

FAQs

Brimscombe Port Public Consultation (10.08.2022)

Question	Answer
The Canal	
Are you working with the Canal Trust on the location of the basin & finding the old canal route to avoid additional re-instatement costs?	Yes. Stroud Valleys Canal Company (SVCC) of which the Cotswold Canal Trust is a member, is a key stakeholder in the redevelopment and will ultimately be the owners of the reinstated canal. We have been and are continuing to work with them on the details of the canal and basin. Although a large part of the Port was originally in water, the design of the canal follows part of the original route and the basin is in the same location. The route has been approved by SVCC and the Environment Agency.
How much are the canal community contributing financially?	SVCC has contributed to the project by transferring its freehold interest in the site to the Council, in return for the reinstated canal and basin being transferred back to it on completion.
Who will manage the moorings & get the mooring fees?	SVCC will be managing the moorings and will receive the mooring fees to enable it to maintain the canal into the future.
How will the mooring area be kept fresh and the water not become stagnant?	The canal and basin will need to be fed, probably through a mix of water sources (e.g. ground water, surface water discharge and abstraction from the River Frome). The details of these are being finalised with SVCC and the Environment Agency to ensure the water is kept fresh and flowing.
How & where will services be provided to the canal boats (fuel, fresh water, black and grey water disposal, maintenance facilities, loading capability etc)?	SVCC has specified what facilities will be required. The detail and their location will now be worked up and agreed with SVCC. There is a craning area designed as part of the infrastructure, to get boats in and out of the water for the residential moorings until the canal is connected up.

Question	Answer
The Community Centre	
<p>How much will it cost to build, how will it be funded, is it a good use of money given existing local facilities within the vicinity of the site & is it currently being prioritised ahead of critical services such as health and education?</p>	<p>Land has been offered to the Parish Council as part of the redevelopment. Build costs will depend on the final design which will be agreed with the Parish Council and the local community. The Council is working with the Parish Council to decide how the cost of the construction and fitting out can be funded, and the building managed and run.</p> <p>Brimscombe Port is the destination at the eastern end of Stroudwater Canal. As well as providing facilities for the local community it has, in part received a significant amount of public funding to realise wider economic and social benefits and a thriving community centre is an important part of the vision for the site. The District and Parish councils are not responsible for providing health and education services so any funding from them will not be being prioritised above those services.</p>
<p>Who will maintain it & what will it be used for? Is it for the existing community or for the benefit of the canal community/visitors?</p>	<p>The proposed design is a flexible space that can be used in different ways at different times of day, with both indoor and outdoor spaces. The final uses will depend on what comes out of the discussions with the Parish Council and consultation with local groups and the local community. The Community facility is expected to be for both the local community (current and future) and for the benefit of canal users and visitors.</p>
<p>Could the retail centre be moved to the other side of the canal and the open space be located next to the Salt House as there is more parking available to the north side of the canal and so it makes more sense to locate activities that require parking on that side?</p>	<p>The team is still considering all options for location of the commercial and community facilities. Parking is obviously an important consideration and must be viewed in the round with residential parking requirements, pedestrian footfall, public visibility, servicing and delivery logistics, and access for both new residents and visitors from further afield. We are seeking to encourage visitors to these facilities to use sustainable means of transport but acknowledge that there will be cars coming to the site that will require retail parking and adequate provision will have to be available regardless of whether access is from the north or south.</p>

Question	Answer
Residential Development	
How many housing units are planned, and how many bedrooms will they have?	The proposals currently contain 152 homes in a mix of 1-, 2-, 3- and 4-bedroom houses and flats.
What does affordable housing mean? Is it average house prices in Stroud?	<p>Affordable housing is defined by the UK Government and is provided to specified eligible households who are unable to rent or buy on the open market.</p> <p>The proposal is for 30% of the homes to be affordable housing and will be split with 50% affordable rent and 50% shared ownership.</p>
How is the 30% affordable housing going to be funded? Is the 30% likely to be reduced given the viability issues associated with the site?	Delivering 30% affordable housing was a requirement of the development brief for the site and included as part of St Modwen homes bid. This requirement will be incorporated into the Development Agreement, so is not just dependent on the planning process where arguments concerning viability can be made by developers. Once built by St Modwen Homes, the affordable units will be bought by either the Council or another Registered Provider (Housing Association) so it is effectively funded by both parties.
How will the buildings be constructed & what level of sustainable design will the buildings be built to?	<p>As well as having highly efficient building fabric, the houses will be provided with heat pumps and the apartments with direct electric heating. There will be no gas or other fossil fuels installed at all.</p> <p>The development will be provided with a local 'smart grid', consisting of a large number of solar panels and a large communal battery. This will enable the development to maximise the benefit of on-site renewable energy– delivering substantially reduced running costs.</p> <p>All the buildings will comply with the interim uplift to Building Regulations Part L and will be net-zero ready.</p>

Question	Answer
Employment	
Where will the employment opportunities be located within the development & how many permanent jobs will be created on the site?	<p>The construction phase of the development will create a large number of jobs in the local area. St Modwen Homes have committed that a minimum of 40% of the workforce will be sourced within 30 miles of Stroud – and a minimum of 12% of their staff will be trainees or in formal education.</p> <p>In terms of the completed development, the employment opportunities will depend on who the occupiers/buyers of the non-residential elements of the development are. These are still being determined so it is impossible to say exactly, but clearly there will be jobs created on the site.</p>
Infrastructure Works	
Will the infrastructure works commence prior to obtaining permission for the development?	The infrastructure works are planned to start in early 2024. Brimscombe Port is a complicated site and there are a lot of details and approvals to work through before work can commence. We are targeting obtaining planning for the development in late 2023.
Transport & Travel	
How many parking spaces will be available for cars (including residential, moorings, commercial, visitors, existing users), bikes and cargo bikes & where will they be located?	We have not yet fixed the final number of spaces proposed. We will liaise with the local planning authority to balance the many competing requirements and the final location and allocation of spaces. Bicycle and cargo spaces will be conveniently located within secure stores and communal lobbies along main routes and adjacent to entrances throughout the proposal. We will share more details as they become available.
How many EV chargers will there be?	Every house and apartment will be provided with an electric charging point plus a proportion of the visitor and other spaces. The final number of spaces to be provided is under discussion with the local authority.
How will active travel & car sharing be integrated into the development?	A detailed proposal has not been agreed at this stage, but active travel and car sharing will be an important part of the forthcoming proposal to encourage sustainable and healthy travel choices for both residents and visitors to the site. We anticipate this will likely include car and bicycle clubs.

Question	Answer
Transport & Travel (Continued)	
Will there be segregated cycle lanes with potential to link to the proposals in the Golden Valley route vision created by parish councils along the A419?	We are aware of the proposals shown in the Golden Valley route vision and will seek to provide improved cycle access through our proposal that are able to tie into the wider strategy for the area.
What are the movement projections?	A transport specialist will be appointed as part of the applicant's design team, so results of their surveys and projections are not yet available. We will share more details as they become available.
Education & Healthcare	
How do the Council propose to ensure public services such as doctors, dentists and primary schools have adequate space to meet demand?	This will be assessed through the planning process where mechanisms such as planning conditions and planning obligations will ensure that any impacts on public services and other wider issues are adequately mitigated.
Could the Council take over one of the proposed block of flats and re-purpose it for education, childcare and healthcare? Could part of Brimscombe Mills be used?	<p>The site is allocated in the Local Plan to deliver a minimum of 150 houses. Repurposing any of the residential blocks would reduce the potential number of houses achieved and would not be in accordance with the Output Specification for the site. This would mean that more public funding would be required to fill the inevitable viability gap that this would create. An element of education, childcare and healthcare could be included within the community facilities, the details of which are still to be finalised.</p> <p>Brimscombe Mills is owned privately and is not available and the Council is not able to subsidise those types of uses.</p>
Is there already a wider plan in place to cater for the very significant change in the population of our community? If so, can we see it alongside the next presentation on the Port	Future housing requirements, services and infrastructure are forecast and planned for through the Local Plan for the whole of the district. Specific impacts and additional needs arising from this development will be addressed through the planning process.
How would you propose to avoid creating a significant increase in the number of car journeys, and meet the Council's own net carbon zero targets, if these services are not to be based directly in the community?	A transport assessment will be carried out prior to a planning application being submitted which will assess car journeys and ensure adequate measures are put in place if the results indicate a requirement to do so.

Question	Answer
Sustainability & Biodiversity	
How much electricity is expected to be generated by the PV panels?	We expect the development as a whole to generate in the region of 600MWh per year.
How is the 10% increase in biodiversity being measured? What is the baseline, when was it measured & who measured it?	It is measured using Natural England's biodiversity metric which is approved for use by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs. Ecology surveys were first carried out on the site in 2015 by Wild Service. The baseline is set out in the Environmental Statement dated July 2020 prepared in support of the infrastructure application.
Where will the 'nature trails' be located?	The specific locations for trails are being developed by the landscape architect and ecologist. We will share more details as they become available.
Are there any plans for dealing with light pollution?	We will produce a detailed lighting design that will balance the need to provide a safe, secure environment with the need to minimize light pollution. This information will be submitted and approved as part of the detailed planning application but is not available yet.
Other	
Has the developer considered buying out the Carpet Warehouse & the Nelson Trust to expand & significantly improve the overall development?	This has been considered and discussions have been had, but this is not currently part of the proposals.
Can we see more realistic and detailed drawings including a plan showing the impact on the wider community as SDC's responsibility is not restricted to the port boundary?	Yes. We will share more detailed drawings as they become available. In relation to the impact on the wider community, this will be assessed through the planning process where mechanisms such as planning conditions and planning obligations will ensure that any impacts on public services and other wider issues are adequately mitigated.
Can the proposed development be delivered given the viability issues associated with the site? If it can't who decides what compromises will be made & when will they be made?	Additional public subsidy has been secured for the project in order to ensure the viability of the site and this has now been tested through the procurement process and St Modwen Homes' successful bid. The planning process may impact on what can be delivered if any unforeseen significant changes are required. Any consequent changes would be agreed between the developer and the District Council.

Question	Answer
Other (Continued)	
<p>What is the process including timelines for engaging with the existing community?</p>	<p>A number of Focus Groups will be held during October and it is anticipated that more will be held before the end of the year. Meetings will also be held with SDC Planning and the South West Design Review Panel in order to progress to the detailed design stage. Once we have a detailed design, a second public consultation event will be held in the new year in advance of the submission of the planning application in the Spring.</p>
<p>Will the SDC Canals Project Community Engagement Officer (once appointed) be involved?</p>	<p>This officer's role is for the wider canal project and Phase 1b in particular, but we are working closely with the canals team and will continue to do so.</p>