

Birmingham City Council

Report to Cabinet

18th May 2021



Subject: Adoption of Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document

Report of: Acting Director Inclusive Growth

Relevant Cabinet Member: Councillor Ian Ward, Leader

Relevant O & S Chair(s): Councillor Shabrana Hussain, Economy and Skills

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Are specific wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No – All wards affected
If yes, name(s) of ward(s): Sutton Trinity		
Is this a key decision?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<i>If relevant, add Forward Plan Reference:</i> See paragraphs 1.3, 3.14 and 7.2.4.		
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state which appendix is exempt, and provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential:		

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the outcomes of the public consultation undertaken on the draft Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan during November 2020 – January 2021 and seeks authority for the adoption of the final document as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), attached as Appendix 1.

- 1.2 The report also sets out the proposed approach to further work on the redevelopment of the Red Rose Centre. This Council owned site is a key project in the masterplan and the City Council is fully committed to its delivery.
- 1.3 The report was not initially identified as a key decision, due to the location of the Town Centre within one ward. However, having considered the implications of the decision for the rest of Sutton Coldfield and for the City as a whole it has been agreed that it should be a key decision and approval has been given by the Chief Executive and relevant Overview and Scrutiny Chair for it's consideration as a key decision at Cabinet.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Approves adoption of the Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan SPD to guide investment and development decisions in the town centre, attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Notes that the adopted SPD superseeds the Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Regeneration Framework SPD (2009).
- 2.3 Supports the proposed approach towards the further stages of work required on the redevelopment of the Red Rose Centre.

3 Background

- 3.1 The Birmingham Development Plan (2017) identifies Sutton Coldfield town centre as playing a "leading role in the continued transformation of Birmingham" and identifies the centre as a Growth Area (Policy GA4). The need to improve the vitality and viability of the town centre is well established and is outlined in detail in the 'Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Regeneration Framework Supplementary Planning Document (2009)'. However, given the level of change town centres have undergone since 2009, there is a need to review the strategy for delivery. The requirement for an updated strategy for transformation is reflected in the inclusion of Sutton Coldfield town centre within the Urban Centres Framework (January 2020).
- 3.2 Building on this existing planning context, a detailed Masterplan has been developed to set out the strategy for the town centre's transformation and to provide further details on the opportunities within the town centre. This masterplan is the result of strong partnership working with Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Regeneration Partnership, who in October 2019 commissioned the consultants Tibbalds to develop the Masterplan. The Town Centre Regeneration Partnership membership includes Sutton Coldfield Town Council, Birmingham City Council, Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID), Sutton Coldfield Chamber of Commerce, Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP), Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and Friends of Sutton Coldfield Library. The Masterplan was funded jointly by Sutton Coldfield Town Council and the GBSLEP. The City Council has been actively involved with the commissioning and drafting of the Masterplan.

- 3.3 This Masterplan has been developed at a crucial time as it allows the strategy to reflect the impact of Covid19 and provide a framework for the town centre to re-position itself economically, along with providing improved public environmentally resilient spaces, that support communities' health and wellbeing. Revisiting the detailed strategy for the town centre also provides an opportunity to include proposals that will help to tackle climate change and encourage sustainable living.
- 3.4 The Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan SPD provides a framework for the town centre's transformation (see Appendix 1). In summary the draft masterplan includes:
- A **Vision** to unite stakeholders and a set of clear objectives that identify the key themes that are fundamental to the transformation of the town centre.
 - A number of **Big Moves** to deliver the vision around three headings: Movement and Transport, Economy and Centres, and Built Environment and Identity.
 - **Town Centre Projects** and a **Delivery Strategy** to clearly demonstrate how the Masterplan can be implemented and to provide a set of deliverable projects that will be achieved through a partnership-based approach.
- 3.5 The consultants undertook public consultation on the 'Big Moves' in February 2020 to guarantee the views of local communities, visitors, businesses, investors and other stakeholders to inform the final proposals in the Masterplan. The Regeneration Partnership fully endorsed the Masterplan at a meeting on the 13th August 2020 and it was subsequently endorsed by Sutton Coldfield Town Council at a meeting on 19th August 2020.
- 3.6 In order to give the Masterplan sufficient weight in decision making, the City Council undertook public consultation with the purpose of formally adopting it as an SPD. Public consultation took place between the 20th November 2020 and 15th January 2021, in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement, which has recently been amended to take account of Covid-19 restrictions.
- 3.7 There were 57 formal responses to the consultation. The Consultation Statement (Appendix 2) contains further details on the engagement that was carried out, the main issues raised and how they have been addressed in the final version of the Masterplan. Many of the responses were positive about the Masterplan and agreed this was the right strategy to support the town centre's transformation. There were several suggestions for alterations to the Masterplan. The main points raised during the consultation are summarised below:
- Support for the Masterplan and agreement that the town centre needs a strategy for transformation
 - Support for the vision and objections with suggestions for additions around design, heritage, culture and cycling.

- Support for the redevelopment of the Gracechurch Centre and the Red Rose Centre – including support for a new library facility.
- Support for the measures to improve the environmental quality of the town centre, including proposals around celebrating Plants Brook, green infrastructure and improving linkages with Sutton Park.
- Support for the proposals that look to reduce the impact of cars on the town centre and improve the cycling and walking experience.
- Support for town centre living and a better mix of uses to diversify away from retail.
- Requests for more details on the historic assets and how these will be complemented.
- Requests for more details on the design of new buildings, heights of buildings and sustainable design. Specific suggestions to changes to design or requests for further information were received for the following sites; the Red Rose Centre, Bus Interchange, Newhall walk, Brassington Avenue and the Gracechurch centre.
- Requests for the Masterplan to consider creative, cultural and educational uses.
- Requests for references to safe and secure environments.
- Concerns about the level of detail in the Masterplan, especially around the design of highway schemes and the delivery of projects.
- Concerns about the impact of the highway proposals on access via the car into the town centre, congestion and parking.
- Questions over whether the Masterplan responds sufficiently to the impacts of Covid19 on the health of centres.
- Questions over whether the Masterplan goes far enough to diversify the town centre away from retail.
- Detailed representations from site owners in support of their sites being included in the Masterplan and requesting some amendments to the wording on projects.

3.8 Following a review of all the representations made, amendments have been proposed to the Masterplan. These amendments do not alter the strategy within the document but rather strengthen and highlight the existing strategy, to respond positively to several of the representations - resulting in a stronger Masterplan overall. The main amendments to the Masterplan can be summarised as:

- Further details in the introduction to how Covid19 is impacting on the health of the town centre and how the Masterplan will support the town centre's recovery.

- A proposed new principle on 'Creativity' to ensure the Masterplan promotes creative, cultural and educational uses.
- Amended Big Move on design to better capture elements such as sustainable design, integrated green infrastructure, creating safe environments and the height of buildings.
- Amendments to the existing Big Moves to strengthen the approach towards the historic environment and references to historic assets throughout the document as appropriate.
- Amendments to the Big Move that focusses on diversifying uses within the centre to include support for creative, cultural and educational uses. This is then also reflected in references to other projects – particularly the Red Rose Centre which has been updated to refer to the creation of a cultural and creative hub, that complements the library and community uses already proposed.
- Further details have been added on the design of the proposed public transport interchange to provide more details on how this will deliver an improved experience and encourage the use of sustainable transport.
- Amendments to the wording for the Gracechurch project to clarify the approach towards supporting leisure uses and strengthen the role for residential use at this site.
- Amendments to the Red Rose Centre project to capture creative uses and strengthen the wording on design. Additional wording has also been added to cover the potential for the site to come forward in phases but with a comprehensive approach to delivering the sites vision.
- Additional wording on design for Newhall Walk.

3.9 Several representations did express concern about the impact of the highway projects within the Masterplan. The Transport and Connectivity Big Moves are considered the right approach for the town centre and no amendments have been proposed. The Masterplan takes a balanced approach between ensuring the centre is accessible by private car but that the impact of cars on the town centre is reduced. The proposals in the Masterplan align with the emerging Transport Plan and support the City Council's commitment to Route to Zero. As stated in the Masterplan further modelling work is needed on the impact of these proposals to ensure any impact is fully understood and mitigated. The work has already been commissioned and will feed into the design of the highway schemes. This will ensure the aims of the Big Moves in the plan are delivered.

3.10 The adoption of the Masterplan is a key tool in delivering the strategy for the town centres transformation. The masterplan is a high-level document that provides the overall strategy and sets out several priority projects. Further work is needed on each of these projects to understand the appropriate delivery mechanism, funding and timescales. Using the remaining money from the agreed budget for

the Masterplan an interdependency plan has been produced by Tibbalds that sets out the relationship between the projects in more detail. The Regeneration Partnership has committed to supporting the further delivery work required for the projects in the Masterplan, working in collaboration with developers and stakeholders. This commitment to further work on delivery will address a number of the representations to the Masterplan, as several respondents supported the Masterplan's proposals but expressed concerns about the level of detail and how the projects will be delivered.

- 3.11 Adopting the amended Masterplan as an SPD would ensure the City Council has an up-to-date planning framework to support the Development Management function and the delivery of the centre's regeneration. Once adopted, the Masterplan will supersede the outdated Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Regeneration Framework SPD (2009).
- 3.12 One of the main projects in the Masterplan is the Red Rose Centre. The Masterplan states the site should be redeveloped to achieve a vibrant mix of uses maximising the prominent location. The City Council owns the Red Rose Centre and a considerable amount of the other land within the 'extended Red Rose Site'. It is therefore agreed that the comprehensive redevelopment of the site should be a key priority for the City Council. This is for two main reasons. Firstly, to support the regeneration of Sutton Coldfield Town Centre. Secondly, to optimise the existing investment the City Council has made in the Red Rose Centre.
- 3.13 Further work is required to understand the mix of uses that would be viable on the site and the best method for bringing forward its comprehensive redevelopment. This includes considering the spatial requirements and delivery model for a future library and local history archive centre, which could potentially form a key feature of the redeveloped site. It is proposed that this work is developed further with the intention of submitting to Cabinet an Outline Business Case for the Red Rose Centres redevelopment towards the end of 2021.
- 3.14 This report was not included in the Forward Plan because Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan boundary falls within one single ward. However, it has now been agreed that due to the role Sutton Coldfield Town Centre plays in serving Sutton Coldfield and indeed Birmingham as a whole, adopting the masterplan will have an impact on more than one ward and should be considered a key decision. This decision relating to adopting Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan must not be delayed due to the need to use the masterplan for active funding applications to deliver the bold vision and projects but also to support the planning management process for imminent planning applications within the town centre. Having the masterplan adopted will provide an up-to-date planning framework, supporting the delivery of high-quality schemes within the town centre.

4 Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

- 4.1 **Option 1 - Do not adopt the Masterplan as an SPD.** The Masterplan provides a clear vision and strategy for Sutton Coldfield Town Centre transformation which

will support the delivery of the growth agenda set out in the adopted BDP. Without it having the planning weight of an SPD there is a risk that development on these sites will not meet the requirements and expectations of the City Council, communities and stakeholders. Not adopting the SPD would also mean the Council would have to rely on policies in the BDP, existing 2009 Town Centre Regeneration Framework SPD and the Urban Centres Framework. Some elements of the existing SPD are now out-of-date and relying on this plan would not address the need for a transformational approach to how the town centre functions. There would also be potential for confusion and conflict between the draft Masterplan and the existing dated SPD.

- 4.2 **Option 2 – Adopt the Masterplan as an SPD.** This is the recommended option as adopting the Masterplan will provide a clear vision and strategy for Sutton Coldfield Town Centre, provide a strong planning framework for decision making, show a commitment to the Masterplan's delivery and replace the current SPD which is considered out of date. Having an up-to-date Masterplan will help to direct investment and unlock funding opportunities.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 The consultant-led public consultation on the Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan lasted for four weeks during the period of 13th February 2020 to 9th March 2020. There has been continuous engagement with landowners within the town centre to ensure the plan reflects their aspirations.
- 5.2 Over the four-week consultation period around 200 people participated in and/or visited the nine organised workshops and drop-in events. Formal responses were sent by 97 people and another 32 people submitted fully or partially filled-in response forms. An overview of the consultation undertaken by the consultants, and the main themes is available on the City Council's website.
- 5.3 The City Council led public consultation on the draft SPD built on this earlier engagement, seeking formal views on the Masterplan. The consultation document was published online and all those on the Planning Policy Consultation Database were notified. The City Council social media was used to promote the consultation. Partners such as the Town Council, Business Improvement District (BID) and friends of Sutton Coldfield library also helped to promote the consultation through their networks. Two consultation events were held online to provide an opportunity for interested parties to hear more about the masterplan proposals and ask any questions. These were advertised on our website and through social media.
- 5.4 Overall 57 individuals or organisations formally responded to the consultation (18 written responses and 39 on BeHeard). A number of these were with detailed responses, proposing positive suggestions for the Masterplan's improvement. Further details on the consultation process are included in Appendix 2. This includes a detailed overview of all the representations and how these have informed the final version of the masterplan.

- 5.5 Local ward councillors have been briefed on the outcomes of the consultation and the proposed amendments to the Masterplan. See Appendix 6 for further details.
- 5.6 The proposed amendments have been discussed with the Town Centre Regeneration Partnership.

6 Risk Management

- 6.1 Once adopted there is a risk that the Masterplan is not effective in delivering the desired outcomes, especially given the current health of town centres as a result of Covid-19. In order to mitigate this risk, work on delivery has already been started and the City Council has identified its own site – the Red Rose Centre as a catalyst for change in the town centre. This risk is further minimised by the work being undertaken through the Regeneration Partnership. The partnership includes the necessary partners required to deliver the plan and is committed to the Masterplan's vision. The Partnership is also committed to developing further the detailed delivery strategy to support the masterplan.
- 6.2 A full risk register is attached at Appendix 4.

7 Compliance Issues:

7.1 How are the recommended decisions consistent with the City Council's priorities, plans and strategies?

- 7.1.1 The SPD will contribute towards the vision contained in the City Council Plan: 2019-2023 that looks to maximise the potential of centres, including "Birmingham is a great city to live in" and "Birmingham is an entrepreneurial city to learn, work and invest in". The SPD is in line with the Birmingham Development Plan.
- 7.1.2 The SPD will also contribute towards the City Council's commitment to Route to Zero and achieving carbon neutrality. The SPD places tackling climate change at the forefront with a clear commitment in the objectives. In line with the City Council's Emergency Transport Plan and emerging Transport Plan the Masterplan includes several measures to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport. Several proposals included in the Masterplan will result in a more sustainable, greener and resilient town centre for future generations.

7.2 Legal Implications

- 7.2.1 The relevant legal powers for preparing and undertaking public consultation on the draft SPD are set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), with detailed requirements set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), and the Birmingham Statement of Community Involvement. The consultation period was eight weeks which meets the requirement to publicly consult on SPDs for a minimum of four weeks before adoption. The SPD is

consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and the Birmingham Development Plan.

- 7.2.2 The City Council has carried out a screening assessment of the draft SPD, under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and concluded that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required. Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England all agreed with this conclusion. The screening assessment has been updated and will be made publicly available as part of the adoption process (Appendix 5).
- 7.2.3 The power to hold, appropriate and dispose of land is contained in Sections 120-123 of the Local Government Act 1972. The disposal power in S123 of that is subject to the best consideration test but under a ministerial General Disposal Consent of 2003 this is modified in relation to disposals intended to promote or improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area and of persons present there.
- 7.2.4 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, specifically Part B6.2 viii "Decisions not on the Forward Plan", the approval of the Chief Executive and relevant Overview and Scrutiny Chair has been given to this report being considered despite not being on the forward plan 28 days before the Cabinet meeting at which the decision is to be taken.

7.3 Financial Implications

- 7.3.1 The Masterplan was commissioned by Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Regeneration Partnership and was jointly funded by the Town Council and the GBSLEP. The SPD process, including public consultation, has been undertaken using existing Planning and Development staff resources. Direct costs of £1,208 to undertake the public consultation on the draft SPD have been funded from approved revenue budgets within Planning and Development.

7.4 Procurement Implications (if required)

- 7.4.1 N/A

7.5 Human Resources Implications (if required)

- 7.5.1 N/A

7.6 Public Sector Equality Duty

- 7.6.1 An Equality Analysis has been undertaken and is attached in Appendix 3. The assessment found that the SPD will have no specific impacts on protected characteristics. The developments will lead to improvements for the local population including improved town centre facilities, services and attractions. The developments will also create new homes and result in a town centre that promotes healthy living through improved public transport

and a greener environment. Rejuvenating the town centre will also help support the economy, including job retention and creation in an accessible location.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1– Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan SPD
- 8.2 Appendix 2 – Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan SPD Consultation Summary
- 8.3 Appendix 3 – Equalities Analysis
- 8.4 Appendix 4 - Risk Assessment
- 8.5 Appendix 5 – Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening for Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan Draft
- 8.6 Appendix 6 – Ward Member Consultation
- 8.7 Appendix 7 – Adoption Statement

9 Background Documents

- Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Regeneration Framework SPC Adopted 2009
- Birmingham Development Plan Adopted 2017
- Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan Baseline Study December 2019
- Urban Centres Framework Adopted 2020
- Sutton Coldfield Town Centre Masterplan Consultation Document August 2020