

Newcourt Masterplan Consultation Questions

March 2010



Exeter City Council

Exeter Local Development Framework

Introduction

To help meet the future housing and employment needs of the city the Newcourt area is proposed as a strategic development allocation by the emerging Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

A Masterplan will be adopted to identify how this area can best be developed to provide housing and employment areas supported by local retail and community facilities, green spaces and transport infrastructure.

A draft Masterplan plan prepared by the City Council in consultation with key stakeholders is now subject of a six week period of public consultation and this is the opportunity for the public to comment on and help shape the final Masterplan. At the end of this period consultation responses will be considered and a revised plan presented to Councillors for approval. The Masterplan will subsequently be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document and used in determining planning applications.

This document sets out some of the key issues and poses questions to stimulate a response.

Background

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) proposed 11,000 dwellings in Exeter between 2006-2026. The Panel who held the Examination in Public of the RSS recommended, in December 2007, a limited increase from 11,000 to 12,000 dwellings. The "Proposed Changes", published by the Secretary of State in July 2008, further increase the target for the City to 15,000 dwellings.

Whichever of these targets is finally set, the full development of the strategic development area at Newcourt that was the subject of the Core Strategy consultation in October / November 2009, will be required.

The Masterplan for the Newcourt area is being prepared to:

- Present a comprehensive development strategy based on the principles of sustainability, which provides for a mixture of land uses i.e. housing and employment supported by local retail and community facilities and green infrastructure;
- Identify and protect key habitats and linkages;
- Identify the development capacity of the area;
- Identify arrangements for sustainable access and movement within the site and linkages with surrounding areas;
- Provide a sound basis for allocating land in the Exeter Local Development Framework (LDF);
- Establish a clear framework within which any early planning application for development in the area could be determined.

Content

The Masterplan identifies a potential for 2300 dwellings and 16 hectares of employment land. These dwellings are in addition to the 1176 dwellings within the Masterplan Area which either have planning consent or a resolution to grant consent.

The Masterplan indicates the preferred location for two primary schools, and a focus within the site where a local centre can include community, health and local retail facilities.

The Masterplan has been prepared by Exeter City Council working with Devon County Council. The Masterplan is based on a Masterplan study commissioned from Atkins Design Solutions, however that work has been supplemented by the Growth Point Green Infrastructure Strategy and additional work prepared by Devon County Council on education provision and transport matters.

Challenges

The process of masterplanning identified key challenges for development of the area.

Promoting sustainable modes of transport over use of the car.

Promoting walking, cycling and the use of public transport has a wide range of benefits from improving health and encouraging social interaction to reducing road congestion and helping to move towards low carbon living, tackling issues of climate change and pollution.

The Masterplan promotes a pattern of development in which a network of footpaths, cycleways and linear green spaces forms the permeable movement network through the area, linking homes with key destinations and public transport hubs to encourage people to use sustainable modes for short journeys such as to the local shops, school or into the City. Providing high quality public transport links with the site both by bus and rail is also a fundamental part of the Masterplan. New cycle and pedestrian bridges are proposed.

Principal vehicular access to the area west of the railway line would be from the spine road which links the A379 in the north to Topsham Road in the south. Old Rydon Lane would be managed to provide local vehicular access only and as a cycle route.

Land is already safeguarded for a future rail halt on the west side the line and it is proposed that land is safeguarded on both sides of the line. A halt in this location would significantly improve access to the area by public transport. A pedestrian and cycle bridge crossing the railway line should be provided in this location.

Do you think the network of transport routes proposed promotes none car means of transport whilst accommodating car access?

Creating a focus and distinct identity for the area.

The extent of the Masterplan area and number of new dwellings is considered to warrant the formation of a new local centre to give the area focus and identity.

Movement routes north/south through the site are constrained in the centre of the site by the position of the golf course. This creates a central point through which a high proportion of journeys and all the public transport services have to pass. It is considered that this makes the area on the spine route southeast of Newcourt House a good site for a local centre that includes community and any local retail facilities.

Locating in this area should be enhanced by the provision of a direct link to the rail halt.

Do you think the local centre is in the best location?

Newcourt House.

Newcourt House is a Grade II Listed Building located in the centre of the Masterplan area. It is considered that this building has the potential to act as a landmark giving the Newcourt area identity and character. It is proposed that open spaces are arranged to enhance the setting of this building and provide views of its facade. Newcourt House is currently occupied by the NHS Primary Care Trust. Any proposed change of use will be assessed in accordance with national planning policy and the development plan policies.

Do you think that this is the right approach?

Provision for education.

Primary education provision is made through the allocation of land for two new two form entry primary schools as shown on the Masterplan figure.

Secondary education provision can be accommodated through the expansion of existing secondary schools.

Do you think that the locations proposed for the two primary schools are the right ones?

Location of a gypsy and traveller site.

As required by government, the City Council has participated in a County wide assessment of the housing needs of gypsies and travellers. The assessment concludes that there is a need to provide 12 residential pitches in Exeter up to 2011. A further 13 residential pitches may also be needed by 2026 in view of national estimates of likely growth in the number of gypsy households. The RSS states that 5 transit pitches will also be needed in the City.

In accordance with national government guidance it is proposed that the need for sites be met within the strategic development areas. This residential use needs to be sited in an area with the amenity required for any other residential use and sites should be of a size and in a location that takes into account the needs of gypsies and travellers, and the interests of local residents and other local occupiers of land.

A self contained site within the Newcourt Masterplan area is therefore proposed. The requirement is for a self contained site providing up to 13 pitches. The site would require half a hectare with dedicated access from the highway network. This is a residential use and as such would necessarily be provided on land considered suitable for residential use that is accessible to local facilities including schools and health centres. The site would be managed by the local authority.

To be considered suitable sites will need to:

- a) be well located on the highway network;
- b) be safe and convenient for vehicular and pedestrian access;
- c) be well located within a reasonable distance of local facilities, including schools and health centres;
- d) minimise environmental and landscape impact;
- e) protect the amenities of adjacent occupiers;
- f) have adequate levels of privacy, security, storage space and residential amenity; and
- g) provide adequate parking, including parking for visitors and for commercial vehicles related to any business activities likely to be carried out.

Three options are presented for consideration: two in the north of the Masterplan area which would be accessed from the A379, and one in the south of the Masterplan area adjacent Topsham Football Ground accessed from Topsham Road. The positions of these are shown on the map attached to this document.

Which of these options do you think is the best?

Do you think that there is a better alternative site within the Masterplan area?

Residential areas.

The Masterplan sets out how up to 2300 additional dwellings can be accommodated in 7 areas (labelled a to g on the Masterplan figure) each of between 150 and 500 units and a target density of 50 dwellings per Hectare.

Do you think that the location and distribution of residential areas is right?

Employment areas.

The Masterplan identifies 16 hectares of employment land which contributes to meeting Exeter's employment land requirements up to 2026.

The 16 hectares have been divided with two areas each of around 8 hectares (labelled y and z on the Masterplan figure) to create a better distribution of uses within the Masterplan area and create sites that may be attractive to a single occupier.

These employment areas are positioned to be visible and accessible and, whilst the importance of good road access is recognised and achieved from the A379, good opportunities are also provided to access these areas by means other than the private car and to encourage combined trips.

Do you think that the extent and location of the employment areas is right?

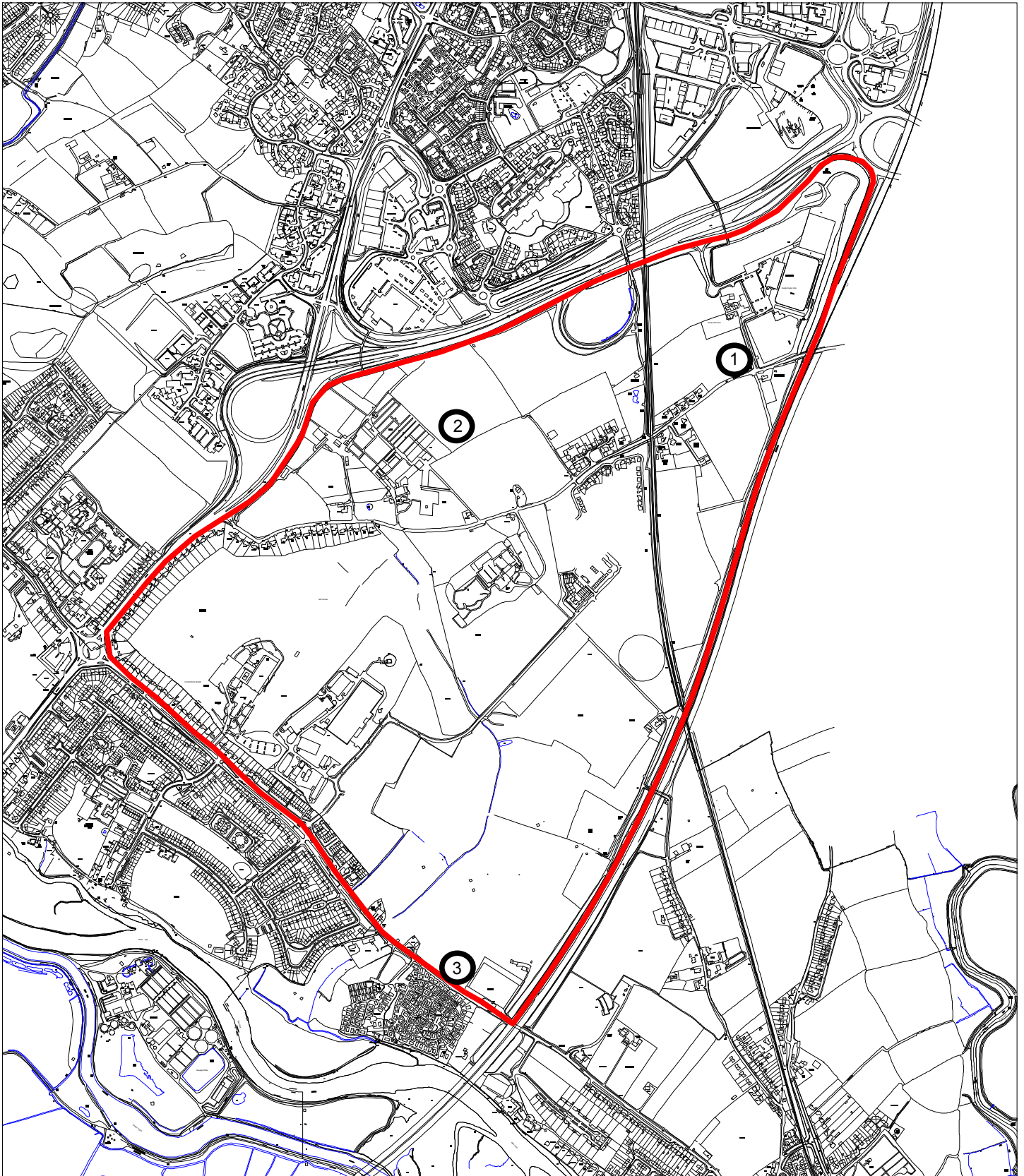
Consultation Arrangements

The consultation period runs from 1st March until 12th April. The draft Masterplan will be available to view at the City Council Offices, Central and Topsham Libraries and it will also be available to view on the City Council website (www.exeter.gov.uk). A drop in exhibition of the Masterplan material will be held at Countess Wear School on Tuesday 23rd March between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. and on Saturday 27th March between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Responses to the Masterplan consultation should be emailed to LDF@exeter.gov.uk or posted to Forward Planning, Exeter City Council, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter, EX1 1NN by 9th April 2010.

Background papers:-

Exeter Local Development Framework Core Strategy Preferred Options paper 2006
Exeter Local Development Framework Core Strategy Consultation paper 2009
Newcourt Masterplanning Study, Atkins on behalf of Exeter City Council
Transportation Access Strategy Addendum Report, Devon County Council
Education Statement, Devon County Council
Transportation Technical Report, Atkins on behalf of Exeter City Council
Strategic Air Quality Assessment, Atkins on behalf of Exeter City Council
Water Quality Impact Assessment, Atkins on behalf of Exeter City Council
Implementation Plan, Atkins on behalf of Exeter City Council
The Devon-wide Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment, University of Plymouth
Green Infrastructure Strategy, Exeter and East Devon Growth Point



Scale 1:14,000



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24/02/2010

Newcourt



Consultation options for Gypsy and Travellers sites

Planning Services, Exeter City Council, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter, EX1 1NN

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Exeter City Council