

TITLE	Transfer of Land to the Council for Coppid Beech Park and Ride
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 28 May 2020
WARD	Norreys;
LEAD OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Sarah Hollamby
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement - Wayne Smith

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

The proposed Park and Ride site at Coppid Beech contributes to the Council's Climate Emergency agenda through a reduction of carbon emissions through reducing total mileage driven in private cars.

The Coppid Beech Park and Ride is located on land west of the A329(M) and allocated within the North Wokingham Strategic Development Location (NWSDL) Keephatch Beech development and was reserved in the Planning Permission for the Keephatch housing sites.

This paper is required to ensure that the Executive makes the necessary resolution as per the S106 agreement for the development of the park and ride to take place in order to transfer the Land into Council Ownership.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive resolves to procure provision of the Coppid Beech Park and Ride site. This will enable the transfer of land from the land owner in accordance with the Outline Application s106 agreement in relation to development at land at Keephatch Beech, Wokingham.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This proposed Park and Ride site contributes to the Council's Climate Emergency agenda through a reduction of carbon emissions through reducing total mileage driven in private cars.

The Coppid Beech Park and Ride is located on land west of the A329(M) and allocated within the North Wokingham Strategic Development Location (NWSDL) Keephatch Beech development and was reserved in the Planning Permission for the Keephatch housing sites. The scheme will provide around 250 car parking spaces and provide an alternative travel choice along the A329 corridor (in particular to Wokingham and Bracknell) to reduce the congestion experienced along the corridor and in the town centres during peak hours. There are currently also plans being investigated to run a new bus service through the South Wokingham SDL terminating at the new Park and Ride site.

There will also be potential in future to provide a shuttle bus from the park and ride site to Twyford Station, to provide a connection to planned enhanced rail services from that station, though this currently remains a long-term aspiration.

The site is currently under the ownership of the developers. This will only be transferred to WBC if a Park and Ride site is constructed as per the S106 agreement for the development; this agreement requires that:

“...the Council first makes a resolution (or such other determination as may be appropriate) through its Executive (or such other decision maker or decision making body as may be appropriate) that it will procure provision of the Coppid Beech Park and Ride and notifies Ashdale Land and Property Company Limited or its successor in title...”

BACKGROUND

The Coppid Beech Park and Ride scheme has been identified by WBC as a measure to help reduce congestion and manage climate emergency impacts and congestion on the A329 corridor. The Park and Ride has been a long term objective of the Council and is set out as a policy objective within the Core Strategy, North Wokingham SDL Supplementary Planning Documents and the Local Transport Plan 3.

The objectives of the scheme are:

- To support the forecast housing growth of 13,000 units by 2026 in Wokingham Borough;
- To reduce congestion on the A329 corridor;
- To encourage car drivers to access Wokingham, Reading and Bracknell town centres using public transport;
- Climate change mitigation as part of the wider programme; and
- To support other Park and Rides.

Outline planning permission (O/2014/24305 refers) was granted in November 2014, which reserves land for the provision of a Park and Ride at the area of Keephatch Beech Land, London Road. Securing the land for the Park and Ride was one of key objectives of the Keephatch planning consent. The land has therefore effectively been “gifted” to Wokingham Borough Council at zero cost to the council as long as it is used as a park and ride site. If this doesn’t go ahead, the land ownership would revert to the developer so an opportunity of securing park and ride land for free would be lost and this might later lead to future building on the site by the developer. S106 commitments from developers of the surrounding sites will fund much of the project.

The scheme is funded by the Local Growth Fund which has been allocated by the Thames Valley Berkshire LEP (£2.4M) and by S106 contributions (£652k).

The Outline Application S106 agreement for development at land at Keephatch Beech is included as an attachment; this details the procedure for the land transfer (page 28).

BUSINESS CASE

Coppid Beech Park and Ride is a project which has been a long term commitment of the council and the land for the site is set aside in the S106 agreement for use for this purpose only.

The Thames Valley Berkshire LEP has approved the funding through the Local Growth Fund and the remaining funding is available from S106 contributions and the scheme is already included in the MTFP for this financial year. In order to progress, all that is required is approval to proceed with the S106 agreement by agreeing that it will procure provision of the Park and Ride site in order for the developer to transfer the land to Wokingham Borough Council ownership.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council continues to face severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of reductions to public sector funding and growing pressures in our statutory services. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions of approximately £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	nil	Yes	
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	nil	Yes	
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	nil	Yes	

Other Financial Information

The transfer of the land will not have any implications in terms of capital or revenue. The Thames Valley Berkshire LEP has approved £2.4M funding through the Local Growth Fund and the remaining funding (£652k) is available from S106 contributions. The scheme is included in the MTFP for 2019/20 (when design and investigations commenced) and 2020/21.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

Stakeholders have been consulted through the Local Plan/Core Strategy and Planning processes for the development and will be further consulted when planning permission for the park and ride site is sought.

Public Sector Equality Duty

This is not applicable to the transfer of the land. However, as the Park and Ride site design is developed due regard will be given to the Equality Act to ensure that there are protected characteristics are considered in the final layout including particularly provision of disabled bays and accessibility to the bus stops and services.

Climate Emergency – *This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030*

The project supports the climate emergency by reducing the number of vehicles making trips into the Town Centres.

List of Background Papers

Appendix 1 - Outline Application S106 agreement for development at land at Keeppatch Beech (*Due to the size of this document it is not included in the agenda but is available on the Council's website or on request from Democratic Services*)

Contact Robert Curtis	Service Place
Telephone Tel: 0118 974 6489	Email robert.curtis@wokingham.gov.uk