

Appendix 2: Consultation Summary and Responses

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The public consultation on the *Birmingham Smithfield Masterplan* ran for 8 weeks from the 21st March 2016 to 23rd May 2016. This built upon an 8 week public consultation held on the Visioning Document in Spring 2015 which enabled ideas for the future of Birmingham Smithfield to evolve and develop, informing the production of the masterplan. The document underwent an 8 week public consultation starting in March and ending in Early May 2015. The consultation invited a variety of groups and organisations to comment as well as market traders and the general public. There was a positive response to the proposal with the main issues being a call for a green park and the secured future of the retail markets. All comments helped informed the product of the masterplan.
- 1.2. The consultation on the masterplan began with a launch event at MIPIM 2016, an annually held international property conference. This was followed by a local launch (March 2016) in Birmingham to which a wide range of organisations and groups were invited and approximately 100 attended. Media coverage of the launch and masterplan was significant with extensive coverage on local television and radio channels. Local media attention around Birmingham Smithfield has been ongoing with images from the masterplan regularly used in the press when reporting on Birmingham's development and regeneration.
- 1.3. Consultation included a number of activities that sought to engage as wide a range of people, groups and organisation as possible. The wide publicity has garnered a good response from residents within the city and beyond. Specific consultation activities included:
 - 1.3.1. A range of individual meetings and drop-in events were held with a number of organisations including Bull Ring Market Traders and Committees, Southside BID, Digbeth Residents Association Committee, Birmingham Civic Society, Birmingham Uprising youth organisation, National Express West Midlands and the Impact Hub business community. There have also been ongoing discussions with market traders dating back to the summer of 2015 and continuing into 2016, where representative from Greig and Stephenson and Market Place Management were present.
 - 1.3.2. A public exhibition providing an overview of the masterplan went on display throughout the consultation period at the Library of Birmingham and St Martin's Church adjacent to Birmingham Smithfield. A series of eleven 'exhibition drop-in sessions' were held where officers were available to answer questions and gather feedback aurally. The sessions were advertised on the Council's website, on posters in and around the library and St Martins Church.

1.3.3. A video showcasing the opportunity at Birmingham Smithfield was shared across the City Council's social media channels raising awareness of the masterplan and consultation.

1.3.4. Letters/emails were sent to over 400 stakeholders including land owners, local residents, businesses and interest groups in and around the site as well as statutory bodies such as the Environment Agency and Historic England.

1.3.5. Copies of the masterplan were made available in local libraries, City Council customer service centres and neighbourhood offices across the city.

1.4. The main consultation interface was the City Council's BeHeard consultation website where a questionnaire sought views and comments on the masterplan. 95 individuals completed the questionnaire with many also leaving other comments. A further 93 individuals completed the paper questionnaires at the exhibitions. In addition, 25 detailed letters and emails were received. In total, 213 formal responses to the consultation were received.

2. Consultation feedback and responses

2.1. The consultation responses have been analysed for each section of the masterplan and any significant changes to the document described in bold italics below. The majority of comments involved minor changes to wording and plans to provide clarity and to ensure consistency or reflect changing factual circumstances. For example, correcting the name of Birmingham Coach Station, highlighting that Southside is a focus for the LGBT community and updating details of site's archaeology. Overall 20 individual meetings/sessions were held with a total of 80 people attending.

2.2. The Vision

2.2.1. The masterplan received the support of 60% of respondents for the vision and approach with the majority of the letters / emails received supporting the key principles of the masterplan and welcoming the site's transformation. There was strong feeling that the site's transformation should reflect the area's history and include more green infrastructure. Of the responses disagreeing with the masterplan's vision, these were on the basis that the site should be redeveloped in its entirety as a park and were accompanied by a 2,643 signature petition, which was originally submitted in response to the Visioning Document public consultation with a total of 2,010 signatures.

2.2.2. Specific points raised include:

- Respondents supporting the petition consider that the masterplan's vision for the site should see the site redeveloped in its entirety as a park.
- Many respondents strongly stated that the site should include more green spaces, trees and natural features. A number considered that this would be an alternative to seeing the whole site developed as a park.

Response:

Birmingham Smithfield is a key site in delivering the City's challenging growth agenda to deliver 89,000 new homes, 100,000 new jobs and the infrastructure by 2031. The city centre is central to this future growth agenda as the economic hub for the City and principle visitor and cultural destination.

The growth potential for Birmingham Smithfield was first established within the Big City Plan launched in 2010. As the strategic masterplan for the city centre the Big City Plan seeks to grow the city centre core and deliver improved connectivity, the strengthening of the centre's authentic character and the diversification of its economic and cultural base.

The principle of green space is acknowledged as being vital to successful city's. However a simple large space presents huge challenges not only to ongoing management etc. but loss of much needed area for homes. The masterplan seeks a balance to provide more usable and deliverable spaces.

The need for green spaces is embedded in the masterplan, with the combined offering of spaces equating to 27,000sq.m this includes public and semi-public spaces of a range of types and characters. In addition to this the masterplan is explicit about the utilisation of rooftop growing spaces and residential rooftop gardens with potential for 17,000 sqm of space.

In response to the feedback received, ***additional green infrastructure has been added to the masterplan.*** This is identified on plans throughout the masterplan and illustrated in the updated 3D images of the site. These additions emphasise the key principle that green infrastructure will be an integral part of the site, through the use of green walls, green and brown roofs and the provision of habitat features, supporting the network of squares and spaces. Throughout the site roof space will be utilised for productive uses and amenity space. Green streets will be created with trees and other features in highway design, enhancing air quality and reducing noise pollution.

New pedestrian and cycle routes throughout the site will connect into the city's wider network of existing open spaces including Eastside City Park and Highgate Park and those proposed such as Duddeston Viaduct Skypark forming part of the Curzon HS2 Masterplan.

Delivering Birmingham Smithfield will also be central to unlocking a much wider area for transformation along the River Rea corridor. Alongside the activity underway for Birmingham Smithfield, there is work underway to open up the river corridor to create a blue-green link that is a focus for new residential communities and employment opportunities in the area. Masterplanning work has commenced in partnership with the Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water for the 68 hectare area termed the Southern Gateway.

- **Respondents stated that the vision for the site should reflect the area's history.**
Response: Additional text has been added to the vision stating that Birmingham Smithfield should be a distinctive place, that reflects that area's rich history. Further text additions have been made throughout the masterplan to emphasise the importance of the area's transformation reflecting its history as detailed in section 3.2.2 of this document.

2.3. The "Big Moves"

2.3.1. The majority of respondents agreed with "Big Moves", with the inclusion of the markets in a new facility at the heart of the site strongly supported. Bringing public transport through the site and making the development pedestrian and cycle friendly, and providing a square for festivals and events received a positive reception. The development of a new residential neighbourhood received support; although it was considered by some that the park upon which it is focused should be bigger. It was suggested that this could be achieved by increasing the density of development.

2.3.2. Big Move – Vibrant Markets and Leisure

2.3.3. Over 80% of respondents supported the inclusion of Vibrant Markets at the heart of the site, with a market offer that attracts new and existing customers in a landmark building. The overwhelming majority of respondents felt strongly that the markets are an important part of Birmingham's shopping offer, character and history.

2.3.4. Specific concerns include:

- **Respondents felt strongly that a new markets building should reflect the character and history of the markets. Many stated that it should be an iconic, landmark building.**

Response: The masterplan states the new markets building should be a landmark building, with a contemporary and innovative design that captures the distinct character of the markets. ***The importance of this building reflecting the markets' rich history has been added to the text. The text states that the design of the new markets building should reflect the rich history of its location, on which a market has been held since 1166. The design of the buildings and spaces should celebrate the historic moat and manor house which formed some of the earliest development of the site. This celebration could be achieved through public art, public realm or exhibitions.*** Plan 6 'Activity and scale' identifies the building as a landmark building.

- **Respondents sought more information on the mix of stalls and other market operational and management arrangements. The clear message received that a new building must be fit for purpose, easily accessible and offers an affordable mix of goods and services that attract new and existing customers. The markets must be well served by public transport.**

Response: The masterplan provides the vision for the area. The markets will provide a revitalised shopping and eating offer that builds on existing quality and continues to be a good value and easily accessible source of fresh food and goods for residents. Integrated servicing, waste, recycling, storage and preparation areas with the capacity to service the operation will be vital to its success. The detailed mix of stalls and operational and servicing arrangements is a matter for future detailed designed.

2.3.5. Big Move – Festival Square

2.3.6. The majority of respondents (74%) supported the inclusion of a major new public space at the centre of the site that is a lively hub for cultural events, activities, festivals and an attractive place for people to meet and relax. Respondents suggested a range of activities that the square could accommodate, many focused on the community and arts as well as hosting existing festivals such as Birmingham Pride and SHOUT Festival. The provision of affordable, multi-functional events space for the community was seen as of great importance. ***The importance of the square providing multifunctional spaces that can host cultural and community events has been added to the text.***

2.3.7. Specific concerns include:

- **A respondent stated that the markets should be at the centre of the site rather than Festival Square. Instead, the square should be next to St Martin's Church.**

Response: Festival Square's position at the centre of the site is designed to draw people into the area bringing life and activity throughout the day and into the evening. Its surrounding uses,

including the cultural building, markets, hotels, restaurants and cafes and the convergence of pedestrian routes will be central to this. The masterplan proposes a Market Square to provide an attractive setting to the markets and St Martin's Church. Market Square is identified on Plan 4 'Pedestrian and cycle connections'.

- **Concern was raised relating to the potential conflict between events being held in the square and surrounding residential uses.**

Response: The proposed mix of uses will make Birmingham Smithfield a vibrant and distinctive place. Careful management of the relationship between these uses will be key in ensuring the success of the area. **Additional text has been included in the masterplan to emphasise this.** The residential uses have been positioned in block away and screened by commercial/leisure uses.

- **The inclusion of public art in the square was stated as being important in capturing the area's character, history and diverse local communities, as well as providing opportunities for local artists.**

Response: The importance of the role of public art throughout the site in revealing its history and character is already embedded in the text.

- **Contrasting views were received regarding the square's size, with some respondents stating it is too big and would be empty and uninviting, and some stating it is too small and not big enough to hold major events.**

Response: The masterplan shows an indicative area for the square. The exact size and design of the square will be drawn up as part of any detailed plans for the site. The correct indicative designs reflect a suitable space for any types of events.

2.3.8. Big Move – Pedestrian Boulevard

2.3.9. The majority of respondents (86%) supported the inclusion of a wide Pedestrian Boulevard providing pedestrian connections into the site, allowing people to walk through the area easily and reach it from other parts of the city centre. There was a positive reception to proposals to give pedestrians and cyclists priority.

2.3.10. Specific concerns include:

- **A representation was received proposing a second boulevard to run through the site, providing connections to Eastside and HS2.**

Response: The creation of an east-west route for Midland Metro that will run across the site along an extended Sherlock Street will provide quick and convenient connections to New Street Station,

Moor Street Station, Birmingham Coach Station, the HS2 terminus at Birmingham Curzon and Eastside. This is identified on Plan 5 'Public transport and access'.

- **Representations called for the boulevard to be 'greener' with more street trees.**
Response: The pedestrian boulevard has been 'greened' through the inclusion of street trees and green landscaping. This is identified on Plan 4 'Pedestrian and cycle connections' and illustrated in the updated 3D images of the site. Additional text has been added to highlight this.
- **Support was received for the active frontages proposed along the length of the boulevard to make it a lively and well used space. However, concern was raised over the appropriate management of the boulevard to ensure that it does not become congested with, for example, street furniture, signage and charity fundraisers.**
Response: Embedded in the masterplan is the requirement for active frontages to bring life and activity to the development's streets and spaces. Plan 6 'Activity and scale' identifies the location of active frontages along the pedestrian boulevard and throughout the site. The importance of the long term maintenance and management of the public realm is identified in the text.

2.3.11. **Integrated Public Transport**

2.3.12. Over 75% of respondents agreed with the inclusion of Integrated Public Transport throughout the site in dedicated corridors providing people with a quick and efficient way of getting around the area. Particular support was received for extending Metro through the site. Respondents agreed with the closure of Upper Dean Street to private vehicles.

2.3.13. Specific concerns include:

- **A number of respondents considered that only Metro should run through the site, rather than Metro and Sprint buses as proposed. The noise, emissions and congestion associated with buses were cited as reasons for this.**
Response: The bus remains by far the most important mode of transport in Birmingham, it is of particular importance to shoppers visiting the markets. Sprint Buses, which are low-emissions vehicles, will run through the site along a dedicated corridor on Bromsgrove Street.
- **The conflict between pedestrians and public transport was raised as a concern by a number of respondents, who felt that public**

transport should not inhibit people's ability to easily and safely walk around the site.

Response: *Additional text has been included in the masterplan that emphasises the importance of creating streets and spaces that enable pedestrians, cyclist and public transport to move through the site in parallel.* Embedded in the masterplan is the importance of people being able to make efficient and convenient interchanges between different transport modes.

- **A representation called for a network of public transport to be provided throughout the wider area, in particular linking the site to Southside.**

Response: Public transport at Birmingham Smithfield will be part of a wider network of public transport that connects the whole city. The vision for Birmingham Smithfield sits within the context of the Birmingham Mobility Action Plan 'Birmingham Connected' which sets out the City's plans for a connected city.

- **The closure of Upper Dean Street to private traffic was well supported by respondents however concerns were raised in relation to access to the markets and existing commercial and residential properties.**

Response: Access to existing commercial and residential properties on Upper Dean Street will be retained and dedicated servicing arrangements for the markets established, as shown on Plan 5 'Public transport and access'. Within the masterplan text the need for a comprehensive access, servicing and management strategy for the whole site is identified. Access to the markets for shoppers will take the form of a dedicated bus/sprint route and public transport interchange on Bromsgrove Street. New and improved pedestrian routes will converge on the markets bringing in shoppers. These routes are shown on Plan 4 'Pedestrian and cycle connections'.

2.3.14. **Big Move – Residential Neighbourhood**

2.3.15. Over 70% of respondents agreed with the inclusion of a Residential Neighbourhood in the development, comprised of a mixture of new, modern sustainable homes set around a major new park.

2.3.16. Specific concerns include:

- **Providing affordable homes, in a mix of ownerships to address local needs, which are supported by community facilities and big enough to accommodate families, received strong support from many respondents.**

Response: *Central to the masterplan is the provision of a mixture of 2, 3 and 4 bed apartments, a proportion of which will be affordable homes in accordance with the City Council's policy and additional text has been included in the masterplan*

in this regard. The masterplan states that these homes will be at the forefront of sustainable residential design and modern living with integrated space for storage, bicycles, waste and recycling. These new homes will be supported by private and shared open and green spaces, leisure and community facilities such as a health centre and primary school all contributing to the creation of a great place to live.

- **Several respondents stated that more housing should be proposed to meet the city's housing needs, with the density of development increased to allow for a bigger park and more green spaces. Taller buildings were suggested as a way in which density could be increased.**

Response: The density of development has been increased, this is illustrated in the various plans included in the masterplan.

3. The Development Principles

3.1. A positive response was received to the approach taken for the Development Principles and the ambition to create a sustainable and inclusive development.

3.2. Specific concerns include:

3.2.1. Development Principle – Connectivity

- **A group of respondents stated that dedicated cycle lanes should be provided throughout the site to encourage cycling and minimise conflict with pedestrians and public transport. More cycle parking should also be provided.**

Response: A key principle has been included in the text for the design of streets and spaces throughout the site to include dedicated cycle lanes. Additional cycle parking locations have been added to Plan 4 'Pedestrian and cycle connections' and text stating that cycling parking should form a key part of the design of buildings and spaces.

- **Respondents stated that the accessibility of the site to all is important.**

Response: Agreed. A key principle has been included in the text emphasising the importance of a development that is accessible and inclusive for all.

3.2.2. Development Principle – Design

- **Respondents stated that the site's architecture should be high-quality, well designed and sustainable buildings that relate to the spaces around them well.**

Response: Embedded in the masterplan is the requirement for the approach to the design of the site, its buildings and spaces to be focused on the delivery of the highest quality place for people and the most sustainable form of development. Buildings, public spaces and infrastructure must be designed to be adaptable to economic, social, technological and environmental change. Development will bring life and activity to the streets through the provision of active frontages. This will be particularly important along key routes and around public spaces.

- **The importance of the site's history in informing the future design and development of the site was highlighted by respondents.**

Response: Embedded in the masterplan is the importance of the area's heritage informing the future approach to design. The Grade II* church of St Martin-in-the-Bull Ring and historic buildings of Digbeth, Deritend and Bordesley High Streets Conservation Area which neighbour the site contribute to local distinctiveness and sense of place. Development will reinforce and reveal this historic environment by, for example, retaining key views to the church, reinforcing the historic grid pattern of streets, retaining existing buildings of merit and the inclusion of public art. The layout of development will continue the existing scale and pattern of city blocks fitting within a logical and legible network of streets and spaces, reconnecting the site to the wider area. ***Additional text has been included in the masterplan to further emphasise the importance of the site's history informing the future design and development of the site. The text states that the important heritage of the area will need to play a central role in informing the future approach to design. The transformation of the area should tell the story of the city's history and celebrate its rich heritage. Reflecting the area's history and character in the development will create a strong sense of place with which people can identify, and feel pride in the area.***

- **Responses relating the site's archaeology state that archaeological remains including the manor house and moat are present on the site. Any development of the site needs to include archaeological survey and excavation. Festival Square should be located in the historical location of the manor house and moat to provide an opportunity to reveal the remains.**

Response: ***The masterplan text relating to the site's archaeology has been revised to reflect the responses received.*** The reasoning behind the location of Festival Square at the centre of the site is detailed in section 2.3.7. Market Square is proposed in the historical location of the manor house and moat. Development in this location and throughout the site will seek to reinforce and reveal the historic environment. The masterplan balances the desire to reflect heritage while ensuring a viable comprehensive scheme to be delivered.

- **Personal safety was considered to be a priority in the design of the site.**

Response: Agreed. Embedded in the masterplan is the requirement for new development to be inclusive and safe with security measures integrated and designed as part of the architecture and public realm.

- **A number of respondents felt that the masterplan could be more ambitious in terms of its sustainability credentials with a greater emphasis place on the inclusion of sustainable technology in the development, along with placing a greater emphasis on green space.**

Response: The masterplan already makes reference to the use of sustainable technology such as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and Smart Grids. **Additional text has been added that includes Combined Heat and Power as a possible sustainable technology that could be used on the site.** The site is also part of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) Zero Emissions Cities programme, which will create an internationally exemplar sustainable development.

- **The provision of green infrastructure throughout the site should be a key principle of the masterplan.**

Responses: Agreed. The need for green infrastructure to feature as an integral part of the site is embedded in the masterplan as a key principle. Green infrastructure will be delivered through the use of green walls, green and brown roofs and the provision of habitat features. Green streets will be created through integration of trees and other features in highway design, enhancing air quality and reducing noise pollution. Productive landscapes will form part of the residential neighbourhood with community assets, such as urban orchards and city allotments, integrated into its network of street and spaces. Throughout the site roof space will be utilised for productive uses and amenity space with plant and equipment carefully managed.

In response to the feedback received, **additional green infrastructure has been added to the masterplan.** This is identified on plans throughout the masterplan and illustrated in the updated 3D images of the site.

- **The design of development should link, complement and enhance the areas surrounding the site.**

Response: Agreed. Embedded in the masterplan is the improvements to the quality of streets surrounding the site to create a street scene that is rationalised and effective in its movement of traffic, with active frontages and high quality public realm. This will

ensure the integration of the redevelopment with surroundings and support pedestrian movement.

3.2.3. Development Principle – Activity

- **The inclusion of leisure and cultural attractions in the site was well supported. A number of responses stated that the masterplan should be more ambitious, with attractions that have a national and international draw.**

Response: Additional text has been added setting out the aspiration for leisure and cultural attractions that have a national and international draw. These attractions will be important in drawing more visitors to the area and wider city.

- **Concern was raised that the retail, food and beverage offer on the site would be high street chains, replicating the offer in the retail core. It was strongly stated that this area should be a focus for independent retailers and businesses.**

Response: Strongly embedded in the masterplan is the proposal for the new markets building that will be a multi-layered environment that will encompass a mix of uses including eateries, restaurants, small retail outlets and business space for start-ups and small enterprises, offering opportunities for growing independent businesses. This mix will create a distinctly Birmingham market and in turn encourage economic activity in and around it. Throughout the site new leisure, cultural and visitor attractions will be supported by cafes, independent shops, restaurants and hotels.

4. Delivery

4.1. A limited number of responses were received on the delivery of development. The appropriate phasing of development was considered critical in ensuring minimum disruption and allowing the markets to continue trading. A phased approach to development is embedded in the masterplan with opportunities to bring forward different elements depending on market conditions. It will be essential that the infrastructure, including pedestrian/cycle routes, public transport corridors and squares are delivered first. The new home for the markets will also form an early phase to bring life and vibrancy to the area and secure a long term future for this important asset. As the phased development occurs temporary uses will need to bring the space to life and create activity.

4.2. Questions were raised regarding the management and ownership of the site in future, the masterplan emphasises the need for a comprehensive approach to estate management and stewardship of the whole site. Strong partnerships and the participation of stakeholders and the community will be key to the long term success of the site.

