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NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
REPORT

To: COATBRIDGE LOCAL AREA PARTNERSHIP
From: HEAD OF REGENERATION SERVICES
Date: 19TH JANUARY 2011

Subject: Coatdyke Masterplan Update & Next Steps

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the committee on the Coatdyke Masterplan commission and what next steps are anticipated to finalise this activity.

2. Background

2.1 A consortium team, led by WSP, was commissioned by Fusion Assets to deliver a masterplan for the Coatdyke area. A cross-service NLC Project Team has been involved in the masterplan development, through the Masterplan Steering Group.

2.2 Initially the commission was split into two phases, however only the first phase was commissioned. This first phase was completed in June 2009, at which point a number of technical and commercial barriers were identified by the Project Team, questioning the value of taking forward Phase 2. At that point it was agreed by the Project Team that the draft should be progressed to a state that allows the masterplan to be embedded as a reference document within the planning structure. This update seeks to summarise activities and next steps to prepare a masterplan that will enable the long-term development of Coatdyke.

3. Phasing

3.1 The masterplan commission began in November 2008 and was intended to be delivered in two phases, moving from Outline Masterplan to Detailed Masterplan. During Phase 1 significant desktop technical appraisals were undertaken, to inform the visioning and options appraisals that resulted in the outline masterplan. A total of £162,875 was committed to this stage, including internal NLC costs and project management fees.

3.2 To proceed to Phase 2, an increased cost was negotiated June-Sept 2009 of around £170k; an overall increase of £55k from the original quote, primarily due to greater technical investigations. This would have included consultation and site investigations.

4. Barriers/Constraints to Progress

4.1 A number of issues have resulted in this activity not progressing to Phase 2:

- The commercial viability of the draft masterplan. The economic downturn makes the masterplan difficult to implement as developers are more risk-adverse. Further, viability requires engagement with multiple landowners; engagement was very limited during Phase 1 with indications that this would remain difficult.

- The technical unknowns, including ground conditions in a formerly mined area, which are a barrier for risk-adverse developers.
Increased costs of £55k, with limited guarantees that the increase would facilitate greater clarity on the technical barriers to development.

4.2 These barriers suggested that progressing to a full Phase 2 stage would neither be economical nor appropriate at this time. It was therefore agreed by the Regeneration Services Committee on 18th August 2010 that the budget for this phase be re-allocated.

4.3 Despite this, NLC has been seeking to identify opportunities for development within Coatdyke.

5 Strategic Land Holdings

5.1 One area of investigation has been developing links with key landowners and known developers. While landownership is large and complex, there are a handful of significant landholders: Scottish Water; Network Paths; Hadham Investments (Tesco) and NLC. Instead of using consultants, it was decided that NLC officers would consult with key landowners and developers directly.

5.2 NLC has met with Persimmon, Scottish Water and Tesco to identify potential areas of collaboration. Persimmon clarified that they do not own land at Coatdyke and only had an option on a site, with no intention to develop. Scottish Water require to undertake further infrastructure work on their site and once the extent of works is understood they will be seeking to dispose of any surplus land. Tesco confirmed their site was surplus to requirement and they would be seeking disposal of the majority of the site. While these consultations have been informative, opportunities for collaboration remains restricted, due to the economic situation. NLC will however seek to maintain contact with landowners should new opportunities arise.

6.0 Next Steps

6.1 In order to achieve the most viable outcome from the masterplan activities to date, the NLC Project Team has agreed to simplify the draft masterplan map through use of broader zoning. It is intended that this approach will facilitate commercial involvement when the economic situation recovers. Consultation will be undertaken on this simplified masterplan, following conclusion of the Draft Local Plan process, which proposes a masterplan for Coatdyke. The finalized masterplan will be taken to both the Planning & Transportation and Regeneration committees for approval and through this process will embedded as a reference document within the planning structure.

6.2 It is anticipated that this work will be completed during 2011.

7.0 Corporate Considerations

7.1 There are no corporate considerations as work to finalise this activity will be undertaken internally by NLC Project Team, with Planning Services providing the technical role.

8.0 Recommendations

8.1 The committee are asked to note the contents of this report.

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Local Government Access to Information Act: for further information please contact Lynne Ward, telephone 01698 302843