

**DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

5 June 2015

**ASHBURTON MASTERPLAN**Report of the Senior Forward PlannerRecommendation : **That Members approve the Masterplan****1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Masterplan for Chuley Road, Ashburton has been developed in response to an approach from several major landowners at Chuley Road who wish to redevelop their sites. The site is identified in the Local Plan (Proposal ASH2), as a 3.5 hectare site for mixed use redevelopment including housing, commercial and employment uses and public car parking. The Authority appointed Building Design Partnership (BDP) to carry out a masterplanning exercise working closely with the community, the National Park Authority (DNPA), Teignbridge District Council and Ashburton Town Council.
- 1.2 The Masterplan provides a 'blueprint' for the redevelopment, it will ensure that opportunities are taken to provide wider community benefit (for example through new parking and flood mitigation), and require that individual planning applications piece together and contribute towards these wider improvements. The Masterplan includes a vision and set of objectives which were identified together with stakeholders at an early stage of the process, and are consistent with the allocation in the local plan.

**2 Preparation of the Masterplan – consultation, engagement and evidence**

- 2.1 The project has been managed by DNPA officers with support of a Masterplan Steering Group made up of officers of relevant local authorities and agencies and elected representatives from Teignbridge District Council and Ashburton Town Council. The Steering Group is not a decision making body, but exists as a forum for the Masterplan progress to be presented and discussed.
- 2.2 At a wider level three 'People's Panel' meetings have been held over the course of preparing the Masterplan. These meetings, held in Ashburton and open to anyone to attend, have taken the form of workshops discussing initially the vision and objectives of the Masterplan, and then the potential design and delivery approaches as options were proposed.
- 2.3 A 'Stakeholder Surgery' was held, where appointments could be made for one to one discussions. Meetings have also been held with Ashburton Town Council, Ashburton Neighbourhood Plan Group, railway interest group, and with businesses and residents at Chuley Road. Two drafts of the Masterplan have been published: the original draft plan in January 2014, and a revised plan in November 2014 for a period of formal public consultation.

- 2.4 The Masterplan has been informed by evidence at an appropriate level for this framework plan including a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) with scenario modelling and Options Report, a Parking Strategy and Movements Assessment, a Tree Scoping Survey, high level viability modelling and a land valuation report. Professional advice has also been sought regarding matters including habitats and wildlife, heritage, housing and economic development. A summary and discussion of this evidence is set out in the Appendices to the Masterplan. The Masterplan also describes the more detailed evidence which will be required to inform and support individual planning applications.
- 2.5 The issues which have formed a key part of the preparation of the Masterplan are as follows:

### **Flood risk**

Recognising Chuley Road as an area prone to flood events, the local plan proposal sets out the need for a sequential approach to the layout and design of development, supported by an FRA. The FRA and Options Report have therefore driven land uses, with modelling used to identify where risk could be reduced and the land uses which would therefore be appropriate in that area. There is no external funding for flood risk mitigation, thus the viability of works (i.e. whether the value uplift justifies the work) is crucial. In some cases this is marginal and some development may only be viable as redevelopment moves forward and values increase.

A key principle is that applications must be supported by a detailed FRA setting out necessary flood alleviation measures in order to demonstrate safe development, not increasing flood risk elsewhere and where feasible reducing flood risk within the site. It is important to recognise that the area could also benefit from upstream improvements though these are beyond the scope of this plan.

A more detailed costed flood mitigation scheme will be necessary to inform delivery and developer contributions.

### **Highway access**

As an edge of town centre site with restricted highway access, and the historic industrial focus of Ashburton, Chuley Road has challenges around its accessibility. An aim of the allocation was to ease this by replacing the larger industrial uses of the site with residential and employment uses more appropriate for its edge of centre location. The Masterplan has an aim to be trip generation neutral in respect of vehicle movements.

Highway improvement will come forward as part of the redevelopment, including the reduction in HGV movements, improving movement on Chuley Road through the removal of on-street parking on Chuley Road and widening where required.

Applications on the site must be informed by a Transport Assessment; new uses would be judged against current uses when considering the impact of change.

The community expressed an interest in a 'southern link road', a new road on the alignment of Bulliver's Way. However given that change in vehicle movements as a

consequence of redevelopment should be minimal there can be no justification for developer contributions towards such a scheme.

## **Parking**

Consultation and engagement has shown parking to be a key community concern with a desire to improve public car parking in Ashburton. A balance must be achieved however; there is a particular challenge around aiming to improve the public car parking offer on the site, whilst recognising that each new public parking space has an associated two way vehicle movement.

The need to sustain business parking in the area has also proven a priority, in the context of sustaining and supporting existing businesses which will remain on the site.

The Masterplan aims to achieve a net gain in public parking, in addition to ensuring that new business and residential uses meet the local plan requirement for off-street parking.

A common approach in the Masterplan is to require each of the main sites to provide an element of public and/or business car parking as part of the new development. Changes may be required around the charging and permitting regime within the town to ensure that existing and new public car parking is used effectively.

## **Housing**

With the preceding issues clearly being the priority for the community; affordable housing delivery is likely to come forward at a lower level than local plan policy. Applications on the site will need to be supported by viability appraisal, the aim being to achieve 25% affordable housing. However it is recognised that where viability is marginal priority may need to be given to on-site and off-site infrastructure improvements when dealing with individual applications.

DNPA will continue to work with the Housing Authority to support other opportunities for affordable housing delivery in Ashburton.

## **Railway heritage**

At a late stage in the preparation of the Masterplan an interest in the railway heritage of the site came forward. This subject had not been raised to any great degree at earlier stages in the preparation of the local plan and allocation of the site (which included a specific community engagement event), or the preparation of the Masterplan.

The interest focussed upon the protection of the former station building and subsequently the reinstatement of a rail link on a new heritage line extending the South Devon Railway from Buckfastleigh.

Whilst recognising the need to progress the Masterplan to approval and enable development to come forward, DNPA Members wished to ensure the opportunity around railway heritage had been fully considered in the Masterplan. A newly

formed group, the Friends of Ashburton Station (FoAS), was given the opportunity to submit a proposal and evidence which might inform alterations to the Masterplan.

The proposal submitted by FoAS is available on the Masterplan web site together with a detailed appraisal of a range of options undertaken by DNPA. Changes were made to the Masterplan to make clear the value of the station building is recognised, and the appraisal identified the need for a pragmatic approach to its conservation in order to provide it with a viable and sustainable future use.

Evidence regarding the reinstatement of a rail link is however extremely limited and comprises principally an incomplete feasibility study of a new rail line to Peartree Cross undertaken by university students in the 1990s, and a high level estimate of potential future economic benefits to the town. It is important to note that compared with other successful heritage rail projects, this proposal would require a new route, given the loss of almost the entire line to the A38 dual carriageway. The appraisal undertaken does not satisfy officers that physical and economic barriers to the reinstatement of a rail link, could be reasonably overcome.

The proposal to safeguard the historic route through the Masterplan site would impact upon public parking, business parking, housing, traffic movement and the provision of the convenience store. These changes would impact upon the ability to deliver the wider objectives of the Masterplan around flood risk mitigation, highway and parking improvements. DNPA would also need to justify the safeguarding of the route in future local plans, and in its own local plan Teignbridge District Council may be required to safeguard an area of land which includes a number of homes at Buckfastleigh.

Compulsory purchase powers would not be available to acquire the land and DNPA has been advised that the likelihood of acquiring the land by private negotiation is remote. The robust and compelling evidence around the ability to deliver the railway, and the ultimate benefits of it, is therefore crucial to justify any safeguarding, and clearly demonstrate that eventual deliverable benefits outweigh the potential negative impact in the short to medium term. Alterations to the Masterplan are likely to be robustly challenged and DNPA would be taking on significant risk in altering the Masterplan to include a safeguarded area without clear evidence to defend this position.

### **3 The Masterplan**

#### **A) Development Parcels**

The Chuley Road site is shared amongst a large number of land owners. The Masterplan aims to be flexible and deliverable by dividing the site into five development parcels. In some cases however, land owners will need to work together, or more than one site may need to be acquired, in to bring forward a viable scheme.

Figures 2.1 and 3.1 of the final draft Masterplan are show below. The complete final draft Masterplan together with the appendices and other supporting documents is available at [www.dartmoor.gov.uk/ashburtonmasterplan](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/ashburtonmasterplan).



FIGURE 3.1 - Illustrative diagram showing the proposed phasing of developments across the Chuley Road site

Please refer to the following text for the key  
The development parcels are as follows (working from north to south):



- **Station Yard (DP4)**

*Create a focus of activity in the northern end of the site, provide a mixed use development comprising of a multi functional space for the community in the former Station building and its surroundings, including potentially a railway heritage use, or market and event space, with opportunities for retail or leisure use. Towards the rear a small (approximately 400sqm) convenience store should maximise opportunities to link functionally with the former station building. A flexible approach will be required to achieve a development which maximises heritage conservation whilst providing a viable building of value to the community.*

*Parking for business use should be retained and improved, providing for additional public car parking and where possible maximise opportunities for the use of business parking for public use outside of business hours. Retain the Station Yard building as commercial use, comprising of office and retail use. Create a 500 sqm mixed use development in the south eastern corner of the Station Yard development plot.*

- **Hillside Plateau (DP5)**

*Create a new residential development and public car parking area with the potential to accommodate around 33 new dwellings. Dwellings should be a mix of market and affordable housing to meet identified needs, with potential for a limited proportion of flats (indicative split 25 houses and 8 flats). The site could be reasonably developed to a higher density. Development should be designed to provide good quality residential amenity by setting development back from the A38 and appropriate evidenced noise attenuation measures.*

- **Central commercial (DP3)**

*Provide flexibility for the existing light industrial uses to remain in situ or for a commercial-led mixed use development in the future with residential at upper floors.*

- **Riverside (DP2)**

*Create a new residential development and public car parking area, within the Riverside development plot with the potential to accommodate around 34 houses, with a density of approximately 37 dwellings per hectare. Development should provide sufficient amenity space, onsite public car parking, a suitable buffer between residential and retained light industrial uses, and address constraints such as the River Ashburn and below ground services.*

- **The Auction Rooms (DP1)**

*Retain and convert the existing building in commercial use with the potential for residential uses on upper floors. Opportunities for business and public parking should be considered as part of future proposals for this site.*

## **B) The Final Draft Masterplan**

The final draft Masterplan is set out at the end of this report in Figure 2.1. Whilst the plan shows the general disposition of uses, parking etc. each individual application will add more detail based upon the layout shown. The plan includes a number of diagrams and annotation which add further advice to potential developers.

It is important to recognise that the Masterplan is a framework for development. Individual site layouts, housing numbers and car park spaces and numbers are illustrative and indicative. Individual applications should draw upon this framework to bring forward a scheme consistent with the final agreed Masterplan and achieving its objectives in the most effective way.

## **4 Delivery**

- 4.1 The comprehensive approach to the redevelopment of the site gives DNPA the ability to require contributions towards infrastructure improvements on the site. In some cases these may be 'in kind' provided on the site, in other cases a financial contribution may be required to fund public/community needs not included within the red line application site. More detailed costed highway and flood mitigation schemes will be required in order to inform the delivery of the final agreed Masterplan.
- 4.2 A key aspect of the 'development parcels' approach is the ability for different areas to come forward at different times. The Masterplan does set out particular prerequisites on specific sites, though ultimately phasing is flexible. It is anticipated that the delivery of some sites earlier on will act as a catalyst for other more marginally viable areas. Importantly, existing uses, for example at the central commercial area, could be retained in the short to medium term and it should be recognised that it may be some time before all aspects of the Masterplan may be realised.
- 4.3 A key requirement of the local plan proposal ASH2 is that "proposals accord with a comprehensive Masterplan for this site". It is important that the Masterplan remains up to date as applications come forward into the future.

## **5 Conclusion**

- 5.1 The Authority's guidance on Development Briefs and Masterplans states that in assessing a Masterplan or Development Brief the Authority will consider:
  - The process undertaken in preparing the masterplan or development brief, including:
    - the range of stakeholders engaged in the process ;
    - whether that engagement and consultation can be seen to have influenced the final scheme.
  - The content of the masterplan or development brief, including:
    - its consistency with the development plan and in particular the requirements of any specific site allocation;
    - how the proposal will help sustain the vibrancy of the community and contribute towards meeting the settlement vision over the plan period;

- the deliverability of the scheme.

5.2 The Masterplan is considered to meet the above criteria in respect of process and content, and is thus recommended for approval.

## **6 Equality and sustainability impact**

6.1 There is no requirement for specific sustainability appraisal in this case. Sustainability and equality are subjects deeply embedded in good planning. This Masterplan is a high level framework; it benefits from the overarching assessments of the allocation in the local plan, and further detailed assessments of applications would be identified as necessary. The process has included wide reaching engagement (and ongoing) with the community, those with direct interest in the site and other stakeholders.

## **7 Financial implications**

7.1 DNPA committed significant financial and officer resources to the preparation of the Masterplan, together with a financial contribution from Teignbridge District Council from the New Homes Bonus raised within Dartmoor National Park. Further resources will be required to support the delivery of the Masterplan. This includes specific pieces of work around highway and flood mitigation scheme costs. Officer resources will also be required for the co-ordination of applications, oversight and negotiation of developer contributions, and continued community engagement and secondary projects such as input to a parking strategy or upstream flood mitigation scheme. Pre-application advice and planning applications will attract a fee in respect of development management.

DAN JANOTA

### **Background Papers** (available at [www.dartmoor.gov.uk/ashburtonmasterplan](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/ashburtonmasterplan))

Development Management and Delivery DPD (July 2013)  
 Chuley Road - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Parsons Brinckerhoff) (March 2014)  
 Chuley Road - Flood Alleviation Options Report (Parsons Brinckerhoff) (December 2013)  
 Chuley Road Masterplan Parking Strategy and Movement Assessment (January 2014)  
 Chuley Road Tree Scoping Survey (Aspect) (August 2013)  
 Report on the Draft 1 Consultation (April 2014)  
 Report on the Draft 2 Consultation (January 2015)  
 Chuley Road - Railway Proposal (FoAS) (March 2015)  
 Ashburton Railway – Appraisal of Options Report (April 2015)

Chuley Road Masterplan Final Draft (May 2015)  
 Chuley Road Masterplan Final Draft (Appendices) (May 2015)



## ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN



- 1 St. Lawrence Lane - short stay on-street parking only, loading and disabled bay for Post Office/Library
- 2 Vealenia Terrace - Remains untouched
- 3 Mini roundabout incorporating grating to connect overland floodwater to new relief culvert in station yard
- 4 Chuley Road remains as two way traffic
- 5 Existing access and business parking remains upgrade public realm
- 6 Old Station Mixed use / Market / Heritage / Events 19 parking spaces
- 7 Convenience Store linked to Old Station development
- 8 Medium/ short stay public car park 23 spaces
- 9 Mixed use development
- 10 Convenience Store Car Park - 26 spaces
- 11 Station Yard Business Car Park - 44 spaces upgrade public realm
- 12 Residential Development 25 Houses, 8 flats
- 13 Raised table 800mm high  
Flood deflection wall 1.2m high
- 14 Emergency access to Skate Park
- 15 Future mixed use, light Industrial uses remain in short to medium term
- 16 Bridge used for emergency and potential access to development
- 17 Residential Development - 30 Units
- 18 River re-profiling to increase conveyance
- 19 Long stay public car parking - 50 spaces
- 20 Stone Park potential access to residential development only
- 21 Potential Pedestrian Link

Note - housing and parking numbers are approximate

Figure 2.1 - Illustrative Masterplan showing the vision for the regeneration of Chuley Road

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5 June 2015

**TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS AND SECTION 211 NOTIFICATIONS  
(WORKS TO TREES IN CONSERVATION AREAS)  
DETERMINED UNDER DELEGATED POWERS**

Report of the Trees and Landscape Officer

Recommendation : **That the decisions be noted.**

**TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS**

**Teignbridge**

**Ref: 15/0012                      29 Amberley Close, Ashburton                      SX 7452 7062**

Application to fell a holly. The tree is in very poor condition with a short life expectancy. Consent was granted subject to the following conditions:

1. Five working days, notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works.
2. Replacement planting of one standard mountain ash tree within the crown spread of the original during the first planting season following felling.

**West Devon**

**Ref: 15/0009                      Willowby House, Yelverton                      SX 5242 6763**

Application to reduce a linear group of ash and beech by 2m and fell two suppressed ash stems. The works will have minimal impact on the group of trees. Consent was granted subject to the following conditions:

1. Five working days, notice to be given to the Authority prior to the commencement of approved works.
2. All works to be carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work – Recommendations.

**SECTION 211 NOTICES**

**Teignbridge**

**Ref: 15/0011                      Wrey Villa, Lustleigh                      SX 7860 8118**

Notification to fell a semi-mature cypress and a semi-mature sycamore. The works will have minimal impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

## **West Devon**

**Ref: 15/0010**

**Sticklepath Playing Field**

**SX 6425 9425**

Notification to crown lift a line of lime trees by 1.5m. The works will have minimal impact on the health or appearance of the trees

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

**Ref: 15/0008**

**1 Tolmen, Throwleigh**

**SX 6682 9082**

Notification to reduce two sycamore and two ash trees by 1.5m. The works will have minimal impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

A Tree Preservation Order has not been made.

**BRIAN BEASLEY**