

Report of the Director of City Strategy

Local Development Framework: City Centre Area Action Plan – Update

Summary

1. This report provides a progress update on the City Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) and outlines next steps for 8 key areas of work that are required to complete the Preferred Options document, these include:
 1. Review of the conclusions of the York Economic Vision report to consider if and how best to incorporate these into the AAP
 2. Production of the Conservation Area Appraisal and incorporation of the findings into the AAP
 3. Production of the City Centre Movement and Accessibility Framework and incorporation of the findings into the AAP
 4. Public realm and key sites analysis and options
 5. Analysis of the deliverability of the preferred options
 6. Finalising the submission Core Strategy section on the City Centre
 7. Drafting the preferred options document
 8. The Sustainability Appraisal of the document.

Background

2. The City Centre AAP will form part of the York Local Development Framework. A report on emerging options, progress on background documents and a Vision Prospectus was presented to LDF Working Group in January 2010. Members approved the appraisals of options and emerging preferred options with a number of amendments as a basis for producing the AAP preferred options document. A follow-on report outlining how work on the York Economic Vision relates to the AAP was presented to LDF Working Group in May 2010. Members agreed to take forward the Vision Prospectus through the wider city Vision and Economic Masterplanning work to avoid 'duplication' of vision documents emerging this year.

City Centre Area Action Plan - Update

Toward an Economic Vision

3. Following an earlier commitment in 2009 to undertake an economic masterplan for York, it was agreed to establish a York Renaissance Team and to create a York Regeneration Academy to provide a programme of training and development in place-making for existing staff and the new team, to be funded by Yorkshire Forward.

4. At the front of this work is the publication of a Toward an Economic Vision, prepared by Professor Alan Simpson and his team of urban, transport, economic and cultural professionals with support from Council and Yorkshire Forward Officers. This vision document was presented to the Council's Executive in October 2010 who, in order to gain all-party debate and guidance on its conclusions, agreed to refer the work to the LDF Working Group. The document will be considered at the next Working Group meeting.
5. The purpose of the Economic Vision is to examine the economic potential of the city and consider how the various major projects, current and proposed, can be pulled together into a coherent strategy that will provide greater certainty for future investment. The work has a strong focus on the delivery of major developments, ensuring these take account of York's attractiveness and heritage, as well as maximise their economic, social and environmental potential.
6. The work is also helping to inform future work with the preparation of the Local Development Framework, particularly in relation to the City Centre Area Action Plan. The Local Development Framework will set the land use and planning framework for planning future developments in the City; the Economic Vision will help the delivery of major projects and give a physical expression to the policies and proposals set out in the LDF.
7. A number of the spatial themes and project ideas set out in the Economic Vision relate to the city centre and the public realm and movement issues being addressed in the AAP. The 'key strategies' for the streets, parks and squares of the city centre and the rivers, 'great street' and the city walls are all relevant to the AAP. Depending on the views of the Working Group, a key task going forward will be to consider how to co-ordinate and prioritise these projects with the other emerging AAP projects and policies, and to test their deliverability. This renaissance work is a significant benefit to the production of the City Centre AAP.
8. The aim of the AAP is to draw together a number of disparate projects into a coherent vision and objectives, so that projects can be co-ordinated, phased and their collective impacts can be maximised. The Renaissance Vision helps to illustrate the vision for the City Centre and place this change in context with past and future change in the wider city. The Renaissance Vision will raise awareness throughout organisations in York that there are numerous current and potential projects that will contribute toward revitalising the city centre.

Central Historic Core Conservation Area Appraisal

9. The aim of the work is to produce a Conservation Area Appraisal and associated views analysis to underpin the AAP. It will form part of a suite of further assessments and strategies designed to further our understanding of York's historic environment and to inform the sustainable management of the City. These other studies will include a City of York Heritage Strategy, a City of York Extensive Urban Survey, a review of the Ove Arup Archaeology and Development Study including a review of the Historic Environment Research Framework for York and work towards a 3D heritage model for York.

10. A brief for consultants has been put out to tender. The consultants have been given a tight timescale to work to and we are seeking completion of a consultation draft by April next year. The completed Appraisal will provide descriptive and illustrative material that will assist in a portrait of the city centre within the AAP. The Appraisal will identify positive and negative aspects to the city centre and will recommend enhancements to the built fabric of the city. These findings will influence all aspects of the AAP including policies and projects.

City Centre Movement and Accessibility Framework

11. The aim of the Framework is to determine a strategy for the city centre over the next 20 years to resolve competing demands for access and help to deliver wider quality of place and economic competitiveness objectives. A consultant has been appointed and the study is due to be completed by the end of February 2011. The study is funded by Yorkshire Forward as part of the renaissance programme.
12. The Framework will test ideas from the Economic Vision and will build on the findings of the Footstreets Review (Halcrow, 2010). The Framework will also provide evidence for LTP3.

Public Realm and Key Sites Analysis and Options

13. The importance of quality of place to the economic competitiveness of York has been emphasised in the Economic Vision and there are numerous examples of the positive impact of environmental improvements in historic cities. The work on the AAP to date has highlighted many areas throughout the city centre where the quality of place is poor. Also, the dynamic of the city centre will change over the next 20 years and the network of streets and spaces will need to be redesigned to be fit for purpose in the 21st century.
14. Work has started to consider options for key streets and spaces in the city centre including work to test the deliverability of the ideas of the Economic Vision. The Renaissance Team will add value through design skills and will work closely alongside City Development Officers. The Regeneration Academy programme will also contribute. The aim is to provide clear and stimulating visuals in the AAP to highlight issues and opportunities.

15. A brief summary of work to date is below:

Project	Progress to Date
Study of Foss Basin	A Planning Statement has been completed outlining suitable uses for the Foss Basin.
Study of Ouse riverside	Officer workshops to review issues and opportunities.
Exhibition Square	Placecheck completed as part of the People Changing Places programme.
Castle Piccadilly	Ongoing discussions with Centros regarding options for the site.
Library Square	Brief produced for Library Square. Detailed design being produced by Engineering Consultancy.
Newgate Market	Detailed site analysis and options produced by the Renaissance Team. Input to Scrutiny Committee discussions.

Parliament Street	Detailed analysis of options produced for use of the space after toilets are demolished.
Barbican	Planning Statement produced.
Reynard's Garage	Planning Statement produced to outline suitable uses and design issues.
Layerthorpe area	Ongoing study of regeneration potential of the Layerthorpe area.
Key movement corridors	Study of Station-Layerthorpe and Station-Bootham Bar routes to inform the Movement and Accessibility Framework, and work undertaken to analyse Parliament/Piccadilly junction.

Delivery

16. It is proposed that the AAP will be implemented over the long term as part of a phased and carefully managed programme of initiatives, with each phase contributing to the gradual transformation of the city's public realm and being underpinned by a robust movement framework.
17. The preferred options document will include a delivery plan that will set out a phased approach to the delivery of projects. This will include information on:
 - Delivery partners
 - Costs
 - Funding options
 - Delivery mechanism
 - Feasibility
 - Cost / Benefit
 - Priority
 - Phasing.
18. The delivery plan will highlight options for 'quick wins' within the first 5 years. These will be options that could be delivered within existing budgets or through opportunities for one-off funding or from S106 contributions. Low cost/high impact options will be prioritised. The AAP needs to have a flexible approach to delivery where projects can come forward as and when funding is available or when development comes forward. Some projects are interdependent and this will be highlighted.
19. The delivery plan will include monitoring indicators to assess the benefit from investment which could, for example, include vacancy levels, turnover, yields, inward investment, footfall, visitor numbers, performance of festival events and Newgate Market and surveys of perceptions.
20. The AAP will provide a strategic framework to assist with funding bids. In order to deliver improvements, it will necessary to secure external funding through public finances, S106 contributions and potentially other charitable/private sources. The case for funding will be enhanced by demonstrating that proposals are embedded in a statutory plan.

Core Strategy

21. A revised city centre section of the submission Core Strategy is being produced that takes into account consultation responses to the Core Strategy Preferred Options document, reflects evidence bases and is in line with other sections of the Core Strategy i.e. the Spatial Strategy. The policy will set the overall strategy for development of the city centre. The vision and objectives of the AAP will be based on this policy. Further work is required to determine the allocated sites within the city centre and their capacity, and the boundary of the city centre.

Drafting Preferred Options

22. The preferred options document will be drafted using the emerging preferred options approved by the Working Group in January as a basis. The document will also incorporate the findings of the Conservation Area Appraisal, Movement and Accessibility Framework, the emerging SHLAA and will take into account the development framework for York Central. The document will be in a format similar to that previously reported to Members and will include a 'masterplan' for the city centre and a delivery plan as discussed above.

Sustainability Appraisal

23. A Sustainability Statement will be produced to inform the AAP and to accompany the document for public consultation. The document will be produced by the City Development team.

Next Steps

24. A report to LDF Working Group with the preferred options document will be presented in May 2011, prior to consultation. The next steps in the production of the AAP are as outlined above:
- Review of the conclusions of the Renaissance report to consider if and how best to incorporate these into the AAP
 - Production of the Conservation Area Appraisal and incorporation of the findings into the AAP
 - Production of the City Centre Movement and Accessibility Framework and incorporation of the findings into the AAP
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Options

25. There are no options pertaining to this report.

Corporate Priorities

26. The City Centre AAP has the potential to contribute towards most of the Corporate Priorities through its policies and actions. It will aim to:
- Reduce the environmental impact of Council activities and encourage, empower and promote others to do the same;

- Increase the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport;
- Improve the actual and perceived condition and appearance of the city's streets, housing estates and publicly accessible spaces;
- Increase people's skills and knowledge to improve future employment prospects;
- Improve the economic prosperity of the people of York with a focus on minimising income differentials;
- Improve the health and lifestyles of the people who live in York, in particular among groups whose levels of health are the poorest;
- Improve the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in the city;
- Improve the quality and availability of decent, affordable homes in the city.

Implications

27. The following implications have been assessed:

- **Financial** – The cost of preparing the City Centre Area Action Plan DPD is being met through current budgets provided for the LDF. The Renaissance work has been wholly funded by Yorkshire Forward, including the Movement and Accessibility Framework.
- **Human Resources (HR)** - None
- **Equalities** - None
- **Legal** - None
- **Crime and Disorder** - None
- **Information Technology (IT)** - None
- **Property** – The AAP identifies areas within the city centre for development or public realm enhancement which includes land and buildings in the Council's ownership.
- **Other** - None

Risk Management

28. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy, there are no risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

Recommendations

29. That Members:

1) Note and comment on the progress and next steps for 8 key areas of work that are required to complete the Preferred Options document, to inform the preparation of the document.

Reason: To help progress the Area Action Plan to its next stage of development.

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Specialist Implications Officer
n/a

**Report
Approved**



Date 22/10/2010

Wards Affected: Guildhall, Micklegate and Fishergate.

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

- City Centre Area Action Plan Issues and Options report, July 2008.
- City Centre Area Action Plan Issues and Options Sustainability Statement, July 2008.
- LDF Working Group report - Local Development Framework: City Centre Area Action Plan Issues and Options report - Consultation Summary, January 2009.
- LDF Working Group report - Local Development Framework: City Centre Area Action Plan – Progress Toward Preferred Options, January 2010.
- LDF Working Group report - Local Development Framework: City Centre Area Action Plan – Vision Prospectus, May 2010.