

DECISION-MAKER: CABINET
COUNCIL

SUBJECT: CITY CENTRE ACTION PLAN: ADOPTION

DATE OF DECISION: 17 MARCH 2015
18 MARCH 2015

REPORT OF: LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

CONTACT DETAILS

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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

None

BRIEF SUMMARY

The City Centre Action Plan sets out a strategy for how the city centre will evolve as a place to 2026 and beyond. It allocates development sites and promotes economic growth whilst protecting the quality of the environment. It forms part of the development plan against which planning applications are judged. It is supported by the City Centre Master Plan which sets out a visualisation of the approach and more detailed design guidance. The City Centre Action Plan has been through a public examination. The Council can only lawfully adopt the Plan by incorporating the Inspector's Main Modifications, which has been done in this final version recommended for adoption.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

CABINET:

- (i) To recommend to Council that the City Centre Action Plan (Document 1 in the Members' room) is adopted.
- (ii) To recommend that Council endorse the list of Local Plan Review policies that will be replaced by the City Centre Action Plan (set out in Members' Room Document 1 Appendix 4).

COUNCIL:

- (i) To adopt the City Centre Action Plan (Document 1 in the Members' room) .
- (ii) To endorse the list of Local Plan Review policies that will be replaced by the City Centre Action Plan (set out in Members' Room Document 1 Appendix 4).

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To provide a clear development framework to encourage investment.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2. Not to adopt the Plan. This would not meet the statutory requirement to keep plans up to date. The Plan helps to deliver the Council's aims and its preparation has involved considerable resources.
3. To adopt the Plan without the Inspector's 'Main Modifications' or by introducing other significant changes. This would be unlawful.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

4. The City Centre Action Plan sets out a development strategy for the city centre to 2026 and beyond. It is consistent with the Council's strategic Core Strategy (as amended by the Partial Review). The Action Plan is designed to promote economic growth and enhance the city centre as a place.
5. Following wide ranging public consultation and evidence gathering, the Cabinet approved a submission Plan on 19th March 2013. This was subject to formal public representations in Autumn 2013 and a public examination in Spring 2014. This led to further public consultation (under delegated powers) in Summer 2014 on changes to the Plan to address the issues raised.
6. In December 2014 the Inspector's final report was received (Document 4 in the Members' room). She found the Plan 'sound' provided her 'Main Modifications' are made. To adopt the Plan, the Council is legally required to include these Main Modifications and make no other significant changes. The Inspector has broadly supported the Council's Plan, and whilst her Main Modifications must be made, they do not significantly alter its overall approach.
7. This report summarises the Council's submission Plan; the Inspector's Main Modifications; and Additional minor Modifications recommended by officers. These are all incorporated into the Plan recommended for adoption.

Council's submission Plan

8. The approach of the Plan approved by the Cabinet in 2013 is as follows.
9. "A Great Place for Business": promoting economic growth, with a focus on new office development, protecting some industrial areas, and managing the relationship between city centre and port growth.
10. "A Great Place to Visit": promoting Southampton as a vibrant shopping, leisure and cultural centre, with carefully phased retail growth and appropriately controlled bars / restaurants / casinos / nightclubs.
11. "A Great Place to Live": encouraging a greater range of people to live in the city centre, identifying sites for 5,450 homes; supporting new secondary school provision in the longer term; and the further / higher education facilities.
12. "A Greener City": protecting open spaces (allowing some reconfiguration where the quantity / quality of space is retained); supporting new open spaces and the greening of streets; the district energy network and appropriate low carbon energy plants; and protecting against flood risk.
13. "Attractive and Distinctive": promoting high standards of design which respect the city's heritage, key views, and surrounding spaces; and supporting high quality tall buildings in appropriate locations.

14. “Easy to Get About”: Promoting a shift from car use to public transport, walking and cycling to minimise congestion and support the environment by enhancing the Central Station, public transport and pedestrian links, and appropriately remodelling roads whilst retaining provision for cars.
15. The Plan sets out the approach for each quarter and development site, generally promoting a mix of residential, office, retail and leisure uses (with controls on that mix in some cases). Some sites will be developed in the short term, some in the longer term. The overall approach set out in the Plan is as follows, and the detail of schemes may evolve in the future where appropriate to reflect the latest circumstances.
16. Station Quarter: Major development by an enhanced Central Station.
17. Western Gateway: Comprehensive redevelopment (more likely in the longer term) to create a new landmark entrance to the city centre.
18. Royal Pier Waterfront: high quality waterfront destination.
19. Heart of the City: An enhanced shopping area including a redevelopment of the East Street Shopping Centre; new development at Watermark West Quay and West Quay Site B; and longer term enhancement / potential expansion of the retail offer in the West Quay Retail Park / Asda / Marlands area.
20. Itchen Riverside: new waterfront destination including marine employment / residential uses at Chapel Riverside.
21. Old Town: protect and enhance the Old Town with retail / residential development at Bargate Shopping Centre / East of Castle Way / High Street; residential led development at the Fruit and Vegetable Market and new open space at Albion Place / Castle Way car parks.
22. Cultural Quarter: New arts complex.
23. University Quarter: East Park Terrace, University led expansion; St Marys Road, residential / student / mixed use development.
24. Holyrood / Queens Park: Duke / College Street: Residential / office uses.
25. Ocean Village: Continue to enhance the waterfront destination.
26. St Mary’s Street (part) and Old Northam Rd.: protect for shops and similar uses, and respect the character of the area.
27. Bedford Place: Maintain and improve existing bars, restaurants, shops and offices.
28. Finally, the Plan sets out delivery issues (including actions the Council will or may take: working with developers, compulsory purchase, investment in infrastructure; other delivery partners and potential funding sources).

The Inspector’s Main Modifications

29. These must be incorporated for the Plan to be lawfully adopted. In any case they are considered useful additions to the Plan. They are set out in full in Document 2 in the Members’ room and the key points summarised as follows.
30. City Centre boundary: Amend to include the whole Station Quarter and reflect the latest Royal Pier Waterfront scheme.

31. Offices: Clarify the office targets; identify sites on map; include Royal Pier Waterfront and the Station Quarter Southside in the sites where a significant proportion of offices is required unless there is a clear justification for a lower level; and delete the more detailed information for specific sites.
32. Port: Further clarify the nature and importance of the Port and its access. Clarify the policy tests for managing the relationship between port and city centre growth; and when the policy applies (e.g. where residential uses are proposed nearby or there are impacts on access routes). Recognise the importance of port freight. Add cross references through the Plan.
33. Retail: Refer to “enhancing” the city centre’s regional role; clarify the approach for a phased expansion of the primary shopping area; define small scale retail uses and explain when other types of retail might be appropriate on key sites at Royal Pier Waterfront; Chapel Riverside and Ocean Village.
34. Parks: Explain that the setting of the grade II* registered parks will be respected and enhanced; with active frontages to the parks.
35. Ecology: More emphasis on processes to ensure no recreational disturbance on the Solent or the New Forest from increased visitor trips.
36. Strategic Views: Further restrictions on the loss of views.
37. Design: Add a reference to sustainable development.
38. Tall buildings: Add that they should contribute positively to the setting of the parks; and slightly reduce the edges to the Parks in which tall buildings are potentially appropriate.
39. Transport: Add that appropriate road access should be maintained.
40. Major Development Zone: extend to include the whole Station Quarter.
41. Station Quarter: Strengthen control so that any changes to Blechynden Terrace have to provide not only a greater amount of open space, but also enhanced space and where practical the same green space. Extend the Quarter to include all areas of public realm improvement.
42. Western Gateway: Add that the layout of development will ensure residential uses are screened from and do not face the Port.
43. Royal Pier: Amend the site boundary in Southampton Water to reflect the latest scheme; recognise that certain activity may need to take place beyond this (eg pontoon anchors); and that consultation will be required with the Harbour Master / Port Authority.
44. North of West Quay Road: extend site to include all retail warehouses.
45. Chapel Riverside: Clarify that built heritage and ecology should be respected, and that waterfront access should be continuous and include open spaces.
46. Fruit and Vegetable Market: Design development to mitigate any conflicts with existing industrial / night time uses.
47. Ocean Village: Development site to cover known schemes only (Admirals Quay and the Promontory site).
48. Delivery: Clarify the Master Plan’s floor space figures are only indicative.

49. Policy Maps: identify hazardous installation consultation zones; include West Quay multi storey car park in area of retail expansion; amend Royal Pier Waterfront evening zone to include 5 – 7 Town Quay.

Additional Modifications

50. Whilst the Council cannot make any further major modifications, it can make minor modifications. These are proposed to respond to detailed points made in representations. They include the modifications consulted upon in Summer 2014; and final changes which either respond to comments received from that consultation (where they do not affect Major Modifications) or are simply for consistency, factual corrections or updates.
51. The minor modifications are set out in Document 3 in the Members' Room. To give some examples, they add:
- Reference to the “grade II* registered” status of, and the Management Plan for, the Central Parks;
 - More emphasis to the key areas of infrastructure funding required (e.g. transport; flood defences; education and energy);
 - Reference to the Water Framework Directive and water quality;
 - Reference to the Local Areas of Archaeological Potential.

Policies Map

52. The policies map forms part of, and is updated to reflect, the City Centre Action Plan.

Replacement of Local Plan Review Policies

53. The adoption of the City Centre Action Plan means that some of the Local Plan Review (2006) policies are no longer ‘saved’. These are the policies that relate to city centre sites, design, night time and office areas, and transport improvements. In addition other policies will no longer apply within (but will continue to apply outside) the city centre. These include policies on design, energy, open spaces, housing, retail and industry. A full list of the policies to be replaced is set out in Appendix 4 of the City Centre Action Plan.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

54. Capital: Delivery of the Plan will mainly be achieved by the private sector. Some projects may be delivered in part through Council investment but this would be decided through the normal approval process. This report does not commit the Council to any capital spending.
55. Revenue: The Plan is being prepared within the existing Planning budget, in the Environment and Transport portfolio.

Property/Other

56. The Council owns an interest in a wide range of the sites allocated for development in this Plan.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

57. Sections 17, 19 and 23 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004

Other Legal Implications:

- 58. Parts of the Plan (e.g. safeguarding for a flood defence) may require the Council to purchase land via a blight notice. However this procedure is framed such that the extent of this is likely to be limited for flood risk. Once the Plan is adopted there is a 6 week period in which parties could lodge a High Court Challenge. This can only be on procedural / legal issues.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

- 59. The Plan forms part of the policy framework and the development plan against which planning applications are considered.

KEY DECISION? Yes

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED: All.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

- 1. None

Documents In Members' Rooms

- 1. City Centre Action Plan – version for adoption. (This incorporates the Major and Additional Modifications; and the Policies Map).
- 2. Major Modifications
- 3. Minor Modifications
- 4. Inspector's Report
- 5. Policy Map Changes
- 6. Sustainability Statement

Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out. Yes

Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at: Civic Centre, contact report author.

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1. None	