

STAFFORD BOROUGH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

MEETING BETWEEN DEFENCE ESTATES AND STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

DATE OF MEETING - 8 OCTOBER 2007

Officers in Attendance

Mark Limbrick - Defence Estates, Head of Planning & Construction
David Boyd - Defence Estates, Principal Planning Officer
Alex Yendole - Stafford Borough Council, Principal Planning Officer

Details

- There are two Principal Ministry of Defence land holdings in Stafford Borough Council's area at Stafford and the Swynnerton Training Camp. The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) partial review have been informed by letter (made available with these notes) of the Ministry of Defence's intentions for its operations within the West Midlands region and related implications. 2,500 new dwellings could be required for military personnel in the West Midlands region, which would contribute to the total housing demand over the RSS period. However at this time the MoD is not able to specify within which Housing Market Area this requirement may arise.
- No Ministerial decisions have been taken regarding the future use of MoD land at Stafford. What has been stated by the Ministry of Defence in its representations in relation to the West Midlands RSS is that land at Cosford and at Stafford will not become available for civilian use with a likely continuing military presence on these sites for the future.
- A number of studies are currently being undertaken which will inform the decision making process in relation to MoD sites in the West Midlands region.
- In Richmondshire, North Yorkshire Defence Estates is seeking to secure the provision of 2,250 new houses to provide for the expansion of Catterick Garrison through the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Spatial Strategy. The Panel's Report into the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Spatial Strategy stated that these extra houses would be in addition to Richmondshire District's housing requirements. The new housing at Catterick Garrison is to be developed and linked into the future development of the town with supporting social and economic infrastructure. The development is being brought forward in 3 phases of 750 houses per phase with 500 houses built specifically for service personnel and 250 houses as additional growth in terms of the Garrison and the civilian population. Clearly if the requirement is not needed the new housing would not be built.

- There are other proposals which may have implications for the West Midlands Region, including the intention to relocate the Headquarters of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corp (HQ ARRC) to Innsworth near Gloucester. Studies into the future locations of supporting elements of the ARRC are currently underway with Cosford being examined as a potential location. A statement regarding the future of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corp and its new Headquarters was made to the House of Commons in September 2007. Further information about the future of MoD land at Stafford was made available by the Minister as a response to David Kidney MP in July 2007. DB to send related information to AY.
- MoD Cosford is currently used as a training establishment. Its future use is dependent on the outcome of the Defence Training Review.
- It is too early to establish a working group concerning the MoD land at Stafford and it will not need to convene formally prior to any Ministerial decisions. However Defence Estates has met with Staffordshire County Council to discuss the current position in relation to MoD Stafford.
- When the future proposals for MOD Stafford are clearer, Defence Estates will be happy to work with Stafford Borough Council, Staffordshire County Council and other stakeholders to examine land use implications, capacity issues, military requirements and opportunities for collaboration and partnership working.
- Swynnerton is a defence training establishment which provides facilities for land based training. The provision of adequate training facilities is a key military issue and it is important that this site is maintained in the future as a requirement for the West Midlands area.
- A number of key issues are linked to the decision concerning the future of Ministry of Defence land at Stafford including issues related to future social and economic infrastructure in the town, such as housing, leisure and social activities. A key tenet of the MoD's strategic approach to developing future military communities will be to integrate them as far as possible into local civilian communities. In this context there may be opportunities for the joint provision of social and community infrastructure.
- The Ministry of Defence will not be releasing any land at Stafford in the foreseeable future. Site 1 will not be made available for housing due to potential future needs for the Ministry of Defence. There are no significant issues regarding where housing and employment could be located, although significant number of vehicles and personnel may need to be moved at any time out of the Ministry of Defence land at Stafford, so this has implications in terms of road infrastructure which need to be considered.
- The Ministry of Defence may need additional land for future use as well as redeveloping existing areas. Land next to the existing Headquarters should therefore not to considered for other uses. 22 Signals Regiment

- At the present time the Ministry of Defence has no aspirations to dispose of any land at Stafford. The key message is that following Ministerial decisions Defence Estates would wish to work in partnership with key stakeholders to ensure that any new development delivers tangible benefits to the local community.
- AY confirmed that an issues and options paper for the Core Strategy will be prepared and circulated in the New Year. Reference will be made to MoD land at Stafford, subject to agreement and details.

Date of Next Meeting January / February 2008
subject to Ministerial announcement.