

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

DATE: 20th February 2014

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WARD(S): Wexham

PART I **FOR DECISION**

PLANNING BRIEF FOR WEXHAM NURSERY SITE

1. **Purpose of Report**

To approve a planning brief to guide the design of the development of the site as part of an architectural competition.

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Committee is requested to resolve to approve the planning brief (Appendix A).

3 **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Priorities:

- Health – provision of recreation space assists people's health.
- Economy and Skills
- Regeneration and Environment – development of site makes use of a part vacant site; brief helps ensure good design which contributes to improving the image of the town and to providing a pleasant residential environment.
- Housing – provides for housing to meet needs of town especially affordable housing.
- Safer Communities – consideration of crime prevention as part of design.

4. **Other Implications**

(a) **Financial**

There are no financial implications of proposed action

(b) **Risk Management**

Recommendation	Risk/Threat/Opportunity	Mitigation(s)
Approve the brief	A brief should highlight the Council's key planning requirements re design. A brief highlights what the Council is seeking and can shorten the design process.	Ensure key design matters referred to.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

None

5. **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 This site comprises the former nursery, two associated cottages and adjacent open land including parcels of land off Forest Close.
- 5.2 The development of the site will be the subject of a design competition organised by the Slough Regeneration Partnership, the Council's Local Asset Backed Vehicle for developing some Council owned sites. This brief is to provide guidance to the architect of the proposed residential development. The aim of the competition is to help achieve a good and distinctive design.
- 5.3 The brief will sit alongside a brief from the Partnership and Lovell Homes, the Council's chosen developer, to guide the dwelling mix, costs and developer related information. The Council as possible purchaser of some of the homes also has some specific layout requests. These are outlined in the planning brief but are not planning requirements.
- 5.4 The brief also outlines how the site has come forward for development in terms of planning policy and identifies the key Core Strategy objectives relevant to the development of the site.
- 5.5 A key objective is to provide housing for the needs of the whole community in terms of dwelling mix and affordable housing. Also the Strategy seeks provision of family housing to balance the substantial number of flats permitted in the town before 2008. Development of the site provides an opportunity to provide suburban family housing and affordable family housing that is more difficult to achieve on more central or more valuable sites.
- 5.6 Consequently the brief includes the Council's adopted policy of 40 % affordable housing on the site. There have been suggestions from the Partnership that some of the affordable housing could be located off the site. No justification has been put forward so far that would allow an exception to Core Strategy policy to be made. Making an exception could set a precedent for other developers.
- 5.7 It is important to maximise affordable housing sites coming forward and not use other sites that could come forward for affordable housing.
- 5.8 Other Sections of the Council have been consulted and key comments incorporated : Housing, Parks Section, Highways, Transportation, Tree Officer. The Slough Regeneration Partnership officers have also been consulted.

6. **Comments of Other Committees**

None.

7. **Conclusion**

The Council owned site will be developed by the Council's partner. A design completion will help ensure the Council gets a good design. A brief will guide the competing architects as to what the Council is seeking and ensures the design will comply with the Core Strategy and associated strategic and design policies. The Core Strategy provides for some unallocated sites to come forward for development.

8. **Appendices Attached**

'A' Planning Brief
'B' Planning Brief Plan

9. **Background Papers**

Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2006 - 2016
Local Plan Proposals Map 2010
Developers Guide