



Report of the Director of Development

Inner North West Area Committee

Date: 21st September 2006

Subject: Area Action Plan for Inner North West

Electoral Wards Affected:

**Headingley
Hyde Park and Woodhouse
Kirkstall
Weetwood**

Specific Implications For:

Ethnic minorities
Women
Disabled people
Narrowing the Gap

Council
Function

Delegated Executive
Function available
for Call In

Delegated Executive
Function not available for
Call In Details set out in the
report

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with information about the role and scope of Area Action Plans and their potential use within the Inner North West Area. Members are asked to:

- a) Note the contents of the report

1.0 Background Information

- 1.1 Following the Inner Area Committee meeting of 29th June 2006, further information was requested in relation Area Action Plans and how they may affect development processes and regeneration within the area. The issue has previously been discussed at the Planning sub group and key messages relayed to the Inner Area Committee. Specifically, it has been requested that the Development Department consider the production of an Area Action Plan for Inner North West, in addition to considering the issue of student housing in Area Action Plans for other parts of the city. Cllr Martin Hamilton (former Inner Area Committee Chair and Chair of the Planning sub group) has previously written to Steve Speak (Chief Strategy and Policy Officer) requesting an Area Action Plan for the area.

2.0 Strategic Policy Context

- 2.1 The Local Development Framework (LDF) is the spatial planning strategy introduced in England and Wales by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and given further detail in Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks (PPS12). PPS12 provides governments advice on the preparation of Local Development Documents (which include Area Action Plans) which will comprise the LDF.
- 2.2 The LDF will eventually replace the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and its Review. Nationally, the previous system was perceived as being too inflexible and difficult to change in a timely manner. The LDF system is intended to improve this situation by replacing the old Plans with a new portfolio of documents called that can be tailored to suit the different needs of a particular area and can be easily updated.
- 2.3 Amongst other things LDFs include mandatory and optional Development Plan Documents (DPDs). Area Action Plans are optional DPDs, but are still subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement, consultation and independent examination. Once adopted, development control decisions must be made in accordance with the DPDs, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. DPDs must be examined with a sustainability appraisal to ensure economic, environmental and social effects of the plan are in line with sustainable development targets.

3.0 Area Action Plans

- 3.1 Paragraphs 2.17-2.19 of PPS12 provide central governments advice on preparing Area Action Plans in addition to the companion guide – ‘Creating Local Development Frameworks’. It states that Area Action Plans should be used to provide the planning framework for areas where significant change or conservation is needed. A key feature of area action plans will be the focus on implementation. They should:
- i. deliver planned growth areas;
 - ii. stimulate regeneration;
 - iii. protect areas particularly sensitive to change;
 - iv. resolve conflicting objectives in areas subject to development pressures; or
 - v. focus the delivery of area based regeneration initiatives.
- 3.2 In areas of change, Area Action Plans should identify the distribution of uses and their inter-relationships, including specific site allocations, and set the timetable for the implementation of the proposals. Further guidance, such as the layout of uses within these allocations and design requirements etc, may be provided in the relevant Area Action Plan or in one or more Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) in the form of a master plan. In areas of conservation, Area Action Plans should set out the policies and proposals for action to preserve or enhance the area, including defining areas where specific conservation measures are proposed and areas which will be subject to specific controls over development.
- 3.3 Area Action Plans should focus upon implementation, providing an important mechanism for ensuring development of an appropriate scale, mix and quality for key areas of opportunity, change or conservation. Action plans or area strategies with a geographic or spatial dimension will benefit from having development plan status as area action plans in contrast to their previous status as supplementary planning guidance.

3.4 Area Action Plans could be relevant in a wide range of circumstances (clearly only some of these are relevant to Inner North West):

- **Areas of significant development opportunity**, including urban expansion and new settlements. In these areas an Area Action Plan could set and prioritise development objectives, specifying and co-ordinating the requirements for new infrastructure and services;
- **Areas where development is desirable, but is not forthcoming**, such as development opportunities in regeneration areas. In these cases an Area Action Plan would seek to identify the opportunities for the location, acting as a catalyst for development by addressing barriers to delivery;
- **Areas that are particularly sensitive to change or development**, such as areas of significant natural or cultural heritage value. Plans for such areas would establish the conservation and enhancement objectives and how these might be reconciled with sensitive development e.g. in an area of heritage led regeneration or a historic market town;
- **Areas in multiple ownership subject to particular development pressures**, such as town centres. An Area Action Plan could consider the conflicting objectives of the different stakeholders, providing the basis for compulsory purchase order applications;
- **Areas in multiple ownership subject to particular change**, such as those benefiting from area-based regeneration initiatives, areas for business improvement districts or the centres of towns in receipt of market towns initiative funding;
- **Focusing the delivery of area-based initiatives**. Area Action Plans could help provide a delivery framework for area-based regeneration initiatives, particularly where there are important land use and development issues (e.g. housing market renewal areas). Integration with community strategy action plans is one example. In areas with a number of area-based initiatives, area action plans may provide a useful 'joining-up' role; and
- **Minerals and waste Area Action Plans** might be required to integrate policies on land uses in areas of mineral working to ensure extraction is located to minimise impact upon the environment and local quality of life. They can also be used to safeguard important minerals for possible future uses. Regarding waste, area action plans could set out proposals for major new waste management capacity in order to ensure adequate provision.

4.0 The Leeds Context

4.1 In the Leeds context, the Area Action Plans are a key priority of the LDF. The focus of the plans is:

- to promote the continued and sustainable renaissance and development of the City Centre as the hub of the City region, and
- the regeneration of major inner city and suburban areas to promote the development of sustainable communities within these areas.

4.2 The current work programme for Area Action Plans covers the following areas (also shown on the attached plan, see Appendix 1):

- Leeds City Centre
- Aire Valley
- East and South East Leeds (EASEL)
- West Leeds

- 4.3 At present, the Development Department has a commitment to a work programme covering the above and at present there is no scope to add any additional Area Action Plans. Under the LDF system, there is no expectation that all parts of the city will be covered by Area Action Plans, but the programme will continue to be reviewed and reported to the Development Plans Panel. A report to the Panel earlier in the year included reference to pressures for new work injections, including a request for an Inner North West Area Action Plan. Given the existing and emerging pressures of government guidance on the new system, no timescales have been placed against this as yet.
- 4.4 Leeds HMO Lobby has previously circulated a draft proposal plan to the Planning sub group for discussion. This paper sets out useful starting points for policy issues including student housing, conservation, regeneration and promotion. It also takes on board the aspirations of Headingley Renaissance and the proposed Neighbourhood Design Statements.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 The Area Committee is asked to:
- Note the contents of this report.