

Agenda Item 6

For information – Update on the Planning & Affordable Housing programme in the Council Plan and work programme

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Summary

This report provides an update, since the previous update on 6 December 2023, on the Improve Planning & Deliver Affordable Housing programme in the Council Plan and work programme.

There follows a summary of the situation for each of the projects listed within the programme. A status update is included for each project. This is on a traffic light basis where green indicates that the project is going ahead without issues, amber indicates that there are impacts on delivery or timeline, and red indicates a significant obstacle threatening project delivery. All projects in this programme are in green status.

There are also projects that are not specifically listed in the plan, for this update, refurbishment of Victoria Park toilets, local plan Part ii, allocation of sites and upcoming major planning applications. An update on these is given at the end of the report.

Progress review for Improve Planning & Deliver Affordable Housing Programme:

| Project | Update | Status |
|---|--|--------|
| Take a more proactive approach to developers and developments to push forward what we want | Through pre-app discussions with developers, our strategic demands as set out in the Neighbourhood Plan, Town Design Statement and our Climate Emergency Planning Supplementary Document are made clear to developers. | |
| Create a Supplementary Planning Document detailing affordable housing | All the information to support a Frome SPD on affordable housing has been collated into a draft report to support 40% affordable housing. This will be shared and discussed with the Planning Committee to agree the next steps. | |
| Bring together a broad cross section of the community, including those that work in the support and housing sectors to give a balanced view of the problem and identify solutions | We continue to work with the Frome Area Community Land Trust | |
| Develop and promote a bigger vision of Frome so the public can see the bigger picture. | This will be part of the engagement on the upcoming Council Plan | |
| Work with the new unitary council to improve enforcement of planning within the town. | We have had an initial discussion with the asset team about how this, and how we could work together in monitoring new developments to ensure they are in line with the approved plans. | |
| Other - Collaboration, advocacy & influence across a wide range of projects important for the town | Working closely with Friends of the River Frome on the Adderwell Bridge project and the provision of a link to the Railway Station | |

Updates on other projects

Refurbishment of Victoria Park toilets

The toilets are now open, except for the changing places unit which has been registered and we are awaiting certification. The drainage to the rear of the toilet block is now finished and has resolved the flooding issues.

Speed Indicator Devices

Two new SIDs have been delivered and will be seen around the town in the next few weeks. We now have 19 approved locations, including one on Somerset Road so that we can gather data before and during the Safer Streets trial.

Local Plan update

The public consultation on the Local Plan Part II Limited Update, has started with a deadline for comments on 12th April 2024. Somerset Council has published its proposed site allocations which will provide for 505 dwellings in the Somerset East (former Mendip area).

This Limited Update is solely to address the directions of a High Court Order to update this Plan following legal errors upheld in a Judicial Review in December 2022.

The majority of housing sites identified are ones which already have planning permission and can be delivered by 2029 (the end of the Mendip Plan period).

Two sites in Frome are proposed for allocation –

- North Parade Car Park, there is a current application on the site for 18 low carbon affordable dwellings. The applicant is Somerset Council
- Land At Adderwell Road, this site has permission for 25 dwellings and work is underway. The applicant is Persimmon Homes

What's on the horizon?

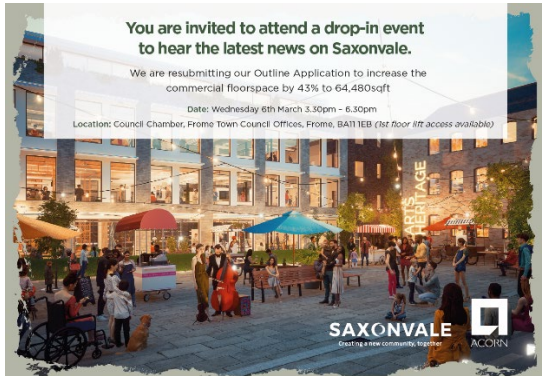
Land at Oldford

A screening application has determined that an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required, so we can expect to see an outline application for 420 dwellings and associated infrastructure soon. The site is not in Frome Parish but does adjoin the boundary.



Saxonvale

Acorn have confirmed that they will be submitting a revised Outline application for the site and held a public drop-in event at the Town Hall on 6th March. The revised application will increase the amount of commercial floorspace by 43%, bringing the total commercial floorspace to 64,480ft² (5990.39m²)



Selwood Garden Community

Revised plans have been submitted, which include new parameter plans, illustrative masterplan and the design codes for the proposed development.

