

## PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION RECORD SHEET

<b>Name of decision maker:</b>	<b>Cllr Terry Douris</b>
<b>Portfolio:</b>	<b>Planning &amp; Regeneration</b>
<b>Date of Portfolio Holder Decision:</b>	<b>15 April 2013</b>

<b>Title of Decision:</b>	Archaeological Assessment of Local Allocations
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**Decision made and reasons:****Decision:**

To agree that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director - Planning, Development and Regeneration to award the contract for the archaeological assessment of five of the six Local Allocations for housing development proposed in the Core Strategy.

**Reasons:**

An archaeological assessment, to be carried out by consultants, is required to inform the masterplans that the Council is preparing for the Local Allocations. The findings from the archaeological assessment may affect the location of built development and access roads within the Local Allocations and the location of landscaping within or adjacent to these sites.

The masterplans need to be completed as a matter of urgency, to inform the draft masterplans for each site and the Pre-Submission version of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document, which is scheduled for publication in autumn 2013.

The following Local Allocations will be investigated in the archaeological assessment:

Location ref.	Site location	Further information in Pre-Submission Core Strategy
LA1	Marchmont Farm, Hemel Hempstead	Page 177
LA2	Old Town, Hemel Hempstead	Page 178
LA4	Land at and to the rear of Hanburys, Shootersway, Berkhamsted	Page 187
LA5	Icknield Way, west of Tring	Page 190
LA6	Chesham Road/Molyneux Avenue, Bovingdon	Page 198

The assessment will not cover Local Allocation LA3 (West Hemel Hempstead), because the promoters of this site are carrying out their own assessment, using their preferred consultants.

Stage 1 of the assessment is expected to cost less than £10,000 in total. The costs of stage 2 are uncertain. This is partly because the number of sites that need to be included in stage 2 will not be known until stage 1 report is produced. The total cost of both stages is likely to be under £50,000, but colleagues at the Historic Environment Unit at the County Council have advised that this figure could be exceeded if all sites require detailed assessment. Some of the Council's costs are expected to be reimbursed by

## PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION RECORD SHEET

landowners and developers who are promoting housing development on the Local Allocations.

Portfolio Holder approval will be required if the total cost of the contract exceeds £50,000. However, the process of obtaining approval once quotes have been received would delay the start of the archaeological assessment, which in turn would probably delay the timetable for the Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

In order to adhere to the Site Allocations timetable, it is requested that authority be delegated to the Assistant Director - Planning, Development and Regeneration to award the contract for the archaeological assessment.

The project brief for the archaeological assessment is attached at Appendix 1. This project brief may be subject to minor amendments following feedback from the County Council's Historic Environment team, who have been providing expert technical advice.

**Reports considered: (here reference can be made to specific documents)**

- Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) version of the Archaeological Desk Based Assessment standards and guidance 2012;
- Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC), produced by Hertfordshire Historic Environment Unit;
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

**Officers/Councillors/Ward Councillors/Stakeholders Consulted:**

- James Doe, Assistant Director – Planning, Development and Regeneration, Dacorum Borough Council
- Andrew Linden, Team Leader - Commissioning, Procurement & Compliance, Dacorum Borough Council
- Kate Batt, Historic Environment Adviser, Historic Environment Unit, Hertfordshire County Council
- Stewart Bryant, Head of Historic Environment Unit, Hertfordshire County Council

**Monitoring Officer comments:** No further comments to add to this report.

**Deputy S151 Officer comments:** There is sufficient budget provision to support this proposal. At it's February 2013 meeting, Full Council approved a 2013/14 opening balance on the Local Development Framework (LDF) reserve of £391k. Plans put forward by the service indicate that c£100k of this reserve is earmarked for the development of the master plan, including c£50k for the proposed archaeological assessments.

## PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION RECORD SHEET

**Implications:****Risk:**

If appropriate archaeological investigation work is not completed, there will be insufficient technical information to inform site masterplanning, and ultimately, site delivery. The presence of archaeological remains could have a significant impact upon the layout and capacity of the site, which needs to be established before the site can be subject to a detailed proposal within the Site Allocations DPD. If appropriate assessments are not carried out, any development on the sites would be contrary to Policy CS27: Quality of the Historic Environment, of the Core Strategy, and Policy 118: Important Archaeological Remains of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011.

**Financial:**

There is a 100k allowance within the LDF budget to support masterplanning work relating to the Local Allocations. Most costs associated with this masterplanning are being paid for by the landowners / developers. It is appropriate for Dacorum Borough Council to contribute towards some of the associated technical work. However, it should be noted that the tender brief requires costs to be broken down per site, to allow landowners / developers to reimburse the Council for costs incurred as appropriate.

**Value for Money:**

Commissioning the archaeological assessments as a single tender will be more time and cost efficient than commissioning work on each site separately.

**Options Considered and reasons for rejection:**

*Continue with normal procedures (i.e. seek Portfolio Holder approval if and when total cost of the contract exceeds £50,000) – Rejected: the process of seeking Portfolio Holder approval would delay the timetable for the masterplanning work, which would have a knock-on effect on the timetable for the Site Allocations Development Plan Document.*

## PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION RECORD SHEET

<b>Portfolio Holders Signature:</b>
<b>Date:</b>
<b>Details of any interests declared and any dispensations given by the Standards Committee:</b>

<b>For Member Support Officer use only</b>
Date Decision Record Sheet received from portfolio holder: 15/04/13
Date Decision Published: 15/4/13 <span style="float: right;">Decision No: PH/014/13</span>
Date of Expiry of Call-In Period: 22/04/13
Date any Call-In received or decision implemented: