

## **YORK NORTHWEST AREA ACTION PLAN**

### **Summary**

1. At a meeting of the Local Development Framework (LDF) Working Group on 24 July 2007, Members considered initial drafts of the York Northwest Issues and Options documents. The documents were subsequently amended to take account of the LDF Working Group's comments. Revised documents were then forwarded to the LDF Working Group for confirmation of the changes.
2. This report seeks Members approval of the Issues and Options documents (attached in Appendices 1,2 and 3) and seeks agreement to undertake public consultation on them. Members are also asked to delegate approval to the Director of City Strategy, in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Member for City Strategy, to make changes arising from the Executive's comments, the final layout of the Issues and Options documents, the content of the Executive Summary, the consultation plan and the content of the accompanying consultation leaflet.

### **Background**

3. At a meeting of the Executive on 27 February 2007, Members agreed to the programme for the preparation of an Area Action Plan (AAP) for York Northwest. The first stage of work, the preparation of the Issues and Options documents, has been undertaken in conjunction with planning consultants, Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners (NLP).
4. Draft Issues and Options documents for the Area Action Plan were considered by Members at a meeting of the LDF Working Group on 24 July 2007. These comprised a draft Issues and Options Report, a draft Baseline Report and a draft Sustainability Statement. In response to the comments made the Reports were revised. A summary of the changes made is attached in Appendix 4. The revised documents were circulated to Members of the LDF Working Group for further comment. An update on any additional comments from Members will be given at the meeting of the Executive on 25 September.
5. The Issues and Options documents are consultation documents. They have been prepared to promote debate at an early stage in the AAP process on the key issues and opportunities relating to the York Northwest area. It should be noted that the issues, ideas/opportunities and options identified in the documents are not exclusive. The main aim of the consultation with residents,

businesses and other stakeholders, is to identify the key things that are important to them, and what priorities they place on them.

6. In working with the consultants to prepare the Issues and Options documents, officers have looked at the emerging plans being produced by other local authorities, and the Planning Inspectorate's comments on plans being considered. As new planning documents there is no set format, content or style for Area Action Plans. The content of the York Northwest Issues and Options documents are, therefore, based on an interpretation of the guidance and the best informed judgement, given the experience elsewhere. The format and 'house style' of the document is consistent with the Core Strategy Issues and Options document.
7. From the advice received by the Government Office, Issues and Options documents should clearly set out the key issues relevant to the specific area, be locally distinctive and outline a number of different alternative approaches in taking forward the future development of an area. It is clear from guidance emerging on Area Action Plans that documents must also be 'sound'. They must be based on evidence, and clearly identify what the plan will deliver, the feasibility of this, by whom it will be delivered, and the timescales for this.

## **Issues and Options Documents**

8. The York Northwest Issues and Options documents include:

### **a. Issues and Options Report (Appendix 1)**

The York Northwest Issues and Options Report forms the main consultation document. The report is structured around key topic areas - employment, housing, social infrastructure, transport, culture and tourism, open space and built sporting facilities, and urban design. Key issues are identified for each topic area and ideas/opportunities relating to these are put forward.

Leading on from the ideas/opportunities identified in each topic area, alternative options are outlined for feedback and comment where possible. In some topic areas such as transport, there are a number of different alternative approaches, however, in other topic areas the scope for options is more limited. It is likely that a combination of options may be needed to maximise development opportunities for the area. Where this is the case it is clearly highlighted in the report. For options to be 'sound' they must be realistic and deliverable.

A section on funding and delivery has also been included in the Issues and Options Report. This will be developed in more depth at the Preferred Options stage. Viability testing will need to be undertaken as part of the assessment of the Preferred Options.

Initial views expressed by the public during consultation on the draft Consultation Strategy for York Central last summer have been taken into account in developing the Issues and Options Report. (Details of the comments made are set out in the Baseline Report in Section 4).

## **b. Baseline Report (Appendix 2)**

This report provides the background context for the York Northwest AAP and should be read in conjunction with the main Issues and Options Report. It can be viewed online and is available on request. The Baseline Report refers to the regional and local context and outlines the key social, economic and environmental characteristics of the area.

The Baseline Report also gives an overview of the main technical evidence base studies undertaken which are relevant to York Northwest. These studies include those which are city wide and those which have been undertaken specifically, to consider various area wide issues. A list of the evidence studies which have been used to inform the preparation of the Issues and Options Report, is attached at Appendix 5. Further technical work will be required and will be produced to inform the ongoing work on the Area Action Plan. This will include specific studies and a financial viability assessment of the Preferred Options stage. Other work is also ongoing in relation to transport/access matters.

## **c. Sustainability Statement (Appendix 3)**

The Sustainability Statement summarises the key sustainability matters arising from the Issues and Options Report by assessing the options put forward against the sustainability objectives set out in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for York Northwest. The Sustainability Statement can be viewed online and is available on request.

## **d. Executive Summary**

The Executive Summary is a short, concise report setting out the main issues and options put forward. This document will be prepared following Members agreement to the main Issues and Options Report. Delegated agreement to the content of the Executive Summary will need to be sought from the Director of City Strategy, in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Member for City Strategy.

## **Amendments made following LDF Working Group**

### Minutes of meeting

9. At the LDF meeting on 24 July 2007, Members referred to 38 matters for clarification/amendment by officers. A summary of comments outlining a response to each point made, together with suggested amendments, is attached at Appendix 4. The suggested amendments have been incorporated into the documents attached to this report. Tracked change versions of the draft Issues and Options Report/Baseline Report showing the amendments made are available in the Members Library and on request from the report author.

### Consequential amendments

10. In response to general comments made by the LDF Working Group, a suggested draft Vision has been included in the Vision and Development Objectives section. The list of suggested objectives has also been amended.

Following guidance from the Council's Marketing and Communications section, the questions at the end of each section have been revised to follow more closely the format of the Public Comment Form which will accompany the Issues and Options Report.

11. Other consequential amendments include:
  - Baseline information has been amended to reflect the latest information available, as referred to in the Core Strategy, Issues and Options 2.
  - In the Funding and Delivery section further clarification is given to the likely content of the legal agreements to be sought to fund community benefits.
  - Affordable housing within the funding section has been clarified, with reference to social rented and low cost home ownership (which includes intermediate and discount for sale homes)
12. In addition, a number of amendments have been made in the Transport sections of the documents to reflect wider issues raised and additional work carried out on transport modelling/refinement of options. A summary of transport amendments is attached at Appendix 4.

## **Consultation**

13. Consultation on the Issues and Option documents will start at the beginning of November 2007, to allow sufficient time for plan preparation and printing, and will finish in mid January 2008, allowing a 10 week consultation period. This reflects the recommendation by Members of the LDF Working Group earlier this year to allow an extended period for consultation to take account of the Christmas period.
14. A consultation plan will be prepared that includes the main elements as listed in para.15 below. The plan will also take account of the earlier consultation strategy for York Central, which was produced by consultants, SRC, last summer. Delegated agreement to the consultation plan will be needed from the Director of City Strategy, in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Member for City Strategy.
15. The main elements of public consultation will include:
  - i) Hard copies of the Issues and Options documents will be available in Council receptions at the Guildhall, 9 St Leonard's Place and all libraries. Electronic copies of the documents will be available from the Council's website:  
([http://www.york.gov.uk/environment/Planning/Local\\_development\\_framework/YorkNorthwestAAP/](http://www.york.gov.uk/environment/Planning/Local_development_framework/YorkNorthwestAAP/)).
  - ii) A number of exhibitions will be held both at central and local venues during the period of consultation. These will be attended by Council officers who will be available to give further advice and information.
  - iii) A leaflet will be distributed to residents and businesses, within and adjoining, the York Northwest area, outlining the main issues and

giving information on how to find out more about the Issues and Options.

- iv) Workshops for special interest groups will also be held.
- v) Due to the timings of Ward Committees, officers will attend local ward committees for Holgate, Acomb and Micklegate in October, which will be in advance of the main consultation period. Articles outlining the current position with the AAP and proposed consultation have been placed in Your Ward, for the 4 local wards, and in Your City.

## **Options**

16. There are two options available in respect of this report:

**Option 1:** To proceed with the amended Issues and Options documents as para. 8 of this report and carry out the public consultation between November 2007 and January 2008;

**Option 2:** To request further amendments to the Issues and Options documents.

## **Analysis**

17. The documents have been put together in accordance with PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development). The draft Issues and Options documents which were prepared last summer for York Central have been expanded to incorporate the British Sugar site. Subsequently, the draft Issues and Options documents for the wider York Northwest area have been taken to the LDF Working Group and have been amended to take account of their comments.
18. To keep to the agreed programme for the York Northwest AAP, it is necessary to go out to consultation on the Issues and Options documents this November. Failure to keep to the programme could potentially have a detrimental impact on delivery of the development in the longer term. Significant amendments to the content of the Issues and Options documents are likely to delay the period for public consultation and delay the overall timescales for the AAP.

## **Corporate Priorities**

19. The York Northwest area provides large brownfield development opportunities adjacent to the city centre. It will be an important area for future employment and housing needs within the City. Regeneration of the area will attract investment, helping to strengthen the city's high growth sectors and generate quality jobs. Development of this area will help to protect and enhance York's existing built and green environment and provides an opportunity for a flagship sustainable development. Development of the area will support the following corporate priorities:

- Improve the quality and availability of decent affordable homes in the City.
- Improve the contribution that Science City York makes to economic prosperity.

## Implications

20. Implications are as listed below:

- **Financial** The production of the Issues and Options Report by NLP is being funded by Yorkshire Forward.
- **Human Resources (HR)** There are no Human Resources implications.
- **Equalities** There are no Equalities implications.
- **Legal** There are no legal implications.
- **Crime and Disorder** There are no Crime and Disorder implications.
- **Information Technology (IT)** There are no IT implications.
- **Property** The Corporate Landlord and Corporate Asset Management Group are being consulted throughout the production of this report and subsequent documents. Any specific corporate property matters which arise from these documents will be reported the Executive separately when appropriate.
- **Other: Marketing and Communication** The format of the public response form has been developed with regard to the Councils policy on Communication.

## Risk Management

21. The production of the Issues and Options documents and proposed consultation accords with the programme for the AAP which was submitted earlier this year as part of the Local Development Scheme. There is a major risk that significant amendments to the Issues and Options documents could delay the period for public consultation and affect delivery of the AAP programme. If progress towards the completion of the AAP is delayed, there is also a risk to the Council's credibility as Planning Authority. There is a further risk that delay to the AAP programme could potentially have a detrimental impact on the programme for delivery of the development. Adherence to the agreed timescales for the AAP will minimise this risk.
22. A further risk relates to whether the final Area Action Plan is found to be 'sound' and has sufficiently covered all options to arrive at a preferred approach, based on robust evidence. As outlined in para. 6 of this report, officers have looked at other emerging AAP's and government advice for the interpretation of the guidance. It is considered that this is the best judgement on the content for the documents. The production of sound evidence base documents will minimise risks further along the process.

## Recommendations

23. Members are asked to:

- 1) Approve the Issues and Options Report, the Baseline Report and Sustainability Statement for public consultation.

Reason: To ensure the Issues and Options for York Northwest are subject to consultation and the responses to this are carried forward to the next stage in the preparation of the Area Action Plan.

- 2) To delegate to the Director of City Strategy, in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Member for City Strategy, the approval of any changes requested by the Executive and the approval of the final layout of the consultation documents.

Reason: To ensure Members comments are included in the documents for public consultation.

- 3) To delegate to the Director of City Strategy, in consultation with the Executive Member and Shadow Member for City Strategy the approval of the consultation plan, the content of the Executive Summary and the content of the summary leaflet to accompany the Issues and Options documents.

Reason: To ensure Members comments are included in the documents for public consultation.

## Contact Details

### Author:

Ann Ward  
York Northwest Project Officer  
City Strategy  
Tel: (01904 552409)

### Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Bill Woolley  
Director of City Strategy

Sue Houghton  
York Northwest Project Manager  
City Strategy  
Tel: (01904 551375)

Report Approved



Date 10.9.07

**Specialist Implications Officer(s)** None

**Wards Affected:** Holgate, Micklegate, Acomb and Rural West York

All

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

### Background Papers:

Report to LDF Working Group 24<sup>th</sup> July 2007  
Report to LDF Working Group 5<sup>th</sup> June 2007  
Report to Executive, 27<sup>th</sup> February 2007  
LDF Issues and Options 2

### Appendices

Appendix 1: Issues and Options Report (circulated separately to Members and available online and for inspection at Guildhall Reception)  
Appendix 2: Issues and Options: Baseline Report (online and available on request)  
Appendix 3: Sustainability Statement (online and available on request)  
Appendix 4: Summary of Amendments made following LDF Working Group (24/07/07)  
Appendix 5: List of Evidence Base Documents  
Appendix 6: Minutes of LDF Working Group, 24 July 2007