

Southern Area Planning Committee

23 February 2017

Purpose of Report

1. To:

Endorse the Salisbury Cathedral masterplan shown at **Appendix 1** to this report as a relevant material planning consideration to be taken into account when making decisions on planning applications on any proposals set out in the masterplan, subject to the recommended change set out in paragraph 17 of this report.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. The master plan is a relatively simple portfolio of projects which aim to preserve the specialness of Salisbury Cathedral and the Close, its heritage and craft skills.
3. Endorsement of the master plan will contribute towards the Business Plan's priority of boosting the local economy by helping to stimulate economic growth through tourism

Background

4. The Wiltshire Core Strategy was adopted in January 2015, and sets the strategic framework for growth and development in Wiltshire up to 2026. The Core Strategy sets out individual strategies for each of the community areas in Wiltshire. The area strategy for Salisbury explains that the presence of Salisbury Cathedral makes Salisbury an international tourist destination which brings significant revenue to the city.
5. Core Policy 58 aims to ensure that Wiltshire's important monuments, sites and landscapes and areas of historic and building heritage significance are protected and enhanced in order that they continue to make an important contribution to Wiltshire's environment and quality of life.
6. The supporting text to Core Policy 58 states that the preparation of conversation area management plans and other proactive strategies will be encouraged to support policy delivery. The production of this master plan which will guide the future development of Salisbury Cathedral therefore complements the Wiltshire Core Strategy. The master plan

sets out proposals that can form an agreed basis for decision making in future years.

7. In 2008 the Cathedral produced a master plan entitled 'Faith in the Future' in consultation with its partners. This Plan showed how the Cathedral's objectives and needs could be met, managing change for the Cathedral and its landscape. This master plan was the subject of widespread public scrutiny as a result of an extensive public consultation undertaken by the Cathedral authorities between June and December 2015.
8. Following a careful assessment of all the response received during this consultation, a revised version of the master plan was prepared by the Cathedral authorities entitled 'An Exceptional Place'. This revised master plan provides the context for proposals that will be taken forward in the future, and details the planning considerations that will need to be addressed in doing so.
9. The projects set out in the revised version relate to the following:
 - (i) Public access to the Cathedral's south side and wider Cathedral grounds
 - (ii) Improving access in the Close and Welcome Point at 32-33 The Close
 - (iii) Magna Carta and the Cathedral Library and Archive
 - (iv) Meeting Rooms and Function Spaces
 - (v) Development of the South Side and Works Yard Site
 - (vi) The Cathedral School – New School Facilities
 - (vii) Building a New Auditorium
 - (viii) Providing new Clergy Housing
 - (ix) Movement around the Cathedral and Close
 - (x) Investing in and making the best use of buildings within the Close
10. Wiltshire council officers provided input into the preparation of the revised master plan, ahead of the council's own consultation on the master plan.

Consultation

11. Consultation on the revised master plan took place from 19th September 2016 for 6 weeks, closing on 28th October 2016.
12. During the consultation period, the master plan could be viewed at: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/salisburycathedralconsultation and at the following locations:
 - Monkton Park, Chippenham
 - 3-5 Snuff Street, Devizes
 - Bourne Hill, Salisbury
 - County Hall, Trowbridge
 - Salisbury Library (during normal opening hours)

13. Comments could be made via the following means:
- online via the Council's consultation portal:
<http://bit.ly/SalisburyCathedralConsult>
 - by email using the form available at:
www.wiltshire.gov.uk/salisburycathedralconsultation and returned to
spatialplanningpolicy@wiltshire.gov.uk; or
 - by post in writing to: Spatial Planning, The Council House, Bourne Hill Salisbury Wiltshire SP1 3UZ.
14. A Public Exhibition was also being held on 28th September between 10 am and 7 pm at the Guild Hall, Market Place Salisbury, SP1 1JH.

General Summary of Comments

15. The schedule of responses received during this consultation can be found at **Appendix 2**. This provides details of all of the representation received, along with a response from officers.
16. The common themes arising from the consultation responses can be summarised as follows:

Improving public access

- There was support for proposals to improve the experience for visitors to the Cathedral by better signage and welcome facilities that clarify routes to approach the building from main pedestrian accesses to the Close.
- Similarly, respondents supported measures that reduce non-essential vehicle movements in the interest of improving the environment for pedestrians and cyclists and resolving pedestrian/vehicular conflicts within the Close.
- There were mixed views about using 32-33 The Close as a visitor centre, with some supporting it, and others not convinced that this was a suitable was forward.

Public access to south side of the Cathedral

- Many respondents supported the proposal for improved visitor access to south side of the Cathedral, which would open up an unused area to residents and visitors.
- However, some respondents expressed concern about security, particularly in the context of the children who attend Salisbury Cathedral School.
- Comments also pointed out that the Close is a large area with several attractions, and that Salisbury as a whole has many historical attractions; there is therefore no need for further areas to be open for visitors and few would have the time or inclination to go there. In any case, there is a good view of the south side of the Cathedral from the Refectory and Broad Walk.

North Porch

- There were mixed opinions about whether the north porch would be appropriate as the main public access.
- Those in support commented that using the north porch as the main public access would create greater openness, accessibility and welcome to the Cathedral in perpetuity, whilst recognising that adapting the North Porch for this use would potentially be an expensive investment.
- Other respondents felt that using the North Porch as the main access will be disruptive to worshippers while Nave services are in progress. North door development to enable visitor access will prove to be hugely architecturally controversial, and very expensive. The North porch is a very beautiful part of the old building and adapting the North porch for the main entry point will be detrimental to it.
- Respondents also made reference to the fact that using the North Porch as a main entry point has been tried in the past, and was unsuccessful because of the confusion, disruption and noise that this created.

Magna Carta

- Some respondents commented that there is a strong case for the Magna Carta to be displayed in the Salisbury Museum where it can be appropriately curated with a permanent exhibition. It would be secure in this location and of great benefit to the museum. This would be preferable to having to provide a new, expensive, purpose-built structure.
- Other respondents commented that the Magna Carta is in the safest environment at present in the Chapter House, which has a single entrance from the Cloisters, and is surrounded by thick medieval walls with no ground floor windows. Moving it would be a conservation disaster.

Lack of detail in Master Plan

- Several respondents expressed concern that the revised master plan consists of little more than general aspirations, rather vaguely set out and that many issues are left essentially unresolved.
- There is no landscape or visual appraisal and subsequently no landscape plan or management scheme. The local distinctiveness and sense of place of the Precinct/Close are key issues that a Masterplan ought to include.

Commercialism

- Whilst some respondents welcomed the development of a holistic and considered approach to the management and development of the Cathedral's assets within the Close, others were concerned about the

potential “creeping commercialism” of the Close, and did not support any further increase in commercial or retail activity.

Development of works yard site

- The proposal to modernise, rationalise and improve the Works Development buildings was generally supported.

Providing new Clergy Housing

- The proposal to provide clergy housing to the rear of 20 the Close received a mixed response.
- Some respondents supported this proposal.
- Others raised concerns because such development would be within the curtilage of various listed buildings and together with the plans for No 20 almost all of the existing gardens will have to be lost to provide space for the necessary and desirable parking that will be associated with these proposals

Overview of proposed changes needed to the Master Plan

17. As a result of the consultation responses, the only amendment recommended to the master plan is in response to comments made by the Cycling Opportunities Group Salisbury (COGS). They recognised that the Master Plan emphasises the need to improve the experience for visitors to Salisbury and the Cathedral by better signage and welcome facilities that clarify routes to approach the building from main pedestrian accesses to the Close. COGS went on to suggest that this approach should be extended to include movement of cyclists. It is therefore proposed to amend the Master Plan accordingly. The detailed wording of this can be found in Appendix 1.

Safeguarding Implications

18. There are no direct safeguarding implications arising from this report.

Public Health Implications

19. Public health bodies will continue to be consulted on planning matters, including in relation to any subsequent planning applications that come forward, where appropriate.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

20. Statutory bodies including the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England have been consulted on the draft masterplan, and their comments, along with officer responses, are set out in full at **Appendix 2** of this report. Consultation with environmental bodies will continue to take place on planning matters in any subsequent planning applications.

Risk Assessment

21. By endorsing the master plan, this helps to build consensus and to have a shared vision for the future of Salisbury Cathedral and the Close. The master plan includes many projects that will involve some fairly significant planning matters which will need careful management and the master plan will provide a shared framework for considering how the area will develop in the future.

Financial Implications

22. There are no financial implications to the Council at this time.

Legal Implications

23. Once the masterplan has been endorsed by Committee, full regard must be had to its content in decision making, including as a material consideration in determination of planning applications. However, endorsement will not predetermine any such applications, which will still have to be considered on their own merits, taking account of the issues identified in the masterplan.

Options Considered

24. The master plan sets out proposals that can form an agreed basis for decision making in future years. It complements the Core Strategy and endorsement of the Master Plan by Committee gives the document weight in this future decision making.

Conclusions

25. The area strategy for Salisbury as set out in the Core Strategy recognises the presence of Salisbury Cathedral make Salisbury an international tourist destination which brings significant revenue to the city. The Core Strategy aims to ensure that Wiltshire's built heritage continues to be protected and enhanced in order that it continues to make an important contribution to Wiltshire's environment and quality of life. The preparation of proactive strategies for Wiltshire's built heritage are to be encouraged to support policy delivery.
26. The production of this master plan which will guide the future development of Salisbury Cathedral therefore complements the Wiltshire Core Strategy.
27. The draft masterplan at Appendix 1 has been subject to public consultation with members of the public, stakeholders and statutory bodies. Prior to that, the Cathedral Authorities undertook their own public consultation on an earlier version of the masterplan. Subject to the minor change that is recommended at paragraph 17 of this report, the masterplan represents an agreed basis for decision making in future years.

Recommendation

28. It is recommended that the master plan for Salisbury Cathedral, as attached at Appendix 1, subject to the amendment in paragraph 17 of this report, and any other minor alterations required to improve its clarity, is endorsed as a material planning consideration for the purposes of development management.

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Major Projects

The following documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

Wiltshire Core Strategy

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Salisbury Cathedral “An Exceptional Place” Revised Master Plan 2016
- Appendix 2 – Schedule of comments received and officer responses