

## **RESPONSE TO DERBY CITYSCAPE**

Report of the Director of Development and Cultural Services

### **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The report concerns the consultation of Derby CityScape and how the comments made by the major stakeholders, including the residents of Derby via a series of Forums, public meetings and an exhibition are informing the process of achieving a framework for future development in the city.
- 1.2 Derby Cityscape is not a prescriptive document. It is a flexible framework that will be expanded and changed during the future as a development programme emerges and evolves. There will be future opportunities for the involvement of the public during the detailed design development for specific areas.
- 1.3 There are a number of implementation options which are being considered, a preferred model has yet to be selected but will include consideration of an Urban Regeneration Company. Such a model would assist the implementation process.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 To note the comments made during the consultation and how these are informing amendments to the final document
- 2.2 To note future implementation proposals including the setting up of an Urban Regeneration Company as an option.

### **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

3. To enable comments to be made to the Consultants and for a final document of Derby CityScape to be prepared which will be used as a promotional document in the implementation process.

## **MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **Purpose of the Report**

- 4.1 Derby CityScape is a visionary document. Derby City Council and its partners share a common vision – to make Derby a Top Ten city by the year 2020. The vision aims to examine and investigate how progress could be made on encouraging the development of the wealth of vacant and underused sites, and in realising the potential of areas like Friar Gate Goods Yard, and to contribute to City Centre life by accommodating land use and economic needs within an improved environment. The comments made as part of the consultation process are vital to the development and implementation of this vision, and the involvement of local communities is important to achieving a sense of ownership of ‘their’ city. Of equal importance in determining the conception and delivery of this vision as a vital part of an urban renaissance, is the degree to which there is a realistic strategy developed which is owned by local stakeholders.
- 4.2 Derby CityScape is not a prescriptive masterplan. It is a flexible framework setting out a series of development proposals that can be used to guide and encourage future development, and to generate support in the delivery of a vision for a Top Ten City. The ideas included in Derby CityScape are conceptual and are not final schemes, they are produced as a guide and will be the subject of detailed design proposals when key stakeholders, including local residents, will be consulted and will be directly involved in the process.
- 4.3 This report is dealing with comments made on the draft report during the consultation phase and will identify points of detail which are either inaccurate, require clarification or may require a different emphasis to achieve certain outcomes.
- 4.4 Throughout the deliberations and development of ideas for Derby Cityscape regard has been given to the current review of the Local Plan. The emerging proposals reflect these discussions and have regard to the policies articulated in the Local Plan Review.

### **Consultation Process**

- 4.5 At the beginning of this year, Members considered a report on the draft Stage 2 Report of the Derby City Centre Design and Development Strategy and a programme outlining the proposed consultation procedure. Following this report, and in consultation with the partners to this initiative, a new name, Derby CityScape was selected to assist in the marketing of the concept ideas and to generate interest from members of the public, landowners and developers.

The consultation procedure proceeded as detailed, with the exhibition, area focus groups and Developers Forum providing the structure for public involvement in consideration and interrogation of the proposals. Views expressed at the meetings were recorded, and in addition attendees were

encouraged to consider the content of the proposals and to complete a consultation response form.

- 4.6 One hundred replies were received from a wide section of the community, including local residents, city centre retailers, individuals with local commercial interest, developers who are already involved in the city and encouragingly, comments from developers and their agents who are actively considering the potential of Derby as a place to invest. Attendance at the focus groups varied and led to a lively exchange of ideas and reaction to the proposals, all of which have been noted and used to inform the key issues included in this report. The Developers Forum was very well attended, and was promoted as the first event in an ongoing need for collaborative working between the City Council and persons involved in future development in the city.

### **Outline of Key Issues**

- 4.7 The analysis of the replies has been organised to enable the key responses and issues arising from the data to be identified and extracted. The responses were varied and numerous but by organising into topic areas and then into comments relating to particular areas identified in the 'masterplan', the main issues can be identified and extracted for further consideration.

### **Housing**

- 4.8 There is outstanding support for city centre living, considering this as a positive proposal to bring life and vitality back into the city centre. The need to include affordable housing in the new development was identified, and the issue of providing car parking for city centre residents, although this view was balanced by a number of comments relating to car free development. A need to evaluate demand for city centre living was identified, and the need to consider the use of vacant upper floors in many of the historic buildings. There were a number of queries regarding aspects of affordable housing requirements on City Centre housing sites. The proposed policy change in the Local Plan to waiver affordable housing on sites within the line of the Inner Ring Road takes account of the viability issue and addresses the concerns expressed by the developers.

### **Highways/Transportation**

- 4.9 There was a general request to improve public transport provision and to be more visionary about the future provision into and around the city centre. In addition to these comments was the issue of car parking, and here there was a divergence of views between the need to provide more car parking in the city centre, and the need to exclude the car in the city centre to encourage greater use of public transport. There is a need to have proposals which can be implemented and take account of the demands and requirements of a busy city centre.

## **Environment**

- 4.10 The perceived loss of open space was expressed as regrettable, together with support for the enhancement of open space as a planned approach to a redevelopment proposal. The focus of development and the extended use of the riverside was welcomed as a positive move, with several requests made to extend and intensify the approach, even to investigate the provision of more waterside opportunities in the city centre and to consider the multi-purpose use of open space.

## **Design**

- 4.11 Due care and attention will be required to safeguard the skyline, and a note that the scale of new development should not dominate the existing buildings and it should respect the existing urban form.

## **Becket Well**

- 4.12 The retention of properties on Green Lane was requested by a number of retailers in the vicinity, and this should be supported by improvements to Green Lane. Links through to St Peters Street were supported, with a desire to retain Oaks Yard.

## **Civic Quarter**

- 4.13 There was general support expressed for the Visual Arts and Media centre as a concept, with an agreement that an iconic building would be an asset to the city. The extension of this building concept to include a new central library was requested. The siting of the Visual Arts and Media Centre generated mixed responses, including support for the activity such a building would bring to the Market Place, the planned enhancement and landscaping of the surrounds but concern regarding the closing off of the Market Place and loss of open space.

In considering a range of possible sites for the Visual Arts and Media Centre, the consultants selected site is on the Market Place. However, it has been suggested that due consideration should be given to one of the alternative sites, at the Magistrates Court site on Full Street.

- 4.14 The proposed use of the Derbyshire Building Society was questioned in terms of viability although there was general consensus that a hotel in this area of the city was genuinely a good idea.
- 4.15 The development of Cathedral Green was of concern to a number of respondents who referred to the loss of open space and the form of the development, and the impact this would have on the World Heritage Site Buffer Zone. There was a counter support for the proposed development of this area, with a request to have careful regard to the sensitive quality and nature of the environment.

## **Friar Gate Goods Yard**

- 4.16 The development of this site is welcomed as being long overdue although there was a counter view expressed by a number who wished to see the site retained for open space and were concerned about the loss of wildlife. Other comments related to issues of development of the site and the need to achieve affordable housing and public open space.

## **Riverside**

- 4.17 In general the comments received for this site were supportive of the residential and commercial uses. The extent of provision of office accommodation was questioned as being excessive. Air quality and flooding issues were mentioned as requiring due consideration in the overall context for the development of this area. There was a request to rework the layout of this area to take account of the existing road layout.

## **Northern Quarter**

- 4.18 The Northern Quarter focuses on providing a series of development opportunities to support and extend the links with the university and to build on the existing leisure activity. There was a request to extend even further the provision of leisure based activities in this area with an extension to the Queens Leisure Centre. The suggestion for residential development in this area received support and was encouraged to perhaps extend the extent indicated in the plan.

## **REPORT ADJUSTMENTS AND ADDITIONS**

### **Visual Arts and Media Centre**

- 4.19 The raising of the profile of the city is one of the key aspects in achieving a re-positioning which is required if we are to achieve Top Ten status. Other towns and cities have demonstrated how large scale cultural projects can be a key factor in achieving positive regeneration – examples include the library at Peckham and the Art Gallery at Walsall. The interest, investment and development this type of project bring could be secured for Derby via the Visual Arts and Media Centre. The site of the VA&MC identified in Derby CityScape has the advantage of being at the heart of the city centre activities where it can be easily accessed and secure further activity to the benefit of this area. The solution lies in the agreement of the concept and then the development of a design sensitive brief. The brief will need to take into account the concerns expressed especially with regard to the size, bulk and form of the building and requiring a high standard of design including the surrounding area, which will be the setting of this iconic building. It is hoped that this important development for the city can be delivered and every support and encouragement will be given to the development of the project.

## **Cathedral Green**

- 4.20 The Cathedral Green is currently an underused resource close to the city centre. It contributes to the setting of the Cathedral, has a charming riverside frontage, and is literally the gateway to the World Heritage Site. Future development of the site requires a sensitive approach which, respects the quality and importance of the surroundings and secures a development which brings significant benefits to the city in terms of quality buildings, quality open space and a 'gateway environment' worthy of the World Heritage Site.

## **Becket Well**

- 4.21 The Becket Well development could have an alternative scheme which could be invoked if the more ambitious development proposal included in the report was unable to be delivered. A less ambitious scheme would include the retention of the properties in Green Lane including a programme of shop front improvements, and environmental improvements to address the street environment. The proposal to provide a link from Green Lane to St Peters Street should be retained as an important element in the developing connectivity in the city centre.

## **Friar Gate**

- 4.22 The proposed redevelopment of Friar Gate for residential and commercial should indicate how the issue of affordable housing, provision of open space, car parking, sensitive wildlife habitat and the reuse of the listed building will have to be regarded and addressed in any future development proposals.

## **Riverside**

- 4.23 Consideration should be given to a comprehensive redevelopment of the Riverside area to provide a new residential neighbourhood using the existing road layout. This would assist in land assemblage and allow the redevelopment to take place without hindrance to existing businesses, and still secure the improvements identified in the report.

## **Northern Quarter**

- 4.24 The ambition to find a location for a new library, which can provide the benefits of a large, accessible central site and provide the opportunity to achieve an exciting new concept for an interactive library has been identified in the Northern Quarter. However, the site is not the most favoured because of restrictions on space, limited access and proximity to the existing library location. There are other sites in the city centre, which should be considered and should be incorporated into this current visionary thinking.

## **Open space/air quality/flooding**

- 4.25 These issues are important to the continuing development and enjoyment of the city, they will not be ignored and will be taken into account at every stage

of the development process. The future success of the city depends on these issues being addressed satisfactorily and policy development is currently being revised to take account of this need. The emphasis of the report is to provide quality open space, which enhances the setting of the buildings and provides areas of contemporary character, thereby strengthening the distinctiveness of this successful city.

## **Transport**

- 4.26 The report seeks to demonstrate a need for more than one bus station. The merits of this suggestion has been carefully considered and does not find favour with any of the interested groups involved in the provision of public transport in the city.

## **Additional Requirements**

- 4.27 The report has not sufficiently considered the need to develop a rational package that considers the future of the museum, library and the 'Gateway to the World Heritage Site'. The future of these activities and their contribution to the vibrancy of the city centre has not been given sufficient regard in the report and require full and careful regard to secure their future.

## **Form of final Derby CityScape Document**

- 4.28 The process of agreeing a common framework as outlined in Derby CityScape is as important as the final document. New partners have already been identified and have entered into the dialogue on the city's future. We now need to build on this and produce a final document, which can provide the scaffolding for future development and clearly demonstrate Derby's intention to secure a new position and achieve Top Ten City status. The document needs to deal with the positioning and marketing of the city, together with the need to strengthen existing partnerships, broker new partnerships, and to build up the interest and confidence of potential investors.
- 4.29 Discussions with the partners and advice from marketing expertise will be taken before deciding on the exact format of the final document. However, it is likely the document will take the form of a high quality brochure with an inset folder that can be added to as implementation progresses.

It was agreed with The Steering Group that in addition to the final document an updated version of the small leaflet should be produced. This was considered to be a useful promotional tool and should be made widely available for residents, visitors and developers and any other interested parties.

## **Next Steps**

- 4.30 The Steering Group agreed that a final copy of the report should be prepared by the Consultants and made available by the end of August.

The Steering Group agreed to meet on the 17<sup>th</sup> September when the final report will be available and they can then consider their future involvement in the implementation process.

- 4.31 Derby CityScape is a visionary document, aimed at the development of a framework to stimulate and guide future development. There will need to be a development of more detailed masterplan designs for specific sites, and at this stage there will be extensive public consultation and reporting to this Cabinet.
- 4.32 There is scope to consider a number of implementation options, including the setting up of an Urban Regeneration Company; there is a separate report on this agenda giving details of this option. Further work is in operation to consider the various models available and this Cabinet will be kept informed on progress. In the interim period, before selecting a final model, discussions with developers will continue with regular Developers Forum meetings as a vehicle for focus and action.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5. The Council agreed the funding of the strategy to promote improvement and development of the city centre, at a total cost not exceeding £150,000, the Council contributing to one-third of the total cost.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6. None at this stage. Any proposed Urban Regeneration Company or vehicle for delivery will have to be considered in detail if selected as preferred model.

## **PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7. None at this stage. Future implementation could result in a need to identify dedicated resources from the Council and the Partnership to pursue specific elements in the implementation programme.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8. None.

## **EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 9. None.