

Wiltshire Council

Strategic Planning Committee

19th June 2019

The Maltings and Central Car Park, Salisbury Masterplan

Purpose of Report

1. To:

Endorse the Maltings and Central Car Park, Salisbury 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 for the Maltings and Central Car Park site, subject to the recommended changes summarised in paragraph 25 of this report.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. A Masterplan to show how the area will be developed is required by Core Policy 21 of the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) and is central to the strategic regeneration of Salisbury.
3. The Masterplan sets out a flexible strategy for a new development including its general layout, scale and other aspects that will need consideration. The process of developing the Masterplan has tested options and considered the most important parameters for the area such as the environmental constraints/opportunities; mix of uses; requirement for open space; transport infrastructure; the amount and scale of buildings; and the quality of buildings. Importantly while appropriate City Centre uses are identified (taken from national policy), the framework is deliberately non-prescriptive of the potential quanta of any given use or indeed its location. This is to reflect the fluid nature of the economy and uncertainty being faced by investors and traditional city centre uses
4. Endorsement of the masterplan will contribute towards the Business Plan's priority of boosting the local economy by helping to stimulate economic growth.

Background

5. The Maltings and Central Car Park site is allocated for strategic redevelopment by Core Policy 21 of the WCS, which is supported by an appended Development Template setting out the broad intentions for the

site. Applications for Planning Permission will be determined against planning Policies set out by the WCS underpinned by material considerations set by National Planning Policy and guidance.

6. This Masterplan sets out Wiltshire Council's broad requirements for the redevelopment of The Maltings and Central Car Park, Salisbury. This Masterplan has been prepared to fulfil the WCS requirement for a Strategic Masterplan for the whole site¹, and to provide site specific guidance for the development of the site, using a baseline of the WCS Development Template.
7. The WCS is now several years old, and it is important to recognise that the role and function of town centres has shifted in the past few years. Accordingly, the Masterplan has been prepared with recognition that the long-term role of the town centre may be subject to change and there is a need to respond flexibly to the unknowns surrounding this. The Masterplan is designed to respond to the requirements of WCS allocation, but with allowance for flexibility for subsequent planning applications to respond appropriately to market conditions. The Masterplan led redevelopment of the Maltings and Central Car Park was also set out in the Salisbury Vision document adopted by Salisbury District Council.
8. The Masterplan shows the preferred distribution of land uses in an indicative layout, where the shape and position of buildings, streets and parks is set out. Indicative is a key word here, as it should be emphasized that proposals that depart from the Masterplan but can demonstrably deliver the majority of the outcomes sought will be acceptable providing the basic framework is adhered to.
9. Importantly the Masterplan is designed to create a permissive planning context within which viable and deliverable proposals can emerge. For these reasons, while it clearly sets out where commercial opportunities are on the site, it is non-prescriptive over those specific end uses. This is due to the fast-changing nature of City Centre uses, especially the changing retail environment and hence the plan is deliberately conceived to keep options open to underpin commercial viability. Whilst Core Policy 21 is explicit in stating the quanta of specific end uses it is considered appropriate to consider up to date market factors in determining how any future development proposals meet policy requirements. It is intended that the Masterplan will be a material consideration in making such determinations.
10. It is acknowledged that the site has significant constraints and known issues (such as abnormal ground conditions) that have prevented viable schemes coming forward on the site in the past. The intention here is to create a positive framework for investment and as supportive a policy framework as can be created to achieve this – acknowledging that public investment may be needed alongside private investment to enable phases, particularly some of the more infrastructure heavy early phases, to come

¹ In light of up to date information regarding land ownership and availability, the site boundary for the masterplan site is slightly different to the boundary depicted by Core Policy 21.

forward.

11. The graphical impressions of what the development could look like are indicative and are intended to illustrate the art of the possible. Any detailed plans will be subject to further consultation through the statutory planning process and will be expected to reflect the character of Salisbury and respect the unique sense of place.

Key Elements of the Master Plan

12. There are 4 main character areas identified within the master plan. These are as follows.
13. **Character Area 1 – Market Walk and The Maltings**
 - Transformational realignment and remodelling of a new double story height arcade through the central arch of Market Walk, creating a key gateway entrance to the development site.
 - Creation of a new pedestrian boulevard, creating a linear and direct link through the site from Market Walk to the Cultural Quarter.
 - Public realm enhancements to the Cheese Market to create a sense of place and improve legibility to and from The Maltings.
 - Opening and enhancement of the public realm at the key pedestrian node from Market Walk and St Thomas's Square. Enhancements to improve the pedestrian environment.
 - Enhancement of the riverside experience along The Maltings shopfront.
 - Shopfront refurbishment and modernisation of The Maltings to enhance its appearance as an attractive shopping and leisure area.
 - Introduction of public art to create interest and wayfinding.
14. **Character Area 2 – Cultural Quarter**
 - Build upon the existing strengths by establishing a reimagined 'Cultural Quarter, encompassing the City Hall and Playhouse and a relocated library and art gallery, developing potential synergies between these uses.
 - Improvements to the public interface of the area by prioritising the Cultural Quarter for pedestrian and cyclist use. This should address potential for improvements to the pavement areas to the front of the remodelled library and United Reformed Church on Fisherton Street.
 - Utilise the open area between the Playhouse and City Hall.
 - Enhance the setting of the Conservation Area through sensitive redevelopment.
 - Consideration of how future operational needs of The Playhouse can be accommodated.
 - Development of a hotel.
 - Improvements to Priory Square as an important interface between The Maltings, City Hall and Playhouse, and Fisherton Street. Enhance the gateway function of this space, encouraging pedestrian and cyclist flows to and from the site from Fisherton Street.
15. **Character Area 3 – Commercial and Residential Core**

- Transformational redevelopment to establish a new group of commercial/leisure premises to replace the existing supermarket and dual level car park. Uses could include a range of commercial units, a cinema (etc.) Office/residential uses will be located on upper floors.
- Respond appropriately to the context of the site and create a sense of place that will endure. The development will be responsive and appropriate to locally distinctive patterns of development and address the river frontage.
- Buildings will be interspersed with features of interest and arcades, which form links to and from the Cultural Quarter and areas of green infrastructure, including a green link between the watercourses.
- Produce a high-quality public realm that promotes public spaces that are attractive, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all.
- Safeguarding the existing 'Shopmobility' scheme, within the Maltings redevelopment (not necessarily the same location as now)
- The Council will work closely and proactively with the existing occupiers, including the Job Centre (Summerlock House) and Sainsbury's to explore potential opportunities for relocation.
- The redevelopment will be framed by significant green infrastructure, including new tree planting and landscaping, with creation of new biodiversity corridors within the urban form of the development.
- The existing surface level parking area will be redeveloped to deliver car parking in a more consolidated form (decked parking) which could be 'wrapped' by commercial/residential development to maximize the availability of space and minimise visual impacts.
- The quantum of car parking to be delivered will be determined having regard to the Council's adopted parking standards.
- Access to car parking will be from Churchill Way and Summerlock Approach
- Car parking areas will provide ample space for electric vehicle charging points.
- Developers will be expected to demonstrate how they will help facilitate reduction of parking demand and maximise parking facilities during construction.

16. **Character Area 4 – Riverside and Coach Park welcome**

- Enhance the public interface with the river environment along all river flanking footpaths within the site. Portions of the river frontage will be remodelled to form casual public areas, while other areas will be left to form wildlife refuges.
- Provision of approximately 40m width of green infrastructure through the development to make space for essential channel capacity improvements allowing access to the river during times of low water levels, while providing increase river capacity to help reduce flood risk on the site and in the city centre.
- The corridor of green infrastructure will greatly enhance the public realm and riverside experience, while providing opportunities for biodiversity gain. If possible, this will include opening the culvert on the main River Avon channel at the Maltings.
- Explore opportunities to link the river fronting footpaths around The Boathouse Public House at Millstream Approach.

- Deliver renovation of the open space and play area immediately north of The Maltings
- Hard and soft landscaping will be introduced as screening around the electricity sub-station at the northern end.
- Modern, fit for purpose toilet facility and changing facility located in the best position for residents and tourists
- The potential need to widen the bridge at Mill Stream Approach will be investigated.
- Transformational redevelopment of the coach park to deliver a positive and welcoming first impression of Salisbury for arriving tourists, with a defined tourist welcome experience area/structure.
- The coach park and arrival zone will be framed with green infrastructure and seamlessly linked to legible pedestrian routes to the town centre, and to the riverside path to the north.
- Delivery of a Health and Fitness Zone based around the surgeries and surrounding green infrastructure links. This could include outdoor gym equipment at the riverside.

17. Design Principles

Active frontage

The Masterplan is based on delivering an outward looking development which adds to the attractiveness and vibrancy of the City. Well-defined streets and spaces are created by relatively continuous building frontage. Active frontages made up of shopfronts, commercial premises, front doors and windows (especially to ground floor habitable rooms) create lively and well-supervised streets. This is a key requirement for creating safe and attractive public spaces.

Urban structure

The Masterplan shows clearly the relationship between new development and existing buildings, through the framework of routes and spaces that connect locally and more widely, and the way developments, routes and open spaces relate to one another. The masterplan recognises these long-term aspirations and provides an indicative urban structure within these core principles. There is also an acknowledgement that existing urban grain may need to remain for sustained periods of time if viable development along the lines envisaged cannot be achieved. There is flexibility built into the plan to allow this.

Density and mix

The Masterplan shows the potential for a high-density development to make optimum use of the site, but in a manner appropriate to its wider historic setting. Salisbury is characterised by a high density, but human scale urban core and proposals should use this as a design cue.

Height and massing

The development will need to demonstrate how the scale of a building relates to:

- The arrangement, volume and shape of a building or group of buildings in relation to other buildings and spaces
- The development to be reflective of the human scale cityscape, which characterises Salisbury
- The impact on views, vistas and skylines, including compliance with the adopted Salisbury Skyline Policy

Building type

There is no prescribed right or wrong building type. The key is high quality design whatever the approach, however the site does lend itself to the creation of a bold modern development that takes inspiration from its historic setting and gives it a fresh approach.

Facade and interface

The rhythm, pattern and harmony of its openings, relative to its enclosure, characterises much of what makes Salisbury so attractive. Proposals should demonstrate how they have drawn on the success of the past to realise the new designs. Buildings lines fronting hard onto the public domain are a strong characteristic of Salisbury City Centre, as are the architectural expression of entrances, corners, roofscape and projections.

Details and materials

Proposals will be required to choose a palette of materials which sit comfortably within the city through:

- The texture, colour, pattern, durability and treatment of its materials
- Materials sourced from local and/or sustainable sources, including recycled materials where possible
- The lighting, signage and treatment of shopfronts, entrances and building security

Not be afraid of a bold use of materials which forms an eye-catching contrast to the wider townscape in an effective manner.

Consultation

18. The council undertook a period of public consultation on a draft masterplan from **Monday 15th April to Friday 24th May 2019** and invited comments during that period.
19. During the consultation period, the master plan could be viewed at: http://consult.wiltshire.gov.uk/portal/major_projects/mccp/the_maltings_and_central_car_park_masterplan_consultation
20. Opportunities for engagement with the consultation process were also widely advertised prior to commencement and included:
 - A notice placed in the Salisbury Journal newspaper
 - Posters placed in various locations in and around the site
 - Announcement on local radio station Spire FM
 - Announcements on various pages of Wiltshire Council's website

- Communications via Facebook and Twitter
 - Press releases about the consultation
 - Communications via the council's Elected Wire
 - Notifications via parish and town council newsletters
21. Through these various means, consultees were informed that the consultation material was available to view throughout the consultation period at the following locations:
- In electronic format on the council's website
 - In paper format at the following locations:
 - Salisbury Library (including exhibition board display)
 - Wilton Library
 - Downton Library
 - Amesbury Library
 - Durrington Library
 - Five Rivers Leisure Centre, Salisbury (including exhibition board display)
 - Wiltshire Council Bourne Hill offices in Salisbury
 - Wiltshire Council County Hall offices in Trowbridge
- (i) In addition, the Major Projects team hosted a public exhibition about the masterplan at the Salisbury Guildhall on Tuesday 23rd April, from 9:30am-6:45pm. A series of exhibition boards were on display, and Wiltshire Council officers from the Major Projects team and Library Services were in attendance for the whole day to answer questions from members of the public. In addition, representatives from the Environment Agency were also in attendance to respond to questions regarding flood risk. The exhibition was very well attended by a wide range of people.

General Summary of Comments and Issues Arising

22. 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.
23. Overall representations were received from some 209 parties. These raised more than 350 separate issues. There were more representations expressing general support for the Master Plan than objecting to it. 23 in support and 17 objecting.
24. The common themes arising from the consultation responses can be summarised as follows, (based on the highest number of representations on single issues):

Relocation of the library

This issue produced the most single number of comments with 71 objections. In general, the concerns were that the existing library is in a better location, is

a good facility and large. There were concerns that all of this would be lost through relocation

Green Corridor

There was strong support for the creation of a green corridor (63 respondents) around the River Avon to create a new urban park, to create new walking and cycling routes into the city (including from the coach park), to enhance ecology and to mitigate flood risk to the City

New Retail Development

There were 50 objections based on the views that Salisbury had enough retail or that the master plan wasn't realistic in the current economic environment.

Coach Park

There was strong support for the retention and enhancement of the tourist coach drop off point to include new welcome centre, enhanced walking route into the City and designated picnic area (37 respondents)

Reduction in city centre car parking

Concerns were expressed by 32 respondents over any reduction in City Centre car parking.

Temporary Nature of the library

30 respondents raised objections to this element of the master plan

Art Gallery

While concern was expressed over the implications for the Young Gallery (26 respondents citing this issue), the idea of a new, larger art gallery to accommodate the former but also attract travelling exhibitions, located around the Cultural Quarter was suggested.

Overview of changes made to the Master Plan

25. As a result of the consultation responses, the Master Plan has been amended and the revised draft is attached to this report as Appendix A. The main revisions are as follows:
 - More detailed assessment of the existing townscape and the important buildings, views and spaces that any new development should respect.
 - New section added on ecological protection and need for an assessment under the Habitat Regulations
 - New access plan added
 - New section added on the planning process including list of required assessments
 - New section on the pre-application support the Council will offer to prospective developers
 - New section setting how voluntary groups can contribute to the management and enhancement of the green corridor.
 - Delivery and phasing section revised to be more realistic.

- Text amended to make it explicit that the new library will be fully accessible to the mobility impaired
- Reference added to increased number of electric vehicles charging points
- Plans revised to make designated parking spaces for blue badge holders an explicit requirement in a location to be agreed when detailed plans come forward.
- Plan revised to make it explicit that that the development will only come forward as part of specific proposals that will need to be worked up either by or in partnership with the private sector. These will all be subject to appropriate consultation at this stage including with residents whose homes may be affected. Additional uses added to Master Plan to reference activities for younger people including climbing walls, bowling and trampolines
- Additional uses added to Master Plan to include activities for young people, educational facilities for people of all ages and medical services
- More explicit reference made to flexible use of new public space including performance areas and informal meeting spots
- Amendments made to emphasise that majority of green corridor will be natural and native species planting with more urban treatment located at the southern end to complement the Cultural Quarter and boost the night time economy
- Potential of a sustainable energy scheme subject to agreement with all necessary parties
- Reference added to designing in Swift nesting in designs
- Stopping spots with access to the water added within green corridor, but controlled to protect ecology
- River loafing areas for wild fowl added
- Lighting design mentioned so that it is designed to reduce impact on wildlife
- Pedestrian linkages throughout the scheme have been reviewed and optimised
- Nature of the pedestrian friendly boulevard from Market Place to Maltings has been clarified
- Connection to existing cycle routes entering the site have been added to the plan
- Provision of public changing facilities added to ensure easier city centre usage for all, including the infirm.

Safeguarding Implications

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

Public Health Implications

27. 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

28. 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

29. By endorsing the master plan, this helps to build consensus and to have a shared vision for the future of the Maltings and Central Car Park. The master plan includes many projects that will involve some 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

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

Legal Implications

31. 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

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

Conclusions

33. The area strategy for Salisbury as set out in the WCS recognises the contribution that the regeneration of the Maltings and Central Car Park will make to the economic vitality and resilience of the City. It enhances its natural assets and upgrades the physical environment. The WCS aims to ensure that Salisbury continues to be vibrant in order that it continues to make an important contribution to Wiltshire's economy, environment and quality of life. The preparation of proactive strategies for Wiltshire's principal settlements are to be encouraged to support policy delivery.
34. The endorsement of this master plan will guide the future development

of the Maltings and Central Car Park and therefore complements the WCS.

35. The draft masterplan at Appendix 1 has been subject to public consultation with members of the public, stakeholders and statutory bodies. Subject to the changes that are recommended at paragraph 25 of this report, the masterplan represents an agreed basis for decision making in future years.

Recommendation

36. It is recommended that the master plan for the Maltings and Central Car Park, as attached at Appendix 1, as amended as described paragraph 25 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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The following documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

Wiltshire Core Strategy

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Maltings and Central Car Park Master Plan
Appendix 2 – Consultation Methodology and Output Report including schedule of comments received and officer responses