

**Report of the Director of City Development**

**Report to Executive Board**

**Date: 12 October 2011**

**Subject: South Bank Planning Statement and City Centre Park**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): City and Hunslet	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. A long term process of change has now started in the South Bank area of the City, with the closure and partial demolition of Tetley's Brewery. During the last two years the City Council has been in discussions with major landowners in the area to arrive at a common vision for the delivery of large scale and high quality mixed use developments in this important area of the city centre and the incorporation within these developments of a City Centre Park. The area has the potential to provide sustainable employment and homes, as a catalyst for the regeneration of the South Bank and the wider area to the south of the City Centre.
2. In July 2010, Executive Board agreed the draft South Bank Planning Statement for consultation purposes as a suggested framework for the delivery of development in the area and a City Centre. This report sets out a summary of the outcome of the consultation exercise and explains the resultant amendments to the planning statement. The report seeks approval for the adoption of the South Bank Planning Statement October 2011 (Appendix 1) as informal planning guidance for the area. One of the main changes to the planning statement is the promotion of active interim uses and temporary greenspace for sites in the area prior to the eventual development of the sites and provision of a new park.
3. The report updates Members on work to deliver an outline business case to support the potential use of council resources to facilitate the delivery of the vision for the area.

## **Recommendations**

Executive Board is recommended to:-

4. Approve the adoption of the South Bank Planning Statement (October 2011) as informal planning guidance;
5. Note future work on the development of an Outline Business Case to assist with the delivery of the City Centre Park, on the basis of a phased implementation plan including the potential for a footbridge link to the Sovereign Street area.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 This report summarises the results of the consultation exercise on the South Bank Planning Statement (the Planning Statement) which was approved by Executive Board on the 21st July 2010. The report updates Executive Board on the proposed changes to the planning statement as a result of this consultation and seek approval for the adoption of the document as informal planning guidance for this important area of change in the city centre.
- 1.2 The report provides an update for Executive Board on work on the outline business case to facilitate the delivery of developments in the South Bank, including the new City Centre Park.

## **2 Background Information**

- 2.1 At Executive Board 21<sup>st</sup> July 2010 Members agreed the Leeds South Bank Draft Planning Statement as a basis for public consultation and asked for a report on the outcome of the consultation to be reported to a future Executive Board meeting. In addition, Executive Board authorised officers to continue with preparatory discussions with landowners to ensure that their development proposals fit in with the vision to deliver a city park and that these proposals can be realised. Members also approved work on a business case for detailed implementation proposals involving council resources.
- 2.2 A number of sites in the South Bank area of the city centre (as identified in the Planning Statement) are coming forward for redevelopment. This provides the opportunity to co-ordinate this development to ensure the future development proposals on the Tetley Brewery site, the New Lane/Hindle Values site (off Great Wilson Street) and land held by the Council and Walmart (ASDA) to deliver high quality investments including the delivery of a new city park (although it must be stressed there are no proposals for the redevelopment of the Asda site at present).
- 2.3 To support this it is proposed that the Planning Statement will provide the vision and framework for the consideration of future planning permissions in the area. The vision is to transform the South Bank into a distinctive, vibrant, well connected sustainable business and residential community which has at its heart a new City Centre Park. The Planning Statement translates this vision into a number of themes and seeks to set out jointly agreed objectives and standards to guide development proposals.

## **3 Main issues**

- 3.1 The consultation process focused around the following key themes which are discussed below:
- scope of the document and its presentation
  - the City Centre Park
  - the layout and indicative heights of development plates
  - connectivity and the wider transportation network
  - uses including family housing
  - the process for delivery, interim uses and what could be achieved in the short term
- 3.2 Consultation responses generally gave strong support for the Vision and aspirations of the South Bank Planning Statement. The aspiration to provide activity, housing,

employment and a city centre park in this location, especially given the changes that have occurred at the former Tetley Brewery site, which is currently being demolished.

### **3.3 Scope of document and presentation**

- 3.3.1 The principle issues arising from the consultation process are described in the following sections. A comprehensive summary of the consultation replies is contained in the South Bank Consultation Analysis September 2011. English Heritage have suggested that the plan area should be widened to include all buildings immediately south of the river between Victoria Bridge and Leeds Bridge, in order to plan future for whole of Bridge End and Water Lane. It is acknowledged that a comprehensive boundary would be of value for completeness, however in the case of the buildings to the north of Water Lane, these lie within the Eastern Riverside Conservation Area (including a listed building) and directly abut the River bank to the north. Whilst the Council would encourage the positive and active use of these buildings, it is not envisaged that there would be significant changes other than sympathetic refurbishment. Water Lane is included within the area boundary as it is envisaged that this connection would be improved and link from a proposed pedestrian/cycle bridge over the river into the park to provide a direct route via Sovereign Street to the city centre core.
- 3.3.2 Some respondents were concerned that promotion of the South Bank with its current proposed boundary would lead to the neglect of other regeneration projects such as Holbeck Urban Village, and leave the rest of the south of the City Centre in a “policy vacuum”. In planning terms, the Holbeck Urban Village Revised Planning Framework 2006 remains as a saved, formally adopted supplementary planning guidance for the Holbeck Urban Village area. A number of planning permissions for redevelopment and re-use of historic buildings exist within the area, and therefore it is not considered appropriate to comprehensively re-examine this whilst development projects are temporarily on-hold due to the current economic climate. The South Bank Planning Statement is intended to complement and provide for the integration and regeneration of Holbeck Urban Village, and provide a viable, green connection to the eastern parts of the Aire Valley across the south of the City Centre. The Station Southern Access is an important step toward these goals for both Holbeck Urban Village and the South Bank.
- 3.3.3 The Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review 2006 City Centre Chapter provides planning policy guidance for land within the UDP City Centre boundary. This includes sites between the South Bank and the M621 which have the benefit of a planning permission for major commercial and residential projects. Sites which have not been the subject of such schemes are generally in use as viable commercial or light industrial concerns which contribute to the employment and economy of Leeds. As long as this continues, these areas will remain as functional parts of the city centre, where there will be a strong aspiration to enhance the character of the built environment, such as improved landscaping, and walking and cycling connectivity (particularly to the South Bank and to Beeston and Holbeck), but no desire to comprehensively redevelop in a way suggested by some respondents at present. This could create uncertainty for numerous stable businesses in the area and adversely affect future investment

and jobs. There a number of development sites in the City Centre with the benefit of planning permission approved in accordance with the current Development Plan, most of which are within existing area-based partnerships or initiatives which will contribute to the City Centre as a sustainable, walkable neighbourhood for businesses, residents and visitors.

- 3.3.4 Some respondees were concerned that the South Bank Planning Statement did not consider wider transportation improvements in its analysis of the area. It is not the aim of the planning statement to pre-empt wider transportation strategy discussions such as the emerging City Centre Transport Strategy. The Planning Statement has been drafted with these considerations in mind, and any improvements to city centre transportation would not be prejudiced by the aspirations of the document, and vice-versa. Should future long term transport initiatives lead to changes in the strategic or local road network, this would only be a positive for the South Bank and City Centre Park. Further joined-up consideration on these wider initiatives will continue and will not prejudice other major projects such as South Bank/City Centre Park. However, this framework provides for the potential re-routing of the loop road along Hunslet Road and the integration of the South Bank into the city centre core via pedestrian and cycle routes.
- 3.3.5 The Development Plates shown on the July 2010 draft Framework Plan did not make clear that the plates were to be threaded with shared, greened, walking, cycling, and servicing routes, depending on the exact requirements for buildings that could go within a given plate. However, it is the intention that, through the detailed design process permeable routes will be created in a way that is compatible the uses proposed. This point is clarified in the text of the document. It is hoped that the South Bank will deliver a board variety of urban grain, from commercial offices to fine grain courtyard residential living, which could include family housing. The suggested layout of the City Centre Park was distorted slightly, and the shared walking/cycling/servicing routes which would be 'greened' was not made clear due to the colours used on the framework plan. The revised Urban Design Principles 1 and 2 sketches shown in the October 2011 draft at pages 26-29 reflect the aspirations and vision of the Planning Statement more clearly.

### **3.4 Uses including City Centre Park**

- 3.4.1 Consultation feedback was generally supportive of the range of uses proposed in the Planning Statement, particularly in the case of the promotion sustainable employment uses and a wider range of housing types, including family housing. Residential use in the South Bank would be supported national policy and the development plan, and is further promoted by the Aire Valley Urban Eco-Settlement proposal. The emerging Aire Valley Area Action plan will analyse family housing and community facilities at the strategic area-based level in the near future. Offices/workspace uses would be supported in the South Bank, as it lies in a sustainable location. Such uses would contribute to sustainable employment and the economy of the city as a whole. Small scale retail may be acceptable in the South Bank., however regard would be taken for the relationship to Crown Point Retail Park. and Clarence Dock in considering such proposals. Cultural uses, especially those maximising the potential of refurbished local

heritage assets, would be strongly encouraged in the South Bank, within and around the City Centre Park.

### **3.5 Function, location, size and shape of City Centre Park**

- 3.5.1 The South Bank Planning Statement aims to embed the vision of the Leeds City Region Green Infrastructure Strategy 2010. In acknowledging consultee responses, the delivery of the City Centre Park will fulfil a variety of functions, and will act as a catalyst for sustainable growth and economic development, promotion of health and well-being, and biodiversity and climate change resilience. The key aims for the City Centre Park are at Section 3.1 of the Planning Statement.
- 3.5.2 Some respondents had concern regarding the narrow width of embankment at Asda House. The inclusion of a wider embankment as suggested by the urban design principles has been by negotiation, as part of setting out indicative urban design principles for the area. Current development plan policy states that sites should provide 20% of their site area as useable public open space. In the South Bank area it is proposed that this requirement be apportioned between the requirements of an individual site and a financial contributions to common infrastructure for the benefit of the area as a whole.
- 3.5.3 Some respondents had concern that the park is inward looking – a balance of enclosure and invitation has been considered in arriving at the indicative form shown in the planning statement. Leaving the park completely open to the south is not considered appropriate in urban design terms at this stage – some enclosure is required not just around the park – but to provide an appropriate frontage to Hunslet Lane. There are wide openings in the development plates indicated to the south, and many other routes through will be possible depending on the detailed design of those plates.
- 3.5.4 Promotion of greenspace across the whole area threading out of the ‘main’ City Centre Park area – into the wider area is promoted through the Planning Statement.

### **3.6 Scale of Development**

- 3.6.1 The Development Plates identified on the urban design principles drawings are intended as a framework to inform the preparation of parameter plans for block layouts at outline planning application stage. These may change as a result of more detailed development proposals, although it will be essential to ensure that the broad principles of this framework are delivered.
- 3.6.2 Concern was expressed by some consultees that the development plates shown on the urban design principles drawing were in fact building blocks. The development plates identified on the framework plan are not solid impermeable blocks, they are zones where potential development could go, to shape the perimeter of the park and give activity and enclosure, enable its viable delivery, and help to create a ‘place’. The development plates would be ‘threaded’ with greened, shared walking/ cycling/service routes, courtyards and pocket gardens, to give a hierarchy of scales of spaces between buildings. This drawing has been revised to ensure it expresses more clearly the aims of the Planning Statement.
- 3.6.3 English Heritage noted that the most significant building in the area of architectural or historic interest is the Grade II\* Listed Chadwick Lodge. It is acknowledged that there should be a clearer commitment to incorporating this building into the park to enhance its setting, which at present is cut-off from its surroundings by boundary

treatments and roads. English Heritage have stated that the proposed heights of surrounding buildings in the immediate setting should be lower in order to enhance the setting of the listed building, as there is a key view from the north from Crown Point Bridge. The setting of Chadwick Street is noted on the urban design principles drawings. At this stage, the development plates close to Chadwick Lodge are shown as unchanged - proposals for those plates would be assessed at detailed design stage.

### **3.7 Common Infrastructure**

3.7.1 Delivery of common infrastructure including greenspace is central to the aspirations of the Planning Statement. The proposed section 106 obligations referred to at Section 3.6 of the Planning Statement are considered necessary, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development, in line with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. Future work on the Aire Valley Area Action Plan and any Community Infrastructure Levy would be informed by the aspirations in the South Bank Planning Statement's infrastructure priority list at Section 3.6 of the planning statement. However, it will be necessary to look at other funding opportunities.

### **3.8 Connectivity and transportation**

- 3.8.1 With reference to Section 3.5 of the Planning Statement, any highways alterations within or around the edges of the South Bank will aim to encourage walking and cycling connectivity (especially to the city centre core). Wider connections will be given further consideration, not just through site-specific development management briefs such as South Bank Planning Statement, but through other Council strategies. The development of the identified South Bank area sites and delivery of a city centre park will transform the south of Leeds City Centre, and will incrementally connect streets previously cut off by large and impermeable single use sites as development progresses on the 3 potential development sites it covers. The aspiration to reconnect and integrate the city centre fringe to its surrounding neighbourhoods physically, economically and socially is an on-going and long-standing objective of the Council, embedded and implemented within many strategies, plans and active programmes.
- 3.8.2 Links to Beeston and Holbeck, are particularly constrained by the M621 motorway, railway infrastructure and large commercial sites. At this stage, opportunities for improvements to connectivity will be reasonably taken on an site-by-site basis through the development management process, and through other transport initiatives and strategies where opportunities may arise in the future. Some of the first steps will be made through the objectives of the South Bank Planning Statement, and those of the Sovereign Street Planning Statement, to improve connections and permeability between the north and the south of the city centre, and through the area of the South Bank covered by the Planning Statement as shown in the indicative sketches.
- 3.8.3 Connections to the east would be improved by changes to Crown Point Road and Black Bull Street, by extending a chain of greened routes and spaces eastwards to take opportunity to connect better with Chadwick Lodge, Clarence Dock and Royal Armouries, via the potential redevelopment of the former Yorkshire Chemicals site on Black Bull Street. The potential to link to adjoining sites has great potential to contribute to the vision and objectives of the Planning Statement.

### **3.9 Next Steps and Interim Issues**

- 3.9.1 The Council will seek to encourage interim use of retained buildings, temporary 'greening' and early laying out of the phases of the City Centre Park, incorporating the walking and cycling connections identified in the Planning Statement. Proposals which include temporary measures such as grassed areas, wild flower meadows, trees in containers, allotments, art workspace and installations, sport/recreation uses would be encouraged which could be supported by appropriate enabling development.
- 3.9.2 Feasibility work on the provision of a potential footbridge connection to north embankment in advance of later development phases would be encouraged by the Council, subject to funding, detailed design, and relevant statutory agency and landowner support.
- 3.9.3 Pre-application discussions with landowners and potential developers will continue on the basis of principles agreed within the draft planning statement. This will eventually lead to a long-term process of scheme preparation by developers, community consultation and engagement including presentations to relevant bodies such as City Centre Plans Panel, outline planning applications and subsequent detailed planning applications – ultimately leading to the delivery of the South Bank Planning Statement vision and the City Centre Park.
- 3.9.4 The delivery of the development proposals for the city centre park is expected to be challenging and take time to achieve. There are complex highway realignments, road closures and design considerations that will require planning and funding at the outset, to allow our Vision for the South Bank to be realised. It is envisaged that commercial and residential developments will take place over at least a 10 year period. However a key part of the successful delivery of the proposals will be the alterations to the areas infrastructure required at the outset. For the council to take part in the development of the South Bank, an outline business case is being developed in order to confirm what needs to be done and how this can be funded. The business case will examine the options for who is best placed to take risk and responsibility for delivering elements of the infrastructure and what funding sources are most suitable to use on this project. This will include for example the use of Tax Increment Financing, (current the subject of the Local Government Resources Review consultation) and Community Infrastructure Levy, which will come into full force in 2014.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1.1 A consultation exercise was undertaken following Executive Board 21 July 2010. During the consultation process, the Council sought to engage stakeholders, including landowners, local residents, businesses, interest groups and appropriate statutory agencies, for a period of six weeks during September/October 2010. Detailed responses are contained in the South Bank Consultation Analysis September 2011.
- 4.1.2 The Planning Statement was publicised via the Council's website from July 2010, and covered in the local media in July 2010 and September 2010. The Planning



Statement was presented by officers and discussed in several public forums in late 2010, including the City Centre Vision Conference, and at meetings of the Council's City Centre Plans Panel, Leeds Waterfront Association, Aire Action Leeds Planning, Policy and Stewardship sub-groups and Leeds Civic Trust. Site notices were displayed around the area and the electronic mailing list of Leeds Waterfront Association and Aire Action Leeds Groups were used to achieve a wide distribution of the electronic version of the document amongst individual residents, residents groups, businesses and other organisations with an interest in Leeds City Centre and the waterfront.

- 4.1.3 City and Hunslet Ward Members were consulted by email in September 2010 and September 2011. No comments were received.
- 4.1.4 The consultation period was extended to take account of the Leeds City Centre Vision Conference 2010 on 15 October 2010, and the four specific South Bank focus group discussions from that event are included in the findings. Any representations received after this date have also been included in the consultation analysis, which is available as a Background Paper.
- 4.1.5 There will be further public consultation on the City Centre Park Vision. This will seek views on how the design brief for the park could emerge in the future. All future planning applications for new development will also be subject to public consultation through the formal planning process, and future developers will be expected to engage with local communities regarding their proposals prior to making their planning applications.

## **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 4.2.1 The draft planning statement has been screened for an equality impact assessment, and in this case it is considered that a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

## **4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities**

- 4.3.1 The South Bank Planning Statement, as informal policy guidance, would be supplementary to the current Statutory Development Plan (currently the Yorkshire and the Humber Regional Spatial Strategy 2008, the Leeds Unitary Development Plan 2006) and the emerging Local Development Framework. It will provide site specific guidance for developers in preparing development proposals in the future, and provide context for the Council in preparing a greenspace brief for the area.
- 4.3.2 The Planning Statement supports the following strategic objectives. From the Leeds Strategic Plan 2008 – 2011, the Planning Statement supports the Enterprise and Economy objective to increased international competitiveness through marketing and investment in high quality infrastructure and physical assets, particularly in the city centre and the Culture objective to enhanced cultural opportunities through encouraging investment and development of high quality facilities of national and international significance. The Planning Statement supports all of the key objective identified in the Vision for Leeds 2011-2030 but will principally supports the objective for Leeds to be the best city:
  - for business - to provide opportunities for significant job creation, start-up businesses, sustainable travel and brownfield redevelopment; and
  - for health and well-being - with a focus on greenspace, transport, housing and work to encourage people to be more active;

#### **4.4 Resources and Value for Money**

- 4.4.1 In delivering on the aspirations for a City Centre Park, it is recognised that financing a scheme that has a combination of land assembly with third party landowners, significant highways alterations, and provision of the greenspace itself, will bring complex challenges. It may be necessary to obtain contributions towards a range of infrastructure by means of planning obligations related to any future permissions 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 Planning Statement has afforded a high priority to the provision of greenspace set against other common infrastructure needs.
- 4.4.2 To support the council's continued role in facilitating the development of the South Bank and the potential for council expenditure on infrastructure to support these developments, a business case will be developed. This business case will be used to demonstrate that any interventions by the council represent best value by examining the costs and benefits involved and making recommendations on how the council's involvement should be delivered.

#### **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

- 4.5.1 This is a key decision and is eligible for call-in.

#### **4.6 Risk Management**

- 4.6.1 There are no significant risks identified in this report.

#### **5.0 Conclusions**

- 5.1 There is a major opportunity to co-ordinate a number of changes in the use of land and buildings in the South Bank of the city centre so that it becomes a distinctive, vibrant, well connected sustainable business and residential community, which has at its heart a new City Centre Park. These developments will act as a catalyst for the regeneration and place-shaping of the South Bank and by creating a vibrant and outward-facing public space will provide the context for the broader redevelopment of the area. This will help to improve connections to the surrounding communities in the Aire Valley, Hunslet, Richmond Hill, Beeston Hill and Holbeck.
- 5.2 The joint vision for the area is encapsulated in the South Bank Planning Statement which is designed to be positive and flexible enough to adapt to changing circumstances within and around its area boundary in the years to come, and allow additional sites to contribute to its realisation.
- 5.3 The consultation process, including the 2010 City Centre Vision Conference, has reinforced the joint aspirations and vision of the South Bank Planning Statement, arrived at through partnership working with local landowners and other stakeholders, and made a valuable contribution to the debate in the city regarding the importance of redevelopment of the South Bank and the delivery of a City Centre Park. It has also focused attention on how the City should ensure that the process of positive change in the South Bank area could begin through the promotion of active interim uses and temporary greening.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

6.1 The Executive Board is recommended to:

- approve the adoption of the South Bank Planning Statement (October 2011) as informal planning guidance for the area;
- note future work on the development of an Outline Business Case to assist with the delivery of the City Centre Park on the basis of a phased implementation plan including the potential for a footbridge link to the Sovereign Street area.

## **7 Background documents**

7.1 Executive Board Agenda and Minutes 13 February 2009 Item 17

7.2 Executive Board Agenda and Minutes 21 July 2010 Item 48

7.3 Draft South Bank Planning Statement July 2010

7.4 South Bank Consultation Analysis September 2011

7.5 Equality Impact Assessment Screening Opinion

7.6 Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion

7.7 Sovereign Street Planning Statement July 2011 (July 2011 Executive Board Item 20).

## **Appendix**

South Bank Planning Statement October 2011