

FOR PUBLICATION

CHESTERFIELD TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN – UPDATE AND REVIEW 2015

MEETING: 1. CABINET
2. LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR
REGENERATION IN CONSULTATION WITH
CABINET MEMBER FOR TOWN CENTRE AND
VISITOR ECONOMY

DATE: 1. 14 JULY 2015
2. 6 JULY 2015

REPORT BY: DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH MANAGER AND
CULTURAL AND VISITOR SERVICES MANAGER

WARD: ST LEONARDS

COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY: SOUTH

KEY DECISION NUMBER 511

FOR PUBLICATION

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR PUBLIC REPORTS:

Council's Intranet:

<http://cbcportal/Regeneration/SitePages/Home.aspx>

TITLE:

LOCATION:

1.0 **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To seek approval of the Chesterfield Town Centre Masterplan 2015 and to consider the proposed Implementation Plan.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To approve the Chesterfield Town Centre Masterplan – Update and Review 2015 as a statement of the Council’s vision, strategy, policies and proposals for Chesterfield Town Centre.
- 2.2 To authorise the Development and Growth Manager and Cultural and Visitor Services Manager to explore the delivery of actions outlined in the Implementation Plan and seek external funding, where appropriate, to implement the Masterplan.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In October 2009, Cabinet approved the Urbed Town Centre Masterplan, an update of the 2004 Chesterfield TEN Masterplan. Following a successful grant of ERDF funding through the Creating Links Project, in September 2014, property consultants Aspinall Verdi and WCEC Architects were appointed, following a competitive procurement process.
- 3.2 During this period, the town centre has remained buoyant, with occupancy levels remaining above 90%, a significant improvement when compared to the national picture. The town centre has retained the majority of its key anchor tenants and has also secured additional units including H&M, and Pandora. The strength of Ravenside Retail Park has grown, specifically with the expansion to include a Debenhams and a larger Next. This has had an impact, particularly given the loss of Next from the town centre.
- 3.3 Whilst the 2009 Masterplan remained fundamentally robust, it was felt that it required updating to take into account what has been achieved since it was produced whilst taking into account new developments and changes that have taken place in Chesterfield town centre alongside reviewing any new opportunities/ challenges. For example, a number of key developments have taken place within the Town Centre that were highlighted as actions within the 2009 Masterplan. These include the following:
 - Refurbishment of Chesterfield Market Hall
 - Chesterfield Townscape Heritage Initiative Project
 - Cultural Renaissance Project in the Yards
 - Chesterfield Gateway Enhancement Project

- Feasibility work for the Northern Gateway development, including a procurement process to seek a development partner
- Car parking improvements

3.4 In addition to the above highlighted actions that have taken place, the town centre is now facing many challenges and opportunities, these include:

- The loss of the Co-op department store and its impact on the northern part of the town centre
- The sale of NEDDC Offices
- A shift to online retailing – consolidation of retail outlets
- The continued mass and value nature of the retail offer in the town centre
- The continued high occupancy rates in the town centre in general, although the occupancy of the outdoor market is declining
- The strength of the retail offer at Ravenside
- The University of Derby proposals at St Helena's
- The delays with the delivery of the Northern Gateway and the Chesterfield Waterside developments
- Competing developments elsewhere e.g. The Moor, Sheffield – adding 12,000sqm of retail space and Sheffield's Retail Quarter creating 55,740sqm of retail space
- The growing independent retail offer at Chatsworth Road
- The delivery of the Peak Resort scheme – creating additional visits to Chesterfield, increases in spend and footfall

3.5 The production of 2009 Masterplan provided the Council with a document that clearly set out a strategic overview of the regeneration of the Town Centre, whilst highlighting a range of specific projects. The document enabled external funding to be secured to deliver this programme of projects by ensuring that a strategic need could be demonstrated for funding intervention. It is anticipated that the 2015 update of the Masterplan will likewise be helpful in ensuring that external funding can be secured in the future.

4.0 SUMMARY OF TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN 2015

4.1 In revising the Masterplan, the key objectives have been:

- To clarify the vision for Chesterfield's Town Centre and its historic market;
- To build investor confidence about the town's potential;
- To provide an overview of progress since 2009;
- To help shape development opportunities;
- To encourage high quality design standards in new development;
- To demonstrate the overall strategy for regeneration of the Town Centre; and
- To provide background evidence for Chesterfield's Planning framework.

4.2 Upon commencement of the revision of the Masterplan, Aspinall Verdi and WCEC Architects undertook consultation with key town centre stakeholders, including Members, the town centre forum and Destination Chesterfield Champions. A workshop session was held on 13 November 2014 to inform the first draft of the Masterplan. This session was attended by 40 people, including Members, town centre businesses, stakeholders and Officers.

4.3 Upon completion of the initial baseline report, a first draft of the Masterplan was prepared and the Town Centre Forum was consulted on 19 February 2015. Given that this is purely an update and review of the 2009 Masterplan, no further public consultation has taken place. A copy of the final draft Masterplan is appended.

4.4 The key principle of the 2015 Masterplan is to concentrate on the Town Centre's historic core, its retail heart. The Masterplan proposes a range of projects to reinforce the core so that the town centre remains attractive and distinctive. This will then create the right conditions for developments in and around the town centre – hence the other key development projects. The document states that the historic core is the key, as it is the area that binds all of the other elements of the town centre together.

4.5 The document itself is broken down into 4 parts;

- **Part 1 – Introduction and Vision**
- **Part 2 – Developing the Masterplan**
- **Part 3 –**
 - **Historic Core**
 - **Station Arrival/ Railway Terrace**
 - **Northern Gateway**
 - **Spire Neighbourhood**
 - **Civic Quarter**
 - **Markham Road**
 - **Education Quarter**
 - **Waterside**
- **Part 4 – Implementation and Delivery**

Key Projects

4.6 Within each of the themed areas are a number of key projects. In general, these reflect the key priorities of the 2009 Masterplan as they remain relevant and are required to deliver a range of uses in the town centre. They include major development projects, big changes in small spaces, town centre management projects and public realm works. This range of priority projects means that it is not purely large infrastructure projects requiring significant capital investment that are the priorities, as the masterplan also identifies smaller projects, requiring smaller amounts of investment, and capable of being quick wins or catalysts for change such as town centre management projects.

1. Historic Core- The projects identified within the historic core are focused on town centre management strategies, including projects such as digital high street retailing, market place management and strategies for improved signage and lighting. A key project that is identified within the historic core is the market reconfiguration project, identified to address declining occupancy levels and to ensure to continued attractiveness and

success of the outdoor market. The masterplan also promotes a number of projects known as Big Changes in Small Spaces which include proposals for the former Co-op store, Victoria Centre and addressing the vacancies in many of the first floors of the units.

2. Station Arrival/ Railway Terrace - the focus of the project is to reinvent the station area as an integral part of the town centre. A critical part of this project is the Hollis Lane Link Road, a new link road between Hollis Lane and Brewery Street. As per the 2009 Masterplan, this remains a priority as it effectively provides a by- pass around the town centre, whilst opening up the Network Rail land for development purposes (commercial development such as high quality light industrial workspace) to be known as Station Arrival. The need for an improved connection to the town centre for pedestrians is recognised, potentially in the form of a wider pedestrian bridge, but the concept of a large decked green bridge across the A61 is no longer considered a viable option.
3. Northern Gateway – this project remains a clear delivery priority. The majority of the site is readily available and in the control of the Council, it is a Local Plan allocation so there is an expectation it will be delivered. The Masterplan states that the development mix should remain flexible to allow the market to be creative in terms of the scheme's delivery.
4. Spire Neighbourhood– the implementation of the Hollis Lane Link Road creates the conditions for the Spire Neighbourhood, a residential area (to the east of St Mary's Gate) focusing on areas such as the former Derbyshire Times Building and the CBC owned surface level car parks in this area. A number of public realm projects are proposed within the Masterplan to connect the Spire Neighbourhood with the rest of the town centre and the other key development projects such as Waterside.
5. Civic Quarter – this is the area surrounding the Town Hall, which is considered the business/ office focus of the town. This is already an area of change due to the changes with NEDDC

Offices and the former PCT site presenting development opportunities. A planning application to provide a range of potential uses for the former Court House has also been approved. In addition to these key buildings, a number of public realm initiatives are proposed in this area, to maximize the value to the town centre of the proximity of Shentall Gardens and the connection to Queen's Park. In this respect, Shentall Gardens is currently underused and attracts anti-social behavior.

6. Markham Road – a key gateway into the town centre and through the town from the west, with a number of vacant sites, including the Royal Mail depot and multi storey car park. The route along Markham Road is seen as a key shop window for the town and town centre, but is currently edged by gap sites, car parks and building backs. This project envisages a new edge to the town along Markham Road with infill redevelopment to create a consistent building line and new inviting pedestrian routes through to the retail core. The proposed demolition of the Royal Mail car park (planning application for its demolition currently pending consideration) is likely to kick start the improvements to this key gateway.
 7. Education Quarter – The Masterplan makes reference to the education quarter, to the north of the town centre, surrounding Chesterfield College and proposes public realm projects to ensure that the future developments at the College and the University of Derby investment are rooted into the town centre.
 8. Chesterfield Waterside – this is listed as a key project due to its proximity to the town centre and the railway station and the need to create connections to the town centre to ensure that the developments integrate successfully.
- 4.7 Part 4 of the Masterplan provides an implementation plan for the delivery of the projects. In this section, the consultants have suggested priorities for the major projects in terms of short, medium and high priority projects. Given the Council's existing priority projects such as the reconfiguration of the market and the commitment to deliver the Chesterfield Waterside scheme, it is

considered that the Council will develop its own implementation plan to move the projects forward within the masterplan.

- 4.8 In addition, during June 2015, two briefing sessions for Members took place to update Members about the revised Town Centre Masterplan. As part of these sessions, workshops took place to enable Members to discuss the priorities and projects within the Masterplan and provide their input as to where the priorities should lie. In general, Members were supportive of the projects and priorities within the Masterplan. The projects that reinforced the historic core were considered essential, particularly in terms of the role they played in making the town centre an attractive place to visit and invest. These projects included the market reconfiguration, improved connections between Ravenside and the town centre and bringing under used buildings back into active use e.g. former co-op store and Victoria Centre.
- 4.9 The feedback from these workshops, together with discussions with local stakeholders, will enable the Council to develop its own implementation plan for these projects. This implementation plan will be a living document that the Council is able to update to take into account changing priorities, developer interest and progress made against key projects such as Chesterfield Waterside. As part of developing an implementation plan, we will seek to develop costed proposals for the key projects which will help the Council respond to emerging funding opportunities to take the priorities forward.
- 4.10 As the implementation plan will be a living document, updates will be able to be easily made and changes identified. Members were keen to be kept up to date and engaged with the Masterplan and an implementation plan will be the ideal tool to do this.

Planning Considerations

- 4.11 As a number of the projects relate to development and land use, they will need to be taken through the planning process. The Masterplan will be a material consideration in planning decisions, although without the same weight as a formal Development Plan Document (DPD).

4.12 The objectives of the Masterplan will be taken forward in Site-Specific Supplementary Planning Documents or Planning Briefs. The preparation of these documents will be subject to a separate, formal, process that will provide opportunities to further detail and develop these projects and give them greater weight as the formal planning policy of the Council.

5.0 CORPORATE ISSUES

5.1 In writing this report consideration has been given to the following corporate issues:

- Risk Management
- Equalities
- Capital or revenue financial implications

5.2 Each of these issues is dealt with below.

Risk Management

5.3 The table below outlines a number of risks for consideration in relation to the overall masterplan. These risks relate to the future of the Town Centre and the planning implications of not endorsing the Town Centre Masterplan Update and Review 2015.

5.4 It is not feasible at this stage to identify the specific risks relating to each individual project proposed within the Masterplan. However, as and when projects are taken forward a thorough risk assessment will be undertaken of each.

Description of the Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action
Decline in Town Centre occupancy – with additional risk in terms of loss in revenue generated from the Council’s town centre commercial property portfolio	Loss of income resulting in adverse delivery of Council services, loss of vitality in Town Centre, decline in Town Centre employment.	Possible	Implementation of Chesterfield Town Centre Masterplan, active marketing of Town Centre commercial property vacancies to encourage lettings

Description of the Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action
Chesterfield Town Centre is less viable and vital as a sub-regional centre	Decline in footfall and less spend generated; vitality and viability of Town Centre diminished, competing retail settings invest in their offer making Chesterfield comparatively less attractive	Possible	Implementation of Chesterfield Town Centre Masterplan
Lack of strategic vision for Town Centre	Unclear planning strategy for the Town Centre, increased appeals, particularly in relation to development in out of Town locations	Possible	Implementation of the Town Centre Masterplan
Unable to secure funding and investment to implement the Masterplan	Projects identified within the plan not delivered, overall vision for the Town Centre not achieved.	High.	Prioritise key projects as highlighted in the Implementation Plan. Continue to explore funding opportunities.

Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

5.5 The equalities impacts of all the proposals in this report for race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age and religion have been considered and assessed. Equalities improvements have informed the development of the Masterplan, particularly with regard to accessibility and improving the economic prosperity of Chesterfield for the benefit of all residents. No equalities group is particularly targeted by the Masterplan, the relevance to each group is therefore

low. However actions/projects to be delivered in the future that are outlined within the Masterplan may have impacts on particular groups. At this stage it is not possible to evaluate these impacts in any detail as project plans are not developed in sufficient detail, however, the impacts will on the whole be positive. As each individual project/action to be delivered by the Council comes forward a thorough EIA will be undertaken to ensure that the impacts on equalities target groups can be fully evaluated and improvements/mitigating actions implemented where required.

5.6 Development Projects incorporated into the Planning Policy framework will be subject to a formal assessment as part of this process.

5.7 The results of the EIA are summarised below.

Relevance to the Promotion of Equality for -	High Medium Low impact	Impacts summary	Equalities Improvement/ Mitigating Action Indicate already or to be taken
Race (all ethnic groups)	Low	Whilst the relevance of the Masterplan to all equality groups is low, this is not to say that there may be positive benefits to all groups as a result of the delivery of actions identified within the Masterplan. In particular, it is anticipated that the regeneration of the town centre will provide improvements to the quality of life of all residents of the borough by providing a more attractive, accessible and vibrant town with increased employment opportunities.	None required at this stage.
Disability (physical, mental, sensory disabilities)	Low	See above	
Gender (female, male, transgender)	Low	See above	

Relevance to the Promotion of Equality for -	High Medium Low impact	Impacts summary	Equalities Improvement/ Mitigating Action Indicate already or to be taken
Sexual Orientation (lesbian, gay men, bisexual)	Low	See above	
Age (especially younger and older)	Low	See above	
Religion/ Belief (including no religion/belief)	Low	See above	

6.0 CAPITAL OR REVENUE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The preparation of the Masterplan Update and Review has been 100% grant funded and has therefore had no impact on the Council's financial resources. At this stage it is not certain what the future financial implications of implementing various aspects of the Masterplan will be to the Council. However, the approval of the Masterplan does not commit the Council to further unbudgeted capital or revenue expenditure.
- 6.2 As the Council relies upon activities its undertakes within the Town Centre as a means of generating revenue it is prudent to have undertaken this masterplanning exercise to ensure that full consideration is given to safeguarding future revenue income (whilst also considering how revenue growth can be encouraged). For example from the revenue generated from commercial property lettings within the Town Centre, the securing of business rates and the attraction of visitors to cultural venues and so forth.
- 6.3 A range of delivery options are considered in the Enabling section of the Masterplan which identifies the private sector as being the lead on many of the actions. However, there will be some projects which require a public sector lead or public/ private partnerships. Wherever possible grant funding will be sought for projects where the Council takes a lead. Cabinet approval will be sought as and when individual

schemes are brought forward, at which stage the capital and revenue implications of each scheme will be considered in detail.

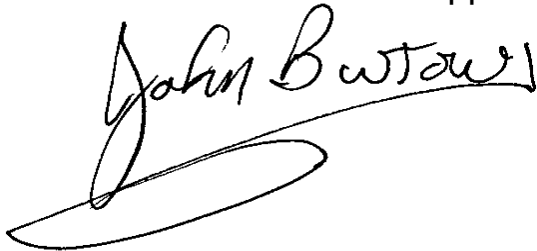
7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To approve the Chesterfield Town Centre Masterplan – Update and Review 2015 as a statement of the Council’s vision, strategy, policies and proposals for Chesterfield Town Centre.
- 7.2 To authorise the Development and Growth Manager and Cultural and Visitor Services Manager to explore the delivery of actions outlined in the Implementation Plan and seek external funding, where appropriate, to implement the Masterplan.

8.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 To take forward the delivery of the Town Centre Masterplan in order to provide the strategic framework for the regeneration and development of the town centre.

Officer recommendation supported.



Signed

Cabinet Member



Consultee Cabinet Member

Date 06/07/2015

Consultee Cabinet Member/Support Member comments (if applicable)/declaration of interests