

Response to the LRIE call-in from Cllr Hilary Cole, Executive Member with responsibility for Planning

- **Significant concern regarding the Council’s project management expertise and capacity to undertake this development;**

This is a matter for the LRIE Project Board.

- **A lack of confidence in the management structure of the development which fails to place a “Chinese wall” between the Council as landowner and its planning authority;**

Planning is a statutory service that performs a quasi-judicial function. Legislation and government guidance set out the process the matters that should be considered when assessing and determining applications. In addition to national guidance we have our own local plan polices that are currently being reviewed.

All planning applications follow the same process and are assessed in the same way. All information received will be published on the Planning pages of the Council’s web site as usual. Although we don’t have a planning application for this site I would expect an application of this scale, and with so much local public interest, to be decided in public by the Western Area Planning Committee.

As the Executive Member with responsibility for Planning I have full confidence in the professional integrity of the council’s Planning Officers. The Planning officers are duty bound to assess applications based on the evidence before them and I have no doubt that is what will happened in this case as it does for all other applications.

- **The question of whether a phased approach is the most appropriate rather than waiting for a full environmental assessment of the whole site to be undertaken;**

This is a matter for the Project Board but the Council’s Planning Service is available to provide formal pre-application advice as it would do for all applications of this type.

- **A lack of clarity of the market for both office space and flats as the longer-term ramifications of the pandemic are not yet understood.**

This is a matter for the Project Board although current evidence that supports the emerging Local Plan Review clearly supports the need for protecting important employment sites and more homes in sustainable locations.