

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING	Planning Transport & Environment Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel
MEETING DATE:	13th January 2015
TITLE:	Placemaking Plan Options Consultation
WARD:	All
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM	
List of attachments to this report: Attachment 1 - B&NES Placemaking Plan Options document (<i>This very large document may be seen at public inspection points and online</i>) Attachment 2 – The Consultation Strategy	

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 Preparation of the Placemaking Plan is underway and, together with the Core Strategy, it will be the primary document against which planning applications will be determined. The Placemaking Plan will be the spatial expression of the Council's objectives. Before the preparation of a draft Plan, the Council must engage publically on the reasonable alternative options. Therefore an options document has been prepared for public consultation to inform the draft Placemaking Plan scheduled for publication in 2015.
- 1.2 The Placemaking Plan Options Consultation, "Getting Around Bath" Transport Strategy and Enterprise Area Masterplan have been developed together as a consistent, co-ordinated and comprehensive suite of B&NES strategy and policy. Together these documents will enable positive change including economic growth, social and environmental wellbeing.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Panel consider the Placemaking Plan options document published for consultation up to 30th January 2015 and make comments to the Cabinet on what should be included in the Draft Placemaking Plan.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 3.1 Preparation of the Placemaking Plan is included in the B&NES Local Development Scheme (LDS), the Council's formal Planning Policy work programme. The resources required for its preparation are set out in the LDS and are covered by the Local Development Framework Budget and the Planning Policy and Environment Teams. However, its preparation requires extensive cross service working. This will be covered from within existing budgets.
- 3.2 The Placemaking Plan will have broad economic implications in that it will establish the planning requirements for redevelopment sites, thereby influencing land values and the costs to development. The Placemaking Plan will seek to facilitate the substantial growth in employment space set out in the Core Strategy, particularly within the Enterprise Area, where the uplift in business rates generated forms part of the West of England City Deal.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Any plan which seeks to allocate sites for development or regulate development is a *Development Plan Document*. Plan-making is a statutory process and their preparation must follow national regulations. In particular, a Plan is examined for soundness and this means that the Plan must be;
- Positively prepared – the plan should seek to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development;
 - Justified – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence;
 - Effective – the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities; and
 - Consistent with national policy – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development

5 THE REPORT

- 5.1 The purpose of the Placemaking Plan is to complement the strategic framework in the Core Strategy by setting out detailed development principles for identified development sites and other policies for managing development across Bath and North East Somerset.
- 5.2 Like the Core Strategy, the Placemaking Plan is being prepared in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and a number of Council strategies, such as the Leisure Strategy, and will facilitate the delivery of Council

objectives. In particular the Placemaking Plan will complement and help to deliver the Council's 3 key strategies;

- The Economic Strategy
- The Health & Well-Being Strategy
- The Transport Strategy

5.3 In complementing the Core Strategy, the Placemaking Plan must reflect the Core Strategy spatial **vision**. It is acknowledged that the Council has refreshed its vision since the publication of the Core Strategy through the above strategies. However, the Core Strategy objectives and direction of travel are still in line with the refreshed vision.

5.4 In terms of the preparation process, the Placemaking Plan is at **options stage**. This provides the opportunity for the Council to test different options with local communities, stakeholders and the development industry without a formal commitment to a policy. The Options document therefore sets out policy approaches for consultation although in some cases a preferred option is expressed. This will enable the demonstration at examination that the alternatives options have been considered in the process of identifying the "most appropriate strategy".

5.5 The Council has been progressing the **Enterprise Area Masterplan** which includes a spatial vision and sets out development aspirations for various sites along the river corridor. The Placemaking Plan Options consultation enables the opportunity to formally test this evidence through the statutory plan-making process, alongside reasonable alternatives. The preferred spatial strategy will be set out in the draft Plan in 2015 although it is acknowledged that proposals on some sites will be progressed in the interim, based on the evidence and policy framework currently in place and that emerging as part of the Placemaking Plan preparation.

5.6 The Placemaking Plan will also need to be closely co-ordinated with the emerging **Bath and Keynsham Transport Strategies**. Some of the Transport strategy proposals will need to be delivered through the Placemaking Plan and relevant proposals are included in the Options document. The Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan will need to be continually updated to ensure a close alignment of new development with infrastructure in its broadest sense.

5.7 The Placemaking Plan covers two broad sections; the identification and allocation of **development sites** and the provision of **district-wide planning policies**. Together these will provide the policy framework needed to deliver Council aspirations, provide clarity and certainty for the development industry and local communities, and facilitate economic growth whilst safeguarding the District's high quality environment.

5.8 The Placemaking Plan will also need to acknowledge the diversity of the district by providing bespoke policy frameworks for the different parts of the district. This is reflected in the structure of the document.

5.9 A number of local communities have responded impressively to the challenge of Localism and have worked in partnership with the District Council to undertake rigorous assessment of their local areas in order to inform the preparation of

local proposals for inclusion in the Placemaking Plan. The District Council will work with those local communities who are preparing **Neighbourhood Plans** in order to ensure a cohesive and consistent policy framework across B&NES.

5.10 As set out in the LDS, the next steps in the process is as follows;

Sept 2014	Draft Plan Published For Consultation
Jan 2016	Submit Plan for Examination
July 2016	Receive Inspector's report
Sept 2016	Adoption

5.11 Whilst the Plan is due to be adopted in 2016, the weight that can be afforded to it in decision making will increase as it progresses through each stage. The draft plan in 2015 will be a key milestone.

6 RATIONALE

6.1 The Plan will be subject to examination to ascertain its 'soundness'. The examining Inspector will need to ascertain that the Plan is the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence. Therefore the options stage is necessary in order to explore various alternative approaches & proposals.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 The Options document in Attachment 1 sets out the options considered.

8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Preparation of the options document entailed the involvement of other Services, partnership working with Town and Parish councils, input from key stakeholders and advice from the LDF Steering Group.

8.2 A consultation strategy was approved by Cabinet and is being implemented.

9 RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

Contact person	<i>Lisa Bartlett 01225 477550 Simon de Beer 01225 47616</i>
Background papers	<i>B&NES Placemaking Plan Options document 2014 Adopted B&NES Core Strategy Placemaking Plan Cabinet report 12th November 2014</i>
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	