

CABINET MEETING – 7 September 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Wearmouth Candidate World Heritage Site Masterplan and Design Code
(Formerly St Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework):
Supplementary Planning Document

Author(s):

Deputy Chief Executive

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet of the outcome of public consultation on the St Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework and to seek Cabinet's approval of an amended draft retitled Wearmouth Candidate World Heritage Site Masterplan and Design Code Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the purposes of further public consultation.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- a) Approve the draft Wearmouth Candidate World Heritage Site Masterplan and Design Code SPD and associated documents for the purposes of consultation.
- b) Approve the draft Wearmouth Candidate World Heritage Site Masterplan and Design Code SPD as interim planning guidance, pending its finalisation and consideration for adoption 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 continue the formal process to progress the Draft Wearmouth Candidate World Heritage Site Masterplan and Design Code to adoption by the Council as an SPD, by carrying out further public consultation on its content. This will inform the completion and adoption of the SPD in a form 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 and Outstanding Universal Value of the prospective World Heritage Site of St. Peter's Church and grounds.

<p>Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:</p> <p>The alternative option is not to prepare a masterplan and design code SPD. 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 masterplan and design code will reduce the Council's ability to ensure a high quality of development in the masterplan area while protecting and enhancing the setting and Outstanding Universal Value of the prospective World Heritage Site. The lack of such an approved planning document would be detrimental to the Wearmouth-Jarrow Partnership's bid for inscription of the site on the World Heritage Register.</p>	
<p>Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution? No</p> <p>Is it included in the Forward Plan? No</p>	<p>Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Environment and Attractive City Planning and Highways</p>

**WEARMOUTH CANDIDATE WORLD HERITAGE SITE MASTERPLAN AND
DESIGN CODE (FORMERLY 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 advise Cabinet of the outcome of public consultation on the St Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework and to seek Cabinet's approval of an amended draft retitled Wearmouth Candidate World Heritage Site Masterplan and Design Code Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the purposes of further public consultation.

2.0 Description of Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

- a) Approve the draft Wearmouth Candidate World Heritage Site Masterplan and Design Code SPD and associated documents for the purposes of consultation.
- b) Approve the draft Wearmouth Candidate World Heritage Site Masterplan and Design Code SPD as interim planning guidance, pending its finalisation and consideration for adoption following consultation.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 At its meeting in March 2010 Cabinet approved the draft St Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework SPD for the purposes of statutory consultation as part of the process leading to formal adoption of the SPD by the council.
- 3.2 The SPD was initially intended to provide detailed planning policy for the area at Bonnersfield and St Peter's identified as a strategic location for change in the adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Alteration No.2 (policies EC5B and NA3B.1). However, the boundary of the previous draft SPD was purposely extended to coincide with the 'buffer zone' of the candidate World Heritage Site (cWHS) at Wearmouth, demonstrating regard to the significance of the cWHS and the potential impact on it of regeneration activity in the wider area. The cWHS buffer zone, and hence the SPD area, includes land on both sides of the River Wear although most of the buffer zone is north of the river. The area covered by the SPD is shown on the plan attached to this report together with the strategic location for change identified in UDP Alteration No.2.

- 3.3 At the heart of the SPD is the need to balance the protection and enhancement of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the cWHS with the proper regeneration of the area. The OUV is, in turn, central to the success of the World Heritage Site bid. The attributes of OUV are attached as an appendix to this report.
- 3.4 The draft SPD was the subject of a six week public consultation in accordance with the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended), between 27 May and 7 July 2010. Statutory consultees and other relevant organisations were formally consulted by letter. A public exhibition setting out the broad content of the SPD was located at the National Glass Centre and Monkwearmouth branch library during normal opening times and attended by council staff at specified times, and at the Civic Centre where staff were available during normal office hours. Reply paid cards were available to enable members of the public to respond to the consultation. All the relevant information relating to the consultation was available online at www.sunderland.gov.uk/stpeters, where responses could also be submitted. An article and a formal public notice publicising the consultation were published in the Sunderland Echo.

4.0 Outcome of public consultation

- 4.1 Forty-nine responses were received from members of the public, including nine submitted online. Of these, 36 (73%) supported the SPD; 10 objected (20%) and 3 (6%) expressed neither support nor objection.
- 4.2 Many of the responses from formal consultees were generally supportive of the SPD, although some raised a variety of issues to be addressed in the final version of the document. These were mostly of a technical nature and could have been incorporated in final amendments to the document prior to its consideration for adoption.
- 4.3 However, the response received from English Heritage, strongly expressed, raised a fundamental concern that the proposed amount, scale and location of development at Bonnersfield and the University's St Peter's campus could seriously prejudice the bid for World Heritage Site (WHS) status for Wearmouth-Jarrow. Further, the draft SPD was not considered to provide a sufficiently robust mechanism for protecting the OUV of the cWHS that will be required to support the bid. English Heritage was also specifically concerned at the way in which the University's outline masterplan for further development of the St Peter's campus and proposals contained in an undetermined planning application at Bonnersfield had been incorporated into the SPD.
- 4.4 The concerns expressed by English Heritage were reflected to a degree in responses received from the Reverend Gibbons at St Peter's supported by the Reverend Stockton (Team Rector, Monkwearmouth), the Reverend Braviner (Team Rector, Jarrow) and Rosemary Cramp of Durham University. In addition, South Tyneside Council – a partner in the cWHS bid – also expressed some concern at the risk to the World Heritage Site bid if the SPD failed to give adequate protection to the OUV of the cWHS at Wearmouth.

5.0 Current position

- 5.1 The SPD document, in draft form at least, will be submitted to the assessor appointed by Icomos (International Council on Monuments and Sites) to consider the Wearmouth-Jarrow WHS nomination on behalf of Unesco (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation). The absence of explicit support from English Heritage to the SPD could fatally undermine the credibility of the document and, potentially, the success of the WHS bid.
- 5.2 In response, and in order to produce a document 'fit for purpose', the SPD has been revisited and substantially redrafted, adopting as a starting point an approach aimed at addressing the fundamental concerns expressed by English Heritage. In particular, the document gives greater emphasis to the pre-eminence of the cWHS in the SPD area and the objective of protecting and enhancing its OUV. The preparation of the revised document in-house has reflected a series of positive meetings held separately with English Heritage and Sunderland University to ensure that the principles being promoted will provide sufficient control over development to protect and enhance the OUV of the cWHS while reflecting the development aspirations of key stakeholders in the area.
- 5.3 To reflect the increased emphasis given to the cWHS and the protection and enhancement of its OUV, the document has also been retitled Wearmouth Candidate World Heritage Site Masterplan and Design Code Supplementary Planning Document Consultation Draft.
- 5.4 The document now incorporates an overall masterplan for the SPD area and a series of design codes that developers will be required to adhere to in bringing forward proposals in each of six character areas. It seeks to provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate the development aspirations of landowners but in a form and scale that respects OUV and in particular conserves and enhances views of St Peter's Church from the north and south shores.
- 5.5 The design code sets out the standards of urban design the council expects to be delivered through development in the masterplan area – the code and masterplan are mutually complementary. The code identifies the key components to be addressed in achieving high standards of urban design, as follows:
 - Urban structures and character areas, focusing development around the cWHS and along the river to create a new, vibrant and integrated city quarter – the character areas are explained in more detail in paragraph 5.5 below
 - Land uses and flexible spaces – accommodating a wide mix of uses in a high quality urban environment, reinforcing the role of the cWHS as a major city destination

- Views and vistas – preserving and enhancing the setting of the area’s heritage assets, in particular the cWHS but also including the Wearmouth Bridges and Old Sunderland Conservation Area; the code highlights key views to be preserved and enhanced through development (creating view corridors to frame views)
- Block principles – establishing a range of perimeter and linear building blocks depending on location and site characteristics, with key design criteria to ensure high quality of design (creating continuous street frontages and building lines, architectural variation, flexible ground floor uses and external activity, and so on)
- Building heights and densities – establishing a range of building heights including maximum heights for each character area, indicating where heights should increase or decrease and ensuring that buildings do not block significant views
- Gateways and landmarks – creating reference points across the area to emphasize a legible hierarchy of streets and spaces and linking the cWHS with the riverside and wider area including the city centre
- Building types and frontages – achieving a flexible range of ground floor units contributing to an active public realm and continuous building lines, ‘transparent’ upper floors with features promoting natural surveillance (terraces and balconies for example), maximizing the potential of corner plots and incorporating sensitively designed signage
- Street types – creating a hierarchy of streets designed and built to meet the needs of users, giving priority to pedestrians wherever possible and contributing to the qualities of the public realm and wider objectives of the masterplan
- Access and servicing – ensuring the provision of adequate access for visitors, residents, workers and students, the servicing of premises and parking provision are not at the expense of other design qualities
- Landscape and public realm – recognizing the fundamental role of high quality, safe landscape, open space and public realm in defining the character of the area and the need for coherent and robust design for a variety of purposes

5.6 The six character areas identified within the SPD area are as follows, with proposed uses in accordance with those identified in policy NA3B.1 of the UDP Alteration No.2:

- St Peter’s Square - the cWHS itself with St Peter’s Church at its centre, where no building will be permitted except to ensure the future security of the church or monastic remains; public realm improvements will be undertaken in accordance with the St Peter’s Landscape Strategy

- Learning quarter – further development of the University's St Peter's campus. Appropriate uses to be encouraged include:

Non-residential institutions including education, galleries and museums (use class D2)

Food and drink including cafes, bars and restaurants (A3 and A4)

Ancillary retail (A1)

Other acceptable uses subject to justification include business (use class B1 only – offices and research and development), hotel (C1) and student accommodation (C3)

- Residential quarter – development at Bonnersfield and the south west corner of the St Peter's campus. Appropriate uses to be encouraged include:

Residential (use class C3)

Student accommodation (C3)

Hotel (C1)

Food and drink including cafes, bars and restaurants (A3 and A4)

Ancillary retail (A1)

Other acceptable uses subject to justification include business (use class B1 only – offices and research and development), non-residential institutions including education, galleries and museums and assembly and leisure (D2)

- Business quarter – includes the North Sands Business Centre and National Glass Centre. Appropriate uses to be encouraged include:

Business (use class B1 only – offices and research and development)

Non-residential institutions including education, galleries and museums and assembly and leisure (D2)

Ancillary retail, food and drink (A1, A3 and A4)

Multi-storey car park (sui generis)

Other acceptable uses subject to justification include hotel (C1) and food and drink including cafes, bars and restaurants (A3 and A4)

- South Shore – includes all of the masterplan area on the south side of the river and comprises part of the Old Sunderland Conservation Area.

Appropriate uses to be encouraged to support the area's distinct character and role include:

Business (use class B1 only – offices and research and development)

Student and residential accommodation (C3)

Hotels (C1)

Food and drink including cafes, bars and restaurants (A3 and A4)

Ancillary retail (A1)

Other acceptable uses subject to justification include leisure and assembly (D1) and non-residential institutions including education, galleries and museums (D2)

- Dame Dorothy Street – the masterplan area north of Dame Dorothy Street where the existing predominant uses are expected to remain (primary school and residential) with opportunities for appropriate development around Lower Dundas Street

5.7 Copies of the consultation draft SPD are available for inspection in the Members' room.

6.0 Next steps

6.1 In view of the significant re-drafting of the SPD and introduction of new material it is considered necessary to undertake a further round of public consultation to satisfy the requirements of the relevant planning regulations. Although the broad concepts have not changed in terms of the potential for development throughout the SPD area there is still the need to elicit and take account of the formal views of statutory consultees and other stakeholders.

6.2 It is therefore proposed to undertake at the earliest opportunity a further round of formal consultation on the current draft version of the SPD under regulations 17 and 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended). This will take the form of a six week consultation period, with relevant material circulated to consultees and available on a dedicated council website, together with required public notices and other appropriate publicity.

6.3 Following the consultation period amendments will be made to the draft SPD as appropriate in response to comments received. The amended document will then be submitted to Cabinet for formal approval as an SPD which, if approved, would be used by developers as a basis for preparing detailed proposals for the area and would be afforded weight as a material consideration by the council when determining future planning applications.

7.0 Reasons for decision

- 7.1 To continue the formal process to progress the Draft Wearmouth Candidate World Heritage Site Masterplan and Design Code to adoption by the Council as an SPD, by carrying out further consultation on its content. This will inform the completion and adoption of the SPD in a form 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 and Outstanding Universal Value of the prospective World Heritage Site of St. Peter's Church and grounds.

8.0 Alternative options

- 8.1 The alternative option is not to prepare a masterplan and design code SPD. 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 masterplan and design code will reduce the council's ability to ensure high quality development in the masterplan area while protecting and enhancing the setting and Outstanding Universal Value of the prospective World Heritage Site. The lack of such an approved planning document would be detrimental to the Wearmouth-Jarrow Partnership's bid for inscription of the site on the World Heritage Register.

9.0 Relevant considerations

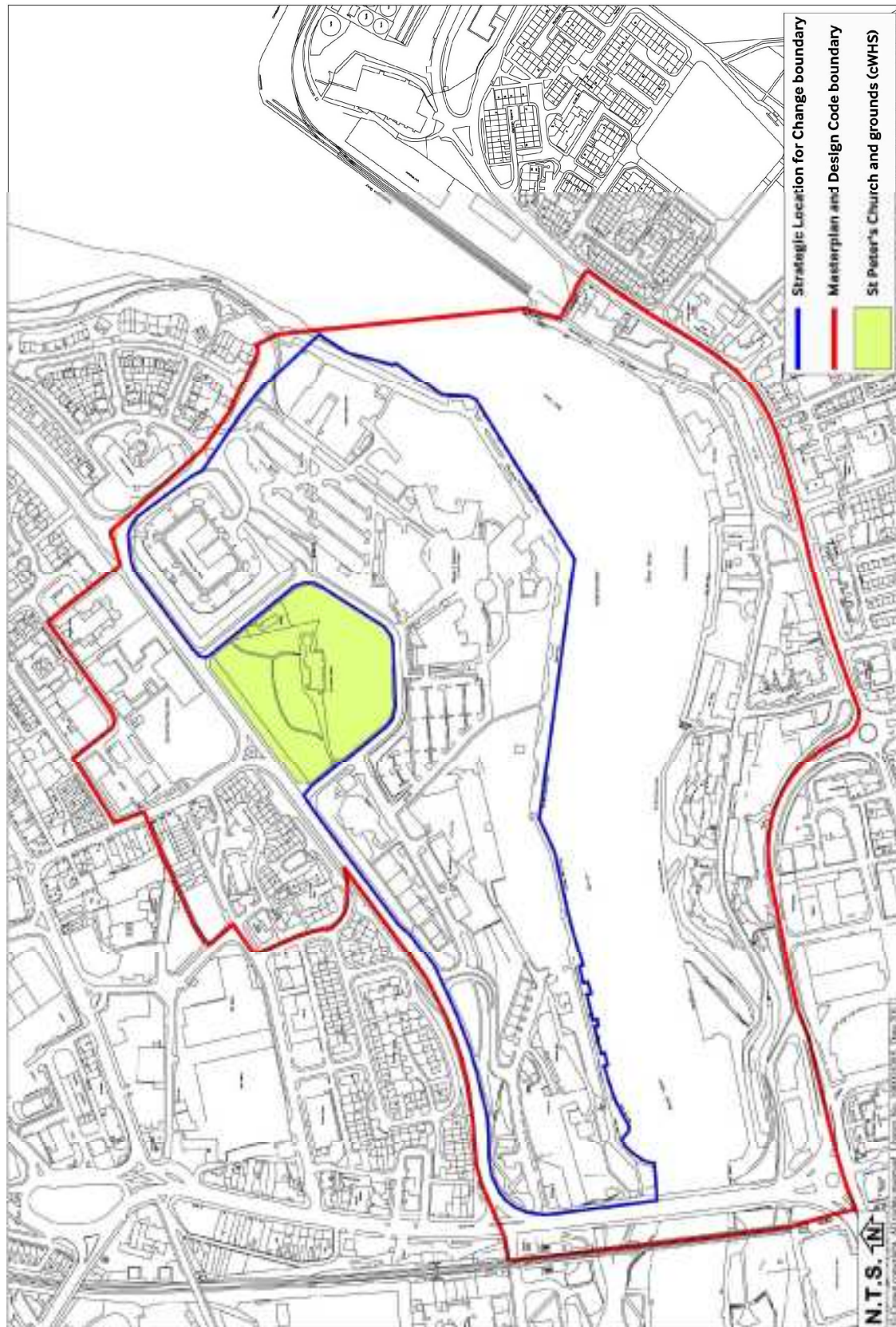
- 9.1 a) Financial Implications - With the exception of the costs associated with the consultation process, the SPD will not involve any direct costs to the Council. The consultation costs can be met from existing revenue budgets.
- b) Policy Implications - The document has been prepared to meet the requirements of UDP Alteration No. 2 policy EC5B. As an approved SPD it would be a material consideration in determining planning applications for development within the plan area.

10.0 Background papers

- Report to Cabinet, March 2010: St Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework Draft Supplementary Planning Document
- The Unitary Development Plan (Adopted Plan) 1998
- Unitary Development Plan Alteration No.2
- Wearmouth Candidate World Heritage Site Masterplan and Design Code Draft Supplementary Planning Document and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Appendix 1

Boundaries of Wearmouth Candidate World Heritage Site Masterplan and Design Code Supplementary Planning Document and St Peter's Riverside and Bonnersfield Strategic Location for Change



Appendix 2

The Outstanding Universal Value of the Wearmouth - Jarrow candidate World Heritage Site (cWHS)

Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) is a general statement of why a place is important which, in itself, can be difficult to use directly for day-to-day management.

The attributes of OUV are its more specific expressions. These can be used to define the need for management actions in order to sustain OUV. They can define the potential impact of proposed changes or developments, or the state of a Property's authenticity and integrity.

Five tangible attributes have been developed which express the OUV of Wearmouth-Jarrow cWHS:

- The relationship between the twin monasteries and their respective estuarine sites
- The standing (above-ground) remains of the Anglo-Saxon monastic building complexes
- The in situ excavated remains of the Anglo-Saxon monastic building complexes
- The monastic plan
- Further archaeological remains

Two associative attributes substantially augment understanding of the OUV of the Property:

- The legacy of knowledge and understanding derived from the work of the monastery
- The rich combination of the in situ, portable and documentary evidence

