

## Background Briefing Note: Arena Planning Issues

This note on planning issues has been produced to inform the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board who wish to discuss the issue of an arena for Bristol at their meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

### 1. The Proposals at Temple Quarter

1.1 Detailed planning permission was granted on 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016 for the construction of a 12,000 capacity indoor arena at the site known as the Former Diesel Depot, Bath Road. The application reference is 15/06069/F and all application documents can be accessed here:

<http://planningonline.bristol.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=NYGUGSDNHG100>

1.2 The application was considered by the Development Control A Committee on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016. The Committee had previously deferred a decision on 2<sup>nd</sup> March for officers to “provide further information in respect of travel planning for the development, together with additional certainty that work had and would continue to take place to ensure that there were satisfactory transport measures in place”. Once this information had been received and assessed, the application was brought back to DC A Committee where it was resolved that planning permission should be granted.

1.3 Transport mitigation and measures are secured by conditions and include the following measures:

- A strategy a series of Parking Controls
- Delivery of a pedestrian and cycle access between the site and Three Lamps junction
- Upgrading, widening and reconstruction of specific footways and carriageways
- A scheme of traffic management in the local area
- A Public Transport Strategy
- A Park and Ride Strategy A comprehensive Event Management Strategy
- A comprehensive Travel Plan
- Provision of a footbridge linking the site with the River Avon path

1.4 The report to Committee considered all of the relevant planning issues, including whether the development of an Arena at the site was acceptable in principle. Relevant factors in support of the application included

- Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Planning Authorities to make planning decisions in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that development plans should allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the requirement for a range of uses, including leisure.

- Policy BCS2 of the adopted Core Strategy states that Bristol City Centre’s role as a regional focus will be promoted and strengthened. Development will include offices, residential, retail, tourism and entertainment and arts and cultural facilities.
- Policy BCS7 of the Core Strategy states that new uses which contribute to maintaining the vitality, viability and diversity of centres will be encouraged.
- Policy BCAP1 of the adopted Central Area Plan stipulates that new development in Bristol City Centre will be expected to contribute to the mix of uses in the wider area.
- Policy BCAP9 of the Central Area Plan requires that proposals for new cultural facilities in the city centre boundary will be encouraged. The policy states that a major indoor arena and complimentary leisure uses will be developed in Bristol Temple Quarter.
- Policy BCAP35 states that sites within the Bristol Temple Quarter will be developed for a wide range of uses, including:
  - A major indoor arena and complementary leisure uses;
  - At least 100,000 sq. m of net additional high quality office and flexible workspace;
  - Up to 2,200 new homes, including live/work space
  - Complementary retail and leisure uses
  - New walking and cycle routes to connect the development to the rest of the city centre and surrounding neighbourhoods.
  - Green infrastructure and public realm enhancements

1.5 In reaching a conclusion and recommending that planning permission should be granted, the following points were considered:

- The delivery of the Arena will create a major destination within the TQEZ, the city of Bristol and the South West Region.
- Together, the detailed proposals for the Arena and the outline proposals for the remainder of Arena Island will deliver the positive regeneration of a brownfield site in the centre of the city.
- Conditions will secure a range of measures that will support the development and assist in the delivery of improvements to the wider area at the appropriate time. Conditions will provide the necessary mitigation measures and monitoring in relation to the planning issues raised. The Council will be the owners and developers of the site and custodians of the area once the scheme is built out, that there can be confidence that this work will continue to completion.

## 2. Alternative Locations for an Arena

2.1 Alternative locations for an Arena would have to go through the same process that the Temple Quarter arena went through in order to obtain planning permission. Relevant guidance on the principle of development is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework as follows:

2.2 Under the title of “Ensuring the vitality of town centres”, at paragraph 23, the NPPF states that planning policies should be positive and promote town centres. The NPPF says that local

planning authorities (LPAs) should recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and should pursue policies to support their viability and vitality.

- 2.3 The NPPF also says that LPAs should allocate sites for a variety of town centre uses (including retail, leisure and cultural) to meet these needs and should assess whether town centres should be expanded to ensure that a sufficient supply of suitable sites are available. Appropriate edge of centre sites should be allocated that are well connected to the town centre if sufficient town centre sites are not available.
- 2.3 Paragraph 24 of the NPPF sets out that LPAs should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre. The sequential test requires that town centre uses should be located in town centres first, then edge of centre locations and then only if suitable sites are not available should out of centre sites be considered. The NPPF goes on to say that, when considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre. .
- 2.4 Paragraph 26 of the NPPF states that out of town proposals should be accompanied by an impact assessment that considers: the impact on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and the impact on town centre vitality and viability including local consumer choice and trade the town centre.
- 2.5 Paragraph 27 says that, where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have significant adverse impact, it should be refused.
- 2.6 Alternative proposals would also have to be assessed against Policy BCS7 of the Bristol Local Plan. This states that town centre uses (including leisure, entertainment, arts and culture) will be primarily located within or adjoining identified centres. As set out earlier in this note Policy BCAP9 specifically states that a “major indoor arena and complementary leisure uses will be developed in Bristol Temple Quarter” and this intention is repeated in Policy BCAP35.
- 2.7 Alternative locations for an Arena would also have to address the same issues that were considered with the Temple Quarter arena, especially transport. A proposal would have to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment that considers the trip generation and impacts of the proposal in the specific locality, and would also have to set out measures to mitigate the impacts.

### 3. Proposals at Brabazon Hanger, Filton Airfield

- 3.1 Planning officers are aware of interest in converting this building in order to create an Arena for Bristol. This site lies within the Bristol City Council administrative boundary, close to the boundary with South Gloucestershire, south of the former Filton Airfield. The site is currently designated as a Principal Industrial and Warehousing Area (PIWA) where Policies BCS8 and DM13 seek to retain sites in such uses.
- 3.2 This out of town location would have to be subjected to the sequential test set out above and would also need to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment that would identify measures required to mitigate the transport impacts.
- 3.3 Finally, although the building is not statutorily or even locally listed, the building is valued in the community and the benefits of retaining the building in use would be a material planning consideration.