

13 April 2023

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Phoenix 10

Ward(s): Pleck

Portfolios: Regeneration

1. Aim

- 1.1 The aim of the Phoenix 10 project is to secure major investment in the borough that will enable substantial new employment floorspace and significant job creation. Jointly owned by the Council and Homes England, Phoenix 10 is located within the Black Country Enterprise Zone (BCEZ) and is the key strategic employment development site in the borough and the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (BCLEP) area. The project benefits will make a significant contribution to economic recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic while providing significant investment and employment opportunities for Walsall. Its prominent location directly adjacent to the M6 Motorway will also raise the borough's profile and act as a catalyst for the development of other sites. However, the legacy of former uses of the land mean that public sector support is needed to achieve these outcomes. As joint landowners the Council and Homes England have procured Henry Boot Developments as development partner to undertake the remediation and development of the site.
- 1.2 This report presents the Committee with a summary of the work undertaken to progress the project to its current position and information about the future programme towards completion.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Committee is recommended to:
- Consider the progress on this project to date.
 - Agree to receive a further report upon completion of the site remediation phase.

3. Report detail – know

- 3.1 At its meeting on 3 March 2022 Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee received a report setting out the background to this important project and the significant work that had been undertaken to progress to the stage where site remediation was due to commence.

- 3.2 The report noted that, as joint landowners, the Council and Homes England had appointed Henry Boot Developments (HBD) as development partner to lead the remediation and development of the site.
- 3.3 Shortly following that meeting the final contract conditions were satisfied and pre-commencement planning conditions were discharged such that the detailed programme of site remediation was able to begin in April 2022.
- 3.3 HBD have appointed John F Hunt Regeneration to undertake the site remediation and they have been carrying out the required works since that time supported by specialist sub-contractor Forkers Ltd.
- 3.4 Forkers Ltd’s role has been to locate, treat and cap the large number of mine entries and mine shafts that existed across the site. This work was substantially completed between April and December 2022.
- 3.5 John F Hunt Regeneration have been overseeing the work by Forkers Ltd while also undertaking a number of other activities including demolition of the Reservoir Place industrial unit, excavating and processing made ground, groundwater treatment and concrete breakout

Figure 1 – Aerial photo of work on site



- 3.6 To date good progress has been made with the site remediation works and these are currently expected to complete by mid 2024 in line with the programme. With completion of the works around one year away greater focus can now being given to the future development of the site.
- 3.7 On 7 March 2023 HBD launched a new name for Phoenix 10 to reflect the role of the scheme in supporting occupier growth, creating the perfect conditions for logistics and manufacturing operators to thrive. The site is now known as SPARK and to coincide with this announcement a new CGI was released to illustrate how the development could look in the coming years.

Figure 2 – CGI of SPARK



3.8 SPARK is now being marketed by HBD's joint agents Knight Frank and Cushman & Wakefield with a view to securing occupiers for the circa 620,000sqft of new employment floorspace that will be created. In addition it is expected that a reserved matters planning application will be submitted later in 2023 for development of the site following the previous outline approval. At this stage it is anticipated that construction works could start in the latter part of 2024.

3.9 In addition to the development of the site the project is also providing social value benefits. John F Hunt have employed local people and provided work placements while HBD staff have engaged in local volunteering and undertaken careers sessions with local education establishments.

4. *Financial information*

4.1 The overall value of the project is circa £100m. The remediation of the site is supported by significant grant funding package comprising Local Growth Fund, BCLEP's Land and Property Investment Fund, the BCEZ funding mechanism and a Homes England contribution.

5. *Reducing Inequalities*

5.1 The development of employment sites in the borough seeks to support economic growth for all people, communities and businesses. Enabling job creation, skills development and increasing incomes will contribute towards reducing inequalities.

6. Decide

- 6.1 The Committee is asked to consider the content of this report, provide comments on progress to date and confirm any specific information required for a subsequent project update.

7. Respond

- 7.1 The next key milestone for this important project will be completion of the site remediation works which is expected to occur in mid 2024.

8. Review

- 8.1 In order to progress the project to this stage the Council, Homes England and HBD have held regular project meetings and these will continue throughout the delivery phase to monitor progress and deal with any issues as they arise.
- 8.2 The Reserved Matters planning application for the development of the site will be subject to the statutory consultation process.

Background papers

Phoenix 10 Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee report – 3 March 2022

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