



Report of the Director of City Development

Executive Board

Date: 21st July 2010

Subject: Leeds South Bank Planning Statement and City Centre Park Update

Electoral Wards Affected:
City and Hunslet

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call In

Not Eligible for Call In

(Details contained in the report)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update on work undertaken for the development of a new commercial area of Leeds City Centre capable of providing a top quality development opportunity, over 20,000 new jobs and delivery of a new City Centre Park. This opportunity arose from the need to develop Leeds' role as Regional Capital, provide new employment opportunities and the need for a new City Centre Park identified at the City Centre Conference held in January 2008.

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform Executive Board on the preparation of a Planning Framework for the redevelopment of the Leeds South Bank and on progress made to date on the proposal for a new City Centre Park. Specifically, this report highlights and informs developments in relation to:-

- the preparation of a Draft Planning Statement (DPS) for the development of new office focused, mixed use area of the City Centre with the provision of a new park at its heart. This involves associated alterations to the highways network to meet revised access needs and integration with the strategic highway network.
- work undertaken on the land assembly and land use planning issues associated with the development of a new greenspace to the south of the River Aire.
- The requirement to undertake consultation with all of the landowners within the Leeds South Bank, regarding the development of a new City Centre Park.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Leeds City Centre Vision Conference took place in January 2008. This major event brought together key players from business, local government and other public sector and community organisations to generate a vision for the development of Leeds City Centre. The Leeds City Centre Vision is the start of a shared initiative to shape an even stronger City Centre, as part of Leeds' role as a regional capital and our ambition to 'Go up a League'. The desire to create a City Centre Park has emerged as one of the key components of the Vision.
- 2.2 In order to begin to realise this ambition and address one of the main feedback themes from the conference regarding the perceived lack of city centre greenspace, Executive Board in February 2009 agreed to:-
- The preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document for contributions towards city centre public realm
 - Officers consulting with key stakeholders in the city centre to inform further proposals
 - Work being undertaken on land assembly and land use planning issues
- 2.2 With a view to progressing the recommendations from Executive Board and assess opportunities in relation to the potential location for a new city centre park, several workstreams have been undertaken. These include:-
- An audit of existing City Centre greenspaces
 - Establishing medium and long term objectives for the delivery of new greenspaces
 - Development of a Draft Planning Statement for Leeds South Bank as part of the proposed Urban Eco Settlement in the Aire Valley
 - Identify a major development/investment opportunity comparable to those available elsewhere in other major European cities
 - Undertaking of an Urban Analysis of Leeds South Bank
 - Development of a working partnership with key landowners in the Leeds South Bank area for a potential Land Assembly
 - The identification of an area within the proposed planning framework, through land assembly, that could deliver a new City Centre Park of approximately 3.5ha. A potential phasing for its creation and a broad indicative cost outline
- 2.3 In the first instance, an audit of all 10 existing, publicly accessible greenspaces within the city rim was undertaken in 2008, taking account of:-
- Location
 - Quantity
 - Quality
 - Linkages and connectivity
 - Current end users
 - Current function
 - Green Flag status
- 2.4 This audit highlighted issues in relation to the quality of the existing green spaces, with only 1 site, Park Square, achieving Green Flag standard. However, when the locations of these greenspaces were plotted, it was clear that there is a major deficit towards and to the south of the River Aire. This area of the city centre, centered around Bridge End, Carlsberg Tetley and Meadow Lane, has also the greatest need

for regeneration. Accordingly, the development of a City Centre Park in this area of the city centre, has the potential to spur broader regeneration and investment initiatives.

2.5 The medium-term objectives for new city centre greenspace proposed utilising Council owned land in the first instance, in the knowledge that the delivery of a place making City Centre Park will necessitate a complex land assembly exercise, which will take time to deliver. In light of this, Executive Board in February 2009, agreed to the recommendation to undertake feasibility work at Sovereign Street, to assess its potential to deliver a new, high quality piece of greenspace. The outcome of this feasibility work and an update regarding the Sovereign Street proposals is presented to Executive Board in a separate report at this meeting.

2.6 The successful delivery of the broader objective of a new a new Commercial area and City Centre Park is clearly a key component of the future development of the city centre as a vibrant, attractive and quality location for investment, job creation for residents, visitors and workers. In recognising this vision, the longer term objectives for a City Centre Park were agreed by Executive Board as:-

- To further promote Leeds as a centre for development and investment thereby helping to strengthen the City's offer as a location for business and jobs
- To provide opportunities for new greenspaces which thread and weave through the city centre
- To improve connectivity particularly between the north and the south banks of the River Aire, to assist in the opening up of the waterfront
- To spur the expansion and regeneration and enhance employment to the southern part of the city centre
- To facilitate the longer term potential to deliver a City Centre Park, looking at opportunities for land assembly with third parties

2.7 To further encapsulate this desire for new city centre greenspace, the City Centre Prospectus 2020, which shows how the city will move forward over the next 10 years, has under 'Liveable' theme, a project to create a City Centre Park. The Prospectus is a product of Leeds City Vision Conference which mapped out a long term vision for the city centre, which has 8 key shared aspirations for a city centre that is:-

- Welcoming
- Legible
- Well Connected
- Liveable
- Sustainable
- Business Friendly
- A Quality Environment
- A Cultural City

2.8 It is evident that economically, socially and environmentally there are significant benefits to the creation of high quality greenspace. Whilst beginning to explore potential options relating to the future development of a City Centre Park, it was felt important to commence some high level consultations with the Quality Places and Spaces group of the Leeds Property Forum to establish a broad consensus of perceptions of greenspace expectations and the city centre itself. This group included representatives from CABE Space, The Civic Trust, Leeds Universities and the private sector. The outcome of this perception study identified that a broad consensus was established in relation to the following statements:-

- Leeds' city-centre has evolved without the provision of significant greenspace.
- The city-centre south of the River Aire has emerged from its heavy industrial past with little public realm of any kind
- City living could be attractive to family groups if significant greenspace was created in the city-centre.
- The city-centre is unsustainable without significant greenspace and green infrastructure
- A city-centre park will create value for perimeter development opportunities.

2.9 In summary, the initial consultation undertaken to date has indicated a broad consensus on the urban issues in the South Bank area and potential for a City Centre Park to resolve them.

3.0 MAIN ISSUES

3.1 Leeds South Bank Draft Planning Statement

3.1.1 The area of the Leeds South Bank, shown in Appendix 1, is likely to change significantly in the next few years, particularly as a result of the proposed closure of the Carlsberg Tetley Brewery in 2011. The area extends from Victoria Lane to Crown Point Road and is dominated by 3 large land holders, namely, McAleer and Rushe, Carlsberg Tetley and ASDA. As the lead agency, Leeds City Council has been working with the key stakeholders, to develop a framework within which the issues and opportunities highlighted within 3.3 and 3.4 can be considered. This framework has been formulated within the new Leeds South Bank Draft Planning Statement (DPS) which will deliver the aspiration for major investment opportunities and to change the image of Leeds South Bank.

3.1.2 It is envisaged that this Statement will be adopted for development management purposes as non-statutory planning guidance, with a view to being incorporated into the Local Development Framework via the Aire Valley Area Action Plan. The Statement will provide:-

- a starting point for the consideration of new development proposals
- the potential to deliver high quality green infrastructure in the Leeds South Bank area, in particular a City Centre Park
- promotion of the new employment
- provision of mixed use places which respond to modern environmental building design, for the varied existing and future communities within the City Centre, and in a way that meets Leeds City Centre and Central Government Urban Eco Settlement ambitions
- and make the next steps toward making Leeds a truly sustainable city

3.1.3 Additionally, the DPS will ensure that any development proposals that are put forward in this area are coherent and complementary to the ambitions of all the major land owners involved, including Carlsberg Tetley, McAleer and Rushe, ASDA and Leeds City Council thereby providing a planned development framework for the wider area of the city centre south and the Leeds South Bank.

3.1.4 The Draft Planning Statement for Leeds South Bank has been produced by Leeds City Council following consultation with major landowners in the area in order to arrive at a common vision, which has formed the basis of this Planning Statement. It aims to provide clarity for developers in terms of development expectations our aspirations

and scale of planning obligations, and for the Council in achieving its aspirations for promoting the City Centre Park, both as a destination in its own right, and as a catalyst for the reconnection of the South Bank to the City Centre and surrounding neighbourhoods and in particular the 'City Rim'. Following the approval of the DPS, the Council will seek to engage all stakeholders, including the people of Leeds and appropriate statutory agencies simultaneously, over a period of six weeks. This consultation will utilise a variety of media, including public exhibitions, hard copy and electronic questionnaires and documents, presentations and public meetings and one to one discussions prior to its adoption.

3.1.5 Notwithstanding these objectives, to begin to develop a framework for the delivery of the City Centre Park, opportunities need to be explored in relation to potential locations that addresses the greenspace deficit to the south of the River Aire. These locations need to be capable of providing a site which could match the best examples in other European and UK Core Cities. Many sites to the north of the River Aire have already been developed or have advanced development proposals. Investigations have identified that land assembly with third parties to the south of the River Aire should be explored in the first instance, forming a broad area of study as previously reported to Executive Board. To the south of the river, development is somewhat sporadic, with recent initiatives focussed in areas around Holbeck Urban Village, Brewery Wharf and Clarence Dock. The whole area to the south of the river is in a process of change, which in itself provides an opportunity to consider a more co-ordinated and joined up future for this part of the city, but in particular for the area identified as Leeds South Bank (Appendix 1). This area consists of four key sites:-

- New Lane (Central Park)
- Tetley's Brewery
- Bridge End and Meadow Lane
- Asda House

3.1.6 The key stakeholders and officers for the City Council have worked together to provide a coherent policy framework for the delivery of these opportunities, This is included within Board Members copies of the agenda only, however, copies can be obtained from the Clerk named on the agenda front. A copy of Draft Planning Statement can be found on the Council's website.

3.2 Land Assembly

3.2.1 The urban analysis of the future development of the Leeds South Bank identifies the potential for City Centre Park sites and there is an opportunity to combine several land ownerships to deliver a significant amount of greenspace through their public realm contributions. These sites are shown in Appendix 2. The principal land owners are:-

- Carlsberg Tetley, owners of Tetley Brewery
- McAleer and Rushe owners of the Central Park site
- ASDA owners of the ASDA House site
- Leeds City Council

Carlsberg Tetley

Carlsberg Tetley has decided to close the historic Tetley Brewery in Leeds in 2011, following a year long review of its supply chain. The Brewery own a 20 acre (8.2ha) site in the Leeds South Bank area, bounded by Hunslet Road, Waterloo Street and

Crown Point Road, which could come forward for mixed use development following its closure.

McAleer and Rushe

McAleer and Rushe purchased Central Park, opposite Bridgewater Place to the south of Leeds Station in 2007. This 8 acre (3.2ha) gateway site, has the potential to incorporate a variety of uses including office and residential. It is anticipated, that in the near future, McAleer and Rushe will explore the development potential of the site. Leeds City Council retains a freehold ownership of 3.5 acres or 1.45ha of this site on a long term ground lease to McAleer and Rushe.

ASDA

ASDA Stores Ltd was founded in Leeds in 1949 and after the Wal-Mart take over in 1999, maintained its headquarters at the then newly opened ASDA House. The site consists of ASDA House itself, built in the early 80's, plus a large at grade car park and a multi storey car park. The site is 7 acres (2.8ha) in size. It is ASDA's intention to retain use of the site in its current form for the foreseeable future and there are no plans to vacate the site at this time.

Leeds City Council

Leeds City Council manage the highway network that surrounds the above three sites and an assessment of potential road realignments and/or downgrading of highways gives the potential for the redevelopment of this area and the release of additional land that could form part of the future City Centre Park. The roads are:-

- Great Wilson Street
- Meadow Lane
- Victoria Road
- Hunslet Lane
- Crown Point Road

In addition to the landowners listed above, there are other smaller landowners within and adjoining the Leeds South Bank who are key consultees and important stakeholders, with whom it is proposed to discuss the scheme it develops.

3.3 Development Framework

3.3.1 In recognising the collective desire to deliver a masterplan, with a City Centre Park as a material component, the Urban Analysis Plan, was further assessed in terms of:-

- The optimal location for greenspace/City Centre Park within the Leeds South Bank, amalgamating the 2.75ha of landowner contributions
- Potential highway options that could deliver additional greenspace
- Potential development platform heights and fabric for future building construction
- Linkages, particularly pedestrian through Leeds south Bank and beyond
- A notional phasing for the future delivery of the City Centre Park
- The provision of an overall vision aimed at providing a major development opportunity

3.3.2 The outcome of this particular workstream is part of the Leeds South Bank Development Framework Plan which is attached at Appendix 3. This plan shows the consolidation of third party and Council views in terms of the potential developments

and greenspace framework, in particular the location and sizing of a potential City Centre Park of over 3.5ha.

3.4 Potential Highway Options

3.4.1 In assessing the location and land assembly of the potential 3.5ha plus of greenspace, as shown in the Draft Development Framework, the Council has considered how the existing highway infrastructure could form part of this provision, but taking account of:-

- That the location sits at a key intersection point for the city centre highway network and access to the M621 motorway
- A pay and display car park is currently located in the central reservation of Meadow Lane, which could form part of the park. It currently generates a revenue of £130k pa
- Key bus routes and the need to maintain and improve permeability and accessibility for users
- Access and egress to the ASDA site would need to be maintained
- The potential for a dedicated right turn from Crown Point Retail Park on to Great Wilson Street
- The detailed design of NGT should the scheme move forward, engaging in continued dialogue and monitoring to ensure that developments remain complementary
- The need to maintain high levels of connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists within any revised highway arrangements

3.4.2 In spite of these issues, there are significant benefits to be gained in pursuing this option, which will assist in our combined objectives for a place making Leeds South Bank with a City Centre Park at its heart.

3.4.3 Initial discussions with Metro have also been held, who are pleased with the early contact from officers regarding the potential to explore the highways alterations and are comfortable with the Council further exploring the proposals, in partnership with them and the bus operators. Further works will need to establish:-

- Additional demand created by new developments
- Existing bus routes through Great Wilson Street and Meadow Lane and end locations of those routes
- Pros and cons of each existing bus route and any future bus route
- Routes lengthened and routes shortened as a result of any highway amendment

3.5 Phasing

3.5.1 Whilst it is important to note that these proposals are long term, the creation of the Development Framework along with the potential highways alterations have generated a much clearer understanding of the massing, location and workstreams required for the delivery of a City Centre Park. However, just as important to understand is how a scheme could come forward in the light of the third party landowners working to independent timescales. Whilst it is anticipated that, in the first instance, that the McAleer and Rushe Central Park site will come forward for development, it will be followed at some point by the Tetley's Brewery site. The site currently owned by ASDA is not, at this point, proposed to come forward as a development site. The impact of this demonstrates that the delivery of the City Centre Park will only be achievable on a phased basis, as land and/or funding becomes

available. Timescales for the delivery are difficult to determine at present, particularly as the development proposals are largely driven by three private landowners.

3.5.2 It is anticipated that the Park will be designed in a number of separate phases which will achieve a total land assembly of approximately 3.5ha while recognising that Phase 4 includes land belonging to ASDA, which may or may not be available for inclusion in the future. It is clear however that the land assembly for a City Centre Park which can match some of the best examples of city centre greenspaces both nationally and internationally is achievable and with a clear vision, strong design brief, structured consultation with stakeholders and end users could deliver the legacy of a City Centre Park that:-

- Will be a pivotal piece in the future development investment in this area of the city centre
- Will deliver an additional element to our progressive heritage
- Will be an innovative standard bearer for greenspace in and around the city centre
- Attracts investment and spurs regeneration
- Will have a transformational effect on the city centre and wider economic, social and environmental benefits for the city as a whole

4.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNCIL POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

4.1 The development proposals for the creation of a City Centre Park assist the Council in achieving several of its objectives, notably:-

- **Vision for Leeds 2004 -2020**
 - **Going up a League** – Best place in the country to live and work with a high quality of life for everyone
 - **Narrowing the Gap** between the most disadvantaged people and communities and the rest of the city
 - **Developing Leeds’ role as the Regional Capital**, contributing to the national economy as a competitive European city, supporting and supported by a region that is becoming increasingly prosperous
- **Leeds Strategic Plan 2008 – 2011**
 - **Enterprise and Economy** - Increased international competitiveness through marketing and investment in high quality infrastructure and physical assets, particularly in the city centre
 - **Culture** – Enhanced cultural opportunities through encouraging investment and development of high quality facilities of national and international significance
 - **Health and Wellbeing** – Reduced health inequalities through the promotion of healthy life choices and improved access to services
- **Council Business Plan 2008 – 2011**
 - Explore opportunities for collaboration to support our business transformation aspirations
 - Deliver our five year financial strategy to align resources to our strategic priorities
 - Consider all additional sources of funding available to support our priorities

4.2 The successful Leeds City Region forerunner bid included four Eco Settlements: Aire Valley Leeds, Bradford Shipley Canal Road Corridor, North Kirklees/South Dewsbury and York Northwest, which together, have the potential to provide up to 30,000 new eco homes in sustainable mixed use development, well integrated with existing communities. Aire Valley Leeds is the most advanced of the four UES, of which the latest proposals extend beyond the Aire Valley Area Action Plan boundary to include sites in the City Centre to the south of the River and within the 'Rim' area. These sites will act as 'stepping stones' from the Aire Valley to the City Centre. The Eco Settlement priorities and development proposals will form part of a formal Area Action Plan.

5.0 LEGAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 In delivering on our aspirations for a City Centre Park, it is recognised that financing a scheme that has a complex mix of land assembly with third party landowners, significant highways alterations, and provision of the greenspace itself will bring complex challenges. It is possible to obtain contributions towards such public facilities by means of S106 agreements related to the planning approvals for the development of the sites in the Leeds South Bank. However, given the central importance of the City Centre Park to the South Bank area, the Draft Planning Statement has afforded a high priority to the provision of greenspace set against other common infrastructure needs.

5.2 In addition to S106 contributions, the aspiration is to minimise the call on the Council's Capital Programme, particularly prior to 2015 by exploring opportunities such as:-

- Any future expansion of Accelerated Development Zones
- Urban Eco Settlement funding
- Other Regional Government funding post 2015
- The use of a Special Purpose Vehicle

5.3 Further feasibility work is required, in relation to potential highways alterations and the development of a design brief, to allow a full Outline Business Case to be developed, for the creation of a City Centre Park based on a phased implementation.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 It is apparent that significant progress has been made in the potential development of a proposal for the Leeds South Bank and the delivery of a new City Centre Park, however there are still some significant challenges ahead. Progress has been made in relation to a potential location and massing, land assembly opportunities with third party land owners, potential highway alterations to assist with the connectivity of the area and the development of the Draft Planning Statement for the Leeds South Bank. In bringing forward the Draft Planning Statement as a framework in which a City Centre Park can be delivered and maintaining the established relationship with the third party landowners and continuing to develop collectively our objectives of:-

'transforming the South Bank of Leeds City Centre into a distinctive, vibrant, well connected and sustainable business and a residential community which has at its heart a new City Centre Park', these actions will go a long way towards addressing issues around the lack of quality greenspace in and around the City Centre. They will also provide a lasting legacy that will significantly enhance the reputation of the City Centre as an attractive and liveable environment and spur regeneration. The next stage is to progress with a full consultation exercise to gain the views of all

stakeholders, prior to bringing the Draft Planning Statement to Executive Board for final approval.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Executive Board is requested to note the contents of this report, particularly in relation to:-

- (i) the preparation of a Draft Planning Statement (DPS) for contributions toward city centre public realm, with particular reference to the Leeds 'South Bank' area
- (ii) work undertaken on the land assembly and land use planning issues associated with the development of a new greenspace to the south of the River Aire
- (iii) Proposals in relation to potential highways alterations to assist with the delivery of the Vision for the Leeds South Bank including a more significant, integrated City Centre Park and the requirement as a result of these alterations to consult with Metro and bus operators

And seek approval to:

- (i) the Draft South Bank Planning Statement as a basis for public consultation and report the outcome back to Executive Board together with any changes to the Draft South Bank Planning Statement
- (ii) continue to liaise with the principal landowners concerning their specific development proposals to ensure that they are complementary to the city's aspiration for a City Centre Park
- (iii) request that officers open discussions with land owners in relation to the development of these proposals
- (iv) the Development of an Outline Business Case for the City Centre Park based on a phased implementation plan

Background Papers

Executive Board Report – February 2009
Leeds City Centre Prospectus 2020 for our Future