

Site Assembly Strategy - information for businesses

This means bringing together all the parcels of land needed for the development.

The City Centre South scheme, once implemented, will transform some of the most tired and outdated areas of the city centre, including Bull Yard, Shelton Square, City Arcade and Hertford Street. The Council's vision for the scheme, which the Council's Planning Committee resolved to grant Planning Consent for on the 22 April 2021, is for a vibrant mixed use development including new homes, hotel, retail, cafes, restaurants, leisure, office and community uses together with improved public realm and car parking spaces.

The Council is keen to ensure that businesses affected by the planned City Centre South development are kept informed of progress and understand what this may mean for them.

This information below sets out how that work will be carried out, along with how any land and property will be bought. It should give anyone affected by the scheme the information needed.

Information included:

- Background details on City Centre South
- How communications and engagement will take place
- The relocation, re-provision and support offer
- Key information about the compulsory purchase order (CPO) process (Including links to Government booklets that provide more details on compulsory purchase process and compensation)
- Your rights, including blight.

Following consultation, an outline planning application for the City Centre South scheme was submitted to Coventry City Council's Planning Department on 19 November 2020. Planning Committee considered the application on the 22 April 2021 and resolved to grant Consent for the scheme.

Background

The plans for City Centre South cover the area outlined in red in the plan above and include:

- Between 900 and 1300 residential dwellings
- Hotel with up to 150 rooms
- A mix of non-residential uses including retail, food and beverage (including hot food and takeaway), leisure, office, community and cinema uses
- Between 90 and 300 car parking spaces (private)
- High quality new public realm

You can see more detail in the [planning application](#).

Most of the land is owned freehold by the Council, but many shops, businesses and other properties are leasehold and owned and occupied by many different parties. The Council will work with leaseholders to try and find an agreed solution for purchases, and will also look at the possibility of businesses relocating to the new development once complete.

Where agreement cannot be reached, the Council will make a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) – as explained in the Compulsory Purchase section below – to acquire any remaining interests using its statutory powers. Any CPO will be prepared in accordance with Government guidance and best practice. The Council's decision on whether or not to make a CPO is expected to take place towards the end of this year with the site likely needing to be vacated on or after 31 January 2023.

Communication and Engagement

The Council will always try to maintain a continuing dialogue with all owners and occupiers of land required for the scheme and will use reasonable efforts to contact all those affected. This will include information on the current status of the scheme; the current timetable; and the impact of the scheme on their property. All parties will be invited to discuss their circumstances and raise any questions with the Council or its advisers, Deloitte.

Communication methods will include one-to-one meetings, emails, telephone calls, periodic 'surgery sessions', or regular newsletters.

The Council will respond promptly to all enquiries and a dedicated email address has been set up at CCSBusinessSupport@coventry.gov.uk.

Negotiations, Relocation, Compensation and Support

The Council will use reasonable efforts to acquire all business and property interests by agreement and will use a range of approaches, including early acquisitions, options and conditional contracts.

In order to assist businesses and traders who are required to vacate as a result of the CCS Scheme, the Council has instructed local property agents Holt Commercial Ltd to maintain a schedule of retail premises available to let in the local area. If you would like access to this schedule, please contact Chris Hobday:

Tel 07889 764350 email chris@holtcommercial.co.uk

There may be opportunities for displaced occupiers to relocate to the City Centre South development on market terms at the time. This will be dependent on a variety of factors, including the planned retail mix within the development.

There are two general categories of land interests to be acquired: commercial leases held from the Council with lease expiry after the land is expected to be required for the development (currently expected to be January 2023), and those with lease expiry before that date.

Category 1: Lease expiry (or date on which the Council can “break” the lease) is before the date by which the property is required for the development (currently expected to be January 2023)

Where the Council is able to bring leases to an end as landlord before the date the property is required for the development, it will do so. Depending on the lease terms, this may require the Council to pay compensation under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.

Category 2: Lease expiry (or earliest date on which the Council can “break” the lease) is after the date by which the property is required for the development (currently expected to be January 2023)

The Council is actively engaging in negotiations with occupiers and this engagement will continue in parallel with the compulsory purchase process. Depending on the circumstances a range of potential agreements are being explored with affected occupiers, for example:

- a purchase price to enable the business to vacate at an agreed time without relocation
- an early acquisition so that the business can relocate immediately to allow a lease to be surrendered
- an option to relocate back into the new development in future
- an arrangement where there is an extended notice period before your property is acquired
- an acquisition conditional on confirmation of the CPO and/or other matters.

The Council will deal with all occupiers on a fair and reasonable basis. However, some leaseholders will be more significantly affected than others, and a flexible approach will be taken to take all circumstances into account.

As part of any agreement, the Council will reimburse the reasonable professional fees incurred in taking professional advice. These would usually comprise the fees of a chartered surveyor (who is experienced in dealing with compulsory purchase matters) and legal fees in documenting any agreement that is reached. These fees will be reimbursed by the Council as long as the fee basis is agreed in advance of work commencing.

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) operates a helpline for people affected by compulsory purchase. They will put you in touch with a local experienced surveyor in your area who will provide a 30 minute consultation free of charge. The **RICS Helpline number is 024 7686 8555**.

Relocation

For businesses looking to relocate (either permanently or temporarily):

1. The Council and partners will keep an updated record of available units and will help those affected businesses that wish to relocate to do as and when possible.
2. For businesses interested in relocating to the new centre once complete, there is the possibility of relocating to the new City Centre South scheme on market terms at the time. The offer of accommodation in the Scheme will be dependent on a variety of factors, including the planned retail mix within the development. Other available Council properties will also be looked at for relocation needs.
3. When relocation back into the new City Centre South scheme is not possible, or business owners do not wish to take space in the new scheme, they will be helped to relocate to alternative nearby premises.

Existing commercial occupiers who may wish to relocate back to the completed development

The Council and SPG want to engage with existing retailers and occupiers who may be interested in taking commercial space in the completed development. The information below sets out the timing of, and process for, more detailed discussions and to ensure that appropriate and consistent action is taken by the Council and the Developer in response to expressions of interest and other enquiries.

It is important to note that any requests for commercial occupiers to relocate within the Scheme will be considered on their merits having regard to factors that include covenant and the tenant mix sought by the Council and SPG, the alternative options available to the displaced occupier and the ability to maintain continuity of trade during relocation (i.e. the new unit not being ready for occupation prior to demolition of the existing unit). Notwithstanding this, the following stages are proposed:

Early Engagement Period

The early engagement period is the period, from now, up until the date that the Developer commences the marketing of the first commercial units in the CCS scheme to existing retailers and occupiers. Whilst the date cannot be confirmed at present, this will be a date before the commercial units are marketed more generally.

From now and until the developer markets the commercial opportunities, any expressions of interest from existing retailers should be provided either to the Council or Deloitte (property advisors to the Council). Deloitte will acknowledge this interest and compile a Register of Expressions of Interest that they will keep updated and issue to the SPG on a monthly basis.

To discuss expressions of interest, please contact Helena Casement, Senior Surveyor at Deloitte LLP:

Tel: 07810 620934

Email: hecasement@deloitte.co.uk

The Marketing Period

Once marketing of the first commercial units in the CCS development to existing retailers and occupiers starts, the Developer will contact all the registered parties and provide a named contact and set up initial meetings with each of the registered parties. It is envisaged this contact will be made during 2024.

At these initial meetings, the Developer will provide more details on the size and configuration of commercial units in the scheme, the rents (and other lease terms), and any other issues relating to the occupier mix being sought. If appropriate, negotiations will then continue on a case by case basis between the Developer and the individual tenants (or their agent).

General

During both the Early Engagement Period and the Marketing Period, the Council and Deloitte will continue to engage with all occupiers in accordance with the wider Site Assembly Strategy set out here.

Compulsory Purchase

Where, despite reasonable efforts, it is not possible to acquire all required interests by agreement, it may be necessary for the Council to make a CPO to enable the scheme to proceed within a reasonable timescale. The decision to make a CPO will be taken by Cabinet following consideration of a full report into the details of the interests to be acquired, the benefits of the scheme and the impacts on those affected. An Equalities Impact Assessment will be prepared, the results of which will be reported on to members to inform their decision making. However, the Council cannot use the CPO to acquire any land interests until it has first been confirmed by the Secretary of State. The Council will send the

CPO to the Secretary of State for review who will make the final decision on whether or not the CPO will come into effect.

Preparations for the making of any CPO will be undertaken in accordance with government guidance and best practice. All those with interests covered by the CPO will be notified and will have the opportunity to make representations to the Secretary of State before the decision on whether or not to confirm the CPO is made. Site notices will be used where it has not been possible to identify the owner of an affected right or interest. Copies of the CPO and all supporting documentation will be made publicly available for review in accordance with the statutory rules and guidance.

All those owners of rights and interests that are acquired by CPO will be able to submit a claim for compensation assessed in accordance with statute.

- **Further information on the compulsory purchase process (PDF).**
- **Information on how compensation is assessed (PDF).**

Rights

The Council will need to acquire “new rights” over some property, for example the right for a crane to swing in the air-space above that property. The acquisition of new rights should not prevent property being occupied, and (as and when the rights required are more precisely defined) the Council will seek to document these by agreement.

Blight

In response to a CPO being made by the Council, certain occupiers can serve a “blight notice” on the Council. If accepted, this notice may require the Council to acquire the property interest in advance of it being required for the development. The Council can provide further details on this process, and if considered appropriate and agreed in advance of work commencing, will reimburse reasonable professional fees incurred in advising on this process.

For more information, please email CCSBusinessSupport@coventry.gov.uk.