

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to the Executive for Decision 18 March 2024

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Planning and Development
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Welborne Delivery Progress Update</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Planning and Regeneration
<b>Corporate Priorities:</b>	Provide Housing Choices, Respond to Climate Change and Protect the Environment, Strong, Safe & Healthy Communities, Promote Economic Development, Leisure Opportunities for wellbeing and Fun Responsive, Inclusive and Innovative Council

**Purpose:**

To present an update on progress of the Welborne Garden Village.

**Executive summary:**

Outline planning permission was granted for the Welborne Garden Village on 30 September 2021. Since then, good progress has been made on the delivery of the Welborne Garden Village, with the Borough Council having a significant strategic leadership role in the development as well as its role as Local Planning Authority.

The Executive Briefing Paper provides the Executive with an update on the developments permitted, the works being carried out at the site and those proposals expected shortly. The report also provides an overview of the governance arrangements to ensure that Welborne is delivered as a well-planned high-quality development.

The key elements of the Executive Briefing Paper have been captured and set out in a brochure titled 'Building Welborne Beautiful', which provides the local community and other interested parties with an overview of the progress made on the Welborne Garden Village to date.

Once this report has been considered by the Executive, the 'Building Welborne Beautiful' publication will be shared in late March. Social media and local media opportunities will also be used to raise awareness of the progress and next steps outlined in the Update.

The Welborne Delivery Progress Update and Building Welborne Beautiful publication were reported to the Planning and Development Scrutiny Panel on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024, and the comments of the Panel will be presented to the Executive for their consideration.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the Executive:

- (a) considers the progress made on the delivery of the Welborne Garden Village; and
- (b) requests that Officers undertake a range of actions to publicise the 'Building Welborne Beautiful' publication which sets out the delivery progress and next steps.

**Reason:**

To set out the progress made against one of the Council's corporate priority actions and seek Executive approval for publicity of the publication.

**Cost of proposals:**

The costs relating to the 'Building Welborne Beautiful' document will be met within existing budgets.

**Appendices:** A: 'Building Welborne Beautiful'

**Background papers:** None

**Reference papers:** Fareham Corporate Strategy 2023-2029  
The Welborne Plan 2015

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### Executive Briefing Paper

<b>Date:</b>	18 March 2024
<b>Subject:</b>	Welborne Delivery Progress Update
<b>Briefing by:</b>	Director of Planning and Regeneration
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Planning and Development

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Outline Planning permission was granted for the Welborne Garden Village in September 2021. The outline planning permission established the principle of the development with all matters reserved for future determination, except for the works to M27 Junction 10, three highway junctions and related works to the A32. Up to 6,000 dwellings will be built along with a new district and village centre, retail and community facilities, a public house, a hotel, over 100,000m<sup>2</sup> of employment space, health and veterinary facilities, pre-schools, a secondary school, three primary schools, new amenity spaces, woodland areas, allotments, and wildlife corridors.
2. The Council's vision for Welborne Garden Village set out in the Welborne Plan 2015 is now becoming a reality, with infrastructure works currently being undertaken on site in preparation for the first homes to be built.
3. Welborne's Master Developer, Buckland Development Ltd, has significantly extended their professional team in order to move the development forward at pace and drive the high quality placemaking required to make Welborne an exemplar amongst the many new communities being developed nationally.
4. The following report explains what has been approved at Welborne so far, what further proposals are expected to be submitted in the near term, along with details of construction underway. The report provides further updates on the governance arrangements and future management arrangements at Welborne.

#### PLANNING

5. The Council's Planning Service has been continually engaged with the development of Welborne since The Welborne Plan was adopted in 2015. Extensive pre-application discussions culminated in the submission of an outline planning application in 2017 which was approved in September 2021.
6. The outline planning permission establishes the principle of development at Welborne and fixes the general location of a range of uses around the development. The outline planning permission is also accompanied by an extensive Section 106 planning legal

agreement which secures the delivery of large amounts of on-site and off-site infrastructure.

7. Whilst the outline planning permission secured the detailed design of the Junction 10 works and other junctions onto the A32, the detailed design of the majority of development to be undertaken at Welborne requires the further approval of this Council.
8. Over the last year or so, approximately 30 planning applications have been received associated with the development of Welborne. This has included detailed designs of development to be undertaken along with the necessary details to discharge planning conditions attached to the outline planning permission.
9. The focus of the first phase of development at Welborne is immediately to the north of Knowle Road, to the east of Knowle Village. Significant applications that have been approved in the last year include a new roundabout on Knowle Road to serve the first phase of housing; a foul pumping station; a new electricity substation and heat exchange energy centre to the north of the Welborne Business Park (formerly Pinks Sawmills); and the undergrounding of the existing overhead electricity lines along with the removal of the existing pylons, and erection of new terminal towers.
10. The Strategic Design Code for Welborne, which sets out the design principles that will shape the development of the entire Garden Village, together with the Welborne Streets Manual, which sets out the regulations that will govern the development of Welborne's streets, were approved by the Planning Committee in December 2023. Both documents will ensure the quality of the places and spaces that are to be created and give certainty to developers and as to how the Council expects these elements to be delivered.

## **HOUSING**

11. Buckland Development Ltd. have appointed three regional housebuilders to build Welborne's first homes. The housebuilders are C G Fry & Son, Thakeham and Pye Homes. Each of these three companies have entered into Joint Ventures with Portchester Equity, which owns Buckland Development Ltd.
12. These housebuilders have submitted three reserved matters planning applications, for 111, 153 and 210 homes respectively, making a total of 474 homes. A further application for the Village Centre, which will include 77 homes, along with commercial floor space, community uses and healthcare provision, is expected imminently. Subject to planning approval being granted, all three housebuilders intend to begin housing construction in 2024.
13. Welborne Land Limited are also seeking an appropriate body to have an ownership stake in, and to undertake the management of the affordable homes at Welborne. Fareham Borough Council has been approached to establish if it would wish to undertake this role. A study to assess the viability of a joint venture model to deliver Affordable Housing has been commissioned by the Council and a report is presented to the Executive elsewhere on this meeting agenda.

## **GOVERNANCE AND ENGAGEMENT**

14. The Section 106 legal agreement which forms part of the outline planning permission, ensures a number of Steering Groups are established to consider and oversee key aspects of the development of Welborne Garden Village. The M27 Junction 10 Steering Group and the Education Steering Group have now been in place for several years, and more recently Affordable Housing, Health and Employment & Training Steering Groups

have been established.

15. In addition, the Council's Senior Officers meet the Master Developer's Team on a very regular basis to discuss issues relating to the scheme and to ensure progress is maintained on the delivery of Welborne. Buckland Development Ltd. has also begun discussions with the Council about establishing a senior leadership-level group, a Welborne Place Board, whose primary focus would be to champion and oversee the achievement of a high-quality place and the growth of a successful new community.
16. Once laid out, the communal parts of the Garden Village will be managed and maintained by the Welborne Garden Village Trust Ltd (WGVTL). The WGVTL will have Directors appointed from both Fareham Borough Council and the County Council (amongst others). The Trust is also required to employ a Community Development Worker before any homes are occupied.
17. The Council's Welborne Community Forum, which provides the opportunity for local authorities, the master developer, residents, neighbouring communities and other interested parties to engage regularly on the delivery Welborne Garden Village has been well supported and welcomed.
18. Buckland Development Ltd hosted a successful public engagement event at their Dean Farm offices in February 2023 to showcase their approach to the design of the new development, and their plans for the delivery of the first phase of homes, green space and the Village Centre. This event was prior to the submission of the infrastructure and housing reserved matters applications.
19. Buckland Development Ltd also hosted a visit from the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Rt Hon Michael Gove in June 2023, accompanied by the Rt Hon Suella Braverman, MP and the Leaders of Fareham Borough and Hampshire County Councils.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **M27 Junction 10 Improvement Scheme**

20. Hampshire County Council agreed to become the delivery body for the M27 Junction 10 Improvement Scheme in July 2021, subject to all funding being in place and appointed Volker Fitzpatrick as their design and build contractor to deliver the scheme. Volker Fitzpatrick and their lead designer, Ramboll, have worked closely with the County Council and National Highways to finalise the design for the scheme.
21. Significant funding has already been secured from the Master Developer for Welborne and the Government, for the construction of the Junction 10 improvements. The cost is expected to be known shortly and will be subject to formal acceptance by both the County Council and Volker Fitzpatrick. Once the costs have been agreed and it is confirmed that all the required funding is in place, construction will commence.
22. The M27 Junction 10 currently has restricted access, only allowing partial movements for traffic westbound off and eastbound on. The proposed improvements involve the provision of a new motorway underpass to the west of the existing M27 Junction 10, three new slip roads and the construction of a new dual carriageway to link the new slip roads to the A32.
23. To help integrate the development to the wider area a dedicated Bus Rapid Transport (BRT) link and facilities for walking, cycling or using a mobility aid will be provided

alongside the new link roads. This includes crossing points and a link through the underpass under the M27 to connect Welborne to the rest of Fareham, including key facilities such as the rail station, schools, and the town centre.

24. It is essential that Junction 10 is upgraded to cater for the predicted new traffic movements which will be generated by Welborne. The upgraded Junction will help to ensure that the site will be well connected to the wider south coast strategic transport network to help attract business and investment into the area. Local residents will also benefit from the Junction 10 upgrade which aims to alleviate the congestion on local roads.

### **First Primary School**

25. The first of the three primary schools at Welborne, is planned to be delivered immediately alongside the housing, currently before the Council for approval.
26. The first primary school will cater for two forms of entry, providing 420 places, and is currently expected to open for September 2027 (dependent on the predicted pupil demand).

### **Welborne Rail Halt**

27. The existing Fareham to Eastleigh line, known as the Botley line, runs along the Western edge of the Welborne Garden Village site.
28. There is no requirement for the developer to provide a railway station at Welborne, although land must remain available to accommodate one, unless it is demonstrated that it is not technically viable or feasible to deliver such a facility.
29. In December 2022 the Council contracted SLC Rail Ltd. to set out the Strategic Outline Business Case for a railway station on the Botley line at Welborne Garden Village. At this stage SLC Rail Ltd. found that there is a moderate case for a railway halt at Welborne.
30. SLC Rail Ltd advised that best value for money would be achieved if a rail halt at Welborne opened in the 2030s rather than 2020s, given the location allocated is in the south west corner of Welborne, which is likely to be developed for housing late in the development. The consultants also advised that any station built should initially use a single-track solution, implementing a station platform constructed in such a way as to be easily moved out should a second track be deemed important at a later date.

## **UTILITIES**

### **Low carbon heat network**

31. The delivery of a large-scale new community presents a unique opportunity to factor in key aspirations right from the outset. One such aspiration at Welborne, shared by both the Master Developer and Fareham Borough Council, is to deliver low and zero carbon energy.
32. In May 2021, Fareham Borough Council was awarded funding from the Government's Heat Networks Delivery Unit (HNDU) towards the production of a detailed techno-economic feasibility study of low carbon district heat network options at Welborne, in partnership with Buckland Development Ltd.

33. A study comparing two network options undertaken by energy consultants Sustainable Energy reported in April 2022. The options were a sitewide thermal network, and a cluster-based closed loop ambient network. Sustainable Energy concluded that the ambient cluster network would be the preferred solution as it offers the lowest carbon emissions and can be built at the same rate as the housing development, thereby lowering the risk and ensuring no need to futureproof for the whole development.
34. Details such as energy efficiency through design and layout, the use of low or zero carbon technologies, and innovative building methods for each specific proposed neighbourhood will need to be considered for each build phase.

### **Electricity**

35. Planning permission was granted in December 2023 for electricity pylons to be undergrounded at Welborne Garden Village to maximise development potential and to achieve a high quality of design across the northern edge of Welborne. As part of the same proposal, planning permission was granted for the construction of a primary substation and a heat exchange energy centre.

### **FAREHAM OWNED PROPERTIES ON WELBORNE**

36. Members will recall that the Borough Council purchased three properties on the site in 2016 and 2017. These properties were acquired in light of their very close proximity and possible implications for the Junction 10 improvement works.
37. These properties were originally tenanted following their purchase, although all are now vacant to minimise any impacts upon Junction 10 Improvement works. The Borough Council has entered into an Option Agreement with Welborne Land Ltd. for them to purchase the properties.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS/CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

38. The subject matter of this Update report is decided under other statutory and/ or regulatory processes. The matters before the Executive now for consideration are not anticipated to have an impact on the Council's carbon footprint, nor is it expected to have a detrimental or beneficial impact to the wider environment.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

39. There are no significant risk considerations in relation to this report.

### **CONCLUSION**

40. Good progress is being made on the delivery of Welborne Garden Village on the ground. Infrastructure to support the first houses at Welborne has been permitted and is under construction. Planning permission has also been granted for more substantial elements of infrastructure which have not begun yet but will do so in the near future. It is anticipated that the Planning Committee will consider the first applications for houses very shortly.
41. The Strategic Design Code and Welborne Streets Manual have been approved and will ensure the delivery of high-quality design at Welborne. The Council and Master Developer have established Steering Groups to ensure that key aspects of Welborne are informed by thorough discussions with all relevant parties.
42. The actions taken by this Council to date, working closely with the Master Developer, ensure that Welborne will come forward as a well-planned and well-designed place

throughout its development.

**Background Papers:** None

**Reference Papers:** Fareham Corporate Strategy 2023-2029

The Welborne Plan 2015

Application documents listed on the Council's website

**Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact Lee Smith, Head of Planning. (Tel: 01329 824427)