



CABINET

21ST JUNE 2018

AGENDA ITEM (7)

CIRENCESTER TOWN CENTRE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

Accountable Member	Councillor NJW Parsons Cabinet Member for Forward Planning
Accountable Officer	Philippa Lowe Group Manager - Professional Services 01285 623000 philippa.lowe@cotswold.gov.uk
Purpose of Report	To secure Cabinet approval of the recommended approach to preparation of the Cirencester Town Centre SPD.
Recommendations	(a) That Cabinet approves the approach to preparation of the Cirencester Town Centre SPD as outlined in the report; (b) that delegated authority be given to the Executive Director for Commissioning, in consultation with the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Forward Planning and having regard to the views of the Local Plan Programme Board, for the approval of funding requests from the £60,000 allocated to deliver the Cirencester Town Centre Strategy.
Reason(s) for Recommendation(s)	To ensure that preparation of the SPD can proceed with Cabinet approval.
Ward(s) Affected	Abbey; Stratton; New Mills; Four Acres; The Beeches; Cirencester, Chesterton; St Michael's; Watermoor
Key Decision	Yes
Recommendation to Council	No
Financial Implications	As part of its budget setting meeting for 2018/19 held on 20 th February 2018, Council approved the inclusion of £60,000 for the Cirencester Town Centre Strategy.
Legal and Human Rights Implications	The SPD must accord with Regulations 11 - 16 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, including the requirement for public participation. It must not conflict with paragraph 153 of the National Planning Policy Framework. It must be in accordance with the Cotswold District Local Plan and must not seek to introduce new planning policies.

Environmental and Sustainability Implications	It is good practice to undertake a sustainability appraisal process which considers the environmental, social and economic impacts of the SPD. This is to help ensure that development meets the needs of both present and future generations.
Human Resource Implications	None directly arising from this report.
Key Risks	The SPD is required to provide an appropriate strategy to ensure a holistic approach to redevelopment and regeneration that accords with, and complements, the Local Plan. There is a risk of more piece-meal and speculative development without such SDP.
Equalities Impact Assessment	Not specifically required

Related Decisions	<p>Council 13th June 2017: Focussed Changes and Minor Modifications to the Submission Draft Cotswold District Local Plan</p> <p>Cabinet 20th October 2016: Submission Draft Cotswold Local Plan - Focussed Changes</p> <p>Council 17th May 2016: Cotswold District Local Plan Submission Draft Reg. 19</p> <p>Cabinet 21st April 2016: Cotswold District Local Plan Submission Draft Reg. 19</p>
Background Documents	<p>(i) Submitted Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-31 July 2017 Tracked Changes with Main Modifications Feb 2018</p> <p>(i) http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/450619/spd-8-december-08.pdf</p> <p>(ii) https://www.stratford.gov.uk/doc/206760/name/final%20PDF%20CQSPD.pdf</p>
Appendices	Appendix 'A' - Local Plan Map, identifying SDP area

Performance Management Follow Up	Implement Cabinet decision(s)
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<p>Background Information</p> <p>1. <u>General Background</u></p> <p>1.1 The delivery of the local plan strategy for Cirencester is predicated on a requirement to enable increased capacity in town centre parking. In doing so, this will unlock an opportunity to redevelop key sites which have been allocated in the local plan.</p> <p>1.2 Redevelopment and regeneration require a catalyst to get started. The proposed decking of the Waterloo car park provides that. Effective regeneration also requires an appropriate strategy to ensure a holistic approach to delivery, particularly to allow the impacts of one area of development to be clearly understood in the context of the town as a whole.</p> <p>1.3 Members will be well aware that town centre issues are already the subject of an adopted Supplementary Planning guidance Document (SPD). Town centre policy issues also are addressed in some detail in the emerging Cotswold District Local Plan. The adopted SPD can be accessed</p>

here:

<http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/450619/spd-8-december-08.pdf>

1.4 The adopted Town Centre SPD focusses largely on traffic management and accessibility/connectivity issues. It does not set out proposals for the redevelopment/regeneration of sites and areas within the town. Cirencester is historically sensitive and a critical economic resource to the district. As the Local Planning Authority and as a significant landowner the council needs to safeguard that. In doing so it must ensure that redevelopment is based on a comprehensive, integrated set of guidelines which ensure delivery of what the council and the community wants for Cirencester.

1.5 The Council requires a comprehensive mechanism that enables the delivery of Council policy set out in the emerging Local Plan to ensure:

- investment in car parking is realised;
- provision of a new public transport hub;
- enhanced town centre offer - improvements in public realm, potential for new residential and business uses and public open space;
- setting the context for a longer term planning strategy for the town;
- establishment of a strategy for the property team and council to assist with site disposal / investment; and
- continued work with other key landowners and interest groups, building on the momentum of the parking board.

The emerging Local Plan stipulates that an SPD is an appropriate vehicle to deliver these objectives.

1.6 As set out at Section 3 below the proposal can be envisaged as updating the existing SPD and supplementing it with a framework masterplan that will provide the necessary and appropriate level of guidance for redevelopment/regeneration. An explanation of what a framework masterplan comprises is set out below. In practice the two elements of the SPD may merge into one comprehensive document - providing it is sufficiently clear in its main components and objectives it is not necessary at this stage to determine its precise format.

1.7 The context for the framework masterplan is set out in Policy S3 of the emerging Local Plan and in the supporting text at paragraphs 7.4.6 to 7.4.24 (which commits the council to production of a masterplan) on pp 52-59:

[Submitted Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-31 July 2017 Tracked Changes with Main Modifications Feb 2018](#)

1.8 The spatial extent of the Framework Masterplan area is the broken black line at Inset 2 on page 48 of that document, although the main focus of the work is likely to be on a narrower area encompassing the retail centre and the Waterloo area. The inset map is reproduced as **Appendix 'A'** for ease of reference.

1.9 Whilst it may not in the end follow this precise format, it is proposed at present that the revised SPD would therefore comprise:

- **Part A** - movement and connectivity within Cirencester Town Centre;
- **Part B** - guidelines for phased redevelopment/regeneration in the form of a Framework Masterplan.

1.10 It is important at the outset to recognise that as a document that will be instrumental in decision-taking the SPD needs to be sound in planning terms. Whilst it is not subject to the same level of scrutiny as a Local Plan, it is good practice to ensure that it is based on evidence, is justified, effective and consistent with local and national policy. Planning Practice Guidance advises that SPDs should build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on the policies in the Local Plan - it is critically important to note that an SPD cannot make new planning policies. Paragraph

153 of the NPPF stipulates that SPDs should not add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development. Preparation of an SPD must be in accordance with Regulations 11 - 16 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 - the requirements include public participation in preparation of the document (Regulation 12).

1.11 The remainder of this report focusses on:

- Section 2 - the proposed Part B SPD, explaining what a framework masterplan is and why that approach is recommended;
- Section 3 - proposed methodology and governance arrangements for the project together with initial thoughts on programme/timescales;
- Section 4 - budget requirements;
- Section 5 - Property Services observations (CDC as landowner);
- Section 6 - next steps and provisional project programme.

2. The Framework Masterplan Approach

2.1 A framework masterplan generally comprises a set of criteria-based qualitative and quantitative development guidelines supported by maps, diagrams and other illustrative media. Its aim is to establish the principles that will guide individual proposals to ensure both that development comes forward in a co-ordinated and integrated manner and that wider public realm, community and infrastructure benefits are delivered. It therefore has a strategic focus in optimising development across and within a whole area, but may contain specific proposals and bespoke details for sub-areas, precincts or development phases. This approach will help in delivery of the overarching vision and set of objectives for the town centre as set out in the emerging Local Plan.

2.2 Detailed development briefs or masterplans for individual sites are also likely to be required. These would come forward later in the process, being prepared by prospective developers and being required to conform with the strategic master planning framework and the Local Plan. In this way, the Council (as planning authority and principal landowner) retains control of the overall “shape” of the process but allows sufficient flexibility for innovative solutions to come forward. Moreover, the preparation of detailed site briefs or masterplans can be time-consuming and expensive, and it may be more cost-effective for the Council to require developers to undertake that work.

2.3 Framework or outline masterplans are a very common approach to area redevelopment where it is important that the outcome is integrated and coherent rather than *ad hoc* and piecemeal. An adopted framework masterplan will enable a more robust approach to be taken in the development management process in resisting development proposals that may compromise the overall vision.

2.4 Many framework masterplans for areas across the country are readily available on the internet. A useful example is the Stratford-On-Avon *Canal Quarter Regeneration Zone Framework Masterplan SPD*:

<https://www.stratford.gov.uk/doc/206760/name/final%20PDF%20CQSPD.pdf>

3. Proposed Methodology and Governance Arrangements

3.1 Methodology

Preparation of the Part A SPD will comprise a review of its:

- scope and relevance (including car parking);
- policy context and evidence base;
- implementation proposals including what has been delivered to date;
- appraisal of recognised successes and shortcomings (SWOT analysis);
- identification of revisions and amendments;
- drafting of replacement text.

Preparation of the Part B SPD will be in two stages based on:

- outcome of the review of the Part A SPD;
- outputs from the Conservation Area Appraisal and Action/Management Plan;
- urban design criteria (taking account of the Design Code);
- interdependency analysis;
- landowner, community and other key stakeholder aspirations;
- emerging Local Plan policy context together with NPPF and PPG.

These elements to comprise a briefing pack for consultants.

Stage 1 will comprise:

- preparation of a brief for consultants to cover;
- development of viable Framework Masterplan options that are sustainable in social, economic and environmental terms;
- prioritised sequence of developments for each option based on a full understanding of dependencies;
- timescales for delivery of each option and component;
- identification of risks and constraints including funding issues, viability etc
- public consultation on Framework masterplan options and the revised Part A SPD with the purpose of identifying the preferred option Framework Masterplan.

Stage 2 will comprise:

- processing and reporting of consultation responses;
- preparation of preferred option Framework Masterplan including Implementation Strategy;
- preparation of SPD document comprising Parts 1 and 2;
- adoption and implementation.

3.2 Governance

3.2.1 This subsection sets out the structure to support delivery. This will ensure that delivery is appropriately driven and governed, that effective stakeholder engagement takes place and that associated required supporting technical work and evidence is procured and delivered.

3.2.2 Political direction - it is recommended that, because the SPD is a forward planning document, the Local Plan Programme Board provides political direction to the project.

3.2.3 Stakeholder Working Group to be formed to engage with and participate in development of the project at key stages and to comprise representatives of:-

- Cirencester Town Council;
- Cirencester Chamber of Commerce;
- Gloucestershire County Council;
- Local Enterprise Partnership;
- principal landowners (including CDC);
- public transport and other key service providers;
- others.

3.2.4 It is anticipated that the main role of the Stakeholder Working Group will be to participate in:-

- building upon the Local Plan strategy to formulate the scope and objectives of the SPD;
- the development of options for the Framework Masterplan;
- public consultation on Framework Masterplan options; and
- consideration of the preferred option for the Framework Masterplan.

3.2.5 Technical Working Group to undertake technical work, and to comprise:

- Forward Planning;
- Heritage and Conservation;
- Development Management;
- Property Services;
- Parking Services;
- consultant support.

4. Budget Requirements

4.1 As part of its budget setting meeting for 2018/19 held on 20th February 2018, Council approved the inclusion of £60,000 for the Cirencester Town Centre Strategy.

4.2 At present it is assumed the budget will need to cover the following items (although at this early stage other items cannot be ruled out):-

- consultant support in preparation of Masterplan Framework options and preferred option;
- conservation area appraisal revision;
- Sustainability Appraisal (SA);
- public consultation - press, materials, print, room hire;
- filling evidence gaps (where identified).

5. Property Services Comments (Council as landowner)

5.1 Although this paper relates to preparation of a Planning Document, as the Council owns the major town centre development sites identified in the emerging local plan this will help frame the future use of these sites. In order to progress decisions taken by Cabinet in April 2016 regarding the future of the Old Station, Waterloo and Old Memorial Hospital sites detailed development briefs will be required for the sites and the emerging local plan and Cirencester SPD will support provision of these in due course. To enable sale/ redevelopment of any of the town centre sites an Estates Strategy is essential to ensure a co-ordinated and phased approach. The Council will have one chance to determine the future use of its land assets in the town and take the right decisions at the right time to ensure this is led by the Council as the LPA and Landowner and not developer-led.

5.2 At the Meeting on 20th February 2018 noted at paragraph 5.1 above, Council also agreed that the £15 million investment in Cirencester car parking will be funded: £7.24 million through borrowing, £2.5 million through use of New Homes Bonus, £5 million through use of Capital Receipts and £260,000 through a revenue contribution in 2018/19. Unlocking the car parking capacity issue allows the redevelopment of the Council's sites.

5.3 It is likely that there will be other work being carried out by stakeholders that will need to be considered as part of the project as a whole. For example, the One Public Estate project is examining the potential for a blue light hub in Cirencester. This project and other landowner aspirations may assist with redevelopment in the Town Centre. This will feed into the stakeholder consultation process.

6. Next Steps and Provisional Project Programme

6.1 Significant progress is expected to be made within the next 12 months, although this is predicated on the continued progress with other related projects, for example the Waterloo car park project. The Local Plan Programme Board has a key role to play in monitoring the delivery of key project milestones. Over time, Officers will submit papers, such as those listed below, to the Local Plan Programme Board for their support/agreement:-

- complete project programme/Gantt chart - establishing milestones, critical path and

delivery dates;

- interrogate existing evidence base and ascertain any requirements for further evidence;
- develop brief for consultants and appoint;
- ascertain stakeholder group membership, terms of reference and meetings schedule.

6.2 Insofar as a provisional Project Programme is concerned, at the time of writing this report Officers are still evaluating the work needed to deliver the SPD. This work will help establish key milestones and firm up the necessary resources required to carry out the work; and form the basis of a formal project plan, which will be presented to the Local Plan Programme Board. A key focus at present is an interrogation of the evidence base to decide what, if any, new or updated information is needed. Work is also in hand in preparing the brief for consultants. Whilst it is not possible to provide specific timescales at this time, Officers are aiming to undertake public consultation on Framework Masterplan options in late 2018/early 2019.

(END)