



Seashell Trust Proposed Site Development Frequently Asked Questions

Why does Seashell Trust want to develop this land? What will the money be used for?

Our current buildings were developed in the 1950s. Over the years the needs of our students have become more complex, requiring specialist interventions and equipment. Some of the buildings have been adapted extensively but many are at their structural and functional limits. We are therefore seeking to redevelop the school and improve and extend the sports, leisure and recreational facilities.

Although costs and funding sources are still being worked up and refined, we envisage that we will be able to raise some of the money through a combination of cash reserves, loan financing and fundraising. Unfortunately, this does still leave a significant shortfall which can only be raised through the sale of some land to the north of the campus.

What other funding options has Seashell Trust explored? Would it be possible to develop only part of the land?

We have explored the use of cash reserves, loan financing and fundraising, each of which will contribute towards funding the campus project. Unfortunately there is still a shortfall which must be met through the sale of land. This has only been considered as an absolute last resort; if there was a viable alternative source of funding this would have been pursued in the first instance.

The final costings and financial information are in the process of being worked up and are also being scrutinised by the Council. This information will form part of the planning application and will therefore be able to be reviewed and commented upon as part of the planning application consultation. Our aim is to be as transparent as possible while noting that costs and funding sources can vary over time.

Why are the Trust looking at a housing development, rather than another use for the land? Which developers will you approach for the Sales Tender? Does this include commercial developers?

The planning application will establish the principle of residential development at land to the north of the Seashell Trust campus. No other forms of land use will be included in the application and therefore no commercial development will be delivered at the site. Discussions with housebuilders are still at a very early stage and we're not yet able to advise which developers have been approached. As the planning application is being submitted in outline form, detailed layouts which would need to be informed by a housebuilder will not form part of the proposals.

The reason that we want to deliver housing at the site rather than another land use is that this will give us the best return on the land sale which means that less land will need to be developed to raise the required amount of funds.

How many residential houses will need to be built at the site to fund the campus project?

As costs and revenue sources are still evolving as the planning application is worked up, we can't yet say for certain how much housing will need to be delivered to meet the shortfall in funding. We do envisage at this stage that we may require around 23-25 acres of land, although the ultimate number of houses that will be built will depend on which developer is brought on board to deliver the proposals.

What impact will this have on local traffic, schools, GPs and the wildlife and environment?

The impact on traffic, local infrastructure, wildlife and the environment are being considered in further detail by technical consultants who are carrying out appropriate survey and assessment work. This survey and assessment work will all form part of the planning application. It is our responsibility to ensure that the development will not have an impact which would be significantly adverse. Upon submission of the planning application these are all important factors that Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council will take into consideration in determining the planning application. If the proposals will have a severely adverse impact on local services, traffic, the environment and/or wildlife, the planning application will be recommended for refusal.

If this is developed, what will be the impact on the division between Heald Green and Handforth/Cheadle Hulme?

We are looking to propose a scheme which will retain a core green wedge running from north to south which would ensure that these settlements maintain a degree of separation.

How did you publicise your plans? Why did you publicise them this way?

Our site development proposal has a discrete page on our website and details have been posted on our Facebook page and our Twitter account. Our 450 staff were informed via staff briefings. Families of our students and users of our Children's Able and Disabled Sports (CADS) programme and our sports facilities were informed by email.

We invited our immediate neighbours to a public consultation event which was held at Seashell Trust on Wednesday 11 November from 10am to 8pm. The invitation to this event was in the form of a letter from our Chief Executive, Mark Geraghty, on Seashell Trust letter-headed paper, accompanied by a copy of an information leaflet, which also appears on the web page on our website.

This letter and information leaflet were hand delivered by a team of Seashell Trust staff, their families and a number of dedicated Seashell Trust volunteers to approximately 3,500 local households and businesses including our immediate neighbours.

Distribution was undertaken this way as it was a cost effective option requiring no postage or delivery costs. As we are a charity we are looking to reduce costs where possible and the postage costs associated with 3,500 leaflets is significant.