

Chichester District Council

THE CABINET

7 November 2017

Southern Gateway Masterplan – Adoption

1. Contacts

Report Author:

Mike Allgrove - Planning Policy, Conservation and Design Service Manager,
Telephone: 01243 521044 E-mail: mallgrove@chichester.gov.uk

Cabinet Member:

Tony Dignum – Leader of the Council
Telephone: 01243 538585 E-mail: tdignum@chichester.gov.uk

2. Executive Summary

Public Consultation on the draft Southern Gateway Masterplan was carried out between 29 June and 10 August 2017. This report contains details of the representations submitted through the consultation and recommends responses to those representations that subsequently inform proposed changes to the masterplan. The revised Southern Gateway Masterplan is recommended for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document.

3. Recommendation

3.1. That the Cabinet recommends to the Council to:

- (a) Approve the recommended responses to representations made as part of the public consultation on the draft masterplan (set out in appendix 1 to this report);**
- (b) Adopt the Southern Gateway Masterplan (set out in appendix 2 to this report) as a Supplementary Planning Document, thereby replacing the existing Southern Gateway Planning Framework Supplementary Planning Guidance 2001; and**
- (c) Delegate authority to the Head of Planning Services, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning Services, to make minor amendments to the document prior to publication.**

3.2. That the Cabinet approves the use of part of the residual budget from the now adopted Local Plan to meet the remaining cost (£51,000) of the Southern Gateway Masterplan project.

4. Background

- 4.1. The Cabinet approved the draft Southern Gateway Masterplan for public consultation in June 2017. The public consultation has been undertaken and the representations received have been analysed. A number of changes to the document have been considered with respect to those representations.
- 4.2. The masterplan has been prepared within the context of the strategic framework provided by the local plan and the overarching aims of the Chichester Vision. The Vision has now been finalised, following public consultation, and was adopted by the Council in July 2017.

5. Outcomes to be Achieved

- 5.1. The main outcomes that will flow from the production of a masterplan are as follows:
 - (a) The identification of opportunities for development
 - (b) The facilitation of new homes, jobs, retail and leisure facilities
 - (c) That key constraints are identified so that they are not compromised through new development
 - (d) The coordination of the development of a number of different sites
 - (e) The coordination of proposals that are the subject of different bids for funding to facilitate development
 - (f) Clear guidance to assist in the preparation and assessment of planning applications.
- 5.2. Proposals in the Southern Gateway Masterplan have been drawn together to deliver the following six key objectives:
 - (a) Making sure first impression count
 - (b) Reinforcing a mix of city uses
 - (c) Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
 - (d) Contributing towards a sustainable movement strategy
 - (e) Providing a flexible framework
 - (f) Achieving design quality.

6. Proposal

- 6.1. The masterplan proposes a range of different land uses for development sites within the Southern Gateway area. It also provides design guidance for those sites. It sets out proposals for significant changes to the highway network around the existing one-way gyratory, the restriction of the Stockbridge Road level crossing to pedestrians, cyclists and buses and the rerouting of Basin Road to the rear of the Royal Mail sorting office site. The proposals in the masterplan will provide opportunities to bring development forward, to coordinate that development and to improve the public realm, not least in the area around the railway station, leading up to South Street and the main city centre shopping area.
- 6.2. The masterplan provides detailed guidance to amplify and expand on how policies in the Chichester Local Plan will be implemented, both in terms of the

assessment of planning applications and the Council's role in facilitating development. In particular it will supplement the following policies:

- (a) Policy 10 Chichester City Development Principles – specific reference to the Southern Gateway area is made at paragraph 12.7 of the Adopted Local Plan in the text setting the context for this policy; and
- (b) Policy 13 Chichester City Transport Strategy.

- 6.3. The Chichester Vision sets out the strategic direction with high level aims and objectives to guide how the city should develop and change in the future. The Southern Gateway Masterplan is the first document that has been produced to provide a set of detailed proposals that will help to achieve the aims of the Chichester Vision. In particular, part of the brief for the masterplan was to explore options for reducing traffic congestion and improving safety at the Southgate Gyratory.
- 6.4. The masterplan, once adopted, will have the status of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This will mean that it will have significant weight in the planning process as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications within the Southern Gateway area. Upon adoption the masterplan replaces the existing Southern Gateway Planning Framework, which was adopted in 2001 and has the status as supplementary planning guidance.
- 6.5. The masterplan is not intended to be prescriptive in setting out exactly how sites within the Southern Gateway will be developed or the number of dwellings or amount of floorspace to be achieved. It is rather a flexible document that provides design guidance and the range of uses that would be acceptable and allows potential investors and their architects a degree of certainty when designing schemes that will implement the aims and aspirations of the masterplan.

7. Alternatives Considered

- 7.1. An alternative is not to produce a masterplan and allow development proposals to come forward in an uncoordinated, piecemeal basis. It is considered this is not an appropriate approach to guide development in the area. It is also likely that without a comprehensive approach to development of the area that only those sites that are viable in their own right will come forward and that opportunities for public realm enhancement and improvements to the highway network within the area will be missed.
- 7.2. In response to the public consultation two local architects have submitted an alternative masterplan proposal entitled 'Freeflow'. This alternative to the Council's draft masterplan the subject of public consultation proposes the closure of both level crossings and the construction of a bridge over the railway in between them. It also proposes a number of alternative uses for buildings in the area to be redeveloped. The full representation is set out at Appendix 3 to this report.
- 7.3. To increase understanding of the 'Freeflow' proposal, senior Council officers and the Council's masterplanning and transport consultants met with the promoters of the proposal. The promoters have not carried out any detailed technical

feasibility or viability analysis but asked for their ideas to be given further consideration in looking at options for the Southern Gateway area. To give full consideration, the Council's masterplanning and transport consultants have produced a report, Review of Freeflow Proposals, which is attached as Appendix 4.

7.4. The report concludes as follows:

'In terms of the draft masterplan, the Freeflow proposals can be summarised as follows:

- (a) It does not comply with the existing planning policy framework;
- (b) It is not in line with Southern Gateway masterplan objectives specified by Chichester District Council;
- (c) It will have a negative impact on residential amenity;
- (d) It reduces the developable area of the Royal Mail site and proposes alternative uses;
- (e) It requires the acquisition of considerable additional land between Basin Road and Stockbridge Road;
- (f) It bisects the site of the existing bus station and law courts sites, and proposes alternative uses for the bus depot;
- (g) It assumes an overall scheme that comprises entirely commercial and leisure/cultural uses other than a small development of town houses and a single block of apartments;
- (h) It involves considerable additional infrastructure costs.
- (i) The proposed road layout is not technically feasible.
- (j) The proposed bridge ramps, when accurately represented, are likely to significantly impact upon existing and proposed uses.
- (k) Conservatively, the proposed plan would have a negative impact on viability of in excess of £25 million'.

7.5. Officers have given the 'Freeflow' proposal careful consideration and have concluded on the basis of the detailed assessment of the proposal carried out by the masterplan and transport consultants that it appears to be neither technically feasible nor financially viable. It is also considered that it would have a significant negative impact on the historic environment and conflict with the aims of the Chichester Vision and the objectives of the masterplan. Officers are not therefore recommending investigating the proposals any further.

8. Resource and Legal Implications

8.1. Budgetary provision of £50,000 was originally agreed by Cabinet in June 2016 to fund the cost of preparation of the masterplan and this was subsequently increased through a virement of £46,000 from the now adopted Local Plan budget. Additional costs have arisen through need to commission a transport study, consultants' attendance at meetings that were not part of their original quotes, costs of consultation and further work to analyse the Freeflow representations. This has led to a total cost for the entire project of £177,000. West Sussex County Council has contributed £30,000 towards the transport study. The outstanding cost of £51,000 can be met from the residual budget remaining from the now adopted Local Plan.

- 8.2. Resource and legal implications associated with the implementation of the masterplan are covered under a separate report to be submitted to Cabinet on 7 November.

9. Consultation

- 9.1. Public consultation was undertaken on the draft masterplan between 29 June and 10 August 2017. There were two ways of responding to the consultation. An on-line questionnaire sought general views about different aspects of the proposals for the masterplan and the opportunity to make detailed comments on the specific wording of the masterplan was available through the Council's usual planning policy consultation software, 'Objective'. In both cases written responses could be made and officers uploaded these to the on-line systems.
- 9.2. A detailed report on the public consultation undertaken, including the results of the questionnaire survey, is attached at Appendix 5 to this report. This is particularly useful in analysing general views of the masterplan and its contents. The main themes raised in the representations are as follows:
- (a) Insufficient consultation process.
 - (b) Lack of detail on what is being proposed.
 - (c) The retention of the level crossings.
 - (d) The need to resolve city-wide transport issues before developing a masterplan, e.g. improvements to the A27 Chichester Bypass and park and ride.
 - (e) Predominance of residential uses and a general lack of ambition.
 - (f) Concerns over the loss of: the bus station; the courts; the Royal Mail sorting office; listed and locally listed buildings; car parking at and access to the railway station.
 - (g) The rerouting of Basin Road, the impact on residential properties and the lack of detail with respect to the junction with Kingsham Road, particularly how this will affect cyclists, pedestrian and those wishing to turn right out of Kingsham Road.
- 9.3. It should be noted that many of the comments received through the public consultation appear to have been influenced by the 'Freeflow' proposal referenced in section 7 of this report. However, had those proposals been developed to the same extent as the proposals in the masterplan, including supporting evidence such as traffic modelling and strategic environmental assessment, there may have been less support for them and also a likely level of objection that is not currently evident due to the lack of information.
- 9.4. In response to the general themes raised in the representations, the following points should be noted:
- (a) The consultation received good publicity and a large number of comments were made and questionnaires completed.
 - (b) The amount of detail is appropriate for a masterplan. Proposals will be developed in line with the masterplan and there will be further opportunities to comment on the detail through publicity and consultation at planning application stage.

- (c) Whilst there has been considerable analysis of the potential to provide a bridge or tunnel to allow the closure of the level crossings, this has proved to be neither technically feasible nor financially viable. No solution is evident that would be appropriate in the urban environment in this part of Chichester, neither in terms of the impact on the historic character of the area nor the relationship with residential properties. Furthermore, a bridge or tunnel would increase the amount of traffic passing through the masterplan area, contrary to a key objective the masterplan and the Chichester Vision aims to deliver.
- (d) Any significant delay to adoption of the masterplan in order to seek to resolve other major transport issues would mean it is likely that some sites would be developed individually without the guidance provided by a masterplan.
- (e) There is a significant amount of residential development within the masterplan and this will help to generate land value to contribute to the provision of some of the non-residential uses and also potentially to access other public funding streams.
- (f) Bus interchange facilities will be re-provided in Stockbridge Road; the masterplan has been developed partly in response to the decision to close the courts; the Royal Mail sorting office does not need to be in a prime location overlooking the canal basin and other facilities for posting letters and collecting parcels are available.

9.5. The consultation report at Appendix 5 also identifies the areas where the masterplan has a good level of support. These include:

- (a) The public realm priorities (in particular cycle route enhancements);
- (b) The sites identified as development opportunities;
- (c) Improved pedestrian, cycle and public transport accessibility;
- (d) Changes to the highway network, including the rerouting of Basin Road and the bus gate at Stockbridge Road to restrict use to buses, cycles and pedestrians; and
- (e) Support for the masterplan overall.

9.6. In relation to the two alternative options to change the Basin Road/Southgate gyratory the report also identifies a slight preference for Option A (53.5%) over Option B (46.5%).

9.7. The detailed representations received on the wording of the masterplan, with a recommended response to those representations, are attached at Appendix 1 to this report. These responses have informed the subsequent proposed amendments to the masterplan. Responses are proposed to representations from statutory consultees and utility companies. Of particular note are representations from Historic England, Highways England, the Environment Agency and West Sussex County Council. None of these raise any fundamental objections to the masterplan and the suggested amendments have been recommended as changes to the masterplan.

9.8. The main proposed amendments to the masterplan to be adopted are as follows:

- (a) Selection of Option A for changes to the Basin Road/Southgate gyratory;

- (b) Further explanation of the approach to the provision of open space in relation to new development;
 - (c) Additional references to waste water treatment issues;
 - (d) Removal of the building to the north of Avenue de Chartres from development opportunity site 6; and
 - (e) Detailed changes to text as requested by Historic England, Highways England, Sport England and West Sussex County Council.
- 9.9. The production of the masterplan has been guided by a Member/Officer Steering Group supported by an Officer Project Team. Membership of these groups has included representatives from West Sussex County Council, the Homes and Communities Agency, and Network Rail. The Steering Group has considered the general issues raised through the consultation process and recommend that the masterplan as proposed to be amended (see para 9.8 above) should now be considered by Cabinet and Council for adoption.
- 9.10. There has also been a workshop held for elected members where further information about the representations and potential changes to the masterplan were discussed. Following the workshop, further amendments to the masterplan are proposed with respect to:
- (a) The inclusion of references to ensure accessibility throughout the masterplan area for those with mobility issues;
 - (b) The need to ensure that the design and layout of key buildings creates a sense of arrival, or a gateway, for those arriving at the railway station or by road;
 - (c) Clarification on the approach to open space to be taken within the masterplan area;
 - (d) Clarification on the approach to be taken to affordable housing, including the tenure mix and how this may relate to starter homes.
- 9.11. The revised masterplan that is proposed for adoption, with the amendments shown as track changes, is set out at Appendix 2

10. Community Impact and Corporate Risks

- 10.1. The proposals within the masterplan have been subject to consultation and all interested parties have had the opportunity to make formal representations. The selection of Option A for changes to the Basin Road/Southgate gyratory has removed the potential impact on businesses in respect of possible demolition of certain buildings under transport Option B. Concerns have been raised by businesses occupying premises proposed for redevelopment on the bus station site fronting Southgate. The Council may be able to assist with securing alternative premises or providing general economic development advice.
- 10.2. There will be a likely small negative impact on some residential properties through the rerouting of Basin Road, although this is not considered to be so significant as to lead to the removal of this aspect from the masterplan. Other residential properties will benefit from the removal of through traffic from Stockbridge Road.

- 10.3. There are no specific corporate risks associated with the adoption of the masterplan.

11. Other Implications

Are there any implications for the following?		
	Yes	No
Crime and Disorder It is considered that due to proposals to redevelop existing areas that detract from the appearance of the area and to bring a mix of uses that will introduce passive surveillance and increase activity outside of daytime hours, the masterplan is likely to have a positive impact on the potential for crime and disorder.	X	
Climate Change The location of development within an existing urban area, close to existing services and facilities and well located to access public transport, is one of the most sustainable options in terms of climate change.	X	
Human Rights and Equality Impact An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared and is a background paper to this report.	X	
Safeguarding and Early Help		X
Historic Environment The masterplan will set the context for development within the Chichester City Conservation Area. A Strategic Environmental Assessment has been undertaken and is a background paper to this report.	X	

12. Appendices

- 12.1. Appendix 1 – recommended responses to representations made as part of the public consultation on the draft masterplan
- 12.2. Appendix 2 – Southern Gateway Masterplan to be adopted
- 12.3. Appendix 3 – Freeflow proposal
- 12.4. Appendix 4 – Review of Freeflow proposals
- 12.5. Appendix 5 – Southern Gateway Masterplan Survey – Public Consultation Analysis Report

13. Background Papers

These three background papers will be published in a separate agenda supplement for online viewing only.

- 13.1. Southern Gateway Masterplan SEA Environmental Report
- 13.2. Equality Impact Assessment
- 13.3. Southern Gateway Masterplan, Chichester – Transport Appraisal