

## **TEESDALE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Report To:** EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
16 February 2009

**From:** Lead Member for Regeneration, Councillor J H Fergus

**Ward Members:** All

**Subject:** Shaw Bank Masterplan

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### **1.0 SUMMARY**

Shaw Bank is located to the north east of the centre of Barnard Castle along the A688. The site is 23Ha consisting of school sports fields, agricultural land and a disused refuse site and a temporary traveller's site. Early reports from the Barnard Castle Vision work recommended a masterplanning approach to the site, given its size and potential for business use development.

The Masterplan lays out aspirations for Shaw Bank to provide some housing, new school playing fields, improved sports and leisure facilities (including water sports area), a youth hub, transport (linking with the South West Durham Heritage Corridor cycle, footpath and bridleways), as well as a small, but prestige business park that builds on the town's strengths in science and technology, providing higher skills, and higher paid employment opportunities in bio pharmacy analytical and development, automation and process analytical technologies. Such mixed usage accords with the recommendations and spirit of the Matthew Taylor report on planning and rural economies.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Shaw Bank Masterplan is approved in principle in order to set out the Council's preference for the site to inform future development control decisions and preparation of the Unitary County Council's Local Development Framework.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Masterplan has the endorsement of the Barnard Castle Vision Partnership – One North East, Durham County Council, Teesdale District Council, Teesdale Partnership (LSP), Teesdale Marketing and Teesdale Enterprise Agency. It also brings together the aspirations of

partners including GlaxoSmithKline, Teesdale School, Teesdale Leisure Centre, Building Schools for the Future, Durham Sport, Teesdale Community Resources and the South West Durham Heritage Corridor.

- 3.2 Although the site is outside the town's currently designated Local Plan development limits, the protected route of the bypass corridor that forms the eastern boundary of the site, and the site's good relationship to the existing built up area, shows that Shaw Bank is an appropriate future potential development site. It has attracted attention from developers on a number of occasions. It was the risk of piecemeal development that led the Vision partnership to prioritise the appraisal of the site and initiate the Masterplan.
- 3.3 The North East of England Plan, Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (July 2008) identifies Barnard Castle as a Rural Service Centre and, notably, at Policy 11 (Rural Areas) requires strategies, plans and programmes (at criteria 11.2 – Economic Prosperity – a) to “provide a positive framework to capitalise on key opportunities the environment provides for the development of a range of employment uses, including the diversification of agriculture, tourism, culture, leisure and new sectors of the economy including renewables and environmental technologies”. The Masterplan's suggested approach to Shaw Bank ideally matches these regional planning policy aspirations, providing the mix of uses to develop the area for the benefit of the local community and to meet wider regional objectives.
- 3.4 With Local Government Review imminent Members will recall that work on the Teesdale Development Framework has, in line with Central Government guidance, now ceased. Work on the emerging Unitary Council's Local Development Framework (Unitary LDF) has commenced and a Core Strategy is to be prepared for consultation in the following months. The Shaw Bank Masterplan can provide a clear steer on the District Council's aspirations for the site and it can be used to help to inform preparation of the Unitary LDF. The masterplan can also be a useful reference paper when future planning applications for the site come forward, and although it will not carry the weight of an adopted Local Plan policy or Regional Spatial Strategy policy, it can be a material consideration on the basis that it arises from the aspirations of the well publicised and consulted upon Barnard Castle Vision.
- 3.5 It can be concluded that the Masterplan can provide a useful vehicle to articulate the District Council's position on Shaw Bank in the preparation of the emerging Unitary LDF and for future Development Control decisions, reflecting also regional planning policy objectives and the aspirations of the Barnard Castle Vision Partnership.

**4.0 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS**

4.1 Financial Implications: None

4.2 Risk

Risk	Category	Implications
The Shaw Bank site is developed in a piecemeal fashion	Development Control	Risk of unsatisfactory development and losing an opportunity to add value

4.3 Equality and Diversity: None

4.4 Human Resources: None

4.5 Community Safety: None

4.6 Legal Issues: None

Background papers: Barnard Castle Vision Shaw Bank Masterplan

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