

## Further Details

### North Star

- 1.1. Seven Capital took over the North Star scheme by acquiring the commercial rights from Moirai in June 2017 and the company is working on the outline planning application for the development of
  - 1.1.1. An indoor snow ski slope of c170,000 sq ft NIA (170m main ski slope, 75m nursery slope, and snow play area)
  - 1.1.2. 13 screen cinema of 30,000 sq ft NIA
  - 1.1.3. Ten Pin Bowling operation of 26,000 sq ft GIA
  - 1.1.4. Ground and First Floor sport related A1 retail and other destination "Experience Users"
  - 1.1.5. Ground and First Floor restaurant users
  - 1.1.6. Car Parking for c750 cars (excluding the car parking provision for the existing Oasis Leisure Centre)
  - 1.1.7. Hotel at the entrance to the scheme of c100-150 bedrooms with allocated car parking provision
- 1.2. The outline planning application for the scheme was considered at November 2017 Planning Committee and the officer recommendation was to grant consent. Seven Capital is aiming to submit a reserved matters application covering the detailed proposals relating to the leisure development in the second half of 2018.

### Carriage Works

- 1.3. The Carriage Works (Great Western Works) has been developed as a brand to identify the railway heritage quarter and will include the Carriage Works site and neighbouring businesses. Forward Swindon Limited (FSL) has developed a brochure in conjunction with other partners to market the Great Western Works as a destination.
- 1.4. The vision for the Carriage Works is a destination for high value, knowledge based businesses supported with a higher education and research presence, complemented by ancillary retail and hospitality businesses to give a "campus like" feel. A business incubation centre, to help increase the rate of start-up businesses and improve their life expectancy, constitutes Phase 1 of the development (see paragraph 1.6 for details of Workshed incubator and start-up space). Swindon's Economic Strategy to 2026 identifies the need for an incubation centre in Swindon in order to address the issues identified in the associated evidence base, namely a relatively low number of start-up

businesses and a high rate of business failure, particularly by year 3 of trading. This will also help to diversify the business base, thus directly addressing an identified weakness in Swindon's economy.

- 1.5. Phase 1 of the Carriage Works regeneration programme includes the refurbishment of Units 3 and 5. Construction works started in early 2017, with the buildings on lease to Swindon Council from then-owner Network Rail. The refurbishment of Unit 3 was completed in April 2018, whilst the refurbishment of Unit 5 will be completed in August. Together, Units 3 and 5, form part of a business incubation centre, known as WorkShed. The Enterprise Network (TEN) was appointed as 'operator' for the development in April. TEN are now responsible for facilities management and providing business support services.
- 1.6. WorkShed opened its doors to the public in June, providing 80 work spaces to rent on a flexible basis, aimed at start-ups, tech professionals and consultants seeking a vibrant place to do business. Once completed, the refurbished Unit 5 will provide 100 additional work spaces (mix of open plan and private office space). The development has received positive media coverage and feedback from businesses looking to re-locate their offices to the Carriage Works. Several companies have already made WorkShed their home – including Bravedog, Carto Group, and Digital Marketing.
- 1.7. Swindon Council completed a land swap deal with Network Rail in May. The entire Carriage Works and neighbouring Bristol St. car park are now within Council ownership, paving the way for further regeneration.
- 1.8. Phase 2 of the regeneration programme involves refurbishment of Units 7, 9 11 (West Shed). Construction works shall proceed on a pre-let basis, in order to minimise financial risk to the Council.
- 1.9. Work is progressing to secure the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD) as the first pre-let tenant. UWTSD plan to set up a new Cultural Heritage Institute at the Carriage Works based on Unit 11. Lease Heads of Terms were agreed between SBC/UWTSD in December 2017.
- 1.10. Discussions with other potential tenants, in respect of units 7/9, are underway, but at this stage commercially confidential. The Council's commitment, phase 1 delivery, and completion of land swap, have inspired considerable investor confidence.
- 1.11. Following completion of the land swap, phase 2 works can proceed apace. Site investigations and design work for 7/9/11 (Jul-Sep); UWTSD to sign Agreement for Lease (Sep); submission of planning application (Oct); start of construction works (early 2019); completion of construction works late 2019. UWTSD are expected to start their first courses by September 2019 at the latest. J-Store is to provide temporary accommodation for a period of time between the Institute opening and Unit 11 being completed and available for occupation.
- 1.12. Forward Swindon is developing options for a phase 3, in consultation with planning and other Council colleagues. Phase 3 will focus on the remainder of the West Shed. Meantime, the Council will endeavour to be a responsible landlord to tenants of the East Shed (supporting local businesses and protecting income to the Council).

## **Falcon House**

- 1.13. Falcon House is owned by Standard Life Investments and is in a prominent location above the Debenhams department store in Fleming Way and opposite Kimmerfields Business District. Over time, the building has deteriorated and although it is a significant example of 'brutalist' architecture, at present, Falcon House requires attention, having been vacant for 16 years.
- 1.14. SBC and Standard Life are working on a joint proposal that will result in the refurbishment of Falcon House and create the appearance of a brand-new building where all main internal and external elements will be replaced (apart from the concrete frame). On completion, Falcon House will contribute towards the Council's Vision for Swindon and the ambition to be a model of well-managed housing growth that supports and improves new and existing communities.
- 1.15. The development will create 90 flats for rent and it is proposed that Standard Life will fund 50% of the development cost in return for SBC entering a 47-year lease, in return for 100% of the rental income. Standard Life will also undertake a scheme with Debenhams to improve the appearance of their building, to maximise the opportunity from a significant enhancement to this end of the Parade.
- 1.16. The agreement to lease is currently being finalised, with a view to concluding this by the end of July. Aberdeen Standard will undertake enabling works to remove asbestos within the building. This will allow the final surveys to be undertaken before tendering the refurbishment works. The surveys will remove a cost uncertainty and enable us to obtain a firm contract sum.

## **Aspen House**

- 1.17. A commercial agent has been appointed to market the Aspen House site on the junction of Regent Street & Temple Street. The marketing will reflect outline planning; which offers the opportunity to develop a multi-storey residential development comprising some 118 units of 1 and 2 bed apartments, Along with other suitable town centre uses such as a hotel.
- 1.18. Bids are to be evaluated in earl autumn 2018 to identify the preferred bidder to then progress the site disposal.

## **1 and 3 Faringdon Road**

- 1.19. Two heritage buildings on the corner of Faringdon Road and Catherine Street (at 1-3 Faringdon Road) have been sympathetically refurbished to bring economic uses into a vacant property that was on a prominent site on a key route through the town centre adjacent to the railway village. This has helped to create a sense of arrival to the Railway Heritage Quarter and demonstrates the Council's commitment to improving the town centre environment.
- 1.20. This development created 7,500 sq ft of refurbished space, including 8 apartments and two commercial units. Unit 3 (which includes 2 apartments and one commercial unit) has been sold at above the initial expected price. A further two flats have sold within Unit 1 and a third apartment is under offer.

## **Kimmerfields and the Bus Boulevard**

- 1.21. Following the termination of the development agreement (DA) with Muse, the Council have been working closely with Homes England to develop a new collaboration agreement and have commissioned advice to enable us to create a jointly agreed, deliverable masterplan by January 2019. We have agreed a jointly approved programme to deliver the refreshed Kimmerfields masterplan and have commissioned Savills to advise on the appropriate residential product that will transform the quality of development in the town centre whilst being commercially deliverable.
- 1.22. To understand the level of market interest in the Kimmerfields development, an advertisement seeking expressions of interest was published in the Estates Gazette and Property Week (3rd April 2018 to 4th June 2018). Some 19 expressions of interest were received and channelled through our commercial advisors Hartnell Taylor Cook (HTC) who followed up on all enquiries received. This ranged from a combination of blue chip institutional investors, residential only developers, office only developers and mixed use developers. The advertisement deliberately sought occupier-led inquiries, to kick-start development, recognising that Muse were unable to attract a commercial occupier during the time they were leading on the development. Following this exercise, interest has been received from a business seeking 100,000 sq ft of office space in Swindon Town Centre. Homes England and the Council are considering the best means of delivering this first phase of commercial space in parallel with the Masterplan refresh to meet the timelines of the anchor occupier who wishes to begin construction in 2019.
- 1.23. In addition, there has been strong interest in the hotel site, established through soft market testing.
- 1.24. Concept designs for a new bus boulevard along the length of Fleming Way from Whalebridge Junction to the Cheltenham Street car park (which will be used as a new taxi rank) have developed from the bus exchange design presented in the December Cabinet report. Further work testing the operational deliverability of this scheme is being undertaken in conjunction with bus and taxi operators. This will allow detailed technical design work to be commissioned by the Highways team.
- 1.25. A progress report is going to Cabinet in July seeking authority to enter into a collaboration agreement with Homes England; to enter into an option agreement with an anchor commercial occupier; to use Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) funding to develop designs for the interim bus facility on Princes Street car park and seek approval for the preferred concept design for the bus boulevard.

## **Corn Exchange / Locarno**

- 1.26. Forward Swindon Limited and the Council completed a Development Agreement with the owner of Swindon Old Town's most iconic building to create an exemplar mixed-use heritage development, including 80 homes and other uses. The developer has until November 2018 to achieve a planning consent for the site. It was apparent that the developer was unlikely to make this deadline as the developer had not achieved key actions.

- 1.27. The land agreement between the developer and landowner has now been concluded.
- 1.28. Security on the site has been significantly improved following site clearance and erection of a new hoarding. While the planks footpath remains open following feedback from the public, there remains the option to close this should there be ongoing security breaches or graffiti.
- 1.29. There have been ongoing meetings with the developer to ensure progress is maintained. However the Developer has requested an extension of time to submit his planning application until February 2019. This was conditionally agreed by the Town Centre Board, and FSL are agreeing heads of terms with the developer. Until these are agreed the existing Development agreement remains in place.

## **Mechanics Institute**

- 1.30. The Council does not own this building nor are there any plans to purchase it. The building's ownership may still lie with the last company that had title.
- 1.31. Nevertheless, Forward Swindon and the Mechanics Institute Trust are working together to create a proposal for the content requirements of a future uses detailed appraisal.
- 1.32. We are currently investigating ways in which we may be able to access funding via the Historic Action Zone bid to progress this project beyond future uses appraisal.