

Sherford Main Street (interim scheme): approval to obtain tenders for construction

Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Cabinet (and confirmation under the provisions of the Council's Constitution) before taking effect.

Recommendations:

- (a) **the Sherford Main Street Interim scheme design, shown in the Appendix to this report be approved for tender at an estimated total project cost of £5 million, subject to:**
- **an agreement by the DfT that they will agree to the delivery of the scheme in two sections and it is eligible to full grant approval of £5m;**
 - **an agreement by the Sherford Consortium on the availability of land;**
 - **an agreement by the Sherford Consortium that they will deliver Section B of the scheme;**
- (b) **the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Development and Waste and the local County Council Member, be given delegated authority to make minor amendments to the scheme design.**

1. Summary

Approval is sought to obtain tenders to undertake construction of the Sherford Main St Interim (SMSi) which runs from the south side of Deep Lane junction connection to the recently delivered Phase 1 of Main St, north of Elburton Plymouth. This scheme will deliver an interim road that will form the spine route through the Sherford development and make Sherford accessible to the A38 by the public. The new road will accommodate development traffic, public transport, pedestrians and cyclists. The developer will need to upgrade the road as the development builds out over time. The SMSi will provide a direct access route into Sherford removing traffic from local roads and will accommodate at least ten years of development traffic. This report seeks approval to proceed with a formal competitive tender process.

2. Background

The area to the east of Plymouth is planned to experience significant growth as a result of strategic developments. The new community at Sherford to the south-west of the Deep Lane Junction will provide 5,500 new homes and 83,000 square metres of employment space in the form of a sustainable mixed-use settlement. Just over 5,000 of the new homes and the three primary schools and comprehensive school will be in Devon. The primary access to the community will be Sherford Main Street via the A38 Deep Lane junction from the north. Additionally, the Langage employment site is identified as strategic employment site which is anticipated to create more jobs for the area and has an existing permission for up to 40,000 sq. meters of employment space. A Park and Ride site south of Deep Lane Junction taking trips to Plymouth, will also be provided as part of the Sherford development proposal. The Sherford Masterplan, is shown in the Appendix to this report.

It is currently only possible to access Sherford from the south which requires a long trip into the City of Plymouth or using local rural lanes connecting to Deep Lane. New housing and employment development will put additional pressure on the local roads of Brixton and Elburton. This has two key problems:

- additional traffic using local roads requires drivers giving way, and reversing creating congestion and potential road safety issues and
- the lack of a principal access from the A38 into Sherford is a constraint making the development less attractive to house buyers and commercial investors which could create a risk that the development stalls.

Sherford is at the start of its construction, with impetus provided by funding support by the Homes England, previously known as Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). The development is ambitious in its vision to deliver high quality design of housing and a sustainable new community on the fringe of Plymouth. In order to do this the infrastructure required to deliver the components of a new town are considerable. The delivery of Sherford is supported by a cross authority delivery team representing Devon County Council, Plymouth City Council and South Hams District Council.

3. Proposal

The proposal is to deliver Sherford Main St interim (SMSi) scheme to provide a spine route right through the development from Deep Lane junction to the first phase of Main St as required in the Sherford planning permission. SMSi will connect Sherford Main Street Phase 1 (being delivered by the Sherford Consortium) to Deep Lane. This will link Sherford, Langage and the communities of Plympton, Plymstock and surrounding villages of South Devon. On completion, it will reduce traffic on the surrounding minor roads and areas of Plymouth subject to air quality and road safety issues. It will also be used by public transport and cyclists as a better alternative to the current routes.

It is not possible to design a final specification of Sherford Main Street because over time it will be upgraded to accommodate the town centre, drainage, services and further pedestrian and cycle facilities, as the development builds out. Therefore, the design has been developed through collaboration with the Sherford Consortium to make sure that the SMSi is designed and constructed in a practical way that makes best use of the funding available but can also be adapted for future improvements. The scheme plan is provided in the Appendix to this report.

This SMSi is on land owned by the Sherford Consortium in Plymouth. It is mostly in farmed grassed fields, which would have been vacated by tenants shortly before award of the contract. There will be junctions with public highways at four locations, along with modifying two private accesses.

The main construction works are anticipated to start in January 2019 and complete by March 2020.

4. Consultations, Representations and Technical Data

The Sherford New Community Area Action Plan (Sherford AAP) is one of the key South Hams Local Development Framework documents. It focuses upon the design and implementation of the Sherford new community, providing an important mechanism for ensuring a development of an appropriate scale, mix and quality. Sherford has progressed through the planning system and was granted outline planning approval in November 2013 by South Hams District Council and Plymouth City Council (PCC) this also included a full planning permission for the development of the Sherford Main Street.

The section 106 for Sherford and detailed planning consent requires the delivery of Main Street. The south junction has been recently upgraded to provide an all movements access and to enable it to accommodate construction traffic and the County Council have delivered improvements at Deep Lane North.

As part of the planning process there have been many stakeholders consulted on the scheme. The permissions were granted following several years of community and stakeholder consultation and technical analysis of the developer's application.

SMSi has been developed from the preliminary design that was granted planning permission. In developing the design, the officers at Devon County Council have consulted the planning authority, South Hams District Council.

5. Environmental Impact Considerations

An Environmental Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the Sherford development to accompany the planning application. The assessment considered the potential for environmental effects to occur as a result of the proposed works, both during construction and after the development has been completed. Where a significant adverse environmental effect was identified, mitigation measures have been developed to reduce, minimise or avoid the impact.

Further ecological work by the developer has recently been undertaken which forms part of their recent section 73 application to revise the Masterplan.

Opportunities for environmental enhancement has also been considered during the design process as well as the need to minimise negative impacts. However, loss of some green space may result in a slight adverse effect on the water environment. It is unlikely to have significant impact on biodiversity. There is a loss of green fields currently used and farmland verge and therefore a slight adverse impact on landscape.

A Construction Environmental Management Plan will be produced to mitigate any environmental impacts as part of the construction process and agreed with the planning authority.

6. Financial Considerations

Devon County Council, has been awarded £5 million capital National Productivity Investment Funding administered by the Department for Transport towards the delivery of the Sherford Main Street Interim. The total scheme estimate is £8 million. To aid delivery the project has been split into two:

- **Section A** - £5 million has been allocated by the DfT which the Council will use to deliver the northern section of the scheme.
- **Section B** - The remainder of the scheme, valued at £3m will be built and delivered by the Sherford Consortium (Bovis Homes, Linden Homes & Taylor Wimpey and agreed through a Section 38 prior to construction.

The funding requirements specify that the full scheme is delivered by March 2020. Section A programme is on target to deliver by that date. Section B is already under way with a contractor in place.

DCC have progressed the procurement for Section A with a view to appointing a preferred contractor via an open competitive tender. It is necessary that the appointment is made as

soon as possible as development of the Traffic Management, confirming arrangements/bookings with the landowners and advance environmental works are a key item in the delivery programme. However, works will not commence until the DfT approve delivery of the scheme in 2 sections and confirm that the £5 million grant can all be applied to Section A.

The cost of the works for Section A including design has been estimated at £5m including an allowance for risk, contingency and finalised elements of the design. The funding for this scheme is from the Department for Transport National Productively Investment Fund (NPIF) capital grant and any revenue costs will need to be met from existing revenue resources.

7. Sustainability and Equality Considerations

Where relevant to the decision, the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision makers to give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

Taking account of age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), gender and gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women/ new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage/civil partnership status in coming to a decision, a decision maker may also consider other relevant factors such as caring responsibilities, rural isolation or socio-economic disadvantage.

An Impact Assessment has been prepared, a copy of which has been circulated to Cabinet Members, and is available on the Council's website at:
<https://new.devon.gov.uk/impact/published/>.

The scheme will have a positive impact on pedestrians and cyclists by providing a direct link though Sherford, avoiding minor lanes.

In economic terms the scheme will facilitate travel and development which will have a beneficial impact upon the local economy by enabling employment and housing development in the area to proceed with mitigated impact.

8. Carbon Impact Considerations

There may be a slight adverse impact on air quality resulting from increased traffic flows as a result of the development. However, conversely the scheme's improvement to traffic flow also has the advantage of improving the fuel efficiency of engines and reducing certain emissions including carbon.

9. Legal Considerations

There are a few legal agreements necessary before there is absolute confidence that the scheme can be delivered they include:

- an agreement by the DfT that they will agree to the delivery of the scheme in two sections and it is eligible to full grant approval of £5m;
- an agreement by the Sherford Consortium on the availability of land;

- an agreement by the Sherford Consortium that they will deliver Section B of the scheme;

These agreements have already been approved in principle.

The lawful implications of the recommendations have been considered and taken into account in the formulation of the recommendations set out above.

In terms of operation following constructing the road will be made open to the public but will be operated and maintained by the Consortium. This is normally the position for any spine road through an emerging development. Once the development is completed it will be adopted by the Council and it will revert to a typical maintenance regime.

The road will be subject to a 30mph speed limit.

10. Risk Management Considerations

The scheme is on a new line in a green field therefore is considered low in terms of engineering risks. It is very well developed in its design programme. A sum for risk and contingency has been included within the scheme estimate.

There is a risk that the Sherford Consortium will not work with the Council on the agreements required and if so the scheme will not progress to Tender.

11. Public Health Impact

The scheme is subject to a three phase (preliminary, detailed and post construction) Road Safety Audit (RSA) process. The design has been assessed in its preliminary phase and items of discussion include the safe use of crossings for pedestrians and cyclists and acceptability of proposed departures. No significant risks to project delivery have been raised.

12. Options and Alternatives

The scheme has progressed on the basis of the Main Street preliminary design included with the planning permission for Sherford.

The design has been developed through a number of options which have re-assessed any potential adverse impacts on themes such as capacity, safety and maintenance.

The decision to deliver SMSi along the permanent alignment for the new road was chosen to minimise the impact on development parcels of housing that have not yet been designed and therefore drainage and final service requirements are not known. The interim road will deliver a single lane in each direction, this provides sufficient capacity to accommodate development traffic as it grows but not over and above which may result in road safety issues.

The selected design option is a result of extensive consultation with the developer and highway officers taking into account maintenance requirements and other feedback received.

13. Reason for Recommendation

The scheme unlocks a key phase of the Sherford development required as part of the Sherford planning permission, providing a major opportunity to bring forward the full potential

of housing and employment planned at this strategic site. The scheme is consistent with the aims of National Policy with regard to housing delivery and economic growth. The scheme has been successful in its award of DfT funding and as such is regarded as a priority transport scheme to ensure the successful delivery of the Sherford new community.

Dave Black
Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Electoral Divisions: Bickleigh and Wembury; South Brent and Yealmpton; and Ivybridge

Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Development and Waste: Councillor Andrea Davis

Chief Officer for Communities, Public Health, Environment and Prosperity: Dr Virginia Pearson

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Contact for enquiries: Gina Small

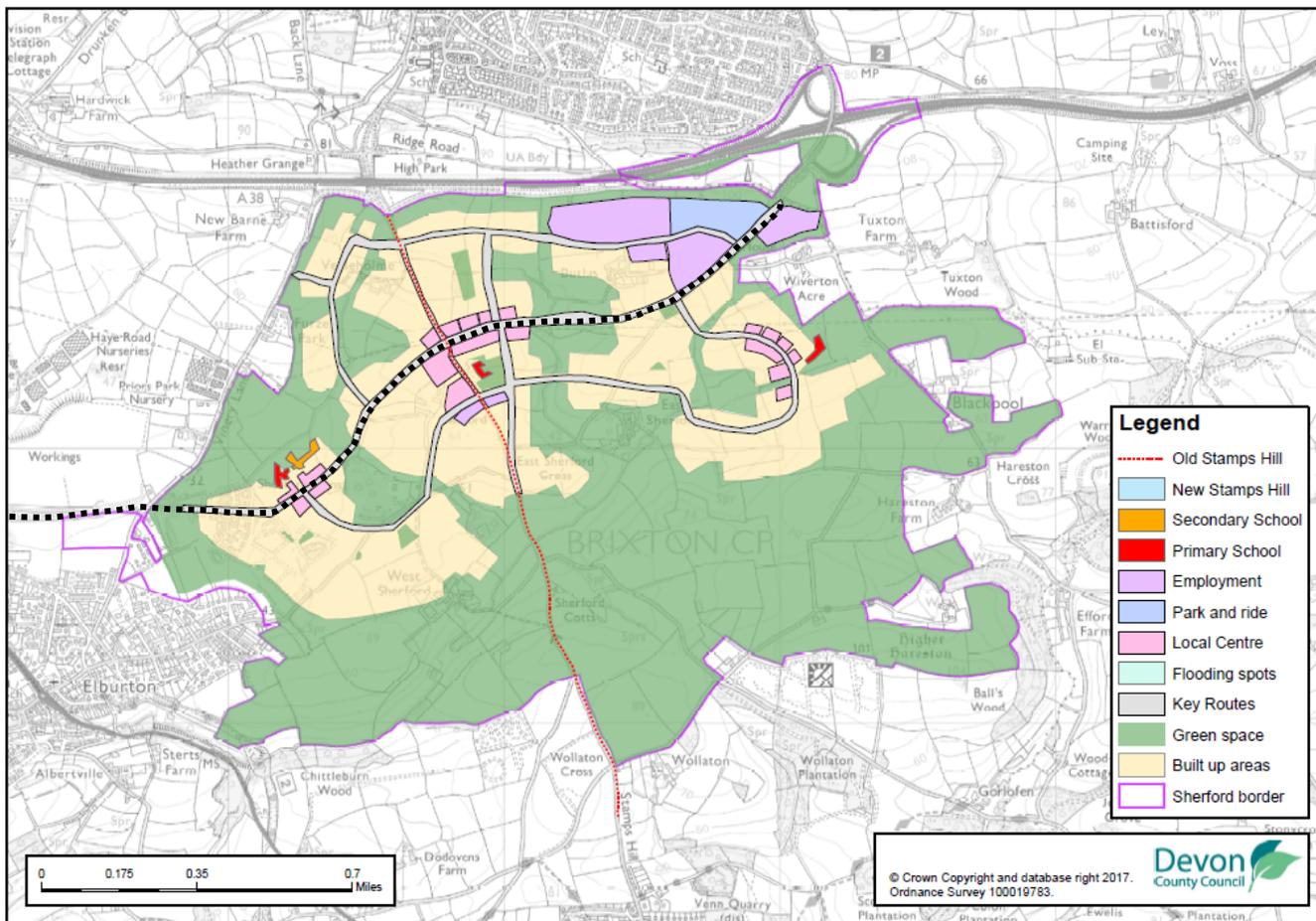
Room No: Lucombe House, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QD

Tel No: (01392) 383000

Background Paper	Date	File Ref.
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Proposed Sherford High Street

