changing Places/Toilets	55m ²	36m ²
Plant Room / Services	11m ²	8m ²
Meeting Room	47m ²	nil
Communal/Circulation/Entrance Area	44m ²	72m ²
Total	712m²	580m²

- 2.16 The new community centre will provide a GIA of 580m² and includes a one court sports/community social use hall, the height of which will be capable of accommodating badminton, a kitchen, storage, bar and communal lounge area, as well as further ancillary areas that will provide for field-based sports. The car park will provide parking for 28 vehicles and include appropriate spaces for 3 disabled drivers close to the main entrance.

2.17 The community centre includes 4 separate changing rooms, these provide direct access out to the sports pitches. It was appropriate to locate the new building to adjoin the recreation ground, thereby creating the shortest route between the sporting activity and changing facility.

2.18 The community centre has been designed to include a central circulation space which provides access to all areas within the centre, this was the most economic use of space to cater for the changing needs of the stakeholders. A 'changing places' facility has been incorporated into the community centre to encourage inclusion and cater for a diverse range of specific needs. The new community building will also incorporate a waste-water heat recovery system to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.

Proposed Schedule of Events

2.19 The proposed schedule of events is given in the table below. The dates should be regarded as indicative at this stage as the Council may need to extend and /or amend the timetable as necessary. Any major changes will be discussed with the relevant consultants.

Full Planning submission	14 th January 2022
Issue Tender Package (Works and Management Contract)	By end of February 2022
Planning Approval	Late April 2022
Tender Returns and Evaluation (Works and Management Provider)	Early May 2022
Policy and Resources Committee approval (final scheme costs and to proceed to construction)	June 2022
Sign Contracts and Detailed Design Period Post Planning with Contractor and Management Provider	October 2022
Start on site	October 2022
Practical completion	March 2024

3. RISK

3.1 Planning consent is a risk, but positive pre planning application feedback has been received for the scheme design proposals of which have catered for existing stakeholders needs where possible. Other risks previously reported

to this committee remain unchanged.

4. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 4.1 Previous feedback from Committee was that they wished Heather House to remain open and that a replacement/upgraded facility be provided. It was approved by Policy and Resources Committee that a combined detailed planning application be submitted for both sites as well as going out to tender for the works contract and procurement of the management provider for the proposed new community centre.
- 4.2 Ward Councillors have been consulted and are supportive of the scheme design proposals and consultation has already taken place with stakeholders and residents of which their feedback has been incorporated into the scheme design proposals where possible taking in account site and financial viability constraints.
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5. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 5.1 Officers will now prepare the necessary documentation in order to go out to tender for the works contract and procurement of the management provider for the proposed new community centre.
- 5.2 A follow up report will need to be presented to Policy and Resources Committee to approve the final scheme costs and necessary financial commitments associated with the development and management of the schemes, once the tenders and planning consent has been received
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6. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Planning Drawings
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7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.