

**CABINET - 13 DECEMBER 2016****SNIBSTON SITE AND COUNTRY PARK****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES****PART A****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Cabinet of the proposed future strategy for the development and ongoing use of the Snibston site and adjoining Country Park and to seek the Cabinet's approval for the masterplan for the site including the sale of part of the land for residential development.

**Recommendations**

2. It is recommended that:
  - (a) That the proposals for the future use and development of the Snibston site as outlined in the report and appended masterplan be approved;
  - (b) That the Director of Corporate Resources be authorised to dispose of that part of the land identified as Zone 3 for residential development.

**Reasons for Recommendations**

3. To enable the masterplan to be agreed and the delivery of the proposals to be progressed.

**Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)**

4. Subject to the Cabinet's approval, the necessary work for the sale of the land for delivery and the implementation of the masterplan will progress immediately.

**Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

5. In February 2014, the County Council agreed the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for 2014/15 to 2017/18, which included savings proposals in relation to Snibston. Following the Cabinet decision of January 2015 inter alia to cease services on part of the site and the dismissal of a subsequent Judicial Review, the Snibston Gallery and Museum was closed on the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015. The site clearance was progressed immediately and completed in May 2016.

6. The County Council's strategic approach is to ensure that it makes best use of land and property assets that it continues to hold and to seek to reduce revenue property operating costs where possible and increase revenue income.
7. In July 2016 the Cabinet approved the County Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan 2016/17 which promotes the rationalisation of the Council's property assets, reducing property running costs, generating new property income streams, ensuring cost effective procurement of property and property services, and creating capital receipts to support capital programme or other beneficial investment proposals.

### **Resource Implications**

8. The forecast total capital investment required to develop the site as detailed in the masterplan is £1.4million. The capital receipt assumed from the disposal of that part of the site proposed for residential development is expected to generate in the region of £1million. The additional funding required to implement the masterplan has been included in the capital programme within the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy and will be funded from discretionary capital resources.
9. The cost of operating the public offering of the Country Park and Heritage Area is expected to be in the region of £146,000 per annum. This is more than offset by the forecast income of £160,000 from the car park and visitor centre/café. The business case does not include revenue income or expenditure for the office accommodation, the Century Theatre, the Scheduled Ancient Monument or the Collections Store on the site as these budgets are managed and held centrally by the relevant services.

### **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

10. A copy of this report has been sent to Dr. T. Eynon CC as the local member.

### **Officers to Contact**

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## **PART B**

### **Background**

11. The freehold of the Snibston site is held by the County Council. Part of the site is leased to a Golf Range operator. There are a number of other minor interests in the site in respect of easements and licences.
12. Following closure of the Gallery and Museum in 2015 the Gallery (Block A) has been decommissioned and demolished whilst the Events Arena and Coach Park have been secured. The Century Theatre and the Country Park remain open/active.

### **Snibston Site**

13. The full extent of the site is indicated by red edging on the attached plan (Appendix A), which also illustrates the extents of the covenant, the Scheduled Ancient Monument, and golf range. In developing the site strategy, the site has been zoned into the following three main areas.
  - Zone 1: Heritage Colliery Site
  - Zone 2: Country Park and Golf Range
  - Zone 3: Potential Development Sites – Former events arena, coach park and site of the former Gallery building.

### **Proposed Masterplan**

14. The following proposals have been developed for the site (illustrated on the masterplan at Appendix B):

Area	Proposals
Zone 1 Colliery Heritage Area and Wheelwright's Workshop	Heritage Self-trail and interpretation displays <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enabling members of the public access to visit and view the Scheduled Ancient Monument.</li> </ul>
Zone 2 Country Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitor Centre and Café</li> <li>• Mountain bike trails</li> <li>• BMX/ Pump Track</li> <li>• Multi-purpose all abilities trail</li> <li>• Adventure Play area</li> <li>• Exercise Area with outdoor fitness equipment</li> <li>• Picnic Area</li> <li>• Recreational play area</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Golf Range</li> </ul>
Zone 3 Residential Development	<p>133 dwellings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10, 1 bed apartments</li> <li>• 46, 2 bed houses</li> <li>• 61, 3 bed houses</li> <li>• 16, 4 bed houses</li> </ul>
Car Park	<p>150 parking spaces with 10% for disabled visitors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking to serve visitors to the Country Park, Century Theatre and Heritage Area.</li> </ul>
Access Improvements	<p>Re-establish the entrances to the Country Park, Century Theatre and Heritage Area from Ashby Road.</p> <p>Re-open the original gates from Ashby Road to provide foot and cycle access and potentially a new one-way access road into the Country Park and Theatre.</p> <p>Improve footpath connections to existing residential areas.</p> <p>Enhanced foot and cycle access from the south of the site and new residential development.</p> <p>Improved walking and cycling access and connections throughout the site.</p>

### **Planning/Highway Constraints**

15. The site does not have the benefit of a potential allocation within the draft North West Leicestershire Local Plan with only part of the site lying within the current limits of development. However, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) guidance 'encourages the effective use of land by re-using previously developed 'Brownfield Land' such as Snibston. The proposed development would require a planning application to be approved by North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC).
16. The site is intrinsically linked to the regeneration proposals that NWLDC is developing in Coalville. It offers an opportunity to provide an important heritage, recreation and culture destination for Coalville and surrounding settlements.

17. Following consultation with the Highway Authority, initial indications show that there is sufficient capacity within the highway network to service the development site for residential purposes via Chiswell Drive (as shown on Appendix B). The overall proposals are subject to further consideration by the Highway Authority.
18. The Colliery Heritage Area provides good opportunities for the Heritage proposals with its immediate physical presence on Ashby Road and the clear links to the town centre and its surrounding residential areas. It offers a potential gateway to the Heritage Area to draw the public into an improved useable public space for learning and recreation. The proposals aim to give an opportunity for the public to view the site with clear interpretations providing the history and significance of the buildings and infrastructure. The Scheduled Ancient Monument and its setting form an integral part of the masterplan proposal. A meeting has been arranged with Historic England to ensure the proposal is acceptable in keeping with its designation.
19. The National Coal Board (NCB) has a restrictive covenant over the majority of the site which limits its use to 'recreational purposes' only. The County Council is involved in ongoing negotiations with the Board concerning the release of the covenant on the proposed development areas of the site and negotiations have so far been positive with the NCB looking to take a commercial view on the proposals.
20. The existing colliery spoil that forms the events arena to the northwest boundary of the site may constrain the development. Following the completion of a ground investigation it has been recommended that remediation works would be required.

## **Conclusion**

21. The masterplan proposal aims to integrate new housing development into the recreation opportunities provided by the Country Park and the heritage offer. From a strategic point of view the proposal to enhance the Country Park will also benefit committed housing developments adjacent to the site and the wider locality.

## **Background Papers**

Report to the County Council on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2014 - "Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014/15 - 2017/18"

<http://ow.ly/Tu0r306lzd2>

Report to the Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2015

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s99975/5%20Snibston.pdf>

Report to the Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2016 – Corporate Asset Management Plan

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=4604&Ver=4>

**Equality and Human Rights Implications**

22. There are no equality or human rights implications directly arising from this report. Subject to the Cabinet's approval of the masterplan an Impact Assessment will be progressed for the agreed proposal.

**Appendices**

Appendix A	Snibston Future Proposal Zone Key
Appendix B	Masterplan