

**CABINET MEETING – 10 MARCH 2010**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I**

**Title of Report:**

St. Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework –  
Draft Supplementary Planning Document

**Author(s):**

Deputy Chief Executive

**Purpose of Report:**

The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet's approval of the Draft St. Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework and accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment for the purposes of consultation.

**Description of Decision:**

Cabinet is recommended to:

- a) Approve the Draft St. Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework Supplementary Planning Document and accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment for the purposes of consultation.
- b) Approve the Draft St. Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework Supplementary Planning Document as planning guidance, pending its finalisation following consultation.

**Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework?**

Yes

**If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework**

**Suggested reason(s) for Decision:**

To initiate a formal process to progress the St. Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework to adoption by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document, by carrying out public consultation on its content. This will inform the completion of a planning framework document that will facilitate the further regeneration of the area in a manner that balances the Sunderland Partnership's aspirations for its development with the need to have appropriate regard for the setting of the prospective World Heritage Site of St. Peter's Church and grounds.

**Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:**

The alternative option is not to prepare a planning framework. The consequences of this would be a failure to meet the requirement set out in the adopted UDP Alteration No.2 policy ECB5 to prepare a broad framework for each Strategic Location for Change site. In addition, failure to prepare an endorsed framework will reduce the Council's ability to ensure a high quality of development in the Plan area while protecting the setting of the prospective World Heritage Site. The lack of such a planning framework would be detrimental to the Wearmouth-Jarrow Partnership's bid for Inscription of the site on the World Heritage Register.

**Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution?**

Yes

**Is it included in the Forward Plan?**

Yes

**Relevant Scrutiny Committee:**

Environment and Attractive City  
Planning and Highways

**ST. PETER'S RIVERSIDE AND BONNERSFIELD PLANNING FRAMEWORK  
DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

**REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet's approval of the Draft St. Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework Supplementary Planning Document and accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment for the purposes of consultation.

**2.0 Description of Decision**

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to:
- a) Approve the Draft St. Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework Supplementary Planning Document and accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment for the purposes of consultation.
  - b) Approve the Draft St. Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework Supplementary Planning Document as planning guidance, pending its finalisation following consultation.

**3.0 Background**

- 3.1 Alteration Number 2 to the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted by the City Council in September 2007. It establishes planning policy for Central Sunderland including the designation of a number of 'Strategic Locations for Change'. These include one, defined in Policy NA3B.1, on the north bank of the River Wear at the Bonnersfield and St. Peter's riverside. This Strategic Location for Change is indicated on the plan in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 3.2 Policy EC5B of UDP Alteration No.2 requires the preparation of a broad framework document for each of the Strategic Locations for Change sites identified in that Plan. The framework is required to set out key principles to be taken into account by developers in preparing detailed masterplans for development.
- 3.3 At its meeting on 12 March 2008 Cabinet approved proposed procurement arrangements for consultancy services for the preparation of a planning framework for the St Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Strategic Location for Change and delegated the appointment of the consultant to the then Director of Development and Regeneration.

3.4 Following a competitive tendering process, Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners were commissioned in September 2008 to prepare the St Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework Supplementary Planning Document

#### **4.0 Current Position**

4.1 A draft Planning Framework has been prepared by the appointed consultants for the purposes of consultation. The area affected by the St Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework is also indicated on the plan attached as Appendix 1. It will be noted that the Plan area is larger than the defined Strategic Location for Change. The reason for this is explained in Paragraph 4.6 below.

4.2 The Planning Framework must have regard to the provisions of relevant adopted national, regional and local planning policies; these are outlined in the draft Planning Framework. The purpose of the Framework is to supplement existing adopted planning policy and provide further guidance. Arguably the main local, area-specific, planning policies affecting the Plan area are UDP Alteration No.2 Policies NA3B.1 and NA 28.A.

4.3 Policy NA3B.1 indicates that the City Council will support mixed-use development at St Peter's riverside and Bonnersfield. The Policy indicates required, acceptable and unacceptable land uses as follows:

##### **REQUIRED**

- C3 Housing
- D1 Non-residential institutions (restricted to non-residential education and training centres only)

##### **ACCEPTABLE**

- D2 Assembly and Leisure
- B1 Business (with no permitted change to B8)
- A1 Retail (a total floorspace of up to 250m<sup>2</sup> in small scale, individual retail units of up to 50m<sup>2</sup> to serve the day-to-day needs of local residents and workers).
- A3 Restaurants and cafes (a total floorspace of up to 725m<sup>2</sup> in small scale units to serve the day-to-day needs of local residents and workers).
- C3 Housing (student accommodation)

##### **UNACCEPTABLE**

- B2 General Industry
- B8 Storage and Distribution.

Proposals for land uses not referred to in Policy NA3B.1 will be considered on their individual merits having regard to other policies of the UDP.

- 4.4 The Policy also emphasises the importance of high quality design and the need for environmental and access improvements. In this regard there is a particular emphasis on the sympathetic design of new development in relation to the candidate World Heritage Site, stating that it must enhance and not detract from its character, setting and views of it from the surrounding area.
- 4.5 Policy NA28.A concerns the candidate World Heritage Site (cWHS) of St Peter's Church and grounds and re-emphasises the above design principles stating that:
- "There will be a presumption against development which would adversely affect the character and appearance of the cWHS and its 'setting' as defined on the Proposals Map. Development proposals will be required to demonstrate that full account has been taken of their impact on views to and from the cWHS and, where necessary, to propose a suitable programme of mitigation as part of the planning application".*
- 4.6 The boundary of the Plan area corresponds to that of the "buffer zone" of the St Peter's cWHS. This includes the 'setting' defined on the Proposals Map in UDP Alteration No.2 and an additional area adjoining it to the north of Dame Dorothy Street which is included in the draft Wearmouth-Jarrow cWHS Management Plan. The additional area is not protected by UDP Alteration No.2 policy NA28.A but it is protected by policy B10, a saved policy of the UDP adopted by the City Council in 1998. The latter policy protects the setting of listed buildings. The cWHS buffer zone, and hence the Planning Framework area, includes land on both sides of the River Wear although most of the buffer zone is north of the river. Consequently as the St Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Strategic Location for Change lies fully within the cWHS buffer zone and is affected by the provisions of policy NA28.A, it is appropriate that, in considering the detailed impact of this policy, it is considered for the buffer zone as a whole.
- 4.7 Bonnersfield and St Peter's Riverside are affected by major current and future development proposals. At Bonnersfield there is a current planning application for a major mixed-use development while at St Peter's the University of Sunderland is developing its Masterplan for the future development of its campus there. On the south side of the river there are a number of smaller 'infill' development sites. The successful development of all of these sites is important for the City and its future economic well-being. Meanwhile the City Council, as part of the Wearmouth-Jarrow Partnership is striving to secure World Heritage Status for the St Peter's Church site and the City's intention to protect and enhance this site is expressed in its adopted planning policies mentioned above. Clearly it is important that the appropriate balance is struck between both of these important objectives.
- 4.8 In the course of preparing the draft Planning Framework a visual analysis has been carried out of heritage assets, particularly the cWHS as well as important townscape views. This has been done in the context of examining options for the development of the University Campus at St Peter's, in consultation with

the University, as well as against the development proposal for Bonnersfield that is the subject of a current planning application. As a consequence the draft Planning Framework sets key principles and parameters to guide the future redevelopment of the area, which must be reflected by a developer in the preparation of a comprehensive masterplan for the site and subsequent planning applications. The draft Framework is accompanied by a Strategic Environmental Assessment and copies of both these documents are available in the Members' library.

## **5.0 Next Steps**

- 5.1 In order to facilitate the adoption of a Planning Framework for the St Peter's and Bonnersfield Riverside area the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 require a period of formal public consultation. Therefore it is proposed that the Framework be the subject of a formal six-week consultation process to ensure that those with an interest have an opportunity to comment on the content of the document.
- 5.2 Following the consultation period amendments will be made to the Framework as appropriate in response to comments received. The amended Framework will then be submitted to Cabinet for approval as a Supplementary Planning Document which, if approved by Cabinet, would be used by developers as a basis for preparing detailed proposals for the area and would also be afforded weight as a material consideration by the Council when determining future planning applications.

## **6.0 Reasons for Decision**

- 6.1 To initiate a formal process to progress the St. Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework to adoption by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document, by carrying out public consultation on its content. This will inform the completion of a planning framework document that will facilitate the further regeneration of the area in a manner that balances the Sunderland Partnership's aspirations for its development with the need to have appropriate regard for the setting of the prospective World Heritage Site of St. Peter's Church and grounds.

## **7.0 Alternative Options**

- 7.1 The alternative option is not to prepare a planning framework. The consequences of this would be a failure to meet the requirement set out in the adopted UDP Alteration No.2 policy ECB5 to prepare a broad framework for each Strategic Location for Change site. In addition, failure to prepare an endorsed framework will reduce the Council's ability to ensure a high quality of development in the Plan area while protecting the setting of the prospective World Heritage Site. The lack of such a planning framework would be detrimental to the Wearmouth-Jarrow Partnership's bid for Inscription of the site on the World Heritage Register.

## **8.0 Relevant Considerations**

8.1 a) Financial Implications - With the exception of the costs associated with the consultation process, the Framework will not involve any direct costs to the Council. The consultation costs can be met from existing revenue budgets.

b) Policy Implications - The document has been prepared to meet the requirements of UDP Alteration No. 2 policy EC5B. As an approved Supplementary Planning Document it would be a material consideration in determining planning applications for development within the Plan area.

## **9.0 Background Papers**

- The Unitary Development Plan (Adopted Plan) 1998
- UDP Alteration No.2
- St Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework Draft Supplementary Planning Document and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

**Appendix 1: St Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield – Strategic Location for Change and Planning Framework boundaries**

