



NORWICH City Council

Committee Name: Sustainable development panel

Committee Date: 09/11/2021

Report Title: East Norwich Stage 1 Masterplan

Portfolio: Councillor Stonard, Cabinet member for inclusive and sustainable growth

Report from: Executive director of development and city services

Wards: Thorpe Hamlet, Lakenham

OPEN PUBLIC ITEM

Purpose

For information, to update members on the emerging Stage 1 East Norwich Masterplan.

Recommendation:

To note details of the emerging Stage 1 East Norwich masterplan and to provide comments to the cabinet meeting on 17 November if appropriate.

Policy Framework

The Council has three corporate priorities, which are:

- People living well
- Great neighbourhoods, housing and environment
- Inclusive economy

This report meets the corporate priorities People living well, Great neighbourhoods, housing and environment, and Inclusive economy.

This report addresses following strategic actions in the Corporate Plan:

- Provide means for people to lead healthy, connected and fulfilling lives
- Maintain a clean and sustainable city with a good local environment that people value
- Continue sensitive regeneration of the city that retains its unique character and meets local needs
- Mobilise activity and investment that promotes a growing, diverse, innovative and resilient economy

This report helps to update the local plan for Greater Norwich by informing production of a supplementary planning document for East Norwich which will support delivery of the Greater Norwich local plan's policies. Once adopted the GNLDP will replace the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South

Norfolk which currently forms a key part of the local plan for Norwich.

This report helps to meet the following objectives of the COVID-19 Recovery Plan:

- Housing, regeneration and development: this specifically includes the action of commencing the masterplanning process for the regeneration of East Norwich with the potential to deliver 4,000 new homes and create 6,000 new jobs; this work began in March 2021 and is well underway as noted in the main body of this report. Also, the masterplan will identify required infrastructure to ensure the regeneration of East Norwich in a timely manner. The acquisition of Carrow House by the city council gives it a stake in the regeneration of the wider area.
- Business and local economy: the masterplan will identify opportunities to promote sustainable travel in the city centre, with a focus on walking and cycling. The masterplan and acquisition of Carrow House is part of the Town Investment Plan which has secured £5m funding for investing in the East Norwich as part of the wider £25m investment programme.
- Climate change and the green economy: the masterplan and eventual supplementary planning document to be produced in stage 2 of the process will help ensure that future the regeneration of East Norwich is delivered to the highest possible environmental standards.

Report Details

Introduction

1. A [report](#) was considered by the sustainable development panel on 14 September 2021 which provided an update on progress with the East Norwich masterplan and reported on engagement and development of concept options.
2. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the emerging Stage 1 masterplan which is approaching completion shortly and will be considered by cabinet on 17 November. Members of the consultant team will provide a presentation to panel members with further detail on the masterplan content at the meeting and respond to questions. Comments by members of the sustainable development panel will then be reported to cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 17 November.
3. The Stage 1 masterplan will be the key output from Stage 1 of the masterplan process. Its purpose is to provide a clear understanding of the development potential of the area (in terms of housing, employment and community/social infrastructure) and the strategic infrastructure required to deliver these. It takes into account estimates of abnormal development costs and an understanding of the impact these have on the deliverability and viability of the scheme. Its development has been informed by engagement to date with a wide range of stakeholders and the public.
4. Given that the Stage 1 masterplan is not yet in the public domain, this report provides some high level information about the masterplan evolution and key themes and approaches, plus feedback from the recent public engagement.

Progress overview

5. Cabinet in February 2021 approved the award of the contract for multidisciplinary professional advice on the East Norwich Masterplan for the period 1 March 2021 - 31 March 2022. At that time £600,000 project funding had been committed from members of the East Norwich Partnership. Since then, further project funding has been committed, and the council has recently acquired Carrow House which gives the council a landowner stake in the delivery of regeneration in East Norwich.
6. Members of the sustainable development panel have been briefed regularly since commencement of the masterplan process. In addition to the September report noted above there were reports to the panel on [18 March 2021](#) and [22 June 2021](#) setting out the background to this commission, including the establishment of the East Norwich Partnership (ENP) in 2020, and emphasising the masterplan's potential to deliver transformational change to this part of the city by the creation of new mixed use quarter with up to 4,000 new homes and significant new employment floorspace.
7. Financial commitment to date totals £675,000 from the following sources: Norwich City Council, Norfolk County Council, Norwich Towns Fund, Norfolk County Council, the Broads Authority, Homes England, Network Rail, and the

owners of the Deal, Utilities and Carrow Works sites. Funding partners sit on the East Norwich Steering Group which oversees progress on the masterplan.

8. This level of partner support has been instrumental to help drive the masterplan forward and demonstrates partners' commitment to work positively towards the regeneration of this area. The funding covers the cost of the masterplan consultants, project management costs, and commissioning of any additional work required to the end of the contract (anticipated at the end of March 2022).
9. It should be noted that the council and the Towns Fund each contributed £100,000 towards masterplanning costs, and the council also recently acquired Carrow House through the Towns Fund which gives the council a landowner stake in the delivery of regeneration in East Norwich.

Emerging Stage 1 masterplan – development and content

10. The purpose of the stage 1 masterplan is to provide a clear understanding of the development potential of the East Norwich area in terms of a range of land uses including housing, employment and community/social infrastructure and the strategic infrastructure required to deliver these, taking into account estimates of abnormal development costs and an understanding of the impact these have on the deliverability and viability of the scheme. It is not a blueprint for development but instead provides a framework for the comprehensive regeneration of the East Norwich area for the long term, to help promote, direct and coordinate its development.
11. The emerging Stage 1 masterplan is informed by a robust and comprehensive evidence base which has fed into the development of concept masterplan options. This includes desktop and site analysis of technical information, and an extensive process of stakeholder engagement.
12. The first stage of engagement involved an extensive process of 'listening and learning', involving one to one meetings with a range of stakeholders, including ENP members and neighbouring landowners, as well as member briefings, community workshops, meetings with statutory consultees, and public drop-in sessions in late July over 2 days. These public events were very well received with over 180 people attending overall. Attendees were invited to complete an online survey which generated over 220 responses on a range of issues including the vision for the site, opportunities for potential uses including housing, open space, community facilities, employment, sustainability, transport, access and heritage assets. This engagement helped build the evidence base on which the concept masterplan was developed and has raised the profile of the masterplan in the wider community.
13. The second stage of engagement involved another public event over two days (15 and 16 October) where the consultants fed back the messages received from stakeholders regarding key themes and priorities for East Norwich and outlined initial concepts for the area which respond positively to these issues. Again, this event was very well attended with almost 200 attendees. An on-line survey again took place: feedback was generally supportive of the emerging masterplan and will help inform the final version.

14. Details of the engagement process to date are set out in the consultant's report of engagement on the council's [website](#).
15. In developing the concept masterplan, the consultants have identified three primary strategic objectives for East Norwich including:
 - (a) Celebrating Norwich's waterfront: by extending and celebrating the waterfront in east Norwich to create vibrant new riverside environments, support new and existing wetland habitats, and support water-based activities and enterprises.
 - (b) Connecting the city with the Broads: there is potential for opening new connections for all modes between the city and the Broads. The sites have long played a significant role in the city's industrial history but have been largely inaccessible in recent years.
 - (c) Framing the future with the past: by making the most of the great historical significance of east Norwich, particularly the Carrow Works site which includes Carrow Abbey and many listed buildings, with new development complementing existing buildings, to form connected neighbourhoods supporting a vibrant mix of uses, activities, tenures and environments.
16. The emerging masterplan acknowledges the biggest challenges to be addressed which are flooding, the complex underground infrastructure particularly on the Utilities site, the adjacent mainline railway line and associated activities, and access to the sites which is most constrained on the Deal Ground and Utilities sites.
17. The emerging masterplan also aims to create characterful places that are responsive to the riverside location and to the different contexts throughout the site, and to create opportunities to enhance landscape setting. It has identified four distinct 'character areas' based on Carrow Works with its industrial heritage and listed buildings, Trowse village and Deal Ground which contains a significant amount of flood zone and open space, Waterside North based on the Utilities site on the north bank of the Wensum, and Waterside East which straddles the Wensum adjacent to Carrow Works and Norwich City Football Club. The intention is that the masterplan proposals will reflect the differing characteristics of these areas.
18. The emerging masterplan will also incorporate a series of strategies including the following:
 - (a) A heritage strategy, setting out how the masterplan responds to the site's significance in terms of heritage and the built environment. The site's rich history is a unique asset and opportunity for the masterplan. The heritage strategy includes the retention of key built heritage assets and a framework for how their setting can be improved;
 - (b) A movement strategy dealing with all principal modes of travel and outlining how the area can help deliver radically improved connections between the city centre and the Broads. The masterplan presents an opportunity to create a sustainable new quarter of the city as an

extension to the city core with major improvements to the walking and cycling network and an improved public transport network;

- (c) A public realm strategy highlighting key spaces and connections within the masterplan area which offer opportunities to create durable and flexible environments;
- (d) A development strategy outlining principles and guidance to help ensure development decisions are made which do not undermine the long term success of the area and respond to issues and opportunities;
- (e) A land use strategy based on a mix of uses including residential and non-residential uses. The latter will be critical to the long-term success of the masterplan and creation of a desirable place to live, work and visit;
- (f) A building height strategy setting out a contextual and sensitive approach to building heights.

19. The emerging masterplan promotes a coordinated approach to infrastructure delivery across the East Norwich site as a whole, as all the individual sites within it will, to some extent, rely on provision across the wider masterplan area. The masterplan will identify key critical pieces of infrastructure to ensure that the full potential of the masterplan is met through a coordinated approach. These will include new bridge infrastructure, roads, sustainable pedestrian and cycling connections, marinas, and social and community infrastructure including educational provision and public open and play space. Further work will be required in Stage 2 to identify how and when this infrastructure will be delivered.

20. Emerging work on viability indicates that the overall development proposition is likely to be profitable but that in order to unlock the potential of East Norwich, major upfront infrastructure investment is likely to be required. The consultants' view is that the challenges of funding necessary infrastructure are considered likely to be overcome, especially given the current partnership arrangements with all stakeholders working together to plan infrastructure delivery. A key element of the work of stage 2 of the masterplan will be to look at viability, infrastructure and deliverability in greater detail, and to develop appropriate strategies for both securing upfront investment and capture long term value to repay that investment.

Conclusions

21. Although not yet complete at the time of writing, it is anticipated that the Stage 1 masterplan will be completed by the time of the panel meeting on 9 November and can therefore be reported to members at that meeting.

22. It is important to note that the Stage 1 masterplan is intended to be a high level document which will be worked up in greater detail in Stage 2, particularly in relation to infrastructure provision, phasing, deliverability and viability.

23. The Stage 1 masterplan has been presented to the East Norwich steering group who responded to it in a positive way as the basis for more detailed work in Stage 2. Whilst high level, its proposals are based on robust evidence and informed by an extensive process of public and stakeholder engagement taking on board the views of the key partners including landowners.
24. The Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) public examination hearings will be held in early 2022 and, whilst the Stage 2 work may not be completed by then, the fact that the Stage 1 masterplan has been produced and that the partnership members, including landowners and national agencies such as Homes England and Network Rail, are working together in a positive manner should give the Inspectors confidence in terms of the site's eventual deliverability.
25. In addition to being reported to cabinet on 17 November, the Stage 1 masterplan will be considered by members of the Greater Norwich Development Partnership on 15 November, which includes members from South Norfolk Council, Broadland District Council and the Broads Authority.
26. The council has achieved much in relation to East Norwich in the last couple of years as noted above, particularly in setting up the East Norwich Partnership and getting buy-in from key partners. It is rare that landowners can be part of such an opportunity, and this is key to the success of the project to date and in moving forward. It is anticipated that the Stage 1 masterplan will demonstrate what can be achieved with the commitment of all key partners, with huge potential benefits for the city and wider region. Stage 2 is required to further refine the masterplan on the basis of a more detailed understanding of viability and deliverability, and to produce a supplementary planning document to support emerging GNLP policy.
27. The Stage 2 process is anticipated to run from November 2021 to March 2022, and will deliver:
 - (a) An infrastructure delivery plan and refined Strategic viability assessment;
 - (b) A refined masterplan;
 - (c) An evidence base to support planning applications and the allocation in the Greater Norwich Local Plan; and,
 - (d) A draft supplementary planning document (SPD) for East Norwich.
28. There will be further engagement on the draft SPD which will be subject to public consultation, expected in February-March 2022. Following that the intention is that the SPD will be adopted by the Greater Norwich partner authorities alongside the adoption of the GNLP in autumn 2022.
29. The recommendation is for members to note details of the emerging Stage 1 East Norwich masterplan and to provide comments to the cabinet meeting on 17 November if appropriate.
30. For information the original masterplan brief includes a reference to a Stage 3, focused on the preparation of a detailed business case to unlock enabling funding to ensure the successful delivery of the overall scheme. Stage 3 falls

outside the contract with Avison Young, but the Stage 2 work described above will feed into this further anticipated stage of work.

Consultation

31. As noted above a summary of extensive consultation and engagement to date is available on the council's [website](#). Members of the sustainable development panel have also been kept informed by regular reports throughout the Stage 1 process.

Implications

Financial and Resources

32. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its Corporate Plan 2019-22 and Budget.

33. There are no proposals in this report that would reduce or increase resources. Partnership funding is in place to cover the costs of the masterplan production as noted in previous reports to cabinet and sustainable development panel.

34. Financial commitment to date for the masterplan work totals £675,000 from the following sources: Norwich City Council, Norfolk County Council, Norwich Towns Fund, Norfolk County Council, the Broads Authority, Homes England, Network Rail, the landowners of the Deal, Utilities and Carrow Works sites, and the Norfolk Strategic Fund. As noted earlier in the report the city council has contributed £100k to the project.

35. The overall level of funding covers the cost of the masterplan consultants, project management costs and other costs including commissioning of any additional work required to the end of the contract (anticipated at the end of March 2022).

36. The table below sets out the total project financial commitment of £675k, the payment that has been made to date, and what is due in Stage 2.

East Norwich Master Plan Total Commitment of Funds	Total Commitment	Stage One	Stage Two
	£000's	£000's	£000's
TOTAL FUNDING	£ 675	£ 482	£ 193

37. Forecasted costs to the end of the project are currently £600k against a budget of £675k, with costs within the budget framework for this project.

Forecasted Costs	Full Project Forecast to Mar-22
Costs	£000's
Forecast	£600
Budget	£675
Variance	£75

Legal

38. There are no legal issues arising from this report.

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and Diversity	This report does not have any direct implications for the council's equality and diversity considerations.
Health, Social and Economic Impact	This report does not have any direct implications for the council's health, social and economic considerations.
Crime and Disorder	This report does not have any direct implications for the council's crime and disorder considerations.
Children and Adults Safeguarding	This report does not have any direct implications for the council's Safeguarding Policy statement.
Environmental Impact	The masterplan will have implications for the council's environmental impact considerations. Impacts that are being specifically addressed through the masterplan include the need to manage traffic impact on the strategic road network in the east of the city which is at capacity, to address key areas of landscape and biodiversity value and the setting of heritage assets, to address and mitigate flood risk, to address and mitigate environmental impacts from adjacent activities and site contamination, and to address navigation rights in relation to the River Wensum part of the Broads network.

Risk Management

Risk	Consequence	Controls Required
This report is an update on the significant progress made to date and does not have any specific operational, financial, compliance, security, legal, political or reputational risks to the council. As noted in the report, funding for stage 2 of the masterplan is already committed. The masterplan is part of the Towns Deal project; risks have been identified as part of that project.	N/a	N/a

Other Options Considered

39. The production of a masterplan for East Norwich is a major opportunity to drive forward the regeneration of that area. Stage 1 is complete but stage 2 is required to further refine the masterplan work and produce an SPD to support local plan policy. The recommendation includes agreement to move to stage 2 subject to approval of the stage 1 report. Given that good progress has been made to date, and we are in the middle of the masterplanning process, the consideration of other options is not relevant at this stage.

Reasons for the decision/recommendation

40. The reason for the recommendation is to enable members to note details of the emerging Stage 1 masterplan and to provide comments to cabinet if considered appropriate.

Background papers: none

Appendices: none

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