

Committee: Cabinet	Date: 11 th September 2013	Classification: Unrestricted	Report No: CAB 21/134
Report of: Corporate Director Development & Renewal Originating officer(s) Owen Whalley – Head of Planning and Building Control Michael Bell – Strategic Planning Manager		Title: Whitechapel Vision Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Wards Affected: Whitechapel Bethnal Green South Spitalfields and Banglatown St Dunstons and Stepney Green	

Lead Member	Cllr Rabina Khan (Cabinet Member for Housing, Development and Renewal)
Community Plan Theme	A Great Place to Live
Strategic Priority	Providing quality affordable housing Improving the public realm Improving local transport links and connectivity Supporting more people into work Improving educational aspiration and attainment Fostering enterprise and entrepreneurship Promoting healthy lifestyles

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Whitechapel offers a major investment, regeneration and growth opportunity for the borough, driven by its excellent location, the world-class health and education facilities offered by the Royal London Hospital (RLH) and Queen Mary, University of London (QMUL) and the arrival of Crossrail in Whitechapel in 2018.
- 1.2 The Whitechapel Vision Masterplan SPD will ensure a co-ordinated approach is taken to the physical and socio-economic regeneration of Whitechapel to 2025. It will set out a clear and unique vision for the area, identify key development priorities on private sites and public land and provide guiding development principles.
- 1.3 The Whitechapel Vision Masterplan SPD will be a material planning consideration for the determination of applications within the defined Masterplan area and will provide guidance and certainty for landowners, developers, Registered Providers (RPs), the local community and other key stakeholders.

- 1.4 This Report sets out the rationale for preparing the draft Whitechapel Vision Masterplan and summarises the key proposals and interventions. It seeks to gain approval of the Cabinet to proceed to a six week period of statutory public consultation.
- 1.5 Once the statutory public consultation has been undertaken, it is intended that the Whitechapel Vision Masterplan SPD will be taken back to Cabinet later in 2013 for final approval.

2. DECISIONS REQUIRED

Cabinet is recommended to:-

- i. Approve the draft Whitechapel Vision Masterplan SPD (contained in Appendix 1) for statutory public consultation.
- ii. Authorise the Corporate Director of Development and Renewal, after consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, Development and Renewal, to make any necessary and appropriate minor amendments to the draft Whitechapel Vision Masterplan SPD, prior to the statutory public consultation.

3. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

3.1 The adoption of an SPD for Whitechapel will ensure that the expected future regeneration and growth of the area can be appropriately managed and coordinated until 2025, the Local Plan period. This coordinated approach should maximise the benefits of growth for the community by delivering new affordable housing, local enterprise and employment opportunities, public realm enhancements, and community infrastructure through various mechanisms, including Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding arising from new developments.

3.2 The Whitechapel area is already extremely active in terms of development aspirations with a number of significant proposals coming forward. The SPD will set out an ambitious vision to promote the area to inward private sector investment but in doing so will ensure that the Council takes a leading role, identifying key community priorities and providing concise planning principles for the area. The SPD will provide a robust planning framework to assist the Council's current and future negotiations with landowners, developers, RPs and other key stakeholders.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 The Council's Local Plan, comprising the Core Strategy (2010) and Managing Development Document (2013), provides a vision and strategic development principles for the borough as a whole and

individual places including Whitechapel. The Local Plan could be used to guide and support development in the Whitechapel area on its own.

- 4.2 Relying on the Local Plan is not considered to be sufficient in that it does not provide the necessary level of detail needed to plan for and coordinate the scale of development expected in Whitechapel. The additional guidance provided by the SPD ensures that there is a more detailed local planning framework to manage and guide development sites coming forward and to deliver necessary infrastructure, public realm improvements and community benefits.

5. BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The Mayor for Tower Hamlets considers Whitechapel and its surroundings as a major development and growth opportunity waiting to happen. It can make a significant contribution to the Mayor's overarching priorities for the Borough including the delivery of more affordable family homes, promotion of skills and employment, increasing educational attainment, and creating safer, cleaner and inclusive neighbourhoods for all to enjoy.

- 5.2 In January 2013, following a competitive tender process, the Council procured the services of Building Design Partnership (BDP) (town planning/architecture/urban design) and their sub consultants, Montagu Evans (property), Regeneris (economic) and Urban Flow (transport) to commence work on the Masterplan.

Planning Policy Context

- 5.3 The new masterplan will build on much of the good work set out in the existing Whitechapel Masterplan 2007 which was prepared as 'Interim Planning Guidance' and informed the Core Strategy (2010) and the Managing Development Document (2013).

- 5.4 The Council's Core Strategy sets out a strategic vision for Whitechapel as "an historic place set around Whitechapel Road with Crossrail and the Royal London Hospital providing a regional role". More specifically it is identified as a thriving regional hub set along the historic and vibrant Whitechapel Road. It includes key priorities and principles which will need to inform the next planning and regeneration response.

- 5.5 On a metropolitan level, the Mayor for London includes Whitechapel within the draft City Fringe Opportunity Area with key policies identified to promote complimentary land uses to support the City as a financial district for London. The masterplan area is also within the GLA's draft Tech City document which is intended to become Supplementary Planning Guidance by late 2013.

Regeneration Progress to Date

- 5.6 Some of the major improvements identified in the original 2007 Whitechapel masterplan and Core Strategy have now either been

completed or are well underway. Significantly, this relates to the completion of the new Royal London Hospital and the opening of the London Overground network linking Whitechapel to areas south of the River Thames and north London. The continued progress on the Crossrail station which is expected to be completed by 2018, will create an important transport interchange at the heart of east London. In addition, the area has received significant investment from the High Street 2012 Olympic project initiative and this has proved successful in enhancing and revitalising some of the area's physical heritage.

5.7 There are however a number of issues that must be addressed if Whitechapel is to fulfil its potential:

- Whitechapel could be performing better – in terms of the range and quality of its shops, services and business opportunities - compared to other comparable sized district town centres in London and it is facing increasing competition from Canary Wharf and the new Stratford Westfield development.
- The Whitechapel ward and surrounding area contain some of most deprived communities in the country.
- Fragmented land ownership has constrained opportunities for major town centre regeneration schemes.
- Despite being well connected to the strategic public transport and road network, Whitechapel Road is a major barrier to local movement and traffic congestion impacts on the quality of the local environment.
- The area suffers from a number of vacant sites and buildings and poor quality of public realm, which is deterring potential investors.

5.8 The Mayor of Tower Hamlets wants the Masterplan to address the above issues and ensure Whitechapel is able to capitalise on the predicted regeneration benefits of the Crossrail line opening in 2018.

Masterplan Objectives

5.9 The following are the key objectives of the masterplan that were set out in the brief provided to the consultants.

- **Establish the detailed vision**, based on the strategic vision set out in the Council's Core Strategy, which can be shared by the local community, landowners, businesses, investors and key stakeholders to drive and promote the future regeneration of Whitechapel;
- Set out actions and guidance to **promote Whitechapel as a place to work and do business**, generating a range of employment, training and enterprise opportunities to complement existing large and small scale businesses and attract substantial new investment;
- **Drive town centre regeneration**, revitalising and expanding Whitechapel as a shopping centre of choice;

- **Identify opportunities to deliver new homes and infrastructure**, with a focus on affordable family homes and the social and physical infrastructure required to support a growing residential and working community;
- Establish a set of design principles to **embed high quality place making** to improve and transform the physical environment, enhancing the best of existing cultural and heritage assets and compete on a global scale in terms of design quality and aspiration; and
- Set out a **detailed implementation programme** which identifies the individual projects required to deliver the vision, including timeframes, cost, funding sources, delivery agencies and a robust strategy for necessary site assembly.

Role and Status of the SPD

- 5.10 Supplementary Planning Documents are used as a material consideration in determining planning applications. They are not part of the 'Local Plan', which is the new term for our Local Development Framework. The Local Plan is comprised of the Core Strategy and Management Development Document. However, the SPD will carry weight in the determination of planning applications in Whitechapel and guide and promote private and public sector investment within the locality.
- 5.11 SPDs undergo a simpler preparation process than DPDs and are not subject to scrutiny by an independent Inspector. However, they are subject to statutory preparation procedures under Regulations 11-14 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

6. BODY OF THE REPORT

Masterplan Vision

- 6.1 The masterplan sets out an ambitious vision for the future of Whitechapel, based on extensive local consultation (as set out in paras 6.4 to 6.8 below), detailed baseline analysis and an understanding of the Mayor's priorities for the area. The vision is based on expanding and enhancing the town centre and surrounding areas to support higher order retail, civic and employment uses, with striking new architecture and high quality public realm.

The Key Transformations

- 6.2 The Masterplan identifies key interventions to transform Whitechapel into a world class place. These are elaborated through more detailed design and planning guidance for 6 defined sub areas which will be transformed through new development and associated public realm improvements:

1. **Revitalised Whitechapel Road**—Supporting the town centre through making the main road easier for pedestrian movement, as part of a major public realm improvement scheme including enhancement to the street market and building a new iconic built structure.
2. **Whitechapel Civic Hub** – bringing back the former Royal London Hospital buildings into civic use to improve the range of public services provided in the town centre as well as creating wider employment opportunities.
3. **Durward Street Gardens** –a new high quality urban quarter to enliven the area to the north of the new Crossrail Station providing new homes, retail and public spaces, including modernising and redeveloping the leisure centre and building over the station and rail track.
4. **Med City Campus** – supporting the expansion of the health, bio-tech and life sciences research activities of QMUL and RLH based around a new ‘green spine’ open space.
5. **Raven Row** – a new neighbourhood within Whitechapel centred on residential led development with improved links to the town centre and hospital.
6. **Cambridge Heath Gateway** – redevelopment of the Sainsbury’s site with a new larger store, residential and community facilities – including the potential relocation of the leisure centre - focussed around a future secondary station entrance.

Delivering the Vision

- 6.3 The draft SPD contains a Delivery and Implementation Plan. This sets out the key strategies and physical interventions intended for the area, and the timescales, delivering bodies and potential funding streams for each of these project interventions

Consultation

- 6.4 Since the beginning of the commission, BDP and the Council have undertaken a number of consultation and engagement exercises with key stakeholders in the Whitechapel area. These include a diverse range of local landowners, developers, RPs, institutions, businesses, resident groups, community organisations and statutory government bodies.
- 6.5 On 11th March 2013, the Mayor publicly launched the Masterplan at Queen Mary, University of London in Whitechapel and a press release was announced to local and London media organisations and also to professional journals.
- 6.6 On behalf of the Council, BDP have launched a dedicated publicly accessible website and set up social media accounts on Facebook and Twitter to create a wider awareness of the Masterplan project. BDP

also published and distributed leaflets and postcards at key local community facilities in the Whitechapel area.

- 6.7 Key statutory stakeholders including the NHS, Transport for London, QMUL and Greater London Authority are fully engaged in the process and have attended regular meetings since the Masterplan launch.
- 6.8 Further details of the consultation undertaken and the full programme for the statutory consultation are set out in the Consultation and Engagement Strategy (see Appendix 2).

7 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 7.1 This report seeks Mayoral approval to enable the draft Whitechapel Vision Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to be submitted for statutory public consultation. Following the conclusion of the full consultation process, the SPD will ultimately be reported back to Cabinet for formal adoption as a document to support the Local Plan.
- 7.2 The draft Masterplan provides a framework to guide development and a programme for infrastructure delivery within the Masterplan area. It will provide evidence to inform and assist future decisions on resource allocation in this part of the Borough, and will assist the Authority in determining and prioritising contributions due from developers as part of the current Planning Obligations or the future Community Infrastructure Levy systems.
- 7.3 The Masterplan area includes several properties that are either currently Council owned or are possible locations for future service delivery. Although only indicative proposals, the possible future use of these sites is incorporated into the public consultation documentation. Any proposals for these sites will have significant financial implications for the Council and although not required at this Masterplanning stage, if pursued, will ultimately be subject to separate Member consideration. Each initiative will require detailed financial appraisal considered within the context of the resource position of the Council.
- 7.4 The cost of preparation of the Masterplan, including the consultation process, is estimated at approximately £150,000. These costs are being met from revenue resources set aside for this purpose within existing budgets.

8 CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL)

- 8.1 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) provide detail to support policy in the Local Plan. They undergo a simpler preparation process than Development Plan Documents however they are not subject to independent scrutiny by a planning inspector.

- 8.2 SPDs are subject to statutory preparation procedures under Regulations 11 to 14 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012, and in accordance with regulation 12 a process of public consultation and engagement with relevant parties and stakeholders must be carried out. This Report seeks member's endorsement of the draft SPD which will be publicly consulted upon following Cabinet approval.
- 8.3 By virtue of the default provisions in section 13(2) of the Local Government Act 2000 the SPD is required to be approved by Cabinet.
- 8.4 Before adopting the SPD, the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who don't. An Equalities Assessment has been carried out and has indicated that there are no negative equality impacts.

9 ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 An equality analysis (EqA) has been undertaken in support of the SPD. The analysis reviews and assesses any impacts of the SPD relating to the diversity of the borough including, race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, faith and deprivation. The Equality Analysis Scoping Report is attached as Appendix 3 to this paper. It identifies some positive impacts, but nothing negative from an equality perspective.
- 9.2 It should also be noted that the SPD is consistent with the Council's Core Strategy which was itself subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA).

10 SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 10.1 The Whitechapel Vision Masterplan SPD is subject to regulation 9(1) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 ("the 'Regulations'"), which requires the responsible authority to determine whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is necessary.
- 10.2 As the responsible authority, the Council is of the view that an SEA is not required because the SPD is an elaboration of an existing plan or programme (and is therefore a minor modification of that plan or programme), and the SPD must be consistent with the existing plans (Core Strategy and Managing Development Document) which have themselves undergone a full SEA and Sustainability Appraisal.
- 10.3 Furthermore Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening and a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Review has been undertaken in support of the SPD. These documents are attached as Appendix 4 to

the report. They show that the SPD does not give rise to significant negative environmental impacts.

- 10.4 The SPD will help ensure a greener environment in a number of ways, including: helping improve existing areas of open space and secure new areas of open space; promoting biodiversity; promoting sustainable transport options; and ensuring new buildings meet the highest environmental standards.

11 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The draft Whitechapel Vision Masterplan is being reported through the Council's Asset Management and Strategic Capital Board who consider risk management issues and mitigation.

12 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION

- 12.1 The Whitechapel Vision Masterplan SPD contains design and public realm principles to ensure new development improves security and safety in the area. This is achieved by influencing the siting of new developments, and setting out public realm improvements to create safe environments.

- 12.3 New developments will also have to satisfy the relevant policies in the Council's Local Plan relating to 'Secured by Design' principles. Development will be required to ensure crime prevention measures are considered to assist with reducing the opportunity for crime and the fear of crime, by creating a safer and more secure environment.

13 EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

- 13.1 The Whitechapel Vision Masterplan SPD will enable the sustainable regeneration of underused land to maximise the full potential of development opportunities for the area and for local communities. This regeneration will release further S106 and CIL contributions from forthcoming development sites, which in turn will deliver new affordable housing, local enterprise and employment opportunities, public realm enhancements, and community infrastructure.

14 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Draft Whitechapel Vision Masterplan SPD

Appendix 2 – Consultation and Engagement Strategy for Whitechapel Vision Masterplan SPD

Appendix 3 – Equality Analysis Scoping Report for Whitechapel Vision Masterplan SPD

Appendix 4 – Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening and Sustainability Appraisal Review Report for Whitechapel Vision Masterplan SPD

Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

List of “Background Papers” used in the preparation of this report

Brief description of “back ground papers”	Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection.
None	N/A