

## **YORK NORTHWEST AREA ACTION PLAN**

### **Summary**

1. This report outlines the work carried out on the first stage of the Area Action Plan. Members comments are sought on a draft Issues and Options document with accompanying Sustainability Statement. The preparation of this document is within the timescale agreed within the Local Development Scheme. It is anticipated that the documents will be reported to Executive in September with public consultation following this in the autumn.

### **Background**

2. At a meeting of the Executive on 27 February this year Members agreed to a timetable for the preparation of an Area Action Plan for York Northwest. This timetable was then incorporated into the Local Development Scheme.
3. Members also noted at the meeting in February this year the consultation reports and consultation strategy prepared as part of the York Central work. It was agreed that this consultation strategy work would be carried through to inform the public consultation on York Northwest.
4. On 5 June 2007 Members of this Working Group agreed, with amendments, a Scoping Report for the Sustainability Appraisal work on the AAP. This document had been the subject of statutory consultation. The Scoping Report provides the methodology and framework for the preparation of the Sustainability Appraisal on the Issues and Options work.
5. The draft Issues and Options document has been prepared by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners, the planning consultants engaged to work on this, with detailed input from officers. Funding for this is being provided by Yorkshire Forward.

### **Issues and Options Documents**

#### Style and Format

6. In working with the consultants on this, officers have looked at the emerging plans being produced elsewhere by 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 document is 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 will be consistent with the Core Strategy Issues and Options document.

7. The York Northwest Issues and Options documents include,

- **Issues and Options Document (Appendix 1)**

The Issues and Options document forms the main document outlining the key issues relevant to each topic area which need to be addressed and identifies a number of different options for developing the area, for comment.

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 this document. (Details of the comments made are set out in the baseline report in Section 4).

- **Baseline Report (Appendix 2)**

This provides the background context with the key social, economic and environmental characteristics of the area. It also gives an overview of the main technical evidence base currently available.

- **Scoping Report for the Sustainability Appraisal**

The Scoping Report has been revised following consultation and Members comments and is now available on the York Northwest web site, [http://www.york.gov.uk/environment/Planning/Major\\_developments/York\\_northwest/](http://www.york.gov.uk/environment/Planning/Major_developments/York_northwest/)

- **Sustainability Statement (Appendix 3)**

This statement summarises the key sustainability matters arising from the Issues and Options document by assessing the options put forward against the sustainability objectives set out in the Scoping Report.

- **Executive Summary**

The Executive Summary will be produced as part of the revised draft work to be taken to Executive for consideration.

### Background Evidence

8. The technical work in support of the Issues and Options document is outlined in the Baseline Report which should be read in conjunction with the main report. The baseline report refers to the regional and local context and the main evidence base studies undertaken to inform the development of the Local Development Framework.
9. These studies include those which are city wide and those which have been undertaken specifically to consider various area wide issues. Appendix 4, attached to this report summarises the evidence studies which have been used

to produce the Issues and Options Report. 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 Option stage. Other work is also ongoing in relation to transport/access matters.

### Content

10. 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. For each of these, key issues are identified and the ideas/opportunities leading from these are put forward.
11. 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.
12. In the case of York Northwest, the document has an overarching theme of promoting sustainable development which benefits all sectors of society. This reflects the approach taken in the Community Strategy for the Sustainable City. The document outlines the key issues for the area, for example
  - provide new employment opportunities
  - assist in meeting housing needs for the City
  - meeting the social needs of the new community
  - promote opportunities to enhance the tourism potential of the area
  - facilitating new transport infrastructure into the site
  - promoting high quality development which complements York's historic core
13. The preparation of development plan documents necessitates full consideration be given not only to the land use elements but also the environmental, economic and social relationships in the development of land. The work on each topic area aims to address these relationships and the programmes of other infrastructure and service providers.
14. The York Northwest Issues and Options Report takes account of the Community Strategy, together with the relevant regional and local strategies, for example, the Local Transport Plan 2, Air Quality Action Plan, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Science City initiative.
15. Leading on from the ideas/opportunities identified in each topic area, where possible, alternative options are outlined for feedback and comment. In some topic areas there are a number of different alternative approaches e.g., transport, whereas in others the scope is more limited. This is because options put forward have to be realistic. 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. The Issues and Options documents

presented are draft documents and there may be some minor amendments and updating to be made prior to the documents being presented to the Executive.

16. It is clear from the guidance emerging on Area Action Plans that to be 'sound' it must be clear: what the plan will deliver; the feasibility of this; by whom it will be delivered; and the timescales for this. The Issues and Options Report therefore includes a section on funding and delivery which will be developed in more depth at the Preferred Option stage. Viability testing will need to be undertaken as part of the assessment of the Preferred Options.

## **Consultation**

### Internal Consultation

17. As part of the preliminary work in producing the draft Issues and Options documents two corporate workshops were held with officers in December 2006 and in April 2007. The first session focussed on identifying key issues associated with the British Sugar site to expand on the work already undertaken on York Central. The workshop session held in April gave officers the opportunity to consider the key options coming forward as part of the emerging work. The draft Issues and Options documents currently before Members have been produced to take account of input from internal corporate departments.

### Public Consultation

18. It is anticipated that public consultation will be held following presentation of the draft document to a meeting of the Executive this September. The approach taken for public consultation will be informed by the Community Consultation Strategy for York Central produced last year (as outlined in paragraph 3 above)

## **Options**

There are two options available in respect of this report

19. **Option 1:** To proceed with the draft Issues and Options documents as outlined in Appendix 1, 2 and 3.

Agreement to the general content of the Issues and Options documentation will allow work to progress to the Executive as soon as possible.

20. **Option 2:** To request amendments are made to the Issues and Options documents
21. Significant changes to the document will necessitate more work in producing the final version of the Reports. Presentation of the Issues and Options document and the Sustainability Statement on this to Members in September may be delayed depending on the level of issues to be considered.

## **Analysis**

22. The Issues and Options Report has been prepared to follow guidance for the production of Local Development Plan documents and the overarching theme of delivering sustainable development, as outlined in PPS1 (Delivering

Sustainable Development). The Sustainability Statement overall supports the approach taken. However, it does recommend a number of issues to be addressed in the York Northwest objectives. It also identifies various conflicts which arise from the options put forward. The sustainability impacts of all options will need to be carefully assessed and considered in taking forward the Issues and Options work to the Preferred Options stage.

## Corporate Priorities

23. The York Northwest area provides large brownfield development opportunities adjacent to the city centre. 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. The regeneration of this area will support the following corporate priorities,
- Increase the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport
  - Improve the quality and availability of decent affordable homes in the City
  - Improve the contribution that Science City York makes to economic prosperity

## Implications

24. Implications are as listed below:
- **Financial** The Issues and Options documents have been prepared by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners as part of the contract for the Issues and Options work. This work is being funded by Yorkshire Forward. The cost of this work is agreed at £47.7k. The Evidence Base documents for York Northwest (where commissioned by the Council) have been covered within the existing agreed budget.
  - **Human Resources (HR)** None
  - **Equalities** None
  - **Legal** None
  - **Crime and Disorder** None
  - **Information Technology (IT)** None
  - **Property** None
  - **Other** None

## Risk Management

25. As outlined earlier in this report there is no set format for this type of document. Informal advice is being sought to ensure that the approach taken will be acceptable to the Government Office.
26. It is recognised that the Retail Study and Phase 2 of the Employment Study will not be available until later this autumn. However the majority of background studies are available and have been included in the preparation of the Issues and Options documents. The evidence base documents referred to above will be prepared to inform our Preferred Options document, to be prepared in 2008,

and in time for the submission stage of the Area Action Plan in 2009, so this approach is considered to be low risk for this stage of the work.

## Conclusion

27. The examination of the Issues put forward has been based on strategies and information available to the Council and the evidence contained in the evidence base documents. The options put forward have been developed as ones which cover possible ways forward for the development of the area. It is the first stage of the process and should provide a basis for wide consultation with all those interested in the future development of the area.

## Recommendations

28. Members are asked to:

- 1) Note the content of the documents attached in Appendices 1,2 and 3

Reason: To give Members an understanding of the content of the Issues and Options document.

- 2) To delegate to the Director of City Strategy, in consultation with the Executive Member for City Strategy, the making of any necessary changes arising from the recommendations of the LDF Working Group, prior to its referral to the Executive

Reason: So that any recommended changes can be incorporated into the documents taken forward to the Executive.

## Contact Details

### Author:

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

### Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Bill Woolley  
Director of City Strategy

Report Approved



Date 10 July 2007

### Specialist Implications Officer(s)

Financial – Patrick Looker, Finance Manager, City Strategy (tel: 551633)

All

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

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

### Background Papers:

Report to LDF Working Group 31 July 2006  
Report to Executive, 27 February 2007

### Appendices

Appendix 1: Issues and Options Report  
Appendix 2: Issues and Options: Baseline Report  
Appendix 3: Issues and Options: Sustainability Statement  
Appendix 4: Evidence Base Documents