

Bolsover District Council

Meeting of the Local Growth Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday 3rd September 2024

Update on Pleasley Vale Regeneration Project

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Growth

Classification	This report is Public.
Report By	Natalie Etches – Head of Business Growth Dragonfly Management (Bolsover) Limited

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

- To update Members about the Pleasley Vale regeneration project and activities which have been carried out around the site.
- To inform Members of future work and projects for Pleasley Vale Business Park.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council is fully invested to make the best use of assets within their ownership, and to find viable ways to sustain and increase revenue streams. Pleasley Vale is recognised as an important asset, for its historic and cultural importance, the stunning parkland, and its success as an industrial and commercial Business Park, as well as offering Outdoor Physical Activity opportunities from the natural assets of the vale. There is a strong commitment to ensure that the site is preserved and enhanced for future generations.
- 1.2 One of the main constraints on site relates to flood risk. A significant area of the site is within flood zone 3b (functional flood plain). A functional flood plain is an area of land where water naturally collects. The geological and geographical formation of the site within a limestone gorge, and the river Meden which flows in a west to east direction, means that in storm events or following heavy rainfall the site can become prone to flooding. This issue became particularly evident in October 2023, during Storm Babet. This extreme weather event caused the River Meden to overflow and flood areas of the site, causing damage to property and land.
- 1.3 The Head of Business Growth and the Assistant Director for Leisure, Health and Wellbeing have been working with their respective departments collaboratively to prioritise the works needed to deal with the flood mitigation and prevention measures. This will ensure continued operation of the

business park (currently insured for flood protection) and enable the Council to explore options for longer term options for the site.

2.0 Project Update

- 2.1 Effectively managing flood risk and protecting the site from future extreme weather events is of paramount importance if the site is to continue operations.
- 2.2 When the River Meden overflowed during Storm Babet, it backfilled the millpond in front of Mill 1, causing significant flooding to the ground floor of Mill 1, damaging the property of both the landlord and tenants occupying those areas, and affecting their working patterns. The financial and economic cost to this flood event is still being felt, with business operations of tenants significantly compromised. Within Mill 3, the storm water rose and broke through floor slabs within units, rendering them unsafe and therefore unusable.
- 2.3 The insurance loss adjuster has agreed to the appointment of a third-party contractor to procure and manage the contractors onsite to carry out the flood remediation works – this is anticipated to start mid-September.
- 2.4 An insurance renewal for the business park for future years is likely to increase the insurance excess, or worse – insurance companies may be reluctant to insure the site, particularly if measures to reduce future flood events are not explored and implemented. Therefore, flood prevention and mitigation measures must be a priority of the Council.
- 2.5 Beaumont Rivers are an environmental restoration company who specialise in nature recovery and water management techniques. The Council has appointed them to oversee a flood mitigation and water management project. During site visits, they inspected areas of the natural environment, and identified opportunities to mitigate flood risk on site and reinstate some of the original drainage networks.
- 2.6 Dr Hughes, a reservoirs engineer, has inspected the site alongside Jonny Ackroyd of Beaumont Rivers, and the full extent of the dam wall (146m) has been cleared by the Council's grounds maintenance team and this has enabled a more detailed assessment of the extent of works required. A Scope of Works has been agreed, and Beaumont Rivers has been appointed to oversee these works and is included in Appendix A.
- 2.7 Beaumont Rivers has undertaken early market engagement on this scope with P&D Environmental to ensure it is deliverable, and this will now be put to the market to establish some budget figures which will be presented to the Council in a future report.
- 2.8 Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (DWT) has been appointed to produce a Nature Recovery / Blue and Green Infrastructure Masterplan for Pleasley Vale, to survey and assess the current condition of the site, identify constraints and opportunities for funding, and collaboration with communities and education providers. Bringing together data from their desktop study, surveys, workshops and in-house habitat creation, DWT will prepare an ecologically coherent and visionary masterplan, which balances the interactions between existing and potential

habitat stocks, and the wider regeneration plans for the mill complex, to achieve a success for wildlife at Pleasley Vale.

- 2.9 This has been commissioned, but once this Plan is complete and works identified, a further report will be taken to Council to fund additional survey work and to conduct any capital works proposed within the Masterplan. DWT will explore opportunities for Biodiversity Net Gain, assessing the suitability to register Pleasley Vale as a Receptor Site. This is a potential income stream for the Council, and Members will be updated accordingly on the progress of this.
- 2.10 Gardener's Cottage and Coach House
Work is currently underway to oversee the renovation and re-use of the two Gatehouse properties. A scope of works has been drafted although overall progress on this element has been slow to date.
- 2.11 However, as part of this work, the project team are exploring opportunities with Vision West Notts to provide educational opportunities for students to work on the properties, developing techniques such as surveying, plan drawing and repairs, all to be overseen by the project team and Council's Conservation Officer. This will provide opportunities for students to learn about traditional retrofitting within the historic environment.
- 2.12 The project team is also in discussions to host Nottingham Trent University for a full day of project experience, where third year students look at a project within Pleasley Vale identifying constraints and exploring avenues for regeneration. The Head of Business Growth and the Assistant Director of Planning will then attend the group presentations at the university. Further educational opportunities will be explored when works commence in the natural environment.
- 2.13 The project team have also been developing a working group of stakeholders, including Leisure Services, Members, and representatives from Mansfield District Council to discuss site issues and opportunities for regeneration.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress of the regeneration project and to highlight the current situation and challenges faced on site following recent flood events.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 This report is for information only. There are no alternative options.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That members note the contents of the report.

Approved by Councillor John Ritchie Portfolio Holder for Growth

IMPLICATIONS:

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details:

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report, however it should be noted that if intervention and investment is not made into the Natural Flood Management and mitigation actions there is a risk that the insurance policy and excess could significantly increase when retendered, or even be uninsurable.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details:

There are no legal implication arising from this report

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment:

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

Details: the report sets out the work being done to address the risks of flooding within the Vale, and how opportunities to enhance biodiversity and natural flood water management will enhance the environment.

Staffing: Yes No

Details:

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

<p>Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards, or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p>Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	No
<p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i></p>	No

<p>District Wards Significantly Affected</p>	Pleasley
<p>Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Details: None</p>

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment.

Economy - drive growth, promote the district and be business and visitor friendly.

Environment - protect the quality of life for residents and businesses, meet environmental challenges and enhance biodiversity

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No	Title
A	Proposed Scope of Works (TO FOLLOW)