

## CABINET MEETING – 6 October 2010

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

**Title of Report:**

Seaburn Masterplan Draft Supplementary Planning Document

**Author(s):**

Deputy Chief Executive

**Purpose of Report:**

To seek Cabinet's approval of the Draft Seaburn Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document and accompanying Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment for the purposes of consultation.

**Description of Decision:**

Cabinet is recommended to:

- a) Approve the Draft Seaburn Masterplan and accompanying Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment for the purposes of consultation.
- b) Approve the Draft Seaburn Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document as interim planning guidance to be used as a material consideration, 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 Draft Seaburn Masterplan 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 document that will help facilitate the planning and regeneration of the seafront at Seaburn in a manner that achieves the aspirations set out in the Sunderland Strategy and the Seafront Regeneration Strategy.

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

The alternative option is not to prepare a masterplan for Seaburn. The consequences of this would be not to have clear guidance on appropriate forms of development for Seaburn. This would weaken the council's ability to control the type of development and design quality at the seafront leaving the area to be developed on an ad hoc basis. Not having an approved masterplan would result in a lower standard of development than would otherwise be achieved, failing to make the best use of Seaburn's potential as a main attraction in the City for residents visitors and investors.

<p><b>Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution?</b> Yes</p> <p><b>Is it included in the Forward Plan?</b> Yes</p>	<p><b>Relevant Scrutiny Committee:</b></p> <p>Environment and Attractive City</p> <p>Planning and Highways</p> <p>Prosperity and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee</p>
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**SEABURN MASTERPLAN DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

**REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet's approval of the Draft Seaburn Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document and accompanying Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment for the purposes of consultation.

**2.0 Description of Decision**

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

- a) Approve the Draft Seaburn Masterplan and accompanying Sustainability Appraisal and Appropriate Assessment for the purposes of consultation.
- b) Approve the Draft Seaburn Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document as interim planning guidance to be used as a material consideration, pending its finalisation following consultation.

**3.0 Background**

- 3.1 The Seafront Regeneration Strategy was adopted in February 2010. This provides an overarching framework to guide future development at the seafront and identifies a vision for both Seaburn and Roker. Building upon this vision the strategy identifies a series of 'Character Areas' and sets out key development principles for each.
- 3.2 The Seafront Regeneration Strategy also establishes the need for a suite of delivery documents, designed to expand upon the ambitions of the strategy and provide detailed design guidance for the Character Areas identified.
- 3.3 For example a Masterplan for Marine Walk was produced alongside the Seafront Regeneration Strategy to provide specific design guidance for this area of Roker. This was adopted as Supplementary Planning Document in February 2010 and now forms part of the Local Development Framework.
- 3.4 A similar masterplanning approach has been taken for Seaburn to provide specific development guidance and planning principles for the Seaburn Promenade and Ocean Park areas of the Seafront Regeneration Strategy.

## **4.0 Current Position**

- 4.1 This draft masterplan for Seaburn has been produced for the purposes of public consultation.
- 4.2 It reflects the provisions of relevant adopted national and local planning policies, its purpose being to supplement existing adopted planning policy.
- 4.3 The Masterplan sets out key principles and parameters to guide the future redevelopment of Seaburn, which should be reflected in the preparation of any subsequent planning applications in the masterplan area.
- 4.4 The vision for Seaburn is for a family focused resort offering high quality indoor and outdoor facilities for both residents and visitors. Accordingly a leisure-led development is advocated, featuring a mix of uses that will be available all year round.
- 4.5 Based on an assessment of the Seaburn area; including consideration of the physical characteristics of the site, market conditions, land ownership and planning issues the masterplan concludes that the delivery of the vision for Seaburn will best be achieved by taking a comprehensive approach to development.
- 4.6 In line with this approach a series of character areas at Seaburn and broad principles for each are identified:
- Ocean Park is identified as a 'Leisure and entertainment core' which will be the heart of the masterplan area. A mix of tourism leisure-led uses will be encouraged which will be open during the day and into evening and will be available throughout the year. This area is to incorporate a pedestrian boulevard through the centre of the site and open plaza across Whitburn Road in order to maximise pedestrian movement through the area.
  - A low density residential development is directed towards a 'Residential Park' to the west of the area on vacant and underused land comprising the public car park and former miniature golf course. This development will serve as a transition between the 'Leisure and entertainment core' and existing areas of housing. A linear park through the residential area will link with the seafront area through a series of green routes. The quality of the new linear park will compensate for any loss of existing green space in the area.
  - Land to the south of the Masterplan area is identified as the 'Cut Throat Dene' character area and will incorporate the former boating lake and land to the south of Seafields. This area will be retained as open space; however will benefit from enhancements focused on improving the biodiversity value Seaburn. Measures will also encourage safe pedestrian and cycle routes and future proof against the impacts of climate change; particularly in relation to flood risk associated with Cut Throat Dene. The masterplan also identifies this area as a suitable site for a new equipped play area to replace the current Pirate Play Park.
  - The 'Seaburn Promenade' character area to the east and overlooking Whitburn Bay will be retained as promenade with the focus on protecting

the panoramic views across the seafront. Interventions will primarily include upgrading of the public realm.

- Existing businesses in the area to be retained as part of the masterplan include the Marriott Hotel, businesses at Queen's Parade, Martino's amusements and arcade and Morrisons supermarket. No redevelopment of these areas is proposed; however opportunities for enhancements to the public realm will be sought.

- 4.7 A design code for Seaburn has been prepared to accompany a spatial masterplan for the area to ensure the quality of proposals will reflect the Council's ambition for the site. The code will offer greater detail on the urban design principles guiding the masterplan and will cover matters relating to: block principles, building height and density, gateways and landmarks, building types and frontages, street types, access arrangements; and landscape and public realm.
- 4.8 Copies of the draft Seaburn Masterplan and supporting documents (Appropriate Assessment Scoping Report for the Seaburn Masterplan and Sustainability Appraisal of the Seaburn Masterplan) are available in the Member's Library.

## **5.0 Next Steps**

- 5.1 In order to progress towards the adoption of a masterplan for Seaburn the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 require a period of formal public consultation. It is proposed that the draft Masterplan 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 document as appropriate in response to comments received. The amended masterplan will then be submitted to Cabinet for approval as a Supplementary Planning Document which, if approved, would be available for use by the Council for marketing the land in its ownership, by developers as a basis for preparing detailed proposals for the area and would also be given weight as a material consideration by the Council when considering future planning applications.

## **6.0 Reasons for Decision**

- 6.1 To initiate a formal process to progress the Draft Seaburn Masterplan 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 document that will help facilitate the planning and regeneration of the seafront at Seaburn in a manner that helps achieve the aspirations set out in the Sunderland Strategy and the Seafront Regeneration Strategy.

## **7.0 Alternative Options**

- 7.1 The alternative option is not to prepare a masterplan for Seaburn. The consequences of this would be not to have clear guidance on appropriate forms of development for Seaburn. This would weaken the council's ability to control the type of development and design quality at the seafront leaving the area to be developed on an ad hoc basis. Not having an approved masterplan would result in a lower standard of development than would otherwise be achieved, failing to make the best use of Seaburn's potential as a main attraction in the City for residents visitors and investors

## **8.0 Relevant Considerations**

- 8.1 a) Financial Implications - With the exception of the costs associated with the consultation process, the Masterplan will not involve any direct costs to the Council. The consultation costs can be met from existing revenue budgets.
- b) Legal Implications – Clause 9.0 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 provides local authorities with a power for the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well being of their area.
- c) Policy Implications - The Local Development Framework (LDF) is the spatial planning mechanism to help deliver the Sunderland Strategy. The council is currently working up the preferred option for the Core Strategy, which will lie at the heart of the LDF setting out the overarching strategic planning framework for the city up to 2021. The currently adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) continues to apply to the seafront until its relevant policies are superseded by policies in the LDF. In summary, UDP policies seek to pursue recreational opportunities at the seafront to serve local, city-wide and regional needs; conserve the environment; and maintain and improve accessibility to the seafront.

## **9.0 Background Papers**

- Seafront Regeneration Strategy
- Marine Walk Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document
- Appropriate Assessment Scoping Report for the draft Seaburn Masterplan
- Sustainability Appraisal of the draft Seaburn Masterplan
- Draft Seaburn Masterplan