



Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Limited

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Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal - Cuerden

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Executive Summary

The Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal is one of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) key strategic economic initiatives. It was signed by Government, the LEP, Preston City Council, South Ribble Borough Council, Lancashire County Council and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) in 2013.

The City Deal Executive and Stewardship Board, chaired by LEP Board Director Jim Carter and Danielle Gillespie, North West Regional Director HCA, oversees the implementation of an annual City Deal Infrastructure Delivery and Business Plan. The three Councils and the HCA have made significant progress in delivering the agreed City Deal outputs with all housing, jobs, infrastructure targets and milestones achieved to date.

The Cuerden Strategic Site, located in South Ribble, is the largest single employment site in the City Deal footprint. Following the adoption, in 2015, of the Masterplan for the site by the Local Planning Authority, the majority land owner, Lancashire County Council, along with its Strategic Property Partner, Eric Wright Group, prepared and submitted a hybrid planning application in January 2017.

The Cuerden Strategic Site has been allocated for employment purposes for decades. The development of the site, in accordance with the development principles set out in the submitted planning application, will achieve significant growth and employment benefits for Lancashire in addition to contributing to the housing and employment targets set out in the City Deal.

A presentation on the development proposals set out in the planning application for the Cuerden Strategic Site will be made to the Board by Lancashire County Council and Maple Grove Developments Ltd, the development arm of the Eric Wright Group.



Recommendation

The LEP Board is asked to:

- (i) Note the contribution that the development of the Cuerden Strategic Site will make to City Deal growth and employment targets plus outputs; and
- (ii) Re-affirm its support, in writing, to the local planning authority for the development proposals for the Cuerden Strategic Site set out in the planning application for the site.

Background and Advice

Context

The Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal is one of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) key strategic economic initiatives. Following an extensive period of negotiation with the Cabinet Office, Department for Transport (DfT) and Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) was signed, in 2013, by the LEP, Preston City, South Ribble Borough, and Lancashire County Councils and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The core outputs of the City Deal include the creation of over 20,000 new jobs and 17,000 new homes in Central Lancashire.

The two decision making bodies for the City Deal - the City Deal Executive, chaired by LEP Board Director Jim Carter and the Stewardship Board, chaired by Danielle Gillespie, North West Regional Director HCA - now meet in combined format and oversee the implementation of an annual City Deal Infrastructure Delivery and Business Plan.

The City Deal Executive and Stewardship Board, working with the LEP's Skills Hub, has also established a City Deal Skills and Employment Steering Group, chaired by the principal of Preston College and comprising the Skills Hub, local colleges, skills providers, UCLan and the local councils. This group is now implementing a detailed programme of activity covering a number of strands including: the delivery of careers advice and guidance into schools; the establishment of the Construction Hub; the promotion of social value across City Deal infrastructure, housing and commercial development schemes and the broader promotion of investment opportunities.

The City Deal Executive and Stewardship Board have an agreed 6-monthly and annual reporting and monitoring arrangement in place with DCLG and the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) on a range of core and supporting outputs. The three Councils and the HCA have made significant progress in delivering these agreed City Deal outputs with all housing, employment and infrastructure targets and milestones achieved to date.



Cuerden Strategic Site

The Cuerden Strategic Site, located in South Ribble, is a 65-hectare site in a strategic location next to the motorway network. The site has been allocated for employment purposes for some decades and is the largest single employment site in the City Deal footprint. In 2012, Lancashire County Council acquired the majority of the site from the HCA, with the remainder of the site now in the single ownership of the Brookhouse Group, a North West based developer.

The primary reason for the site not having previously been brought forward for development has been the significant cost of the extensive infrastructure required to open up the site. In 2015, the local planning authority, South Ribble Borough Council, consulted on and subsequently adopted a Masterplan for the site that confirmed the planning policy for the site in accordance with the Site Allocation document. This policy for the site sets out that high value uses, such as residential, mixed use, and retail development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that they contribute to the opening up of the site for employment purposes.

In spring 2016 the County Council, as the majority land-owner, along with its pre-procured Strategic Property Partner, Eric Wright Group, commenced a detailed and intensive work programme to develop scheme proposals for the site. In November 2016, consultation on the development proposals took place and a planning application was subsequently submitted in January 2017.

The proposals set out in the planning application will achieve significant growth and employment benefits for Lancashire, including:

- 4,600 jobs on the site, nearly a quarter of the total City Deal job target;
- 2,900 person years of construction over the lifetime of the development (equivalent to 150 FTE temporary construction jobs per year for 18 years);
- £240m GVA per annum for the Central Lancashire economy; and
- New global retail entrants to Lancashire.

A Skills and Employment statement was also submitted as a formal part of the planning application.

A detailed presentation on the development proposals set out in the planning application for the Cuerden Strategic Site will be made to the LEP Board by Lancashire County Council and Maple Grove Developments Ltd, the development arm of the Eric Wright Group. The presentation will identify the contribution that the development of this site can make to the Lancashire economy and to achieving the aims and objectives of the City Deal.