

Subject:	Hove Station Area Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document – Draft for public consultation		
Date of Meeting:	19 November 2020		
Report of:	Executive Director, Economy, Environment & Culture		
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Ward(s) affected:	Goldsmid		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the preparation of the Hove Station Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). A Draft Masterplan has been prepared and the committee is being asked to approve the draft document for public consultation purposes prior to its final adoption.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the committee approves the draft Hove Station Area Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (attached as Appendix 1 to this report) for public consultation for 8 weeks and authorises the Executive Director Economy, Environment and Culture to make any necessary minor amendments to the Draft SPD in consultation with the Chair of TECC Committee prior to the public consultation.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 At its meeting on 22 November 2018 the former Tourism, Development & Culture Committee authorised the commencement of consultation with local stakeholders in respect of potential Issues and Options, to guide work on the production of a Supplementary Planning Document in the form of a masterplan to be focussed on the Conway Street Industrial Area, Hove. This followed the receipt of a £70,000 revenue grant from central government under the One Public Estate (OPE) programme towards the production of a masterplan, in order to provide a positive and coherent framework to manage future development and regeneration across this area, where sites are currently in multiple ownerships.
- 3.2 The Conway Street Industrial Area forms a Strategic Allocation for a minimum of 12,000 sq m of primarily B1 office and business floorspace and 200 residential units within the wider Hove Station Development Area (DA6) as defined in the adopted City Plan Part 1. The overall built environment and public realm of the Conway Street area is poor - and the underutilised spaces and large areas of

surface car parking provide significant transformational opportunities for a vibrant mixed-use high-density redevelopment in this inner-urban area of Hove.

- 3.3 Following consultation with key stakeholders on Issues & Options in early 2019, a procurement was undertaken for consultants to produce a masterplan document for the wider Hove Station Area, but focussed on the 'core' opportunity area on the south side of the railway (the Conway Street Industrial Area as well as remaining land within the City Plan Part 1 'DA6' area). A consultant team led by Tibbalds Planning & Urban Design was duly appointed to undertake the necessary technical work, which commenced in January this year. Following engagement with a range of key stakeholders and regular meetings since January with the officer working group, a draft masterplan in the form of and SPD has been produced and is presented in Appendix 1 of this report for the committee's consideration.
- 3.4 The draft SPD seeks to integrate and distil existing higher-level planning policies in the Brighton & Hove City Plan and the emerging Hove Station Area Neighbourhood Plan. It provides an urban design-led approach to guide the future development of blocks, routes and spaces in the area - identifying opportunities for development to provide a coherent, connected, integrated and sustainable urban quarter within a high-quality townscape and public realm. The key elements of the draft document are summarised below.

'Unlocking' the station area

- 3.5 The draft masterplan identifies the combined redevelopment of the station car park and adjacent sites to the south currently occupied by the bus depot, as the key means of providing an integrated and connected 'spine' and 'heart' to the new urban quarter (through what is currently the Conway Street Industrial Area). This element would be fundamental in realising the area's role as a strategic allocation in the City Plan, providing new and legible pedestrian routes and access both to and from existing and planned neighbourhoods south and north of the railway - and just as importantly, making best use of the station location. Realising this objective will require a major concerted and unified effort, given the various different land ownerships in the area and need to provide for both the shorter and longer term aspirations of the bus company, who advise that the Conway Street location is of key strategic importance to its ongoing operational needs.

Honeycroft Centre Area

- 3.6 This existing important community facility would be re-provided and enhanced as part of the wider regeneration of the core masterplan area. The site and its surroundings provide an opportunity for new residential development and greatly improved east-west route into and from Ellen Street, incorporating active frontages around a high quality public realm.

Station Approach

- 3.7 Major public realm improvements to the area immediately in front of the station buildings and their surrounds would include a car-free forecourt and relocating the taxi rank and bus stop to more convenient locations for station users.

Fonthill Road and Goldstone Street

- 3.8 The draft masterplan proposes to improve the role of these roads in providing a key north-south movement corridor either side of the railway for pedestrians and cyclists, with improved paving, environmental enhancements, active frontages and traffic calming.

Pocket Park

- 3.9 The realisation of a 'pocket' park located at the junction of Goldstone Street and Ellen Street would provide an important public space at a key node for pedestrian and cycle movements through the area.

Ellen Street

- 3.10 The draft document identifies the potential of this street to be completely transformed, providing the key east-west pedestrian and cycle route through the core masterplan area, lined with trees and new buildings on the sites either side of the road currently occupied by industrial buildings and residential garage blocks, providing new employment floorspace, residential development and 'active' frontages at ground floor level.

Ethel Street

- 3.11 The removal of parked cars from this area, in combination with the proposed Watkins Jones development recently granted planning permission at 1-3 Ethel Street, provides an opportunity for a transformed and much-improved environment for the benefit of both future users and existing businesses.

Hove Park Villas Square

- 3.12 Opportunities are identified to upgrade the footbridge over the railway and transform Hove Park Villas into a 'square' that enables pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles servicing the shops to co-exist in a high public space.

Phasing and delivery

- 3.13 Delivery of the overall masterplan will require a concerted effort that would need to be project-managed, with the council playing a major role in leading the way - possibly though the engagement of a third party by way of a development partner, in order to facilitate the necessary land deals, broker agreements with landowners where necessary and take on board the locational needs of existing businesses where possible. The SPD, when adopted, will play an important role in distilling existing higher-tier planning policy (both adopted and 'emerging') and providing a framework to guide a future land assembly and development strategy. A key requirement in implementing the key objectives of the masterplan will be successfully providing the means for Brighton & Hove Bus Company to shift its operations westwards within the masterplan core area onto a consolidated site that will improve on its current split-site arrangement – while accommodating its future operations in such a way that the townscape, public realm and other aspirations of the masterplan will be met.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 Considerable work has gone into analysing the masterplan area, which suffers from a low-grade environment, fragmentation and lack of access, due to a variety of factors - including the physical presence of the railway and the range of

different land ownerships. The key concepts of the draft masterplan – in particular the objective of ‘unlocking’ the core area through the joint development of the station car park and bus depot site(s) - have been arrived at following this analysis. No alternative options were apparent that would unlock the area’s potential in this way.

- 4.2 An alternative approach to developing the area would be to maintain the current situation in respect of the existing street patterns, site areas and traffic movements. This would retain all the inherent weakness in the area (including poor access, legibility, connectivity etc) and would not provide for a well-connected, integrated and ultimately successful urban quarter.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Consultation with a range of key stakeholders was undertaken prior to and during the Issues & Options stage, with further meetings taking place following the appointment of the consultant team earlier this year. The results of the Issues & Options Consultation are appended to this report. Stakeholders consulted have included key landowners, developers, residents, ward councillors and core members of Hove Station Neighbourhood Forum. The discussions with key landowners are reflected in the draft SPD (‘Ownership and Land Use’ para. 3.8). The concepts of ‘unlocking’ the station area (involving the landholdings of Brighton & Hove Bus Company and Network Rail) have been discussed with both parties, who have been supportive in principle, subject to financial and operational viability. An advance copy of the draft masterplan was shared for information with Hove Station Neighbourhood Forum, whose comments were noted and accommodated wherever practicable. A copy of the version appended to this committee report will have been shared with key landowners in advance of the committee meeting. The next stage in the process (eight weeks public consultation – a two-week extension to the normal six weeks to factor-in the Christmas period) will include an online exhibition and online meetings, together with opportunities for anyone to make representations in respect of the draft SPD. These will be taken into account when drafting the final recommended version of the SPD which will be the subject of a future report next year to this committee.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The draft SPD represents the culmination of considerable technical analysis and stakeholder discussion towards the creation of a document that is intended to pave the way in guiding the long-awaited and much-needed regeneration of this area. The public consultation will allow anyone with an interest in the area to consider the document’s proposals and input to the process, by formally submitting their views and comments.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The council received a revenue grant of £70,000 through One Public Estate funding from the government which has been used to finance the work in preparing and developing the Hove Station Area masterplan. Officer time spent on the project will be met from existing revenue budgets.

Finance Officer Consulted: Rob Allen

Date: 23/10/20

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 govern the content of, and the procedure for adopting, SPDs. The Regulations provide that SPDs cannot contain planning policy but can contain statements regarding environmental, social, design and economic objectives relevant to the attainment of the development and use of land. Once adopted the SPD will be a material planning consideration in the determination of those planning applications to which it is relevant. The Regulations also provide that a draft SPD must be subject to public consultation for a period of at least four weeks.

Lawyer Consulted:

Hilary Woodward

Date: 25/10/20

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 The draft SPD provides supplementary planning guidance in respect of the adopted City Plan Part 1, for which an Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken. Equalities issues are embedded in existing planning policy and these are further applied in the draft SPD. Such issues as providing and improving access for all are an important element of the masterplan, which includes proposals to improve access over and beneath the railway line to benefit a wide range of user groups (including people with disabilities, pushing buggies etc).

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.4 The City Plan Part 1 was the subject of sustainability appraisals over the course of its preparation. Sustainability issues are embedded within its policies and proposals and have informed and been carried forward in the master-planning work. This includes 'paving the way' for a Heat Network Feasibility Study of the Hove Station Area, that is programmed to be commissioned and undertaken next year.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Draft Supplementary Planning Document: Hove Station Area Masterplan

2. Hove Station Area Masterplan SPD – Report on Issues & Options Consultation

Background Documents

1. Brighton & Hove City Plan Part One
2. Hove Station Neighbourhood Plan ('Regulation 14' public consultation version, 2019)