

**Castle Ward Committee**

**20 March 2018**

**Newcastle Great Park Update Report (NGP): Highways, Town Centre, Education and Landscaping**

**Report by:** Planning, Transport, Communities and Education

**Ward Implications:** Castle

**Please indicate**

For information

**1.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To provide Newcastle Great Park (NGP) residents and businesses within Castle Ward with an update on development and infrastructure, including highways, retail, education and landscaping, at NGP and provide key timescales for delivery.
- 1.2 A number of priority issues have been identified during monthly drop-in sessions staffed by the Consortium and by Local Members which this report seeks to provide an update on.

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 **Castle Ward Committee are recommended:**
- 2.2 To receive this report for information from relevant Council Officers in consultation with the NGP Consortium in relation to the delivery of infrastructure at NGP.

**3.0 Recent Planning Applications**

- 3.1 The original planning permission for Newcastle Great Park dates back to 1999. Since this time there have been a large number of detailed and outline planning applications and amendments which have been considered and determined in order to allow the delivery of housing and associated infrastructure at Newcastle Great Park.

Since the development started in 2001 the site has secured planning permission for 2932 dwellings and approximately 2400 have been built. Over 42,000 sq m of commercial office space has also been delivered, alongside a first school, nursery, community centre and sports and recreation space and approximately 1500 people work in NGP. A district centre is under construction with 19 retail units complete. This will provide access to shops and additional services. Over half of the 1200 acres is being landscaped to deliver open space, biodiversity, drainage and public access improvements with over 200 acres complete now.

3.2 The latest planning applications to be granted or minded to grant include:

### 3.2.1 **Cell D**

Planning permission for 492 residential units and Spine Road between and including junction 4 (junction west of the Sage) to junction 7 (to the West of Greenside meeting with Kingston Park Road).

Planning Ref: 1999/1300/236/RES

Construction of the residential units has started on site and is due to be completed in 2021.

The Spine Road has been designed by engineers working for the Consortium, is out to tender for a construction partner, and the contract is expected to be awarded in April 2018. Enabling work has commenced but the Consortium is keen to start construction as soon as possible following contract award. A full construction programme will be available when the contract is awarded.

### 3.2.2 **Cell A and B1**

Outline Planning Application (all matters reserved) for up to 1,200 residential dwellings, education provision for both primary and secondary aged children, playing fields with fencing and changing pavilion.

Planning Ref: 2017/0666/01/OUT

Planning Committee were 'minded to grant' outline planning permission for Cell A and B1 in January subject to the agreement and signing of the S106 (Section 106 Agreements are legal agreements between the Local Planning Authority and the developer which are generally negotiated in the context of granting a Planning Permission. They provide a means of ensuring that developers carry out or contribute financially towards infrastructure or services required to facilitate proposed developments.). Officers and the Consortium are currently working through the S106 and it is hoped that it will be completed and signed in the next couple of months.

Further detailed planning applications will need to be prepared and submitted by the Consortium and considered by the local Planning Authority for the detail of the residential development in Cell A. Detailed planning applications will also need to be submitted for the schools.

- 3.2.3 All planning applications and information submitted as part of the planning applications and discharge of conditions are publicly available on the planning portal at:

<http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning-applications/search-and-comment-on-planning-applications>

#### **4.0 Highways update**

- 4.1 The majority of the roads at NGP are not adopted by the City Council however the City Council and the NGP Consortium are working towards a programme for adopting them – with the focus being on the adoption of Melbury and the first section of the Spine Road. Whilst the roads are not adopted the day to day management and maintenance of the highways is the responsibility of the NGP Consortium or the Management Company (MANCO). A plan showing land under the control of the MANCO is available at the following link: [http://www.newcastlegreatpark.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/MANCO-Responsibility-2016\\_A0.pdf](http://www.newcastlegreatpark.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/MANCO-Responsibility-2016_A0.pdf). As such, with the exception of the school safety scheme, any queries from residents regarding street lighting, pedestrian crossings, 'pot holes' or the quality of road surfacing should generally be directed to the NGP Consortium (<http://www.newcastlegreatpark.com> – further contact details can be found at the end of this report).

#### **4.2 Spine Road Update**

The Cell D application incorporated planning permission for the delivery of a Spine Road. It will link to existing highway provision and will ultimately provide an access route from Kingston Park Road to the Brunton Park / A1 junction. The design for the Spine Road has been confirmed within the planning application and the final construction design of the road is currently subject to a competitive tender process to determine who will deliver this infrastructure.

#### **4.3 Kingston Park Road improvements**

Improvements have been delivered to the east of the A1 on Kingston Park Road. The Council, with Section 106 contributions from the Consortium, have also developed two different designs that would improve the way that Kingston Park Road west of the A1 operates. These options are currently being appraised and costed to determine whether or not they are deliverable and within what timescales. In early April the final S106 payment will be made by the Consortium amounting to a total £1.34 Million to allow the council to deliver improvements to Kingston Park Road and Traffic Signals or other complementary measures in the area.

#### 4.4 Bus Link S106

In 2015 two public consultation processes took place where all residents and businesses were invited and engaged regarding the need for a potential Cell E to Cell G bus link that would link Greenside with NGP Town Centre. The results of this consultation confirmed that the bus link was not necessary and even if it was delivered, it was unlikely that a commercially viable bus service would be able to be delivered. Alternative bus routes will be delivered via the Spine Road.

As the Council agreed that the Cell G to E Bus link is not required it triggered a S106 payment from the Consortium that has previously been reported to be £490k. This was an error and actually this amount should only be a proportion of a total bus link sum and this has been agreed to be £441,000. £49,000 has been paid by the Consortium to date with the remainder to be paid in April 2018.

When the Council agreed that the Cell E to G bus link was not required it was confirmed that the Bus Link Sum would be used to improve connectivity between Greenside, NGP Town Centre and Newcastle City Centre with the focus of the investment to be agreed by the Transport Advisory Board.

As a result of the decision not to implement the Cell E to G bus link, consultation has been undertaken with Greenside Residents Association and ward members on the best ways to utilise the submitted contribution. As a result of the consultation, and in line with the signed S106 agreement, the following three schemes are currently being pursued:

- **Strategic cycle route signage throughout Greenside**

The Council have commenced design work for comprehensive signage however this cannot reasonably be implemented until the routes have been completed to a standard that would enable them to be signed therefore ensuring a comprehensive scheme. Officers at the Council are working closely with the NGP Consortium to ensure this work is completed and the signage can be implemented as and when the routes are in place.

- **Residents' permit parking scheme**

Public consultation on a residents' parking scheme in Greenside has been undertaken with residents in Greenside and results of this are currently being collated and considered. Feedback to residents is due to be provided imminently.

- **Speed signage**

The principle of the installation of mobile Driver Feedback Signs has been agreed between NCC and the NGP Consortium and further work is being undertaken to agree the detail as to where signage would be sited.

## **5.0 Broadband**

There have been a number of reported problems in the quality of service and speeds in very specific areas of NGP mainly Cell C, Cell E and parts of Cell F. The Council and Consortium have been working hard with service providers to improve this situation to deliver what is needed. Recent improvements have been delivered in Cell C but both NCC and the Consortium are awaiting and update from the Service Provider for Cells F and E.

## **6.0 Town Centre/Retail**

6.1 To date 19 retail units have been delivered in the Town Centre and are available to be let for a range of uses. Retail Agents have been engaged to fill the units and negotiations are well advanced and the units will be occupied as soon as possible. Discussion are still ongoing with an Anchor supermarket and this is critical for other potential investors in the town centre. Updates on the progress of the Town Centre will be posted on the NGP website:-

<http://www.newcastlegreatpark.com/>

6.2 The Eastern Link Road phase 1 is complete and phase 2 delivering the link to Sage is due to be complete over the Summer.

6.3 Work has commenced on the road improvements around the Town Square and it is expected that this will continue and the town square work will continue over the spring summer 2018.

## **7.0 Education Update**

7.1 Planning Committee minded to grant outline planning permission for a first school and middle / secondary school, including associated playing pitches, as part of the Cell A and B1 planning application. The detailed design and layout of both schools are yet to be determined and separate reserved matters planning applications for the development of the schools will be required before they can be delivered on site. This can only be done once the S106 legal agreement for Cell A has been signed.

7.2 The Council, NGP Consortium and the Education and Skills Funding Agency are working together to deliver the secondary school provision and a planning application for the detailed design of the school will be made once the S106 legal agreement has been signed. The Council, NGP Consortium and ESFA are working towards the school opening in September 2020.

7.3 The additional first school places at NGP will be provided by the relocation and expansion of Broadway East First School, which was agreed by Cabinet in November 2017 following consultation and agreement by the school's governing body.

7.4 The optimal model for delivering the first school will be carefully considered. The potential cost savings of delivering this school building in conjunction with the middle / secondary school (through a single contract within the ESFA

framework) will be looked at. Or whether it would be more practical and timely to deliver the first school building through a separate contract (with the associated highways and other infrastructure designed and aligned with plans and requirements for the middle/secondary school build).

7.5 Council officers are working with Broadway East First School, Gosforth Schools' Trust and other Gosforth schools to address the following issues prior to the relocation:

- Expanding other Gosforth first schools (particularly Gosforth Park First School), to ensure there are sufficient local places in 'central' Gosforth to meet needs - once Broadway East First School has relocated to NGP.
- Developing school admissions proposals for 2020, including future feeder school arrangements, for Gosforth middle schools (for consultation in summer 2018).
- Developing proposals to support transitional travel arrangements to the new school site for children who are already on the school roll and would be transferring to the new location at the time of opening.

In addition, design work is being commissioned by the Council to develop detailed designs and proposals for the new first school buildings, and a planning application will be made once the S106 legal agreement has been signed. The proposed opening date for the relocated first school is September 2020.

## **8.0 Landscaping**

### **8.1 Landscape Review**

Newcastle Great park has a rich and diverse landscape environment and has been very successful in creating an ecosystem which includes meadowland, woodland, drainage systems, strategic open space and local open space all linked by cycleways and pathways to allow residents and visitors to enjoy.

8.2 The landscaping and open spaces is underpinned by a landscape masterplan for each development Cell which is then used to carefully determined and approve the detail within each Cell through planning permissions and planning conditions.

8.3 The Council and the NGP Consortium have commissioned an independent review of all the open spaces which have planning permission within NGP to look at whether the implementation of these spaces has been successful and whether they are being managed and maintained in line with the details within the original S106 legal agreement.

8.4 This review is complete and was undertaken in October 2017 and is being reviewed by the City Council. This provides a list of all areas where further action by way of implementation or management is necessary. The report will be made available to the public via the Newcastle City Council and NGP websites in April. Once complete the report will provide a baseline for an annual review of these spaces in the future.

## **NGP Ranger**

- 8.5 A NCC Ranger has been delivering community wildlife walks, events and activities for residents in NGP over the last few years which have been successful and well attended. This has included working with Brunton First School to deliver a number of Forest School sessions.
- 8.6 As part of the Ranger role, wildlife interpretation boards are also currently being designed specifically for NGP with the intention of installing these at four key locations along the recreational routes.
- 8.7 The Council have recently advertised for an enforcement assistant to sit within the planning department who will work two days a week to patrol and report ranger type issues at NGP. This could include dog fouling, fly tipping, and planning issues and will be funded by S106 contributions made for an NGP Ranger. This is a new role and will be supported by the ongoing ad-hoc work undertaken by the current NCC Ranger and support from the Communities Team who work with residents' groups. The new enforcement assistant is expected to be in position by the summer.
- 8.8 Residents can report offences of dog fouling and fly tipping to the Council's Envirocall (call 0191 278 7878 and ask for 'Envirocall' or <https://envirocallservice.newcastle.gov.uk/welcome-to-envirocall>). Whilst it is the responsibility of the Consortium, as landowner, to keep their land free of litter and waste, including dog fouling, any issues reported to Envirocall are logged. This can help to identify ongoing problems where further action may be required or possible. Any witnessed offences can be similarly reported, and depending on the evidence available, enforcement action can be taken by the Council. Please remember to record details of the vehicles used, descriptions of offenders and be accurate with date, time and location.

## **Management and Maintenance**

- 8.9 Other than highways when adopted the City Council does not manage or maintain any infrastructure on NGP. A MANCO is in place to manage infrastructure in perpetuity. Residents and businesses pay a rent and service charge. Further information is available at the following link and set out in a Rent and Service Charge Information Pack.  
[http://www.newcastlegreatpark.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/P0128-NGP\\_Rent\\_Service\\_Charge\\_A4\\_revised18.pdf](http://www.newcastlegreatpark.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/P0128-NGP_Rent_Service_Charge_A4_revised18.pdf)
- 8.10 The NGP Consortium, through S106 contributions, have funded the NCC Communities Team to support residents and resident's groups in NGP. This role is funded up to the end of October 2018 and provides an additional link between residents, NCC and the NGP Consortium.

## 9.0 Sources of Information

- For the latest information and contact details for the NGP please visit the NGP website:

<http://www.newcastlegreatpark.com>

- All comments and questions regarding NGP can be sent via the website where they will be recorded and directed to the appropriate person:

<http://www.newcastlegreatpark.com/contact-3/>

- NGP Consortium also hold a monthly drop in session where residents can go along to discuss any questions they may have with a representative from the consortium. For details of the next drop in session please visit [www.newcastlegreatpark.com](http://www.newcastlegreatpark.com)

- For details of planning applications please visit:

<https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/planning-and-buildings/planning-applications/search-and-comment-on-planning-applications>

- Incidents of dog fouling and fly tipping can be reported to:

<https://envirocallservice.newcastle.gov.uk/welcome-to-envirocall>

and/or

<http://www.newcastlegreatpark.com/contact-3/>

- Contact your local Councillors via:

<http://democracy.newcastle.gov.uk/mgFindMember.aspx>