

Report of Group Manager for Policy and Plans

Report to Chief Planning Officer

Date: 15th April 2021

Subject: Approve and Publish Planning Brief for the Eastgate Quarter

Are specific electoral wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, name(s) of ward(s): Little London & Woodhouse	
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	

Summary

1. Main issues

- This Planning Brief has been prepared to provide supplementary guidance to the adopted planning policies relevant to the redevelopment of the Eastgate Quarter (formerly known as Victoria Gate Phase 2). It has been prepared jointly by Leeds City Council (LCC) as the Local Planning Authority (the LPA) and Hammerson as the majority landowner, over a period of 2 years.
- To be used as a guidance document by the Landowner when preparing proposals for development and is a material consideration for use by the LPA when determining planning applications.
- The Planning Brief was publicised and representations invited for a period of 6 weeks between 8 July and 19 August 2020, 8 representations were received. On the 7th January 2021, City Plans Panel received a report, which sets out details of a Pre-application presentation for a new Masterplan and Planning Brief for the Eastgate Quarter.

2. Best Council Plan implications (see the [latest version of the Best Council Plan](#))

There is a clear role for planning in delivering against all of the Council's priorities as established through the Best Council Plan. It is anticipated that the approval and publication of the Planning Brief will deliver against the Council's key strategies as they particularly shape a significant development site within Leeds City Centre as follows:

Inclusive Growth Strategy – through policies including, planning for the land use and infrastructure needs of key economic sectors, the location of development, green infrastructure and connectivity.

Climate Emergency – managing the transition towards carbon reduction via policies including: the design of places, the location of development, accessibility to public transport, use of brownfield land, energy, supply, generation and the efficiency of buildings.

Health and Well-being Strategy – through policies including the design of places, quality of housing and accessibility to green infrastructure and services.

3. Resource implications

- It is not considered that there are any direct resource implications as a result of this decision.

4. Recommendations

The Chief Planning Officer is recommended to:

- a) To approve the Planning Brief for the Eastgate Quarter;
- b) To publish the Planning Brief for the Eastgate Quarter on the Council's website;

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report is to enable the Chief Planning Officer to approve and publish the Planning Brief for the Eastgate Quarter (found at Appendix 1).

2. Background information

- 2.1 The original Eastgate and Harewood Quarter Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted in October 2005. Since that adoption there has been substantial change both within the City Centre of Leeds, including the completion and occupation of Victoria Gate (Phase 1) and within the development market. As such it has been deemed appropriate to reconsider the principles laid down in the adopted SPD against these City and market changes and the Developer's current thinking on how Phase 2 (now to be known as the Eastgate Quarter) is to be developed. As such a new planning Brief and new site Masterplan have been drafted to reflect an up to date policy and market position.
- 2.2 This Planning Brief has been prepared to provide supplementary guidance to the adopted planning policies relevant to the redevelopment of the Eastgate Quarter, a major site in Leeds City Centre. It has been prepared jointly by Leeds City Council (LCC) as the Local Planning Authority (the LPA) and Hammerson as the majority landowner.
- 2.3 The previous plans for the Eastgate Quarter were for a mixed use redevelopment that is led by major retail. Following the completion of Victoria Gate (Phase 1), the developer has changed their approach and considered how both the development market and Leeds City Centre have evolved.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 Leeds City Council is the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for Leeds and is responsible for preparing planning documents, offering detailed guidance and supplementing development plan policies. The Planning Brief aims to positively shape the future of the Eastgate quarter, enabling development, delivering a mixed use scheme, as well as making decisions on future planning applications.
- 3.2 The Planning Brief sets out how the Council and landowners will inform the future development of the Eastgate Quarter by providing a clear and comprehensive set of development objectives that will enable individual development opportunities to come forward in a coherent manner.
- 3.3 The Planning Brief outlines the principles for their new approach.
- The key changes in approach include:
- environmental and sustainability principles that respond to the climate emergency
 - a mixed use redevelopment that is no longer led by major retail
 - the inclusion of residential uses, offices, some retail, leisure and culture uses, food and drink
 - uses, hotel and education

3.4 The Planning Brief and (the Masterplan) make reference to the need for development to come forward at the site as a mixed use scheme, but do not specify any one dominant use. The Developer is therefore proposing a Masterplan that would include a mix of residential uses, office/workspace, some retail, leisure and culture uses, food and drink uses, hotel and education. It is however likely that residential use will form a substantial element of the future development on the Eastgate Quarter (Phase 2) site.

Public Consultation

- 3.5 Following a period of 2 years of discussion with the Developer (Hammersons), their Architects, and Local Authority Officers (including members), the Planning Brief was publicised for public consultation between the period of 8 July – 19 August 2020.
- 3.6 The Planning Brief was published on the Council webpage – [Link](#)
Due to Covid-19 restrictions paper copies could not be made available at libraries and council offices. In consultation with Executive Member at the time, notification was sent out to Local Ward Members for City Centre and neighbouring wards. Briefings for ward members was offered, two Councillors asked for briefings, but were subsequently not taken up. No other member requests were received. Local Plan consultees and Neighbourhood Planning groups also received notification, offering the option to discuss the Planning Brief with Council officers.
- 3.7 In total 8 responses were received, including City Council Ward Members, key statutory stakeholders and non-regulatory organisations. The Council intended to give all interested parties and key stakeholders full opportunity to set out their aspirations for the site and to identify constraints that need to be accommodated. Comments received have been considered by officers (Policy and Plans, Highways, Development Management and Environment Design Group colleagues) and the developer, and where appropriate, changes have been made to the Planning Brief.
- 3.8 Consultees expressed general support for the overall vision and aspiration of the Planning Brief. Within the site there are several listed and non-designated heritage buildings, which the Planning Brief identifies. Consultee comments reflect the importance of preservation, enhancement and reuse of these buildings. Through the master planning exercise and Heritage Impact Assessment, heritage matters will be considered in detail at planning application stage, by members, officers and consultees.
- 3.9 A development focus on landscape, public spaces and good pedestrian connections, along with a potential large public square at the heart of the site, biodiversity net gain as per policy G9, green roofs and tree planting will be carried through into the masterplan. In meeting the City Council's Climate Change Emergency declaration, development must incorporate measures that protect the environment and be ambitious in terms of carbon emission reduction to address the declared Climate Emergency. The need for a sustainable transport strategy is a further key principle. This will focus on addressing public transport, pedestrian and cycle movements, the public highway, access to the site and neighbouring areas, car parking and servicing.
- 3.10 The Planning Brief does not intend to design or prescribe a scheme for the site, but instead aims to set out clear principles for future development of the Phase 2.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement – The Planning Brief was published on the Council's website. It has been consulted on with Plans Panel Chairs and the Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development.

4.1.1 On the 7th January 2021 City Plans received a report, which sets out details of a Pre-application presentation for a new Masterplan and Planning Brief for the Eastgate Quarter. The minutes indicate that Members were in general support of the principles set out in the Planning Brief. Minutes of the meeting are available here: [Link](#)

4.1.2 Councillor Hayden (Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development) has been consulted and supports the adoption of the Planning Brief.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.2.1 Equality has been an integral part of the preparation of the Planning Brief. Due regard has been given to diversity, cohesion and integration.

4.3 Climate change emergency

4.3.1 A climate emergency was declared at Council meeting 27th March 2019. Existing planning policies seek to address the issue of climate change by ensuring that development proposals incorporate measures to reduce the impact of non-renewable resources. As such, the Planning Brief is clear that the development must incorporate measures that protect the environment and be ambitious in terms of carbon emission reduction to address the declared Climate Emergency. Any scheme coming forward should aspire to be net zero carbon in embodied carbon, construction and operation, utilising sustainable materials and construction techniques, high levels of energy efficiency and the exploration of on-site renewable energy generation.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

4.4.1 The approval and publication of a Planning Brief is not considered to impact on any issues relating to resources, procurement or value for money.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

4.5.1 The Planning Brief has been prepared in accord with current Planning policy, which is focussed to help deliver the ambitions of the Best Council Plan. The Council adopted its Core Strategy in November 2014 and the Leeds Site Allocations Plan was in 2019. The Core Strategy Selective Review was adopted in 2019.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 It is not considered that there are any risks to taking the decision to adopt and publish the Planning Brief. However, there is a notable risk of not doing so, which could result in a delay to future development of the Eastgate Quarter phase 2.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The approval and publication of the Planning Brief will help the Council and the landowner develop a Masterplan which sets clear principles to ensure opportunities to create a vibrant, well planned, cohesive destination at the Eastgate Quarter (Phase 2) site, complementing recent nearby developments and allowing for the creation of substantial new public spaces. The development following on from the clear guidance and principles set out on the Masterplan and laid down in the Planning Brief would support appropriate sustainable growth in Leeds City Centre, creating new jobs and contributing towards the economic growth of Leeds.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 a) To approve the Planning Brief for the Eastgate Quarter;
b) To publish the Planning Brief for the Eastgate Quarter on the Council's website;

7. Background documents¹

- 7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.