

Cabinet

7 November 2023

Blandford Waste Management Centre - Update on finance and land acquisition

For Decision

Portfolio Holder: Cllr L Beddow, Culture and Communities

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director: J Sellgren, Executive Director of Place

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Report Status: Part Exempt

Brief Summary:

This paper provides an update on the finance and land acquisition for the new Blandford Waste Management Centre. The details of the proposed Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO), to be progressed if negotiations on the land acquisition fail, are also included.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. note the financial position of the project and progress to date;
2. agree the draft Order documents, including the latest draft Order Plan, attached to this paper.

Reason for Recommendation:

To deliver works approved by Cabinet to secure critical infrastructure in Blandford for the development of a strategic waste transfer facility in central

Dorset which will provide the capacity to maximise the benefits of operational efficiency and resilience to provide business continuity.

Negotiations have taken place over a considerable time period and it has not so far been possible to reach a formal agreement. Compulsory purchase powers are therefore sought to enable the project to progress in the event that the land and necessary rights cannot be acquired by agreement.

1. Report

1.1 The Cabinet of 20 June 2023 considered an exempt report regarding the acquisition of land to the south of Sunrise Business Park, Blandford for the construction of a waste management centre. The Cabinet resolved to use the Council's powers of compulsory acquisition to secure a compulsory purchase order (the 'CPO') to acquire the land provided that the acquisition costs are within the budget approved by Cabinet. The report to the 20 June 2023 Cabinet is now appended to this Report as Appendix 1 (with the land negotiation and valuation amounts redacted for commercial confidentiality) as a public record of the Cabinet's decision making.

1.2 In addition delegated authority was given to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to authorise the continued negotiations to acquire the necessary land and new rights by private treaty if agreement could be reached.

1.3 Cabinet are invited to agree the revised draft Order Plan in Appendix 2 showing the land to be the subject of the Order.

2. Land Acquisition

2.1 A Certificate of Appropriate Alternative Development (CAAD) was determined by the Planning Authority on 25th August 2023. A CAAD is a valuation tool and is often used by landowners to support the valuation process.

2.2 The valuation and ongoing negotiations have been informed by the determined CAAD and in accordance with the delegated authority provided by Cabinet on 20 June 2023.

2.3 The engagement with the agent for the landowner continues to be positive and the preferred option remains to acquire the land through negotiation. However, the negotiations have been protracted and due to the project and financial consequences of further delay, it is necessary to continue to proceed with securing CPO powers to ensure the land can be acquired in a timely way.

3. Legal Implications

3.1 The legal implications identified in the 20 June 2023 Cabinet report remain relevant.

3.2 The draft Order and draft Statement of Reasons of the Acquiring Authority is shown in Appendix 3. The Statement of Reasons sets out the justification for the use of compulsory acquisition powers and demonstrates the requirement for a compelling case in the public interest is met. The draft Order Plan is shown at Appendix 2. This shows land coloured pink as land to be acquired freehold, and land coloured blue showing where new rights will be created.

3.3 It is considered that there are no impediments (other than land acquisition) to the scheme proceeding.

3.4 Alternative sites have been considered by officers, including an expansion of the existing Blandford Waste Management Centre. It is considered that the case for the chosen site as compared to alternative site proposals has been met.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 It was reported at the Cabinet of 25 July 2023 in the Quarter 1 Financial Management Report 2023/24 that “based on the latest cost estimates for this project funding from the East Dorset Household Recycling centre will be repurposed in order to fund the delivery of the site at Blandford”. Given the timing of the Cabinet decision, this virement of funds between projects will form part of the quarter 2 financial management paper presented to Cabinet.

4.2 An updated high level finance statement is shown in Appendix 5 as part of the project progress report update. There are sufficient funds to deliver the scheme including the cost of the CPO process and compensating the landowner.

5. **Project Plan and Risks**

5.1 Delay to this crucial infrastructure project continues to cause a high risk to the service and inefficiencies for waste collection. It is intended to continue with works that are not reliant on the land acquisition process, to include works on the Highway which is controlled by the Council. This will benefit the project in relation to the planning permission timeframe and give an opportunity to further scrutinise the construction costs of the infrastructure to ensure value for money.

5.2 An updated high level risk assessment is shown in Appendix 5 as part of the project progress report update.

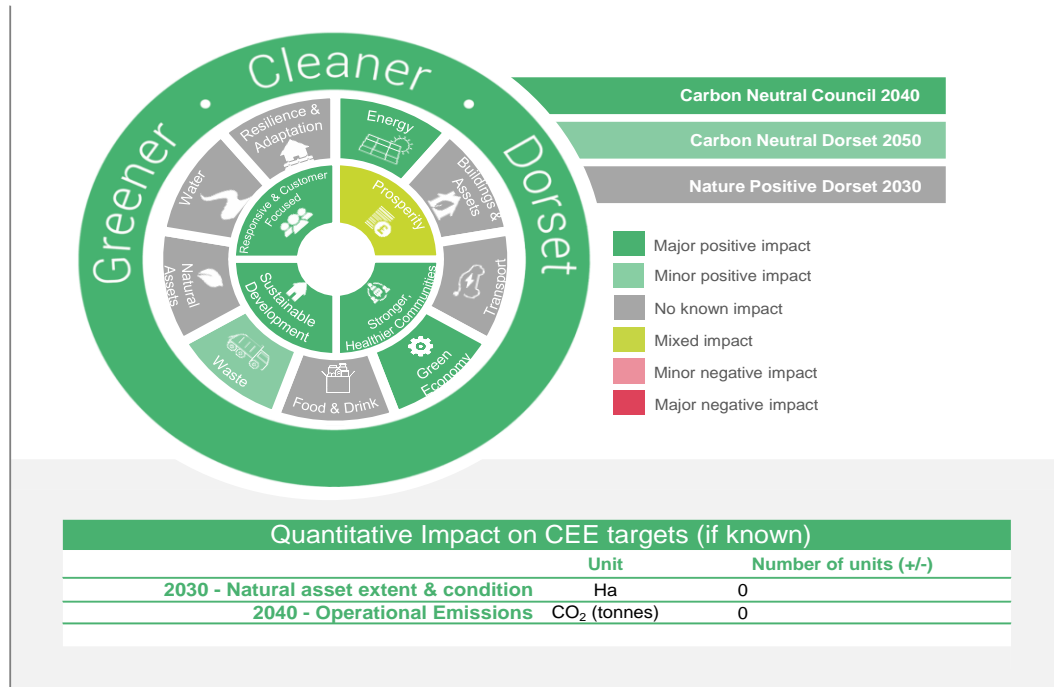
6. **Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Implications**

6.1 Dorset Council declared a climate and ecological emergency in May 2019, and has subsequently refreshed its strategy to reflect the synergies between climate, environment and adaptation. In the waste sector, the most significant way to make carbon (and financial) savings is to push waste further up the waste hierarchy and reduce, reuse and recycle waste ahead of any treatment options. The new waste management centre incorporates a much-improved Household Recycling Centre which would allow more materials to be separated for recycling compared with the current site serving the Blandford area. The new site will also allow for more diversion of waste for reuse.

6.2 Having more facilities contained in the same site for reuse and recycling will reduce the mileage residents have to travel to effectively dispose of their different waste streams. For example, the only other two sites in Dorset that have capacity on site to segregate and therefore recycle rigid plastics in Dorset is at Bridport or Portland.

6.3 As part of the council's commitment to decarbonise energy use wherever possible, the new waste management centre will incorporate solar panels to ensure that renewable energy is an integral part of the site's electrical needs.

6.4 The following is the results of the Natural Environment, Climate & Ecological Decision Wheel for the project. The accessible impact assessment and table of recommendations is shown in Appendix 4.



7. **Well-being and Health Implications**

none

8. **Other Implications**

none

9. **Risk Assessment**

9.1 **HAVING CONSIDERED:** the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Medium

Residual Risk: Medium

10. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

An EQIA on the CPO process for this project has been completed following consultation with the Council's Equality Diversion and Inclusion Officer. It is considered that there are no negative impacts associated with this proposal.

11. **Appendices – Part 1: for publication**

Appendix 1 - Cabinet report for meeting of 20 June 2023, Use of Compulsory Purchase Powers for land adjacent to Blandford Heights Industrial Estate (with the land negotiation and valuation amounts redacted for commercial confidentiality)

Appendix 2 – draft Order Plan

Appendix 3 - draft Order (table of interests) and draft Statement of Reasons of the Acquiring Authority

Appendix 4 - Natural Environment, Climate & Ecological Decision Wheel Accessible Impact Assessment & Table of Recommendations

Appendices - Part 2: Not for Publication: By virtue of paragraph(s) 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972

Appendix 5 - Project Progress Report Update

12. **Background Papers**

Cabinet, 6 April 2021, Capital programme 2021/22 Capital Programme 202122 report including Appendix 1-3.pdf (dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

Strategic and Technical Planning Committee, 4 April 2022 - Land south-east of Sunrise Business Park and north of the A350 Blandford Bypass, Blandford Forum.

Cabinet 25 July 2023, Quarter 1 Financial Management Report 2023/24