



**Report of the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism
Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel – 23rd March
2020**

Swansea Vale Development Area

Purpose:	To provide a briefing as requested by the Board in respect of the Swansea Vale Development Project
Content:	This report includes a summary of progress to date, together with ongoing and future phases of the scheme.
Councillors are Being asked to:	Endorse the conclusions and consider the report as part of their review.
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Swansea Vale development area is a 190 hectare mixed use development area in the Lower Swansea Valley and has over the last 20 years been an important area for regeneration and investment.
- 1.2 The scheme commenced following earlier acquisitions for the garden festival and the original Swansea Vale Development Strategy was adopted in 1991. The aim for scheme was the creation of a new sector of the City with extensive opportunities for housing, employment and leisure uses set within a strong ecological and landscaped structure, much of which has been achieved to date.

2.0 Delivery of the Development Strategy

- 2.1 Whilst the land is owned by Swansea Council, development at Swansea Vale has to date been delivered via a Joint Venture with the Welsh Government (WG). It was originally set up between Swansea Council (SC) and the former Welsh Development Agency (WDA) in 1995. As part of this agreement the WDA made financial contributions to Swansea Council to facilitate the scheme. The recent agreement dated 30th March 2017, allows for the agreement to run until 31st March 2025.
- 2.2 Under the terms of this agreement the income from capital receipts and ground rent is divided between both parties in proportion to financial contributions made into the scheme by each party. It is intended however that all income will be used to fund the scheme until complete. SC hold on trust WG's share for investment which they authorise as required. This arrangement has been enabling development of this area for the last 20yrs.

3.0 Policy Context and Masterplan

- 3.1 The site is allocated as a Strategic Development Area (SDA) in the adopted Local Development Plan (LDP) under Policy SD1, which sets out mixed use development proposals for the site and includes an indicative masterplan (attached).
- 3.2 New planning guidance, flooding issues, demands and constraints have had considerable implications for the area and a comprehensive review of the strategy was undertaken to respond to changed circumstances. The current Swansea Vale Development Strategy was adopted by the Council in February 2013 and has informed the preparation of the Swansea Vale Strategic development area policy (SD 1) within the Swansea Local Development Plan. The Strategy and policy confirms that the area still has the potential to deliver a high quality, sustainable mixed use development with an important role to play in the area's economy.
- 3.3 The Development Strategy provides guidance on appropriate land uses, access, green infrastructure, and character and design aspirations for the area and was

informed by a robust evaluation process including assessment of environmental, flood risk, transportation socio economic and planning policies.

- 3.4 The Strategy and LDP identifies a series of development aspirations for the main area set within a green landscape structure. The areas are identified on the plan as Riverside Business Park, Central Business Park, Tregof Village, Llansamlet East and Peniel Green sites.

4.0 Development to date/Outputs

- 4.1 To facilitate investment at Swansea Vale in excess of £25 million has been spent by the JV and through grant assistance such Objective 1. Works included construction of major infrastructure such as a new bridge interchange crossing of the River Tawe, new service and utility works, new highways and connections to the M4 motorway, compulsory acquisition of land, reclamation, and extensive structural landscaping. To create an attractive new site for inward investment.

5.0 Riverside and Central Business Parks

- 5.1 The Riverside and Central business parks are located on the western side of Swansea Vale south of junction 45 and include a total area of 43 hectares/104 acres. These areas are allocated for good quality manufacturing and office uses. Some 700,000 sqft of commercial floorspace has been built in these areas leveraging £70 million of private sector investment with over 2500 people employed.
- 5.2 Notable occupiers include Western Power, DVLA, AAH, Glass Systems, NTC and Menzies.

6.0 Tregof Village and Llansamlet residential areas.

- 6.1 Two phases of Tregof Village and the site at Llansamlet West have been completed and comprise of some 293 homes. Further land releases at Tregof phases 3, 4 and 5 are proposed which could support around 300 additional dwellings including affordable homes. A cluster of small scale commercial and community uses is also proposed. A community Resource centre has been built and a new playground facility provided.
- 6.2 Additional residential development is also proposed in the long term at Llansamlet East subject to provision of adequate infrastructure by Welsh Water/Dwr Cymru.

7.0 Public open space and Informal recreation

- 7.1 Swansea Vale has extensive areas of natural green space and ecological rich habitats some of which are used informally for recreation and amenity space by the local community.
- 7.2 There are extensive areas of structural landscaping which enhance the setting for new developments particularly along principal highways and the riverside path.

8.0 Flood Prevention Works

- 8.1 A £7.7m Welsh Government/European Convergence funded flood risk mitigation scheme was implemented in 2012 by Swansea Council in partnership with Natural Resources Wales. This scheme involved the raising and re alignment of existing flood defences, and a number of other infrastructure improvements. The scheme provided an improved standard of flood protection (1 in 100 years) to businesses and residents from flood events arising from the River Tawe.
- 8.2 Further flood risk mitigation works are required to mitigate risks of flooding from the Nant Bran on areas of land to the East of Swansea Vale area.
- 8.3 Some of the land uses were re allocated as part of the Strategy review and a Flood Evacuation protocols plan prepared with partners to manage strategic flood risks however development proposals will still require site specific FCA's .

9.0 Current Position and Challenges

- 9.1 A FPR7 report which was taken to Cabinet in 2018 reported on a new phased programme of implementation which has been devised to enable the full potential for development and enhancement of Swansea Vale to be realised. The programme will require some capital investment from the JV to overcome a range of technical and infrastructure issues and deliver a range of environmental enhancements.
- 9.2 Ecological surveys have recently been undertaken to enable the preparation of an ecological management plan for the whole of Swansea Vale together with mitigation measures for any loss of habitat during the release of the next residential phases at Tregof 3, 4 and 5.
- 9.3 A detailed Development and Marketing brief is in preparation to support the disposal of the remaining sites at Tregof (TV3, 4 and 5). These will be brought forward within the current LDP plan period once ecological issues are resolved.
- 9.4 Recent changes in legislation including; revised TAN15, SUDS(Flood and Water management Act) and the Environment(Wales)Act2016 have presented new challenges to be overcome by the JV in the future.

10.0 Future Phases of development

10.1 The Development Strategy incorporates a comprehensive package of projects for delivery over the coming years. Whilst the long term success of the scheme will depend largely upon private sector investment, it is clear that the public sector will also continue to have a crucial role to play in facilitating the ongoing development of Swansea Vale. In order to achieve the overarching vision for the site, there are key preparatory and enabling initial phases of the development which the Joint Venture partners will need to proactively deliver and these include the implementation of flood risk management, site mitigation measures, undertaking feasibility work and where necessary, the provision of infrastructure to facilitate the planned levels of development where required.

10.2 Each element of future expenditure and any disposals will require the formal agreement of each of the JV partners. It is intended that the works will be funded by CCS and WG funds currently held on trust and supplemented by new capital and revenue receipts. The new agreement does not require either party to input any new capital funding into the project.

11.0 Conclusion

11.1 Despite significant issues for Swansea Vale in recent years, including flood risk, ecology and utility capacities together with a financial/property crisis which have halted/delayed progress the current revised Strategy/LDP has shown that the area still has potential to complete the delivery of a high quality, sustainable mixed use development with an important role to play in Swansea's economy.

11.2 Future infrastructure, ecology, landscaping and marketing requirements for Swansea Vale will be delivered by the self- financing principals of the Joint Venture with income from capital receipts/capital reserves within the JV being used to implement enabling actions to ensure delivery of the objectives for the area.

Appendix A - Swansea Vale

-  Outward facing edge onto protected open space
-  Spine Street with active frontages
-  Cycle path / footpath
-  New/enhanced off site highway
-  Safeguarded Canal route
-  Higher Density Residential
-  Low-medium density residential
-  Primary School
-  Employment
-  Commercial floor space with residential above
-  Park and ride sites
-  Conservation Area
-  Key Areas of Public Access Greenspace
-  Active recreation provision

