

<b>Report on</b>	Redevelopment of the former Maghera High School Site, Maghera
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	10 May 2018
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Adrian McCreesh
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Adrian McCreesh

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	x

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To update Members on progress of the redevelopment of the former High School Site, Maghera.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	Members will be aware from previous reports, that the legacy Magherafelt District Council purchased the Maghera High School site at 30 Tobermore Road, Maghera from the Education Authority (formerly the North Eastern Education and Library Board) for a sum of £400k. The Shadow Mid Ulster District Council approved the capital expenditure relating to the purchase, which was finally completed in July 2015. Not included in the sale is an area to the north-east corner which houses a Maintenance Depot belonging to the Education Authority (EA).
2.2	The site extends to 7.84 hectares (or 19.37 acres) and is located 0.6km from Maghera town centre and less than 0.5km from the Maghera Park and Ride facility.
2.3	The Council's Economic Development Plan (2015-20) has set out a strategic aim to develop strategic sites under the theme "Enabling Infrastructure and Connectivity". The site has been identified as a strategic site for economic development purposes within the Maghera Development Framework Plan 2017-30.
2.4	The availability of suitable industrial land and premises is a vital factor in attracting new firms into the area and retaining existing firms that have the opportunity to increase their scale of production and compete in new markets.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	The shortage of development land is the single most important development constraint for medium/large sized companies in Mid Ulster.
3.2	The site of the former Maghera High School site has been identified as a potential strategic site for economic development purposes.
3.3	The geographical location of the site is unique, being equidistant from Belfast and Derry and approximately 30 minutes from the North Coast whilst also acting as the gateway to the Sperrins for many. The site is adjacent to the North-South-East-West axis of the main arterial A29 and A6 roads.

3.4	There has been significant interest from local companies in locating to the site which demonstrates a definite business need.	
3.5	In order to progress the development of the site, Teague & Sally were appointed as the Integrated Consultancy Team (ICT) in January 2018 to carry out option appraisals including project cost analysis of the various options for proposed roadway infrastructure works to industrial serviced sites. An IST (Contractor) will be procured to complete the construction works at a later date.	
3.6	The ICT has completed a number of design concepts options to RIBA Stage 2 and discussions with relevant statutory agencies and utility companies are ongoing to ensure the appropriate services and access is provided to the site.	
3.7	<p>Proposed works to the site include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Upgraded site access.</li> <li>➤ Road network into the site.</li> <li>➤ Footpath linkage.</li> <li>➤ Service / Utility infrastructure e.g. electricity, broadband.</li> <li>➤ Landscaped areas.</li> <li>➤ Ground preparation.</li> <li>➤ Signage</li> <li>➤ Demarcation of individual serviced sites which will give clients flexibility to construct their own purpose built facilities.</li> </ul>	
3.8	One of the key site constraints is that a proportion of the site (approx. 8.5 Acres / 40% of the site) lies within the 1 in 100 year fluvial flood plain and is caused by the over topping of the Milltown Burn. To this end, discussions are underway with their Rivers Agency officials to agree an appropriate engineering solution that will manage the flood risk and maximise the potential land available for economic use. Any flood solution must be accepted by the Planning Department and Rivers Agency. It is important to note that a neighbouring local indigenous business has expressed an interest in acquiring a section of the lower part of the site (within the fluvial flood plain) in order to expand their operations.	
3.9	The Council has previously submitted a PAD Application to the Planning Department. The next stage of the process is to submit a PAN (proposal of application notice) to the Planning Department, that an application for planning permission for the development is to be submitted. A key part of the PAN process is a period of public consultation, which will allow the local community to provide feedback prior to the submission of a full planning application. There must be at least 12 weeks between giving the PAN and submitting a full planning application.	
3.10	Appendix 1 provides an outline drawing of the proposed site layout identifying site access and access points to potential sites, which is subject to agreement of flood measures put in place. It is recommended that the outline map/drawing is submitted for the purpose of the PAN. Moreover, it is important to note that the proposed site boundary may be subject to change because it does not include the 2.5 acres of land north east of the site owned by the Education Authority (EA). The Council has expressed an interest in acquiring the EA's property, which would enable the Council to further maximise the economic potential of the site.	
3.11	<u>Indicative timeline</u>	
	Appointment of ICT Design Consultants	January 2018
	Develop design concepts RIBA Stage 2	February 2018

	<p>Members update briefing on Design Concepts April 2018</p> <p>Public Consultation events (dates to be arranged) May-July 2018</p> <p>Submit Planning application August 2018</p> <p>Procure Contractor (IST) August-October 2018</p> <p>Commence works December 2018</p> <p>Works completion April/May 2019</p>
3.12	As mentioned previously, demand for sites in the area is healthy. Therefore, officers are currently developing a robust, open and transparent process modelled on the Invest NI (INI) process to manage the demand and allocation of serviced sites to businesses. INI's established process is dependent on whether there is more than one business interested in a specific serviced site and considers a number of factors including solvency, contribution to INI's Corporate Plan as well as economic impact e.g. projected job creation and export sales.
3.13	A proposed Assessment process for the allocation of serviced sites for industrial units within the Maghera High School site will be presented to Council for consideration at a later date.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Other Considerations</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b>
	Financial: Within existing budgets.
	Human: Officer time.
	Risk Management: The ICT has established a Risk Register which will be reviewed and updated as the project progresses.
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b>
	Equality & Good Relations Implications:
	N/A
	Rural Needs Implications:
	N/A
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	Members to note progress.
5.2	Members to approve submission of PAN including outline site map/drawing (in Appendix 1) in order to commence the formal planning application process.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached &amp; References</b>
6.1	Appendix 1 – Outline site map/drawing to be included with PAN (proposal of application notice)