

## Cabinet – 8 February 2012

### Goscote Development Package

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Councillor Adrian Andrew, Deputy Leader, Regeneration
<b>Service:</b>	Regeneration, Development and Delivery
<b>Wards:</b>	Blakenall
<b>Key decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Forward plan:</b>	Yes

#### 1. Summary

This report outlines the development appraisal work completed to assess the deliverability of the two potential development options for the Goscote Development Package - residential and retail/residential mixed-use options - and concludes that the residential development option presents the most deliverable regeneration package. Based on a wholly residential scheme, this report subsequently outlines the appraisal and sensitivity testing work completed on a site-by-site basis and for the aggregate Goscote Development Package. It provides conclusions on packaging the sites to make the scheme commercially attractive and viable and work streams to progress the project in order to procure a preferred developer partner(s).

#### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet endorse the action being undertaken to progress the residential development package for the Goscote regeneration area, and supports in principle the inclusion of land in the Council's ownership (sites C and J as set out in Section 8.2 and **Appendix A**) into the package of sites in order to secure the financial viability of the overall Goscote project.
- 2.2 That Cabinet approve in principle taking ownership of land at site B (former Goscote Estate in the current ownership of whg) to provide replacement public open space in exchange for land at site J following the procurement of a future developer partner(s), with the intention of managing the land as public open space.
- 2.3 That Cabinet endorses the principle of a flexible approach being taken towards the requirements for affordable housing and other s106 costs (subject to financial viability evidence or similar and a future planning committee decision), and towards the proposals for how any values from the development package may be re-invested in prioritised community infrastructure projects (to be agreed) in the Goscote regeneration area.

- 2.4 That Cabinet agrees to receive a future report that sets out details of the draft development agreement, which will include items such as details of contractual arrangements, the phasing plan for delivery of the new homes and community infrastructure, and the apportionment of any residual value and overage towards investment in community infrastructure.

### **3. Report detail**

#### **3.1 Development Options Appraisal**

In April 2011 Cabinet endorsed undertaking an OJEU Restricted Procedure tendering route to procure a preferred developer partner(s) for the Goscote Development Package, based on the development option that provides the best financial and deliverable regeneration package, as identified through an Expressions of Interest (EOI) process and additional development appraisal and sensitivity testing work. The two potential development options for the Goscote sites package were: Residential development and Retail/Residential mixed-use development.

- 3.2 Consultants, GVA Grimley (now 'GVA'), were jointly appointed by the Council and Walsall Housing Group (whg) to undertake an independent appraisal of the deliverability of both development options. The appraisal considered:

- current market intelligence and conditions;
- policy requirements and other development 'ideals' sought by the Council and whg for residential development (e.g. 25% affordable housing, S106 contributions, dwelling mix, etc);
- assumptions/adjustments resulting from the two EOI responses received (one in favour of each development option);
- high level financial appraisals and sensitivity analysis based on varying the land-use of Site J (i.e. residential or retail uses); and
- potential risks to delivery (including planning policy for housing, for retailing and other uses, for Green Belt and for the environment).

- 3.3 The initial appraisal work concluded the wholly residential package as the most deliverable option, largely due to the significant planning risks associated with the mixed-use option. Both of the options include specific land-use proposals that are contrary to current planning policy. For example, both options propose a land-use exchange between a cleared former residential site (Site B) and a site that is currently designated as Green Belt land (Site J) – the principle of this exchange to deliver a residential scheme is set out in the Goscote Design Guide (August 2010). Additionally, in Option B, the development of a retail element would also be in an out-of-centre location and potentially of a greater scale than could be justified to meet local needs, and would be likely to have impacts in environmental and transport as well as economic terms. However, the initial appraisal identified that the residential option would require the partners to reconsider the policy requirements and manage the development 'ideals' (for S106 contributions etc) to provide a viable commercial/market-facing scheme.

### 3.4 Residential Development Package Appraisal

Based on the residential option, GVA undertook a series of development appraisals for the nine development sites to be potentially included in the Goscote Development Package (the locations and ownerships of the sites are shown in **Appendix A**). The purpose of this work was to assess the attractiveness and financial viability of the sites and to subsequently enable a judgement to be made on the deliverability of the total development package from a commercial market perspective. The approach reflected how a developer would assess the development potential, and also considered the overall residual value produced to consider the viability from the landowner's perspective.

3.5 The development appraisals of the individual sites took into account various high-level assumptions, as advised by GVA to create an attractive commercial market scheme. A baseline scenario was used to undertake the sensitivity analysis that assumed:

- 25% affordable housing requirement or less (i.e. 15%, 10% and 0%)
- Full S106 contributions (approx £7,300 per dwelling) or less (i.e. 50% reduction in contributions)
- Full site abnormal/remediation costs (but not all infrastructure costs) or less (i.e. 20% reduction in estimated abnormal/remediation costs)
- Developer profit at 20% of sales revenues (including the cost of developing any affordable units) based on GVA's market intelligence.

3.6 The individual site appraisals concluded that the overall development package is viable through the cross subsidy of land values (or through separate funding subsidy), as the majority of the sites can be made viable and produce a positive land value by varying reductions in the percentage of affordable housing and levels of S106 contributions. Sites B and D can not be made viable across any sensitivity scenarios due to the high cost of site abnormalities.

3.7 Further high-level appraisal work on the revised combined development package (see Section 8.2) concluded that the package can produce a positive residual value in the absence of any public grant funding. However this is on the basis that there is flexibility in reducing the level of affordable housing and S106 contributions and in reducing the development costs, particularly abnormal/remediation costs.

### 3.8 Overall Development Package and Workstream Stages

From the detailed development appraisal work and 'soft' market testing, the stages to assemble an attractive and commercially viable and deliverable residential package and procure a developer partner(s) that are being pursued are as follows:

- Undertaking additional work to understand and reduce the estimated development costs, particularly remediation/abnormal costs of sites, to ensure viability.
- Undertake work to understand the estimated costs off-site highways infrastructure (based on the requirements identified within the Transport Assessment, such as improvements to Harden Road/Goscote Lane junction) to ensure viability.

- Completion of a process of soft marketing with potential house builders based on the new 'market-facing' development package.
- Continue with the proposed land-use exchange involving sites B (former Goscote Estate) and J (currently Green Belt) as values from Site J are needed to cross subsidise the development package. The unviable nature of Site B (high site abnormal costs due to the housing clearance and shallow mining works in comparison to Site J) has resulted in the majority of the site (approx 8.6ha) being proposed to be returned to Green Belt. Subsequently the remainder (approx 2.3ha) of the site will be redevelopment to address security and design issues in relation to existing properties. The principle of the land exchange has been pursued through an outline planning application that takes the form of a masterplanning approach for all the sites in the development package. The outline planning application was submitted to the Local Planning Authority at the end of January 2012 and is intended to be determined in March 2012 (subject to subsequent referral to National Planning Case Unit/Secretary of State and possible public inquiry – see Section 7.3).
- As part of the outline planning application the Council and whg have submitted financial appraisals to demonstrate the necessity for reductions in S106 contributions and affordable housing levels as determined through the development appraisals and sensitivity analysis, and have sought consent on an agreed position for s106 contributions and affordable housing levels. Naturally any decision as to whether or not to seek planning contributions via the mechanism of s106 agreements will be a matter for planning committee after considering all the relevant information before them.
- From agreeing the approach to the collection of s106 contributions and prioritisation of community infrastructure projects obtained through the planning process, the Council and whg would be able to ascertain the justification for and the extent of any dividend from the residual value or overage that may be produced through the development package. They could then make arrangements through a development agreement for the use of the available resources. It is anticipated that a draft development agreement could be prepared during spring 2012 and finalised upon the determination of the outline planning application – with Cabinet receiving a full report setting out the details.
- Prepare and commence the procurement of a preferred developer partner(s) through an OJEU Restricted Procedure as previously endorsed by Cabinet (April 2011). It is anticipated that the procurement process could commence following the finalisation of the draft development agreement and completed by spring 2013.

#### **4. Council priorities**

The project aims to achieve increased numbers and types of new homes, including a percentage of affordable housing, alongside high quality environmental, infrastructure and community facility improvements. This will contribute positively towards the Council's 'Communities and Neighbourhoods' and 'Health and Wellbeing' priorities. Ensuring that the development programme generates work and training opportunities for the businesses and residents of the borough through the Think Walsall approach is also a key objective/output, as well as the overall residential development attracting the workforce required to develop the boroughs Economy. The project therefore has benefits towards the Council priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan 2011/12 – 2014/15.

#### **5. Risk management**

##### **5.1 Risk 1 - Lack of developer interest in the Goscote residential development package during the procurement process**

(Risk Level Medium)

In the current economic climate the potential interest from a single developer to partake in a large-scale redevelopment project may be reduced. However, initial market intelligence and commercial advice, both through in-house and the external consultants work, along with direct enquiries made to house builders and developers suggests that they are more attracted to sites that are packaged within one locality which offer an opportunity to create a sense of place/transformational change similar to that which may be achieved with the Goscote package.

A 'soft' market testing exercise has been undertaken with house builders to test the development appraisals and sensitivity analysis work completed by GVA. This confirmed that there is a level of interest in the package but identified the key known risks associated with phasing, rate of sales, average residential market values and area reputation/perception. Due to the risks of the development opportunity, house builders confirm that a developer profit of between 20-25% would be required, which is in line with the development appraisal work.

Obtaining outline planning consent for all the sites through a masterplanning approach will also reduce the development risk and risk profile of the scheme; thus increasing interest from potential developers. Soft market testing will be also be continued throughout the project to confirm the commercial market view of the development package in terms of dwelling mix and type, layout, delivery and phasing.

##### **5.2 Risk 2 – Reduction in the level of community infrastructure benefits delivered through the package**

(Risk Level Low)

In the current housing market the amount of residual value remaining within any development is reduced and it has been demonstrated that the impact of s106 costs and affordable housing levels all have an impact on the level of dividend

available to be re-invested in community infrastructure benefits. Previously Cabinet agreed (firstly in April 2008) to reinvest any land values into community benefits, and the latest appraisal work confirms that this principle will still need to underpin the programme as a means of ensuring greater financial viability and investment in regenerative benefits for the local community.

It is therefore advised that in view of the fragile nature of the development package that any residual value or s106 contributions should be viewed as the same 'pot' capable of being reinvested in the Goscote area. Therefore if the Local Planning Authority can take a 'flexible' approach to the collection of s106 contributions and affordable housing levels then a greater residual value might be achieved and this value would still be capable of being reinvested into local community infrastructure, such as education or open space improvements, depending on local need and an agreed priority for how dividends are spent.

Through the pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority the principle of the same 'pot' was understood and flexibility towards s106 and affordable housing levels was supported. This will be subject to the assessment of the financial viability evidence submitted with the outline planning application and the future planning committee decision, which will need to be able to weigh the importance of community benefits against established s106 and affordability. The outline planning application therefore demonstrates how any dividend will be spent on community benefits that are necessary for the development, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development (in accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 s122).

**5.3 Risk 3 – Planning risk associated with achieving the best land-use configuration**  
(Risk Level Low)

To achieve the best land-use configuration and deliver sustainable regeneration, the residential development package contains specific land-use proposals that are contrary to current statutory planning policy (i.e. residential development on an existing designated Green Belt land (Site J)). This poses a risk of securing planning consent. The impact of this is two-fold: It adds to the overall risk profile of the development which will impact on the level of interest from potential developers in the development package, and if consent is not secured the initial development appraisal and sensitivity testing identifies an alternative configuration is not likely to be financially viable nor will it deliver the level of sustainable regeneration and transformational change that the area requires.

To further de-risk and incentivise the residential development option and ensure its deliverability and the creation of sufficient value, an outline planning application has been prepared and submitted prior to procuring a developer partner(s). Gaining outline planning consent would allow the inclusion of Green Belt land (site J) in the development package and remove the significant risk to a developer of building within the Green Belt whilst also securing the Green Belt land exchange with site B (former Goscote Estate). The consent would also allow the partners to agree any s106 costs against the project with the Local Planning Authority.

**5.4 Risk 4 – Landowners fail to benefit from increased values that may be generated by improved market conditions during the lifetime of the development programme**  
(Risk Level Low)

It is extremely difficult to predict future variations in market conditions, particularly given the volatility that still remains in the residential market, the characteristics of the area, and the need for market and affordable housing. It is therefore not likely that the sites will yield greatly increased values over the development period (e.g. 8-10 years). However, clauses within the legal development agreement will be utilised to enable landowners to be able to benefit from any future increases in values. The priorities for reinvesting any overage back into the development will be pre-determined and agreed by the Council and whg and enshrined in the legal development agreement.

**5.5 Risk 5 – Managing the priorities and expectations of partners**  
(Risk Level Low)

The development appraisal and sensitivity testing work identified that the Council and whg need a flexible approach in relation to fixing the key development ideals and community infrastructure priorities in order to ensure viability and deliverability of the package. As both partners agree that a 'do-nothing' approach to the regeneration and redevelopment of the area is not an option for either partner or the local community, the need to manage priorities and expectations, which at times may be competing, is vital to delivery. The existing working relationships and Collaboration Agreement between the partners will be important in managing, negotiating and agreeing priorities and expectations.

**6. Financial implications**

**6.1 Land Values**

A key principle of the Goscote Development Package is the requirement for capital receipts from land sales in the ownership of the Council and whg to be reinvested into the package through the legal Development Agreement. These capital receipts will in turn require the developer(s) to deliver community infrastructure benefits- as first approved by Cabinet in April 2008. This principle will still need to underpin the programme as a means of ensuring greater financial viability. Whilst the financial viability in development appraisal work provides information on potential positive residual land values these were based on a number of assumptions and scenarios at a moment in time. Attempting to value the Council's land holdings at this time based on the appraisals would be inappropriate. As the scheme progresses and assumptions are fixed understanding of land values will become clearer. However, the true land values will not be known until the completion of the OJEU procurement and contract signing. Any issues of disposing of the sites and the possibility of doing so at less than best consideration will be reported to Cabinet accordingly.

## 6.2 Section 106 Contributions, Dividends and Overage

As detailed in Section 5.2, given the fragile nature of the financial viability of the development package, officers (including the Local Planning Authority) have formed an in principle view that the S106 contributions, dividends from residual value and overage from the development package will be viewed as the same funding 'pot' for community infrastructure benefit. This includes recognition of the need for flexibility towards the level of S106 contributions and affordable housing levels. However a decision by the LPA would rest with the Planning Committee Members subject to an assessment of financial viability assessment.

This principle has also been discussed with the service areas that will be affected by flexibility in the level of, and mechanism for collecting, S106 contributions: this includes Housing Strategy and Greenspaces. Whilst these service areas identify that their preferred contribution levels and mechanism for collecting S106 would be per the current SPD requirements, they understand the financial viability of the package and the need for a flexible approach, which has been evidenced in the outline planning application through financial viability evidence. Additionally, whilst the request is being sought from the Secretary of State to revoke the current Education SPD (as per the report to Cabinet on 9 November 2011), it has been discussed with Education that planning obligations will still be sought from the project based on their ability to demonstrate that existing services are under pressure and that to provide a satisfactory service to the residents of the new housing development, a new facility or upgrading existing facility(s) is required.

Through pre-application discussions, Greenspaces and Education highlighted that a level of infrastructure would need to be provided in any event to sustain the new community and they understood that such improvements would need to be in accordance with CIL Regulations 2010 s122. For example, Greenspaces emphasised the need to provide play and youth provision, structured tree planting, footpaths and a canal footbridge, as a minimum level of provision and would be looking for a funding contribution comparable as far as possible through the S106 mechanism. Similarly, Education stressed the requirement for at least an increase by 1 form of entry within the primary school provision in the local area. It is acknowledged that without specific proposals for exact numbers and types of dwellings to be provided Education cannot, at this stage, confirm the exact details of additional places required as a result of the development package. However, an initial view is that the proposed development is likely to yield just under 23 additional pupils in each year group in the primary sector.

Such community infrastructure improvements and development details have been reviewed alongside the preparation of the outline planning application and in line with the forthcoming Greenspace Strategy, as well as Education's development programme for the local area that was considered in conjunction with the layout housing proposals of the application. Both the Council and whg are committed to reinvesting all residual value from the development package into the community infrastructure of the Goscote regeneration area, and are agreed that, in order of priority and level of funding, values will be reinvested into education, green spaces and affordable housing infrastructure. The agreed community infrastructure priorities/spend to be delivered through the 'pot' are articulated in the outline planning application and subsequently will be subject of a legal development agreement.



### 6.3 Project Costs

As a partnership project, the financial costs including consultancy (GVA, architects, specialist engineering consultants), legal and planning application fees associated with the project will be met jointly by the Council and whg.

## 7. **Legal implications**

### 7.1 Legal Team

Following a competitive tender process, the legal firm Squires, Sanders, Hammonds (SSH) has recently been appointed jointly by whg and the Council to advise on the project and undertake the developer partner(s) procurement through an OJEU Restricted Procedure. As part of their role, SSH will prepare a draft Development Agreement to be issued with the procurement documents so that prospective developers will have an understanding of the project requirements from the outset. The Development Agreement will include the contractual arrangements between whg, the Council and the developer(s) and mechanisms/priorities for how any residual value is reinvested.

### 7.2 Development Clawback

Development Clawback applies to the difference between the value of the land sold by whg for open market value and the value of the same land for social housing purposes. Following the Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) Agreement clawback is divided three ways; a third accruing to the Council, a third to whg and a third allocated to the Visionary Investment Enhancing Walsall fund (VIEW) for regeneration projects. Subsequently, subject to whg contributing its third, the Council will also reinvest any money generated by the clawback provisions into VIEW for regeneration projects.

In September 2009, Cabinet agreed to waive development clawback to reflect both the Council's and whg's intention to reinvest their respective one third shares generated from the disposal of land assets in the SRF1 areas (Goscote, Brownhills and Moxley) back into the comprehensive housing regeneration and delivery of community infrastructure benefits in these areas. The latest development appraisal and sensitivity testing work identifies that a residential package is viable, provided that the Council and whg can take a flexible approach towards the level of affordable housing and other requirements. This will have potential implications on the proportion of clawback. For example, a higher mix of open market housing would increase the proportion of clawback being reinvested into the Goscote Development Package. It is therefore proposed that any clawback funds are reinvested back into supporting the viability and delivery of the Goscote Development Package housing developments in the first instance. Subsequently, any dividends or overage generated from the package (assisted by the reinvestment of clawback into the housing developments) will subsequently deliver agreed community infrastructure priorities which will be articulated through a development agreement.

### 7.3 Planning

The outline planning application will have to be considered in terms of planning policy from the local, regional and national levels: the Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) and the saved policies of Walsall's UDP, the West Midlands

Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS) of January 2008 and relevant Government statements (including Planning Policy Guidance 2 on Green Belts and Planning Policy Statement 3 on Housing).

Site J is designated in Walsall's UDP as Green Belt where there is a presumption against development, except where "*very special circumstances*" are demonstrated. This reflects current national policy (in PPG2) which says that development (considered to be inappropriate) will only be justified where harm to the Green Belt is outweighed by other considerations. The BCCS also proposes "*a strong Green Belt to promote urban renaissance...*" (Policy CSP2), which reflects the approach in the WMRSS. The proposal to develop residential development on the currently designated Green Belt land, even with the exchange of this land for land previously developed for housing (Site B), is contrary to the BCCS and saved UDP policies and to regional and national policy. A justification based on 'very special circumstances' has been articulated in the outline planning application in relation to the Development Plan and also considers and outweighs the potential harm to the Green Belt.

The outline planning application, setting out the Green Belt development and land-use exchange, will be subject to a Planning Committee decision proposed to be in March 2012, which - if the application were to be supported - would be subject to referral to the National Planning Case Unit and potentially the Secretary of State for final approval. During the later stages it would become known whether a public inquiry may be required. The arguments for 'very special circumstances' will be key in the determination and will need to be fully evidenced.

The proposed land-use configuration and exchange to deliver the residential package is however not a new concept to local stakeholders and community as it formed the key principle of the Goscote Design Guide (August 2010), which underwent consultation during February 2010. This was also revisited during the consultation process in January 2012 for the preparation of the outline planning application. The inclusion of Site J in the package will help to achieve transformational change of the area through the design and layout concepts set out in the Goscote Design Guide. This includes strengthening west/east connectivity, integrating a new community into the existing and drawing the canal into the community. The Guide does not have statutory status, but it can provide evidence and justification for such development in the Green Belt, which also includes a land exchange (so that it is envisaged the majority of Site B would become open space) leading to an overall net gain in open space. This contributes to the demonstration of 'very special circumstances' for securing planning consent in comparison to developing the site in isolation. It is also envisaged that Site B would be designated as Green Belt through the Site Allocations Development Plan Document, which the Council has begun to prepare, following the agreement of Cabinet in June 2011, and which is intended for adoption at the end of 2013.

The proposed package will involve the development of what is currently open land and is likely to have local environmental impacts although the overall effect of the proposals should be beneficial. Housing construction is not specifically identified in the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2011 (SI 2011 No. 1824) as development requiring an environmental

impact assessment, but in the local circumstances the package could be construed as an 'Urban Development Project' falling within Schedule 2 of the regulations. A screening opinion was therefore sought from the local planning authority in advance of the submission of the outline planning application. In accordance with the Regulations, the Local Planning Authority was of the opinion that it was not necessary for an Environmental Assessment to be carried out for the proposed development (decision notice dated 12<sup>th</sup> January 2012). In any event, the planning application submission gives proper consideration to the implications of the development proposals.

## 8. Property implications

- 8.1 Through the development appraisal work the importance of Site J (the Council-owned land that is currently in the Green Belt) has become increasingly apparent. Although in isolation it would have minimal value, development/planning potential or regeneration benefits, it is vital in delivering the overall development package. Under all tested sensitivity scenarios Site J produces a positive residual land value and will therefore be important in cross-subsiding the development of the less viable sites within the package, such as sites B and D. The inclusion of Site J in the package will also help to achieve transformational change of the area through the design and layout concepts set out in the Goscote Design Guide (August 2010).
- 8.2 Following the individual site appraisal work, whg have confirmed that the development of Site G for 100% affordable housing will be delivered outside of the development package through secured HCA grant funding and their internal resources. Given the size (0.08ha) and minimal aggregate benefit of Site E to the overall package, whg will also deliver this site independently of the package. Additionally, given the size (0.2ha) and current use of Site F as a car park within Blakenall local centre, the Council will exclude this from the development package at this time. The revised sites package is shown in Table 1. The overall land ownership of the revised development package is therefore 25% in ownership of the Council and 75% in ownership of whg.

Table 1

Site	Size (ha)	Ownership
A	6.8	Whg
B	10.9	Whg
C	0.5	WMBC
D	3.2	Whg
H	1.2	Whg
J	7	WMBC
	<b>29.6 ha</b>	

- 8.3 As part of the land-use exchange, following the remediation of the new open space / Green Belt area at Site B, it is proposed that the land ownership of this area will be legally transferred to the Council. Whilst residual land values from the package will be re-invested into delivering a range of infrastructure improvements including footpaths and landscaping, the on-going management and maintenance costs will be met by Neighbourhood Services on adoption of the asset.

- 8.4 Additionally, the management and maintenance of the other open / green amenity spaces included within the residential development areas is being considered by Walsall Housing Group, through a stewardship agreement with the new resident occupiers. The partners have been exploring the stewardship approach and will be concluded as part of the discussions and preparation of the draft development agreement.
- 8.5 It is also the intention for the proposed new highways within the development sites to eventually be adopted by the Council. In essence, this would be based on an agreed phasing plan for the completion of sites, whereby the Council would provide 'sign-off' confirming that the new highways had been completed to the required adoptable standard.

## **9. Staffing implications**

The project will continue to be led, in conjunction with colleagues in Asset Management, Planning, Strategic Housing, Finance and Legal, and at whg and HCA, by the established Development Team within the Development and Delivery Service as part of Regeneration Directorate.

## **10. Equality implications**

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken for this report. The Council is seeking to achieve the highest possible level in the Equality Standard for Local Government. As part of this we are seeking to ensure that wherever possible our activities ensure a positive impact is made on people / communities using the 6 equality themes / strands. The companies who tender to become a PSP(s) will be expected as a minimum to support both the Council and whg's equality and diversity policies. They will be required to highlight how their company will ensure the regeneration benefits for people based upon:

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Age (i.e. young and old)
- Sexuality / sexual orientation
- Religion and or belief
- Disability

## **11. Consultation**

- 11.1 A Project Reference Group (PRG) operates for the Goscote Lane Corridor regeneration area. The role of the PRG is as an overall project steering group and has been important in continuing to represent local interests and key stakeholders. This continual engagement through the PRG will remain an important mechanism for demonstrating the commitment to regeneration of their neighbourhood despite the difficult market and funding position. The PRG were also key in continuing and directing community engagement throughout the

planning application process and will be important throughout the subsequent stages of the project.

- 11.2 A public event was held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2012 at the Blakenall Village Centre to exhibit the draft proposals and consult on the green space improvements, as part of the pre-application consultation. The event was publicised through a series of press releases and residents leaflet distributed to properties in proximity to the sites. A consultation report has been appended as part of the outline planning application.
- 11.3 Officers will continue to present and discuss the project at Strategic Property Briefing (Council) and at Walsall Housing Group's Boards throughout the planning and OJEU tendering processes.

### Background papers

- **Appendix A** Goscote Development Package Sites Plan
- Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) February 2011
- Walsall Unitary Development Plan (UDP) March 2005 (Saved Policies December 2007)
- West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy January 2008
- Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts
- Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing
- Walsall Council Supplementary Planning Documents
- Goscote Lane Regeneration Area: Masterplan Design Guide (August 2010)
- Strategic Regeneration Framework 1: Update Report – Cabinet report 09 February 2011
- Strategic Regeneration Framework 1: Further report on the packaging and marketing of the Goscote SRF1 sites – Cabinet report 13 April 2011
- Proposed Development Plans for Homes and Enterprise in Walsall - Review of Local Development Scheme – Cabinet Report 8 June 2011
- Plans to Support Key Infrastructure in Walsall Borough – Review of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) - Cabinet Report 9 November 2011

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