

EMSWORTH SOUTH STREET CAR PARK REDEVELOPMENT

Report by the Business Development Manager

Resources Portfolio: Councillor Briggs and:
Sustainable Development Portfolio: Councillor Guest
Economy Portfolio: Councillor Gillet
Health and Wellbeing Portfolio: Councillor Lenaghan
Infrastructure Portfolio: Councillor Wride

Key Decision: No

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consult with and gain the approval of the Executive on the proposed redevelopment of the Emsworth South Street Car Park (following the presentation of the proposals to EMT and completion of EMT's recommended consultation process with Emsworth Members and key local stakeholders).

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive:

- 2.1 supports in principle and approves the progression of the proposal to achieve a comprehensive redevelopment of the South Street, Emsworth Car Park area, funded through capital gains from Havant Borough Council asset release accrued from a partnership approach with a private developer (or developers) in tandem with match funding from various sources and partner contributions.

3.0 SUMMARY

- 3.1 Current Situation is that Havant Borough Council owns and is responsible for the Emsworth South Street Car Park and two buildings thereon (the Emsworth Centre and the Public Toilets). The Car Park could be re-arranged to allow retail and residential development without significant loss of car park spaces/revenue whilst providing funds to redevelop / reprovide existing associated community facilities.

- 3.2 Community facilities on the Car Park:

1 - **Emsworth Centre**. This Community Centre is currently under an extended lease from HBC to Havant Council of Community Services (HCCS) and provides services to the residents of Havant and particularly those at disadvantage. Previously, HCCS prepared and delivered "Meals on Wheels" from there. Currently, the building is under-utilised and, whilst providing good services, is not fit for purpose due to very poor access facilities. The proposal seeks to transform this facility.

2 - **Public Toilets** - These are inappropriately sited and require major improvement.

- 3.3 An improved Emsworth Centre would be well placed to serve the local community and provide an excellent focus for the visitor in its prime location near the Emsworth Quay area. Added value provision to the current café/restaurant and meetings venue is envisaged, as an extended plan and frontage could offer key new elements including visitor information point, heritage displays, interpretation centre for historic Emsworth and Chichester Harbour (with increased partner provision for school ecology trips hosted by Chichester Harbour Conservancy in a similar way to those currently run by the Conservancy at Dell Quay in West Sussex, as well as providing an improved venue to events/celebrations etc etc.
- 3.4 The east-facing frontage of South Street has been identified by the Market Town Initiative (MTI) analysis and the Emsworth Conservation Area Review/Appraisal and Management Plan as being an area that has been adversely affected by unsympathetic developments which interrupt the Emsworth Urban character. This, in particular, relates to the entrance and exit points to the car park which unnecessarily break the typical south-central Emsworth tight urban development pattern. A skilful urban design would provide both visual and commercial benefits.
- 3.5 The South Street Car Park site has three potential areas for redevelopment that would provide urban improvement / enabling capital (please see plan at Appendix 1):

Site A - Main entrance/exit to the Car Park and location of existing public toilets.

The Proposal is to reduce the number of accesses from two to one and infill the gap with retail/commercial trading units at ground floor with apartments above. The poor quality Toilet Block will be demolished and replaced with smaller unobtrusive and modern facilities.

Site B – Secondary access to the Car Park and Emsworth Centre Building.

The proposal is to redevelop the Emsworth Centre (options are either demolish and rebuild or modernise and extend). The remodelling will include reducing the entrance gap and extending the Emsworth Centre frontage, again to improve both the centre's façade and "shop window" and that area of South Street's street frontage in that prime position close to the Emsworth Quay area.

HCCS, with its current lease of the building seeks to work in partnership with other Emsworth community groups to ensure the building is more fully utilised, offer extended opening hours, including evenings and weekends and meet the needs of the present user groups and to extend user groups to reflect access by the whole community in future. Also, the Emsworth Town Partnership (ETP) is in discussion with HCCS so that a joint management arrangement could share and thus reduce the responsibility of the HCCS.

Site C – This gap site in Nile Street offers the potential for non-complex residential infill and could be progressed simply and independently of the larger and more complex developments proposed on Sites A and B to the South Street frontage and so could be used as "seed corn" fund provision for the whole project.

- 3.6 The commercial and residential developments would provide significant capital asset funds to enable redevelopment of the community facilities and also to enable HBC to seek significant leveraging-in of partnership contributions and apply through bidding for major external public funding. It is proposed that the community redevelopment

costs are met by the reinvestment of the capital gained from the commercial and residential development which would be added to and matched by external funds.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

Financial

- 4.1 Although, in principle, it is considered that the project would be delivered “cost negative” to HBC, consideration will be given to whether to recommend the allocation of LABGI funding to meet the initial costs arising from this project and a further report will be brought to the Executive in due course-house.

Legal

- 4.2 A competitive bid process is envisaged where developers would be invited to prepare design submissions for all elements commercial / residential / community and a cost profile of delivery so that the funding gap extent can be identified and match funding secured as appropriate.

Strategy (Community and Corporate)

- 4.3 This project is in line with the Objectives of the Community and Corporate Strategies.

Equalities/Customers

- 4.4 A limited invitation will be offered to selected Private Developers to produce proposals in response to a comprehensive design brief prepared by HBC, and in line with the Emsworth Design Statement). The response will include the design approach and capital funding profiles.

The extension of the customer group is a pre-requisite of making the excellent Emsworth Centre equally available to, and able to serve, all local residents.

Risk

- 4.5 In the current “Credit Crunch” environment there may be a reluctance of Developers to fully engage with this initiative. However, the process, which does not require “up front” contributions, could actually and perversely generate interest and response.

Communications/Public Relations

- 4.6 At the appropriate times, reference will be made to the Communications Team.

Background papers:

- 1 Emsworth Design Statement (concurrently to be available to the Executive meeting)
- 2 Key Development Plan

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