

Basingstoke Canal Joint Management Committee

**For information: Update on redevelopment of the
Mytchett Canal Centre site**



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Key Issue

To give an update on the work to redevelop the Mytchett Canal Centre.

Summary

Officers have now carried out desk top studies to screen Collier's options for feasibility and have identified three solutions to be worked to a detailed feasibility stage. Tenders for the feasibility work are now being sought.

1 Options

Countryside and Estates Officers are continuing to develop a way forward to provide an economically sustainable solution for the Canal Centre.

Desktop studies have been undertaken in respect of planning and environmental considerations for each of the options presented by Colliers.

Views were sought from senior management on viability of Option 6 the *Wavegarden*, given that this is a much higher risk solution. With the risk, together with the planning and environmental constraints it was considered that this should not be put forward as one of the options to be built into a detailed feasibility study.

2 Detailed feasibility

As a result of the desk top studies, the following options were identified as deserving more detail feasibility studies:

- 2.1 *Option 3a* – Redevelopment of the site keeping as far as possible in-house management, plus building a boat basin (similar to the commenced but uncompleted 1997 planning permission).
- 2.2 *Option 5* – Major redevelopment with a minor attraction such as a maze.
- 2.3 *Option 5a* Major redevelopment with a minor attraction such as a maze AND building a boat basin (similar to the commenced but uncompleted 1997 planning permission)

Tenders are being sought from suitable suppliers to bring these options to a detailed design level. Part of the successful firms remit will be to consider who might be a suitable good quality anchor tenants, and be in a position to implement the plans should the decision be taken by Members to proceed with one of the options.

The study will need to provide

- Designed priced buildings and attractions for play and education appropriate to the location.
- Proposals that have low maintenance costs, use renewable energy and demonstrate the efficient use of resources.
- Clear recommendations regarding day to day operation.
- Identify potential tenants
- Staffing requirements
- Analysis of the limitations of the site
- Leasing/partnership arrangements
- Income
- Capital outlay
- Periodic reinvestment
- Return on Capital
- Management
- Branding
- Market testing.

All of these options include the re-provision of the visitor centre and offices, together with improved facilities for visitors, campers, canoeists and boaters. However, no further work can be done on fast tracking the facilities block, as suggested by some partners, until a master plan for the whole site has been prepared. This will ensure that a stand-alone solution for the facilities block does not interfere with overall provision of improved facilities on the site.

Sources of capital and grant funding opportunities will need to be considered once a overall plan is known.

3 Next steps

- Tenders sought from suitable firms for detailed feasibility.
- Once appointed feasibility work is expected to take around 6 months.
- Discussions with Hampshire County Council Officers over any parallel developments at Ash Lock
- Guidance from Cabinet Portfolio-holder on preferred option