



2 June 2021

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee will be held on **THURSDAY, 10 JUNE 2021** in the Council Chamber, Ebley Mill, Ebley Wharf, Stroud at **7.00 pm**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy O'Leary".

Kathy O'Leary
Chief Executive

Please Note: The meeting is being held in the Council Chamber at Stroud District Council and will not be recorded or streamed live.

Due to current Covid-19 regulations a maximum of 6 members of public will be permitted in the Council Chamber at any one time, if you would like to attend this meeting please contact democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk.

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**
To receive apologies of absence.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive declarations of interest.
3. **MINUTES (Pages 5 - 8)**
To approve the Minutes of the meetings held on 4 March 2021.
4. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**
The Chair of the Committee will answer questions from members of the public submitted in accordance with the Council's procedures.

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF QUESTIONS Noon on Monday, 7 June 2021

Questions must be submitted to the Chief Executive, Democratic Services, Ebley Mill, Ebley Wharf, Stroud and can be sent by email to Democratic.services@stroud.gov.uk

5. **PETITION**

A petition has been received as follows:

“We want a lease extension until January 2022 for Rush Skatepark et al”

We, the friends of the Brimscombe Port Community Interest Businesses, want Rush Skatepark and other Brimscombe Port businesses to be given a lease extension until January 2022.

Stroud District Council recently successfully applied to Stroud District Council (no that isn't a typo) to demolish all the buildings at Brimscombe Port including Rush Skatepark to prepare the site for possible developers. This has resulted in the businesses at Brimscombe Port being given notice to quit by 30th June 2021.

This will mean Rush Skatepark and the other businesses will only have been able to fully open for a few weeks since Covid-19 restrictions were lifted. We believe it is very unfair to users of the skatepark and on local children, in particular, given that the closure will come just before the school holidays. We also believe that Rush Skatepark can offer a 'slice of normality' to many people in particular our families and children who have had a very disrupted year.

Although all the businesses have been aware that they would be asked to vacate, no allowance has been made for the impact of the pandemic on efforts to find alternative homes for the businesses and to protect jobs.

Since opening, Rush Skatepark has become established as a big player within the international skatepark community, offering a world class facility that has catered to riders of all levels, from grass-roots beginners all the way up to active, competing professional riders from the now Olympic sports of Skateboarding and BMX as well as up and coming action sports, scootering and inline skating which have seen an incredible surge in popularity since Rush opened in 2013. Rush skatepark has hosted national and international competitions including the World Championships in 2014, 2015 and 2019, attracting thousands of people to the Stroud area from all over the world.

Rush Skatepark and The Grace Network, who run the Stroud District Furniture Bank, The Long Table, Stroud District Kids Stuff, Kick Off Stroud and other social businesses which are also facing the end of their lease and are on notice to quite, have been looking at options for a joint site which could benefit both organisations in terms of footfall, funding and overheads.

All these businesses continue to work hard looking for new homes either together or separately.

Please note we understand that at the time of writing (25th May 2021) Stroud District Council do not currently have a developer engaged or ready to carry out the building work at the site. We believe that there is a high likelihood that the site will be empty and development won't go ahead for a number of years once the buildings have been demolished.

In accordance with the Council's Petitions Scheme, the petition is to be debated by Committee. The petition organiser will be given 3 minutes to present the petition.

6. APPOINTMENT OF PERFORMANCE MONITORS

To appoint two performance monitors for Civic Year 2021-22.

7. Member / Officer Reports (To Note)

- a) Property review update (pages 9 - 10)
- b) Leadership Gloucestershire update
- c) Gloucestershire economic growth joint committee (GEGJC)
- d) Gloucestershire economic growth scrutiny committee (GEGSC)
- e) Strategic recovery board (pages 11 - 12)
- f) Corporate delivery plan progress update q4 (pages 13 - 18)
- g) Corporate peer challenge action plan progress update q4 (pages 19 - 22)
- h) Support of the leisure contract provider in Stroud (sport and leisure management) to recover from the impact of covid-19 update (pages 23 - 24)

8. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

See Agenda Item 4 for deadlines for submission.

9. TENANCIES AT BRIMSCOMBE PORT - RUSK SKATEPARK AND GRACE NETWORK (Pages 25 - 46)

A decision is sought from Committee to confirm when vacant possession is required from tenants currently occupying units that are due to be demolished; forming the start of redevelopment at the Port.

The Appendices for this item contain exempt information by virtue of Paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 and a resolution may be passed to exclude the public during consideration of this item.

Members of Strategy and Resources Committee

Councillor Doina Cornell (Chair)

Councillor Chris Brine
Councillor Gordon Craig
Councillor Stephen Davies
Councillor Nicholas Housden
Councillor Nicholas Hurst
Councillor Martin Percy

Councillor Catherine Braun (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Keith Pearson
Councillor Steve Robinson
Councillor Mattie Ross
Councillor Ken Tucker
Councillor Chloe Turner

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

3

04 March 2021

7.00 pm - 8.26 pm

Remote Meeting

Minutes

Membership

Councillor Doina Cornell (Chair)	P	Councillor Keith Pearson	P
Councillor Martin Whiteside (Vice-Chair)	P	Councillor Simon Pickering	P
Councillor Chris Brine	P	Councillor Mattie Ross	P
Councillor Nigel Cooper	P	Councillor Tom Skinner	A
Councillor Rachel Curley	P	Councillor Ken Tucker	P
Councillor Stephen Davies	P	Councillor Debbie Young	A
Councillor Nick Hurst	P		

P = Present A = Absent

Officers in Attendance

Chief Executive	Monitoring Officer
Strategic Director of Communities	New Homes and Regeneration Manager
Strategic Director of Place	Head of Property Services
Strategic Director of Resources	Senior Democratic Services & Elections Officer
Strategic Director of Change and Transformation	Democratic Services & Elections Officer

Other Member(s) in Attendance

Councillor Haydn Jones

SRC.067

APOLOGIES

There were none.

SRC.068

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

SRC.069

MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2021 are approved as a correct record.

SRC.070

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were none.

SRC.071**REDEVELOPMENT OF BRIMSCOMBE PORT**

The New Homes and Regeneration Manager introduced the report and advised that the redevelopment of Brimscombe Port was one of the council's key corporate priorities. It was confirmed that delegated authority to grant planning permission for the key infrastructure to take the site out of the flood plain had been agreed at the development control committee in February 2021. They were now therefore requesting that the committee consider granting permission to procure a developer partner. It was confirmed that the site would not be developed for 2 years due to the time taken to procure a developer partner and for a detailed planning application to be submitted for the redevelopment. Values and costs may change in this time; however, it would be down to the developer to assess the market. The council would need to progress the scheme in line with the milestones and the long stop dates for the Homes England and LRF funding or risk having the funding withdrawn.

In response to a question from Councillor Pearson it was confirmed that the current proposal was to proceed with a developer partner and for them to carry out all of the works, however other options were available such as early demolition and the council putting the infrastructure in place instead of a developer partner.

Councillor Davies asked whether the criteria that would be used to judge the proposals had already been agreed. It was advised that the output specification which sets out the vision for the site and the tender evaluation matrix which the bids would be assessed against had both been approved at Committee previously.

The New Homes and Regeneration Manager advised that sustainability was one of the criteria that bidders would be assessed against.

The Head of Property Services provided an update on the current tenants Rush Skatepark, it was confirmed that the Council had been working with them for some time to try and help find a different location. Support was also being provided to other tenants looking to relocate.

In a response to Councillor Cooper's question it was confirmed that the design of the infrastructure was now fixed following the agreement of planning permission, however in terms of the redevelopment proposals they would be looking for innovation and a specific layout had not been decided upon. Councillor Whiteside advised that although the infrastructure had been agreed further proposals could be considered.

Proposed by Councillor Whiteside and Seconded by Councillor Pickering

Councillor Pearson offered his support and stated that it could become a genuine tourist attraction for the district in conjunction with the canal project.

The Chair expressed her hope that there would be some interest to develop the site and that she was looking forward to seeing the progress made over the next few months.

Councillor Pickering congratulated the Members and Officers for all of their work on this project and highlighted the difficulties of building on brownfield sites.

Councillor Whiteside thanked Members and Officers who had been involved in the development, and commended the output specification which outlines the aspirations and expectations of the site and hoped that creative developers would be able to take on the project. He also highlighted the importance of the creation of the green biodiversity corridor and urged all Members to support it.

On being put to the vote, the Motion was carried unanimously.

- RESOLVED**
- 1) To delegate authority to the Head of Property Services:**
 - i. To commence the procurement of a developer partner for Brimscombe Port using the competitive dialogue procedure with the final selection of the partner to be presented to Committee for approval at the completion of the process;**
 - ii. In consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources and Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee to:**
 - a. proceed when necessary with the demolition of buildings on the site prior to a partner being selected, subject to planning conditions being met, for any of the reasons set out in section 3.23 of this report, and**
 - b. enter into grant terms and conditions and other documentation as necessary in respect of the Land Release Fund if awarded to the Council.**
 - 2) Note the agreed amendments to the funding conditions with Homes England Consultation and Feedback.**

SRC.072

ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGENERATION AND INVESTMENT BOARD

The Strategic Director of Place introduced the report which sought the committees' approval for the establishment of a Regeneration and Investment Board. There were numerous council projects at a key stage of their development including Brimscombe Port and the canal project which the board could help support in an advisory nature, furthermore the board could help to shape the Council's regeneration priorities and programme.

Councillor Hurst asked a question regarding the membership of the board. The Strategic Director of Place advised that a suggestion of Membership was included in section 3 however further suggestions would be welcomed. Councillor Brine requested further flexibility regarding the Membership to allow for other knowledgeable Councillors who were not political group leader or chair of Committee to be included. Councillor Cornell stated that she would like the membership to be linked to the Strategy and Resources Committee but with some flexibility. Councillor Whiteside stated that the suggested membership in section 3.2 of the report would give enough flexibility.

Proposed by Councillor Pickering and seconded by Councillor Brine.

Councillor Whiteside asked for the word 'mainly' to be added to paragraph 3.2 of the report so that it would read 'members of the Board will be drawn *mainly* from the membership of the 'parent' Committee'. The monitoring officer advised that the report could not be changed however it was agreed by Members that the membership of the board could be made more flexible to ensure that Members with particular experience or knowledge could be included on the Board whilst still maintaining a link to Strategy and Resources. It was also confirmed that the Constitution working group would be looking further at working groups and maintaining the link to 'parent' committees.

Agenda Item 3

2020/21

On being put to the vote, the Motion was carried with carried with 10 votes for and 1 abstention.

- RESOLVED**
- a) **To establish a Regeneration and Investment Board, following the approach and principles set out in this report, and**
 - b) **To agree the terms of reference of the Board as set out in Appendix A.**

SRC.073

MEMBER/OFFICER REPORTS (To Note)

- a) Support of the Leisure Contract Provider in Stroud (Sport and Leisure Management)

Councillor Brine shared that they had received good news as they had been awarded the grant however he did not yet have details about the payments to SLM.

- b) Strategic Recovery Board

A report had been circulated. The Chair advised that there was a drop in session regarding the Community Hubs in March and encouraged Members to attend.

- c) Leadership Gloucestershire

The Chief Executive advised that they were given updates on Covid-19, Western Gateway, Gloucester City Region Board, Fusion Project and One Gloucestershire Integrated Care System. Further information was provided on Covid-19 testing with regards to schools and surge testing. It was also confirmed that the District Councils now had direct representation on the Western Gateway Board and that there would be a meeting for all of the District Leaders with Katherine Bennett (Chair of the Western Gateway project).

SRC.075

WORK PROGRAMME

There were no questions.

SRC.076

MEMBER QUESTIONS

A question was submitted by Councillor Davies. It was answered by the Leader, Councillor Cornell. (Refer to the [Council's recording and Item 9](#)).

The meeting closed at 8.26pm.

Chair



STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Members Briefing Note

Property Review Update – 4th May 2021

Property	Current Position	Target date
Stroud Cemetery Chapel	Approval to agree terms for a transfer of the cemetery chapel to the Stroud Preservation Trust for £1 was given by Strategy & Resources Committee in October 2020 subject to detailed feasibility studies, public consultation, compliance with S123 and a further report back to S&R. Despite Covid, the Trust has appointed consultants to develop a detailed and technical condition survey along with costings for minimal intervention in the chapel and longer term options. Alongside this Trustees will be doing commercial and community potential user research which will give the Trust a clear idea whether or not they are in a position to take on the chapel as a long term project. Officers will report back to S&R later in the year to update on progress.	Autumn 2021
Kingshill House, Dursley	Discussions have continued to take place with Kingshill House Trust regarding a Community Asset Transfer. A capital budget provision of £50,000 in 2017/18 and £50,000 in 2018/19 was made as part of a funding package to help assist the transfer. A tapering reduction in core funding was also agreed as part of the funding package. Covid has had a significant impact on Kingshill House and there have been changes on the board of Trustees. The council will need to see a robust business case and be confident that the board is in a position to take on the freehold interest before agreeing final terms and reporting back S&R for approval.	Autumn 2021
Woodchester Mansion	Leased to the Woodchester Mansion Trust. Again, Covid has had a significant impact with the closure of the mansion during lockdown but grant funding from Historic England and Historic Houses Foundation grant has enabled the Trust to fund repairs to the east windows and roof. Senior officers recently met with the Trust and agreed to work more closely with it and consider what the council can do to help the Trust to reach a more financially sustainable position for the long term including research on and links into other potential sources of funding and support.	Summer 2021
Public Conveniences	Identified as a review due to start in 2019/20. The first stage was to have initial discussions with the relevant Parish & Town Councils to assess the local importance of each block. These discussions have taken place. Officers were then proposing to install counters in the PC's in late spring/early summer 2020 to get accurate data on the number of people using the facilities before identifying options and making a recommendation to S&R in late 2020. Officers were unable to progress this review because of Covid, it is likely to be deferred until 2022.	Autumn 2022

The Old Town Hall, Stroud	A Grade II* listed building in Stroud Town Centre comprising of small office units, a meeting room and stores. Alternative uses and costs of improvement/refurbishment are still being explored. A One Public Estate (OPE) phase 8 bid was submitted in November 2020. Phase 1 of the project will look at a number of sites and properties including the Old Town Hall where it is hoped to identify and implement energy efficiency measures. The project aims to explore how the rationalisation, co-location and the repurposing of the public estate in Stroud can deliver more sustainable buildings, new homes, jobs and contribute to a net zero carbon future. The outcome of the bid is still awaited.	TBC
Stratford Park, Stroud	This is a service led review. A review of Leisure and Wellbeing in Stroud by industry specialists has been commissioned and the results will be reported back to Community Services and Licensing Committee.	July 2021

Agenda Item 7a



STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MEMBER/OFFICER REPORT

NAME OF ORGANISATION/BODY	Strategic Recovery Board/Regeneration and Investment Board
DATE OF LAST MEETINGS ATTENDED	25 March 2021 & 29 April 2021

BRIEF REPORT:

The last meeting of the Strategic Recovery Board took place on 25 March 2021. This meeting also served as the inaugural meeting of the Regeneration and Investment Board, established by Strategy and Resources Committee on 4 March, 2021.

Key Items discussed at the meeting on 25 March 2021 included:

- Signing off the Terms of Reference of the Regeneration and Investment Board. A number of minor amendments concerning membership were requested which have now been approved.
- Levelling Up Fund – the criteria for the recently launched Levelling Up Fund (LUF) and potential project bids for Stroud district were discussed. Members noted a combination of factors relating to LUF criteria, including: i) a very tight timetable for round 1 bid submissions, (ii) the need for projects to be ‘shovel ready’ and begin during 2021-22, (iii) the fact that only one successful bid could be supported over the period to March 2024 and (iv) the fact that Stroud is a ‘priority 2’ area, with a preference towards priority 1 areas, including Forest of Dean and Gloucester City. Given the above facts, the steer given was to work towards a strong 2022 bid, rather than rushing a bid for the 2021 deadline. It was noted that this should not be taken as a lack of ambition by SDC. Rather, it was seen as being in the best interests of our district to submit the strongest case when it has the best possible chance of success.
- An update on the Modernisation Programme was provided by Caron Starkey (Strategic Director of Transformation) with a focus on current work to procure a Digital Platform’. Caron would attend again to discuss arrangements for key stakeholder and community engagement.

The Regeneration and Investment Board met again on 29 April 2021, with main items discussed as follows:

- Canal Corridor Strategy. David Hawes Urban Design consultancy attended and described the process just being started to develop a Canal Corridor Strategy for the district. Members will be updated at regular intervals.

Agenda Item 7e

- Prospectus for Stroud District. A brief was agreed with some suggested amendments, to create a prospectus for the district that will provide a clear and compelling narrative and context for individual bids for external funding.
- The Board considered ‘work in progress’ work on a pipeline of capital investment and regeneration schemes and a list of brownfield/stalled sites. These would be developed further in consultation with members, as we aim to sharpen our regeneration priorities.
- The Board discussed a potential further bid for One Public Estate funding – entitled the Brownfield Land Release Fund. Officers advised that on initial reading of guidance there were no immediately identifiable sites that met the criteria for bids, which were required by 2 June 2021.

FUTURE MEETINGS	To be arranged
REPORT SUBMITTED BY	Brendan Cleere – Strategic Director of Place
DATE	1 June 2021

**CORPORATE DELIVERY PLAN PROGRESS 4TH QUARTER 2020/21
(UNCOMPLETED ACTIONS ROLLED FORWARD FROM 2019/20)**

1. BACKGROUND AND FOREWORD

- 1.1** The Corporate Delivery Plan (CDP) incorporating Key Actions for 2019/20 was agreed at full Council on 16 May 2019 following a number of officer and member workshops.
- 1.2** This information sheet has been prepared to show progress made during the 4th Quarter 2020/21 for those actions which were not completed during 2019/20 due to the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.
- 1.3** The postponement of the 2020 elections to May 2021 and the pandemic has led to a reassessment of priorities, which will develop into a longer term renewal strategy which will form the basis for a new Corporate Plan in 2021.
- 1.4** As reported previously, the majority of CDP actions have been completed, namely:
- New Health and Wellbeing plan and
 - Corporate Procurement Strategy in place
 - Continued provision of new housing
 - Sheltered housing refurbishment completions
 - Support for the Stratford Park parkrun
 - Development of a 2030 Strategy
 - Investment in a low carbon community fleet
 - The tenant repairs service has moved in-house
 - Introduced new TM Strategy with significant ethical screening
 - Housing Delivery Strategy Adopted
 - Made a (pre-Covid) decision on Stratford Park Contract
 - Legal Services moved into a partnership

2. PROGRESS ON THE KEY ACTIONS FOR 2019/20 ROLLED FORWARD TO 2020/21

- 2.1** Below, under each of the 5 Corporate Delivery Plan priorities, are the headlines of the progress made for each of the remaining CDP Key Actions during quarter 4 and since last reported to S&R Committee in February.

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ECONOMY: Help create a sustainable and vibrant economy that works for all

CDP1.1 Continue to allocate funds from the business rates pilot fund in line with the agreed principles: Supporting Local Businesses; Improving the Council's long-term financial position; Local Wealth Building; Supporting a Zero Carbon District; Reducing inequality.

- The Business Rates Pilot has been partially used for funding elements of the recovery work. This will continue as the new Corporate Plan is developed.

CDP1.3 Progress and deliver the redevelopment of Brimscombe Port by securing planning permission and being ready to seek a development partner.

- Planning permission for the infrastructure was received on the 24 March 2021. Strategy and Resources Committee gave approval to commence the procurement of a development partner on the 4 March 2021.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING: Provide affordable, energy efficient homes for our diverse and changing population

CDP2.5 Contribute to our identified local housing need, by building new council homes through:

- a) submitting planning applications for 56 units on 6 sites.**
- b) agreeing an approach to purchase more land.**

- All milestones set for 2020/21 have been achieved with the exception of Queens Drive which was due to be submitted to planning for 7 new homes. Due to legal issues around the access to the site it is currently not possible to move the site forward. This site forms part of the New Homes & Regeneration Programme and will be progressed as soon as the legal issues are resolved.

CDP2.8 Provide high quality, safe temporary accommodation for homeless single people and families within the district.

- This action has been paused to allow for a wider ranging review of temporary accommodation need and usage, including HRA properties and B&Bs.

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ENVIRONMENT: Help the community minimise its carbon footprint, adapt to the changing climate and continue to improve recycling rates

CDP3.11 Implement the revised Environment Strategy and develop an action plan with partners to incorporate our commitment to being a Carbon Neutral district by 2030 (CN2030).

- The 2030 Strategy and Master plan is now adopted by full council. This includes within its 75 commitments a number relating to the council's own estates and social housing energy programmes, in combination these constitute a Carbon Neutral master plan for the council. The remaining 75 commitments focus on what it takes to achieve a carbon neutral, resilient and ecologically diverse district where carbon neutral activity and progress is to be achieved in balance with ecological restoration, social justice and inclusion. Overall the Master Plan requires the ongoing development of a number of strategies and action plans (CN action plans being one, tree, food and economic strategies being other examples, but not a comprehensive list).

CDP3.12 Work with partners to implement the next phase of the cycling and walking strategy, focussing on routes between Dudbridge-Nailsworth; Dursley–Cam-Uley; Wotton-Kingswood-Charfield.

- Following requests from GCC for CIL funding, further match funding has been allocated from the cycling and walking budget to progress several routes as outlined in the route summaries below.
- **Dudbridge-Nailsworth:** Following allocation of £116k from CIL and £40k from the cycling and walking budget (total £156k) works to Newman Henders bridge have been completed. Further track improvement works to be completed from this allocation are under way or due to commence during Q1 2021.
- **Dursley-Cam-Uley:** Sections of track requiring highways design work have been agreed. This is to be funded through £25k from CIL and £25k from the cycling and walking budget (total £50k). Work has commenced which should be completed Q1 2021, with any remaining funding going towards implementation. Formal public consultation on work to footpath CDU14 to make it suitable for cycling and re-designate it is yet to commence. The £50k allocated from the cycling and walking budget to complete these works remains in place.
- **Cainscross segregated cycleway:** Following an allocation of £25k from CIL and £25k from the cycling and walking budget (total £50k) for the upgrading of 1.25km of existing advisory cycle lanes to provide light

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segregation between Lansdown and Cainscross Roundabout, work has yet to commence with an estimated start of Q2 2021.

- **Frampton Cycle Path:** Detailed design work is yet to commence following an allocation of £10k from CIL and £10k from the cycling and walking budget (total £20k) to implement a safe link from the canal to the village in association with the completion of the canal restoration work.
- **Wotton-Kingswood-Charfield:** Sustrans are nearing completion of the design phase for this project. SDC has committed a further £10k on top of £8k already allocated to complete this work.
- **Stroud-Chalford:** Meetings with the local parishes leading this project are due to be held to coordinate this route with the proposed redevelopment of Brimscombe Port. Stroud Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) A draft Stroud LCWIP produced by GCC focusing on Stroud town centre, Stonehouse, and with links to Nailsworth, Chalford, and Hardwicke via Standish is to be presented to Environment Committee in June 2021 with a view to adopting the plan as a focus for future cycling and walking infrastructure investment. Further LCWIPs for Cam and Dursley and Wotton are to be produced through 2021/22.

CDP3.14 In Partnership with Stroud Town Council and Friends of the Lido submit a bid to National Lottery Heritage Fund for additional funding to refurbish Stratford Park Lido.

- Volunteer-run community group The Friends of Stratford Park Lido have been working with the Council and operator Everyone Active to ensure the outdoor pool has had a refresh and is Covid-secure before being able to open again on Saturday, May 29. Once bids become open and outcomes of Leisure review are released the Council and the friends will pursue best course of action available.

HEALTH AND WELL BEING: Promote the health and well-being of our communities and work with others to deliver the public health agenda

CDP4.18 Agree a long term investment and management plan for Stratford Park with partners and contractors

- The consultants and a project lead have been appointed (Max Associates and Angela Gillingham). Angela has been appointed project lead and Mike Hammond as project sponsor. Keith Gerrard has a strategic oversight of the project and its progression. A plan for the project has been laid out and regular meetings are being held. Regular updates are being given to the Chair of CS&L.

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DELIVERY: Provide value for money to our taxpayers and high quality services to our customers

CDP5.21 Create a strategic approach to building more effective partnerships with parish and town councils.

- The Council has been working with Town and Parish Councils throughout the pandemic. This has included market town forums and including parish clerks in the regular Covid updates. There is no a need to rethink these relationships on a strategic basis, but a review of the interaction with Town and Parish Councils is on the work programme for the Corporate Policy and Governance Team in 2021.

CDP5.22 Adopt a clear vision and digital strategy which is fit for purpose to deliver good quality, convenient and efficient services for staff, residents and local businesses.

- The Fit for the Future programme has been launched covering four work streams: Service redesign; Community Access; People & Organisational Development; Technology & Digital. Each of these work streams has its own pages on The Hub, which are regularly updated to keep staff and Members informed and involved with the Council's modernisation journey.

CDP5.23 Explore the opportunities for income generation to help achieve financial self-sufficiency.

- The Council has continued to manage the impact of the pandemic and remains financially stable in the medium term. Developing further opportunities for income generation remain a priority.

2.2 In summary, progress on these key projects has continued despite the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. After the election of May 2021 a process for agreeing a new Corporate Plan is well underway, as discussion with the Alliance Leadership about how the plan will be produced in 2021 takes place. It is clear that the work of the recovery board will form the basis for many of the organisation's key ongoing activities.

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CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE PROGRESS 4TH QUARTER 2020/21
1. BACKGROUND AND FOREWORD

- 1.1** The Local Government Association (LGA) offers all local authorities the opportunity to participate in a Corporate Peer Challenge every 4 years or so as part of its sector-led improvement programme.
- 1.2** The Council's Corporate Peer Challenge took place between 26 and 29 March 2019. It was conducted by a team of elected members and senior officers from other local authorities together with LGA advisors.
- 1.3** The Peer Challenge team reviewed the Council's self-assessment, key documents. They conducted site visits, interviews and workshops with a wide selection of staff, members, stakeholders and partners, meeting with 107 people and holding 47 meetings during their stay.
- 1.4** The Council received the Peer Challenge team's feedback report in May 2019 and reported it to Council on 16 May 2019. The report set out eight recommendations in respect of areas for development and improvement.
- 1.5** An Action Plan was developed in respect of the 8 recommendations, including timescales and organisational leads. These are recorded on our performance management system – Excelsis.
- 1.6** Three of the recommendations were completed during 2019/20, namely the restructure of the senior leadership team (CRD1); adoption of the Corporate Delivery Plan to May 2020 (CRD2) and regular meetings are now held between Senior Officers and Members both on a formal and informal basis. Officers and members are also involved in strategic conversations with partners from other authorities (CRD5). The remaining actions were rolled forward to 2020/21.

2. PROGRESS ON THE ACTION PLAN

- 2.1** A summary of progress made during the 4th quarter is set out below. Progress on Rec 8 (CRD8) remains as stated in the 3rd quarter report to S&R Committee in February.

REC 3 (CRD3) Ensure the integrity of the current IT system. Review the progress and suitability of current plans, capability and capacity in respect of this, and beyond that to confirm the emerging plans in respect of ICT development and digital delivery fit with longer term transformational plans.

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**STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
INFORMATION SHEET**

- The infrastructure refresh programme remains on schedule. Resource supply required to support the Fit for The Future programme will be assessed as demand plans are established. The IT and Security Strategy are both currently being reviewed.

REC 4 (CRD4) Work with all key stakeholders over the next year to develop a clear vision and priorities for the council aligned to our Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), to be agreed in the next iteration of the Corporate Delivery Plan (CDP) and once approved ensure this is communicated effectively to residents, businesses and other partners.

- After the election of May 2021 a process for agreeing a new Corporate Plan is well underway. Discussion to be held with the Alliance Leadership about agreeing how the plan will be produced in 2021. It is clear that the work of the recovery board will form the basis for many of the organisation's key ongoing activities.

REC 6 (CRD6) Establish effective workforce planning and performance management arrangements so that the Council has a committed and engaged staff group with clarity in terms of the expectations of them and sufficient capacity to deliver its plans. The Council should:

- Review is future staffing arrangements, ensuring strategic fit and the development of a 'one council' ethos
- Develop core transformation plans and ensure sufficient capacity to enable effective delivery and monitoring. This includes consideration of ICT provision.
- Establish appropriate pay and reward arrangements for staff
- Ensure consistent compliance with, and outcomes arising from, core HR policies are delivered eg appraisals
- Ensure consistent oversight, management and compliance with key performance management practices.

- Working with the Council's Organisational Development Consultants significant progress has been made in the following areas:
 - Organisational Values and Behaviours
 - People Strategy
 - Wellbeing Framework
 - Performance Management
 - Non Pay Benefits
 - Learning and Development Offer
 - Target Operating Model

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**STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
INFORMATION SHEET**

A toolkit is being rolled out to managers to promote values and behaviours. As part of the Fit for the Future programme, staff and Members are being regularly updated on progress via blogs and videos on The Hub

REC 7 (CRD7) Building on its relatively strong financial position, review how its investment and commercial plans could be enhanced. A key focus of this will be to help deliver the Council's priorities as well as sustain its financial viability into the medium term.

- The Council's financial performance has been strong throughout the pandemic and the short term financial position is sound. There remains a need to close the medium term financial gap although the position there remains uncertain until the Local Government Financial Environment is clarified.

2.2 In summary, the impact of the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly in having to postpone the local council election until May 2021, has delayed the implementation of some of the recommendations. Alliance Member workshops to help set strategic priorities and inform budget setting have been held. The Council's organisational development programme is now under way with much of the ongoing activity captured in our Fit for the Future Programme.

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STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MEMBER/OFFICER REPORT

TITLE	SLM Grant Payment Update
BRIEF REPORT:	
<p><u>SDC contribution</u></p> <p>SDC had ring fenced 150K to support SLM and their recovery from Covid. 45K was awarded as a 50% contribution towards their operational losses for the period April – October 2020 23K was awarded as 50% contribution towards their operational losses for the period of November 2020. 82K is left in the budget and has been carried forward to 2021/2022 financial year.</p> <p><u>National Leisure Recovery Grant</u></p> <p>The National Leisure Recovery Grant applies from December 2020 to support SLM recover. A total award has been applied £235,140 SLM have invoiced SDC a total of £126,496 covering December – March 2021. £108,504 remains in the allocation from the grant. The remainder of the grant will be given on receipt of suitable monthly accounts and is awarded to cover their operational deficit.</p> <p><u>Moving Communities</u></p> <p>As part of the Leisure recovery both Stratford Park Leisure Centre and the Pulse are included on the Moving Communities Data Platform. This enables the council to monitor recovery against other facilities across England. This platform is part of the recovery package from Sport England. Moving communities compares financial and usage figures along with customer response to questionnaires about each centre.</p>	
REPORT SUBMITTED BY	Ange Gillingham (angela.gillingham@stroud.gov.uk)
DATE	1 June 2021

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STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL
STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**AGENDA
ITEM NO**

10 JUNE 2021

9

Report Title	TENANCIES AT BRIMSCOMBE PORT – RUSH SKATEPARK AND GRACE NETWORK
Purpose of Report	A decision is sought from Committee to confirm when vacant possession is required from tenants currently occupying units that are due to be demolished; forming the start of redevelopment at the Port
Decision(s)	<p>The Committee RESOLVES to:</p> <p>a) Delegate authority to the Head of Property Services to take all necessary steps, including legal action, to ensure vacant possession of all the units required to be demolished as part of the redevelopment of Brimscombe Port including Unit 3, Industrial Estate, (occupied by RUSH Skatepark) and Units 1a, 2a and 4, Business Park, Brimscombe Port (occupied by the Grace Network), if they are not vacated at the end of June 2021.</p> <p>b) Approve the Write-Off of Sums owed by Inside Football as recommended by the S151 Officer.</p>
Consultation and Feedback	<p>Consultation and discussions have taken place with members of the Strategic Leadership Team, Group Leaders, Brimscombe Port Project Board and the Parish Council. The initial deadline of the end of March for vacant possession was extended to the end of June as a result of these and confirmed in the report to Strategy and Resources in March 2021.</p> <p>Further requests by RUSH and Grace Network to stay beyond June have been considered and it is recognised that the circumstances of the two tenants are different. There is support for securing vacant possession of all the units so as not to prejudice the redevelopment, from senior officers and members.</p> <p>The Parish Council has also been consulted.</p>
Report Author	Alison Fisk, Head of Property Services Email: alison.fisk@stroud.gov.uk
Options	<p>The options are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To seek vacant possession of the units by the end of June 2021 • To grant new leases to tenants beyond this date

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Appendices	<p>Appendix A (i) – Site plan</p> <p>Appendix A (ii) – Infrastructure; Approved General Arrangement Drawing</p> <p>Appendix D – Key milestones</p> <p>The following appendices contain exempt information by virtue of Paragraphs 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local government Act 1972 and a resolution may be passed to exclude the public during consideration of these items:</p> <p>Appendix B – Exempt Text Background Information, Discussion and Legal Implications.</p> <p>Appendix C – Tenancy schedule showing impact on infrastructure, rent holidays and arrears</p> <p>Appendix E – Flow chart showing legal process for repossession of commercial property</p> <p>Appendix F – Letter from The Grace Network</p>			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 One of the Council's key corporate priorities is the redevelopment of Brimscombe Port, the destination at the eastern end of the canal with a vision to deliver a reinstated canal and basin, a sustainable, new residential-led mixed use community that meets the needs of both existing and future residents. By responding to the site's unique characteristics with innovative and inspiring design, the Council aspires to create an exemplar scheme that integrates with the existing surroundings and expands upon the site's constraints and opportunities to enhance the residents' daily lives. The scheme will respond to the district's post-COVID economic recovery strategy and its ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030.
- 1.2 The redevelopment of the Port has been the subject of various reports to this Committee over the last few years as the Council has proceeded to de risk the site to deliver a viable opportunity to the market and maximise the interest from potential partners. These reports, the output specification, programme, FAQ's and more background information can all be found on the council's website at <https://www.stroud.gov.uk/environment/brimscombe-port>.
- 1.3 With delegated planning permission granted on the 23 February 2021 for the key infrastructure to take the site out of the flood plain, by the reinstatement of the canal and basin, the committee gave approval to take the next important step; to procure a developer partner to work alongside the Council to progress the redevelopment of the Port.
- 1.4 The resolutions made at the meeting on the 4th March 2021 are set out below for ease of reference:

- 1) *Delegate authority to the Head of Property Services to:*
 - i. *commence the procurement of a developer partner for Brimscombe Port using the competitive dialogue procedure with the final selection of the partner to be presented to Committee for approval at the completion of the process.*
 - ii. *in consultation with the Strategic Head of Resources and Chair and Vice Chair of this committee to:*
 - a) *proceed when necessary with the demolition of buildings on the site prior to a partner being selected, subject to planning conditions being met, for any of the reasons set out in section 3.23 of this report.*

1.5 Sections 3.23 and 3.24 of that report were as follows:

Tenancies/ Demolition of units

3.23 *All of the remaining tenancies of the buildings required to be demolished, to facilitate the infrastructure works, expire at the end of June 2021. This is to provide the Council with the maximum flexibility in progressing the redevelopment. It may be necessary for the Council to procure the first stage of the works and demolish empty units on the site to:*

- *avoid further delays once a development partner is procured;*
- *reduce NNDR/ security costs etc. which will eat into the management account and limit the ability for the Council to accrue any more surpluses;*
- *enable the installation of car charging points to improve the ongoing management and desirability of the Mill for current and prospective tenants;*
- *reduce the risk of anti-social behaviour and improve the aesthetics of the site (as units continue to deteriorate, some being at end of life);*
- *give the council the option of proceeding with the infrastructure works as a worst case scenario if a developer partner isn't procured.*

3.24 *Many of the businesses on site have had to close due to COVID -19 restrictions. The council has extended tenancies for as long as practicable, without prejudicing its ability to regain possession of the units and continues to support tenants both whilst on site, through rent holidays, and to relocate.*

1.6 Planning permission for the demolition of the Business Park, Industrial Estate and Port House and completion of the infrastructure for the redevelopment of the Port was granted on the 24th March 2021 (S.19.1502/FUL); see plans at Appendix A.

1.7 Many of the units on the site lie directly in the path of the reinstated canal, the basin, de-culverted river and new highway access on to the site. The reasons for the need to start demolition ahead of the main redevelopment are still valid and are explored later in this report.

1.8 Current Position

The council continues to support tenants to relocate. However, the council has received requests that RUSH be allowed to stay on site until the end of the summer to allow young people to access the facility over the summer holidays after the lockdown and RUSH itself has recently asked that it be allowed to remain open until Christmas this year, or at the

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very least until the end September. A subsequent on-line petition 'requests a lease extension until January 2022 for RUSH Skatepark et al'.

- 1.9 The Grace Network has confirmed that it has not as yet been able to secure new premises (with the exception of Stroud Foodbank) and has requested confirmation of the date that it needs to vacate the site by. A letter was received from The Grace Network outlining its request to the Committee, just before publication of this report. This is attached at Appendix F (Exempt) Details of the circumstances of these 2 tenants and their leases are set out in Appendix B (Exempt).
- 1.10 The Cotswold Canals Trust, SVCC (and SDC) also occupy units on the site to store materials for the ongoing restoration of the canal and the council is providing support to find alternative sites.
- 1.11 Inside Football vacated their unit in April 2021 as their business had been impacted by the Pandemic. A rent holiday valued at approximately £42k was given to the business during the pandemic to support operation. However, even in spite of this holiday, rental arrears £10,185 remain at the end of the tenancy. The Council's constitution states that debts of between £10k and £20k may be written off by the S151 Officer and reported retrospectively to the Committee. It is the view of the S151 Officer that as a rent holiday was required and the business is no longer trading this debt will not be collected. It is therefore to be formally written off. The Committee is asked to agree this write off decision recommended by the S151 Officer.
- 1.12 Finally, but as importantly, there are two other commercial tenants whose leases are due to expire at the end of June 2021, these tenants would also like to stay as long as possible on the site. One of these has not been able to secure alternative premises but is also aware that their lease end date is the 30th June. Appendix C (Exempt) provides details of the tenancies of units that are to be demolished, the infrastructure that will be within the footprint of their units, rent holidays that have been granted and any rent arrears.
- 1.13 The **purpose of this report** is, therefore (in light of these new requests for tenants to stay longer) to seek approval as to whether the council still wishes to try to secure vacant possession of the units that are due to be demolished and which have leases that expire at the end of June 2021 or whether it wishes to consider requests from tenants to occupy beyond this point, and to outline the risks to the project if it does so.

2. Background: RUSH Skatepark and Grace Network

RUSH

- 2.1 RUSH Skatepark is a community interest company based in Unit 3 on the Industrial Estate at Brimscombe Port. They were granted a Tenancy at Will and then a formal lease (completed in July 2017) of the unit in 2013 by Stroud Valleys Company (SVCC)¹ before the Council secured a £2m loan from Homes England towards the infrastructure costs. SVCC was acting on advice from the council. It was always clear that the site was a redevelopment site, although the prospect of vacant possession being needed was some

¹ SVCC (Stroud Valleys Canal Company) was set up, in part, to hold the property assets of the reinstated canal. Brimscombe Port was transferred to SVCC by SWRDA after it had acquired it from British Waterways in 2009. The freehold interest in the site was subsequently transferred to SDC on the 1st April 2020 as a condition of the funding agreement with Homes England part of the terms of the transfer are that the reinstated canal and basin are transferred back to SVCC on completion.

years away. Consequently, the lease contained a landlord's break clause first operable in January 2019 and annually thereafter. This break clause was operated in January this year as the council was close to a decision on the planning application for the key infrastructure on the site being considered at Development Control Committee.

- 2.2 Members will be familiar with the Skatepark as a unique facility in the District and County. In April 2018 Committee agreed to grant a ground lease of land at Stratford Park to RUSH, subject to detailed terms and planning permission being secured and RUSH funding the build costs of a new facility RUSH had been looking for an alternative site for some time and this was considered the most suitable in the District, with good transport links and sitting alongside the leisure centre. RUSH has been unable to progress plans for the site
- 2.3 RUSH has continued to seek alternative premises, but buildings of the size required are relatively few.
- 2.4 The rental arrears for Rush, although now owed to the Council, largely pre-date the Council ownership of the site as shown in the table in Appendix B (Exempt). In the Council's accounts an allowance has been made for this debt to effectively, although not legally, write off the sums due. This is because it is not deemed likely to be collectable so prudent accounting requires this to be reflected. However, the process of seeking vacant possession will involve reconciliation and clarification of all sums owed. There is likely to be a future report to this committee seeking approval to formally write off some or all of the sums owed.
- 2.5 In order to maintain a viable business model RUSH needs a new building, regardless of the council's redevelopment plans. A separate area for toddlers and younger children is needed, as well as outdoor space to maintain income. They also need a well maintained building with a secure future in order to book competitions and attract elite riders to come and train/ compete/ exhibit bringing new members to the Park. The unit they occupy at Brimscombe Port is at end of life.
- 2.6 **Grace Network**
- 2.7 Grace Network (GN), first approached the Council in 2014 seeking premises for a warehouse and distribution hub for Stroud Foodbank and were granted a lease of Unit 2a in April 2015. GN developed and supported a variety of social enterprises including Stroud Furniture Bank, Kids Stuff and Stroud Foodbank within this unit. GN were very aware of the council's redevelopment plans for the Port and the lease was granted for a 5-year term with 2 tenant only break clauses at years 2 and 4. This was some months before the council secured £2m of funding from Homes England.
- 2.8 In 2016 GN used Unit 1 as a temporary overspill for the furniture bank for a few months. Subsequently in 2018 they requested use of the unit again for the furniture and food banks and a Tenancy at Will was granted on a low rent co-terminus with their lease of unit 2a.
- 2.9 Subsequently the Long Table was started up in Unit 1, however, it became apparent that the multiple uses within these units required both planning permission for change of use and were of concern to the council's insurers. As Unit 4 became vacant and as COVID-19 hit, the Council allowed the furniture bank to move into Unit 4, leaving Unit 1a for the Long Table use only. This was intended for a short-term period only with a low rent reflecting this.

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2.10 GN applied for planning permission for a change of use for Units 1 and 4 in July 2020, a decision is awaited, but a deferral was recommended by the Highways Authority in December 2020 until the applicant provides evidence to justify the parking levels proposed. See S20/1550/FUL.

2.11 The current position with regard to these tenants' leases is set out in Appendix B (Exempt.)

3. Discussion - RUSH Skatepark and Grace Network's tenancies

Please see Appendix B for additional exempt information

RUSH

3.1 It has not completed the new lease offered to it and which it has had since January and is occupying on a Tenancy at Will. It is assumed that it would only be able to continue in occupation beyond June on the basis of a peppercorn rent. This would require committee approval because of the rent arrears already owed and as occupation would extend beyond the lock down period, within which rent holidays have been granted by officers.

3.2 The facility has been closed for a large part of the pandemic, only now starting to re-open and as the summer approaches, outside venues are likely to still be used, particularly in good weather. It will have to close again to relocate or to provide the council with vacant possession. RUSH have indicated that they do not have the resources to remove the ramps from the unit at the end of term as prescribed for in their Tenancy at Will. This will add to the council's demolition costs and could potentially make the unit liable for NNDR, preventing the council's ability to be granted void rates.

Grace Network

3.3 Discussions have been taking place with GN for many months regarding the need for the council to gain vacant possession of their units and assisting with trying to find alternative sites. The deadline for this had been agreed as March (similarly for RUSH) and has since been extended to June. They have been looking for alternative premises for some time, and it is understood that, whilst not ideal, the various social enterprises within the units could be split up and other buildings secured in the short or long term, if larger premises are unavailable. Whilst GN has tried to purchase 2 larger properties during this time, it has been unsuccessful in securing these. Officers have recently offered other accommodation which is currently available in council buildings on a temporary basis and sites that may be suitable in the longer term.

3.4 All the tenants on the site have been kept updated on progress with the redevelopment through liaison meetings set up by the former ward councillor in 2014 which also includes local residents and the Parish Council and through direct one to one contact. Prior to this SVCC held regular meetings with tenants as well. The council has been publishing the redevelopment programme and discussing the likely requirement for vacant possession with tenants for several years.

3.5 Reasons for the delegation and early demolition of Units:

These have been set out in this and the previous report to committee but are expanded on below;

The Development Programme

- 3.6 The key milestones for the redevelopment of the Port were published as part of the previous report to Committee and are attached at Appendix D. These have been updated to demonstrate the impact of the current uncertainty around achieving vacant possession by June (see para 2.3 Appendix E: Exempt)
- 3.7 Vacant possession is required in June to give the Council flexibility to carry out the demolition for the reasons outlined and to have the option to construct the infrastructure if the procurement of a partner is not successful. This may become necessary at various stages in the procurement process as follows:
- a) July 2021 - Little market interest to the tender opportunity (tenants remaining on site with public support and no clear vacant possession date may impact developers' interest as well as wider economic factors)
 - b) Oct 2021 - Evaluation at the SQ (Selection Questionnaire) stage does not result in any preferred bidders
 - c) Dec 2021 - Shortlisted bidders from SQ stage do not proceed beyond competitive dialogue phase due to a mismatch between their approach and the Council's to the redevelopment
 - d) May 2022 Strategy and Resources does not approve the selection of the final bidder at the completion of the tender evaluation stage

These are all points at which the council may decide it wishes to commence the full infrastructure works.

- 3.8 The continued occupation of the units has already had an impact on programme as pre-contract asbestos surveys cannot be undertaken until they are vacant. This means that provisional sums will have to be included in tenders and time given for these to be undertaken before the start of any works. Officers are trying to reduce the impact by phasing surveys as units become empty and these have started.
- 3.9 The impact on programme is further complicated by the limited ecological windows for bat surveys and licences and Environment Agency permits to work in the river. This can mean delays in the programme further down the line for up to a year if the opportunity to demolish is not taken this year.
- 3.10 All of the units are in the way of some of the key infrastructure – Units 1 to 3 on the Industrial Estate are a terrace and need to be demolished to allow the new highway access onto the site from the A419 and the Business Park units, (several of which are also attached to each other), are where the river will be de-culverted and the canal reinstated, as well as services such as the mains sewer diverted. It is not possible at this stage for officers to work out what the developer's programme and preference for timing of demolitions will be. Appendix B sets out the units on the site, their current state of occupancy and the key infrastructure that they lie in the path of.
- 3.11 Homes England and Land Release Fund bid requirements – the Council needs to be mindful of the key milestones and HE's requirement for achieving best value in any decisions it makes with regard to the development programme. The council has also been successful in its LRF bid for £776k where there is a deadline to meet, whereby the site has

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to be released for housing by March 2023. (see Appendix C: Exempt) The success of this recent bid shows continuing confidence that the council will deliver the redevelopment and acknowledges the de-risking and investment in the site that has already taken place.

- 3.12 National Non-Domestic Rates/ Security costs. Empty industrial units will qualify for 6 months void rates period after which full business rates will become payable. As some of the units are already empty, payments will start to be made from mid-July. Officers will minimise liability as far as is possible but these costs will eat into the management account for the Port as rental income diminishes. There is the risk that with reduced rental income and vacant offices in the Mill, the Port income will not cover its costs.
- 3.13 Anti-social behaviour/aesthetics/ecology. The Parish Council and local residents have expressed concerns over units standing empty for long periods. Security costs and anti-social behaviour are likely to be higher with empty dilapidated units on the site rather than fenced off areas which are less inviting. Current estimates of the programme show there being a relatively short period between buildings being demolished and infrastructure works being able to start on site. Empty buildings will potentially be used by bats and more surveys may need to be undertaken before demolition, with further delays to the programme possible.
- 3.14 Electric Vehicle Charging Points and Mill lettings
- 3.15 The council has had requests for the installation of EV points from companies interested in taking space at the Mill. Power to this area is limited and taken up by the Business Park Units, their demolition would help both with power supply, but also laying out a temporary extended car park for the Mill, which would provide more certainty for tenants. The Mill remains the only property on site which can be let in the long term, bringing in income to cover its running costs and potentially producing a surplus for the redevelopment budget. Lettings here should be prioritised.
- 3.16 Developer confidence
Any uncertainty around the council's ability to secure vacant possession will be picked up by developers interested in the redevelopment. With the council set to start procuring a partner in July this year this may impact on the quality and quantity of bids received
- 3.17 **Securing Vacant Possession**
See Flow chart at Appendix E (Exempt) and Legal Implications.

Community benefits provided by RUSH and Grace Network

- 3.18 Whilst RUSH has been closed for a lot of the pandemic it has been able to open and provide sessions for vulnerable groups of children and adults and the benefits of exercise for people's health and well-being are well documented and more acute as a result of the pandemic. With children now back in school and the potential to be able to use the skate park in small groups there are obvious benefits in it continuing to be open for as long as possible. Currently bookings are only being taken a week in advance.
- 3.19 Grace Network has provided a life-line to the local community in terms of its pre-prepared and frozen meals during the lockdown and has been in receipt of council grants to support its community work. Kids' Stuff, the furniture bank and the foodbank are also important services for some of the most vulnerable in our community.

CONCLUSION

- 3.20 This is an extremely complex and challenging site to develop, unviable without the significant amounts of public investment that have been secured. The amount of infrastructure is disproportionately large compared to the numbers of homes that can be built on site and many developers will not be interested because of this. However, there is already developer interest in the site, confidence is high at the moment and the property market is extremely strong. A lack of clarity around when tenants will be vacating the site may impact on confidence when the council starts the procurement process.
- 3.21 These units need to be vacated by the end of June, in order that pre-demolition surveys on them can begin and the demolition of units can start outside of the main activity season for bats (between October to April). Any delays to this programme limits the council's ability to complete the demolition within this time period and will lead to longer delays to the redevelopment programme with the ability to do works in the river also only permitted outside the fish spawning season (i.e. from June to September).
- 3.22 Relatively small delays of weeks or months now are therefore greatly magnified by these protected 'ecological' time periods and result in even longer delays, (potentially up to a year) to the start of the anticipated development programme, where little will be able to happen on site, contrary to the wishes of the local community and Parish Council and resulting in a longer redevelopment programme of up to 2 years on site.
- 3.23 Whilst officers cannot confirm how a developer partner will approach the programming of works, the complexity of the timing of the works suggests that providing maximum flexibility to a partner and the council is the right way to proceed. Starting demolition further de-risks the site, making it more attractive to develop.
- 3.24 The council needs the flexibility possession of the units gives it, in order to make decisions on how best to progress the redevelopment at the key points as set out above. The milestones show clearly that delaying achieving vacant possession only until September is a significant risk to the project – there is no contingency for any delay and if tenants have not vacated before the end of June the whole project and the £2.776k funding secured is at considerable risk.
- 3.25 The benefits that these two tenants in particular bring to the community are very much acknowledged but cannot continue on the Port if the redevelopment is to go ahead. The impact of their loss from the site/closure is recognised in the Equalities Impact Assessment at section 4.3 below, but has to be considered against the long term gains to the community of the redevelopment. Stroud Foodbank has already made the decision to relocate and has secured premises in Stroud Town centre.
- 3.26 If the council allows tenants to remain on site, the redevelopment of the Port is at significant risk and the council may become in breach of its contractual obligations to its funding partners and to Stroud Valleys Canal Company.
- 3.27 If, however, members wish to extend leases beyond June 30th this year, new leases should be entered into with a specific end date and members need to bear in mind the process set out in paragraphs 3.12 of Appendix B (Exempt), which could mean that tenants occupy beyond these dates; compromising the redevelopment programme further. It is clear from the programme that any occupation beyond September jeopardises the project.

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3.28 Ultimately, the balance to be made between these opposing requirements is a political one; officers have made a clear recommendation with regard to the longest end date that should be given for occupancy of the site (June 2021) as previously approved by committee.

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial Implications

4.1.1 The costs of securing vacant possession and demolishing units to prepare for Infrastructure works are already included within the approved Brimscombe Port Project Budget. The Council has already spent approximately £1.1 million in getting the project to this stage.

4.1.2 The funding agreement with Homes England allows them to request the return of funding if the milestones in the funding agreement, as set out in the development timetable, are not met. This return of funding would be up to the value of the original grant funding to acquire the site (£7.6 million) plus the development funding of £2m, or a transfer of the site to Homes England at nil value. Delays in site development increase the risk of default to the agreement requiring the Council to pay out those sums or lose ownership of the site.

4.1.3 Appendix C provides details of the significant financial support provided to Port tenants in the form of rent holidays throughout the Covid pandemic. Income from the Port is ring-fenced to the development budget. Therefore, these rent holidays have reduced the total budget for Port Development but have helped ensure valued local businesses and services have remained operational throughout the pandemic.

4.1.4 As set out in this, and the previous, report to the Committee, delays in demolition will result in increased costs and also the Council incurring liabilities for business rates on the buildings.

4.1.5 All rent arrears which predate the Council's ownership of the site (April 1st 2020) have been deemed as not collectable in the Council's accounts and therefore there is no additional financial impact created by writing off debts.

Andrew Cummings, Strategic Director of Resources
Email: andrew.cummings@stroud.gov.uk

4.2 Legal Implications – Exempt: see Appendix B

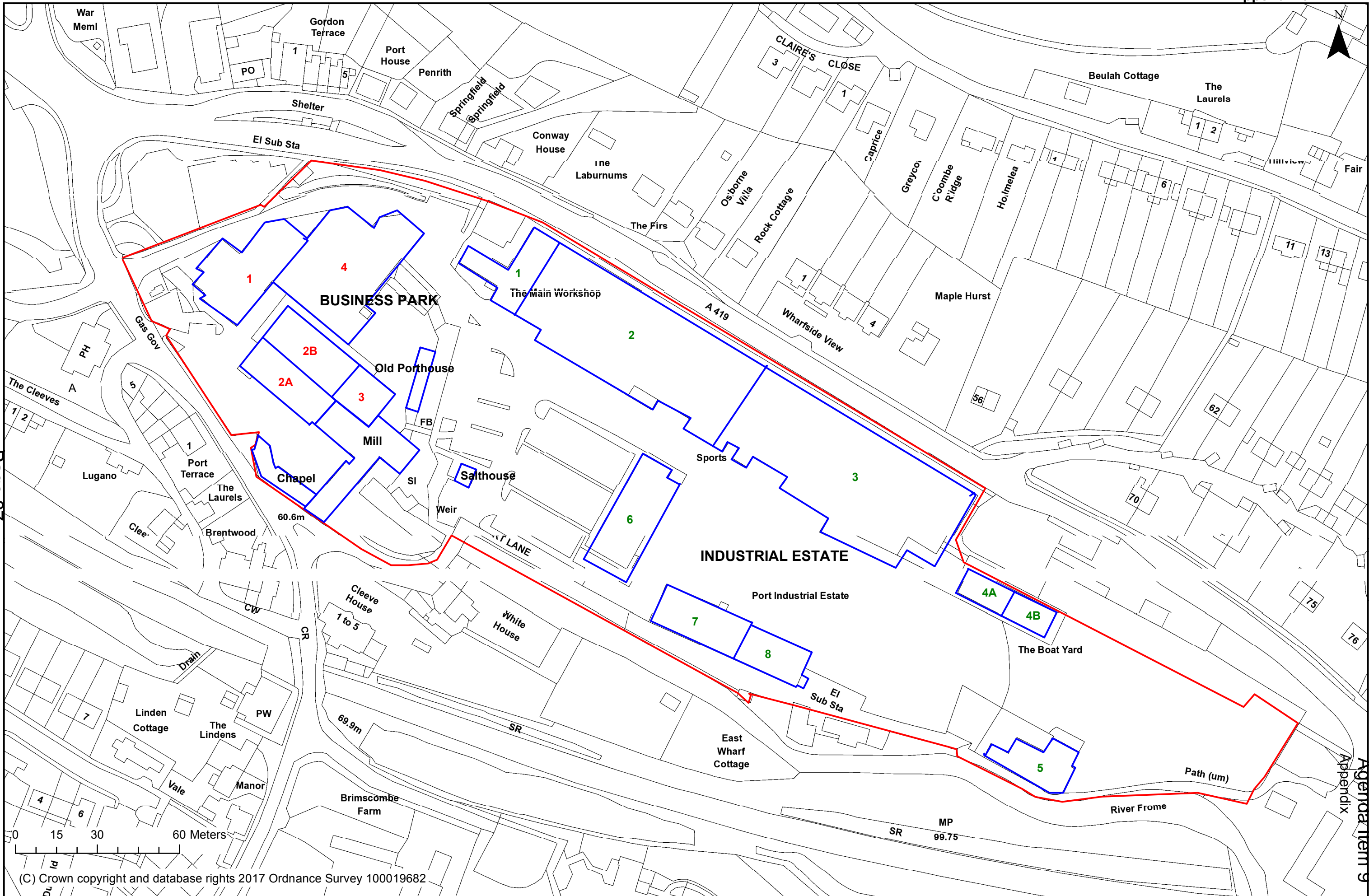
4.3 Equality Implications

An EqIA has been carried out and confirms that some protected groups could be negatively impacted from the loss of some of the businesses and social enterprises currently occupying the site if they cannot, or do not wish to, find alternative premises. This is being mitigated by the council supporting these tenants through the pandemic and to find suitable alternative premises locally. Also by allowing tenants to remain on site for as long as possible without jeopardising the redevelopment programme. The Output Specification for the site (development brief) includes the provision of a new social enterprise centre, commercial and retail space, affordable homes, a reinstated canal and basin with towpath and de culverted river; providing new opportunities for outdoor recreation, social enterprises and employment on the site.

4.4 Environmental Implications

- 4.4.1 The greatest proportion of carbon emissions for Stroud District, in common with elsewhere, is the built environment. The key challenge on delivering our 2030 Carbon Neutral commitment is that about 85% of these built environment emissions are in private control. By taking the partnership approach to the delivery of the redevelopment of the Port, the Council will remain in control and, whilst acknowledging that the demolition and construction will have an impact, we can ensure that the scheme responds to its commitments.
- 4.4.2 The redevelopment, as set out clearly in the Output Specification, is to deliver an exemplar scheme with high levels of energy efficiency that exceed the Council's current Local Plan and will be in line with the proposals set out in the draft Local Plan. Building with Nature accreditation is a requirement for the scheme.
- 4.4.3 The Environmental Statement (ES) that has been published as part of the planning application demonstrates that overall there are no significant adverse effects which will result from the proposed development. The approach undertaken as part of the ES and subsequent ES Addendum has led to the inclusion of a number of mitigation measures which have accounted for the likely impacts associated with proposed development and reduced their respective effects to within acceptable levels.
- 4.4.4 The planning conditions ensure that ecology, contamination and flood risk are addressed as part of the infrastructure works.

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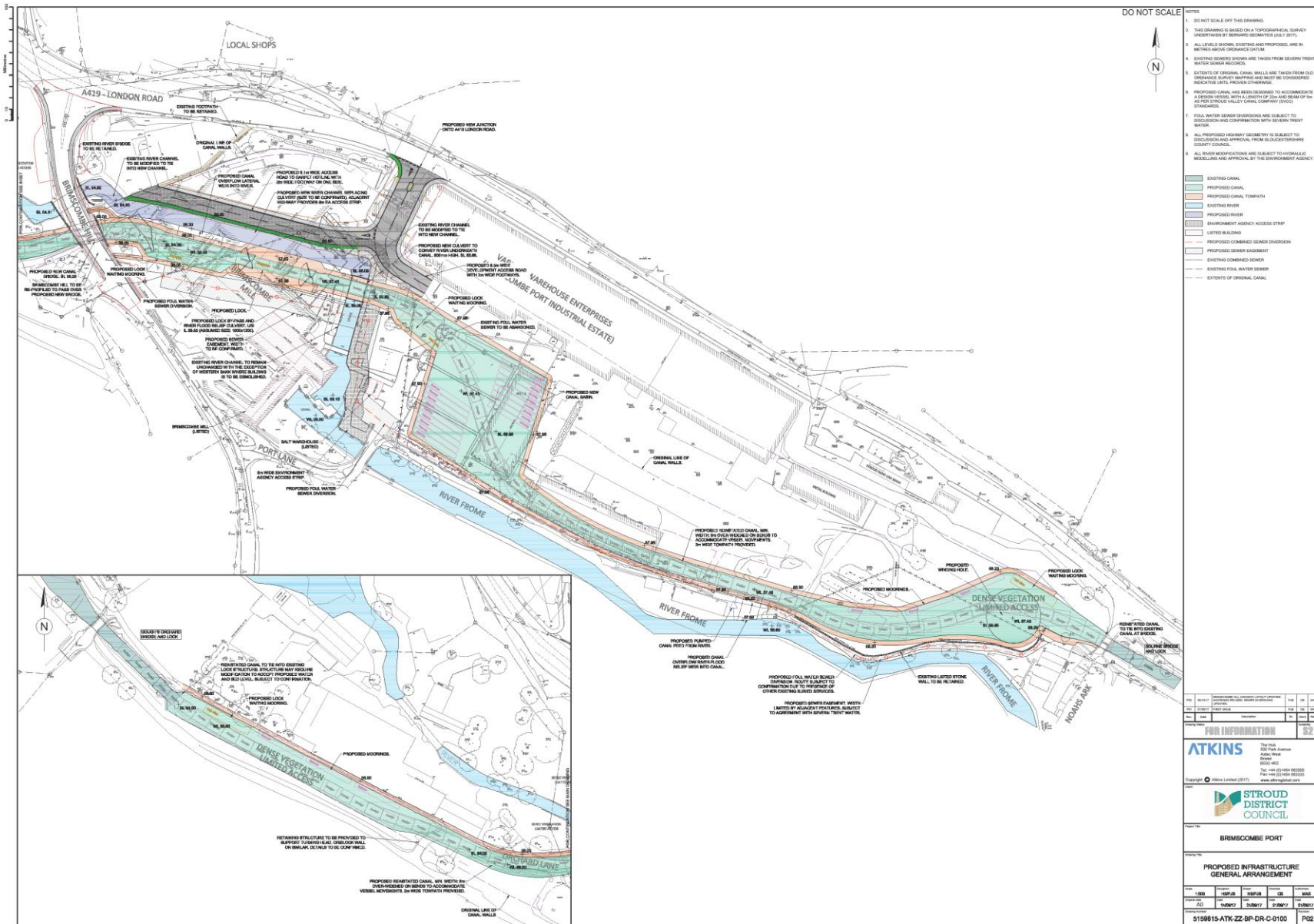


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Appendix A (ii) Infrastructure General Arrangement Drawing



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APPENDIX D Brimscombe Port – Key Milestones (May 2021)

Timetable for procurement of development partner for redevelopment – SDC procures D&B infrastructure contract and passes to developer to implement		Timetable for demolition implemented by SDC assuming June 2021 Vacant possession		Impact of Vacant Possession Delayed beyond end of June
Activity	Date	Activity	Date	Comments
		Estimates for demolition only/ / Draft tender docs	April 2021	
Preparation of tender documents for infrastructure	June 2021			
Finalise tender documents, draft development agreement and legal sign off for procurement of a partner	May/June 2021	Investigation of mains services/culverts etc. Notices to stat bodies for termination. Investigate temp works/protection to Port Mill	April -July 2021	
Break date for vacant possession of buildings	June 2021			
Marketing of development opportunity/ commencement of procurement for developer (Vacant possession would give confidence)	July 2021	Pre demolition surveys for vacant buildings following on with other buildings once vacant possession achieved.	May 2021 – July 2021	Currently carrying out pre demolition surveys to empty buildings for tender documentation. If vacant possession not achieved by the end of June for all buildings, will need to include a provisional sum within the tender and complete the surveys once the contractor appointed.
Procurement of the infrastructure contract (split demolition/ construction)	June – August 2021	Tender for works	End of July – Mid Aug 2021	Lack of vacant possession will affect interest in infrastructure contract. If no interest may have to delay until vacant possession achieved. This was timed to provide certainty on cost and programme for developers as we start procurement.
		Appoint contractor / Mobilisation/ s.80 Building Act Notice (max 6 weeks response from LA)	End Sept 2021	

The dates are subject to change due to reliance on third parties.

APPENDIX D Brimscombe Port – Key Milestones (May 2021)

SQ evaluation to derive shortlist of potential partners	Oct 2021	Commence demolition (7&8 need to be demolished outside of main bat activity season and avoids bird nesting season - April to Sept) Licensed ecologist to inspect buildings 7 and 8 for roosting bats prior to demolition.	Oct 2021 6 month contract	If vacant possession is not achieved by end of June the demolition will need to be broken down into phases (to ensure window for demolition of 7&8 outside of main bat activity not missed) as follows: Phase 1 – Units 4,6,7 and 8 Ind. Estate Phase 2 – Units 1,2 and 3 – Ind. Estate Phase 3 – Business Park Phase 4 – Port House Breaking the contract down and waiting for VP for pre demolition surveys will cause delays to the programme. Assuming VP in September the contract will extend by approx. 2 months and incur additional costs. Demolition will not be complete until June 2022. This leaves the programme with no room for manoeuvre. A bad winter may delay progress and there is the risk that bats may start to occupy vacant buildings imposing further restrictions on the timing of demolition. Any delays could impact on the overall redevelopment programme. The built in contingency to the programme will have been lost.
Competitive dialogue process	Nov/ Dec 2021			
HE Milestone (Long Stop date) – Commence procurement of a partner	March 2022			
ITFT submissions and evaluation	April 2022	Demolition complete	April 2022	
Strategy and Resources Committee – approval to appoint developer partner	May 2022			
Contracts completed	June 2022			
Prep of detailed planning application for development	June 2022 – Dec 2022	River/canal/new access road infrastructure can start by developer (Est 12 month contract)	June 2022	If vacant possession goes beyond September, the demolition works will still be on site in June and so the window for the river works in 2022 maybe missed (June to Sept only). Delays the work in the river for a further

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APPENDIX D Brimscombe Port – Key Milestones (May 2021)

				year until June 2023. Can't start access road off A419 until Units 1-3 have been demolished. The developer will not be able to undertake any substantial works on site for a year if this happens.
Pre-app consultation	Aug 2022			
	Aug to Oct 2022			
Submission of detailed planning application	Jan 2023			
HE Milestone (Long Stop date) - Enter into Development Agreement	March 2023			
LRF requirement - Release of the land for housing	March 2023			LRF funding is at risk, if funding conditions aren't met and a substantial amount remains unspent at this date as the infrastructure hasn't begun.
		Infrastructure complete (Est. 12 months)	June 2023	
Planning approval for residential	Oct 2023			
Construction mobilisation and completion of development	Oct 2023 to Oct 2025	Redevelopment can commence as infrastructure is in.	Oct 2023	If vacant possession goes beyond September, resulting in a delay to the demolition and infrastructure, then this will have a knock on to the start on site of the redevelopment potentially delaying it by a year due to the need to comply with ecology seasons. This may result in long periods when there is no activity on site which the Council wishes to avoid and brings the programme closer to the long stop dates in the funding agreements putting the project at risk. Start on site pushed back to June 2024. The redevelopment programme could be as much as 2 years longer if river works don't start in June 2022.

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APPENDIX D Brimscombe Port – Key Milestones (May 2021)

HE Milestone (Long Stop date) Start on site (infrastructure only)	31 Dec 2023			
HE Milestone (Long Stop date) Submit planning application	30 June 2024			
HE Milestone (Long Stop date) Secure planning consent	30 June 2025			
HE Milestone (Long Stop date) Start on site (housing)	31 Oct 2025			
HE Milestone (Long Stop date) Project Target Date. Port Basin, Canal and associated Canal/river works and new London Road access and third party access way to be completed	31 Oct 2026			
HE Milestone (Long Stop date) Practical Completion	31 Dec 2031			

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Officers may seek approval to proceed with all of the infrastructure itself if the procurement process is not successful. This may occur at various stage as follows:

- Little market interest to the tender opportunity - July 2021
- Evaluation at the SQ stage does not result in any preferred bidders – Oct 2021
- Shortlisted bidders from SQ stage do not proceed beyond competitive dialogue phase due to a mismatch between their approach and the Council's to the redevelopment – Dec 2021
- S&R do not approve the selection of the final bidder at the completion of the tender evaluation stage – May 2022

Programme risk for infrastructure:

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APPENDIX D Brimscombe Port – Key Milestones (May 2021)

- Works to the river – June to Sept only
- EA checks and flood risk activity permits as part of the detailed design process
- Road works - requirement under the New Roads and Street Works Act to notify the Highway Authority of our intention to carry out works on the highway. The act requires formal notification at the appropriate time to “book road space” so that the Highway Authority can manage other works in the vicinity so that conflict with others requiring to work on the network at the same time does not occur. Not notifying the HA at the appropriate time may cause significant delays to the project. There is a 12 week lead in. Units 1-3 need to be demolished for new access road.
- Planning application conditioned due to EA, contamination, ecology, materials management plan etc.
- Delays at the moment due to statutory authority’s response times.
- Further lockdown impacts on programme
- Bats start to occupy buildings that have now been vacated in accordance with our agreed programme resulting in restrictions to when these buildings can be demolished.
- Little interest in bidders for infrastructure contract due to lack of vacant possession at procurement stage.
- Developers uncertain due to lack of vacant possession once procurement process commenced.

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