

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Executive
Date: 24 February 2020
Report for: Decision
Report of: Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration

Report Title

Stretford Area Action Plan

Summary

Securing the successful regeneration of Stretford has been a long-standing priority for the Council. The Council is now proposing to commence preparation of a Stretford Area Action Plan (AAP) to provide a robust planning framework for the delivery of its objectives and ambitions for Stretford Town Centre and its surrounds.

The Stretford AAP will form part of the Council's adopted development plan, sitting alongside the adopted Core Strategy and in due course the emerging Trafford Local Plan. The Development Plan informs the entirety of the development management process, from pre-application through to the determination of planning applications or related consents.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Executive:

- (i) Approves the commencement of work to prepare the Stretford AAP.
- (ii) Approves the indicative timeline for its preparation through to adoption.
- (iii) Notes that a consultancy team will be commissioned via the Trafford Bruntwood Joint Venture to support preparation of the Stretford AAP.
- (iv) Notes the indicative AAP boundary for initial consultation.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

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Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Proposed Draft Area Action Plan Boundary

Implications:

| | |
|---|---|
| Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities | The Stretford Area Action Plan (AAP) will support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan (2019), including the priorities Building Quality, Affordable and Social Housing, Health and Wellbeing, and Successful and Thriving Places. The final Area Action Plan will be an adopted Development Plan Document which will sit alongside the adopted Core Strategy and in due course the emerging Trafford Local Plan. Furthermore the Area Action Plan will form an important component in the delivery of the Refreshed Stretford Masterplan vision. |
| Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework | At a GM level the Stretford AAP will support the growth ambitions articulated within the emerging Greater Manchester Spatial Framework and the GM Strategy. Specific proposals within the AAP will be developed in the context of the GM 2040 Transport Strategy, GM Congestion Plan, and Made to Move walking and cycling plan to identify improvements tackling traffic congestion, promote sustainable modes of travel and better integrate transport and new developments. |
| Financial | With the exception of Council staff resources, which are being met from existing budgets, the costs associated with the production of the AAP, including associated consultations, will be funded from the Joint Venture between the Council and Bruntwood. |
| Legal Implications: | Legal will support the production of the Area Action Plan as required. |
| Equality/Diversity Implications | An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out. This has concluded that there would be a neutral impact on protected groups from these proposals. Further assessments will be completed as part of the process to prepare the Final AAP, including as part of the Integrated Assessment. |
| Sustainability Implications | The AAP will contain policies with relevance to sustainability principles that new development would be in accordance with. The AAP will help deliver the Council's climate change / low carbon agenda and the GM Environment Plan though supporting better use of the existing land resource and promoting development in sustainable urban locations. |
| Resource Implications e.g. Staffing / ICT / Assets | Existing resources have been identified to support the preparation and delivery of the AAP and related activity across all the partners. |
| Risk Management Implications | The preparation and delivery of the AAP is supported by a risk plan setting out the key risks to delivery and proposed mitigation measures. |
| Health & Wellbeing Implications | None as a consequence of this report. |
| Health and Safety Implications | None as a consequence of this report. |

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Securing the successful regeneration of Stretford Town Centre has been a long-standing priority for the Council. In January 2018 the Council approved the Refreshed Stretford Masterplan to provide its strategy for the transformation of Stretford. Despite the work delivered to date, significant challenges remain, including a high vacancy rate, limited diversity of uses and the loss of several major retailers in recent years.
- 1.2 The Council now intends to commence preparation of a Stretford Area Action Plan (AAP) to provide the basis for the creation of a renewed and reshaped Town Centre that will be a successful and distinctive place aligned to the aspirations of the community. This will support a whole town centre approach, with community engagement at its heart, underpinned by a robust planning framework and effective delivery arrangements.
- 1.3 Previous attempts to deliver the regeneration of the Town Centre have been hampered due to a lack of control of strategically important sites, most notably the Stretford Mall site. In order to acquire the Stretford Mall site and gain control of this key asset in the Town Centre a joint venture arrangement (JV) has been established between the Council and Bruntwood on a 50:50 basis and on commercial terms. The JV arrangements will provide the basis of a delivery mechanism for development at the Stretford Mall site and potentially across the wider Stretford AAP area.

2.0 Proposed Stretford AAP

- 2.1 An AAP can be produced to set out area-specific vision and planning policy for areas within a wider Local Planning Authority area where it is anticipated that significant change is likely to take place. Its status as a Development Plan Document falls under the legislative framework established by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Regulations made under that Act, namely the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. As part of the Development Plan, once adopted, an AAP informs the entirety of the development management process, from pre-application through to the determination of planning applications or related consents.
- 2.2 The Council considers that the most appropriate and robust route, in planning terms, is to produce a document for adoption as a Development Plan Document. Therefore the Council is proposing to prepare an AAP for Stretford.
- 2.3 The Stretford AAP will help to ensure that the scale of development and change proposed for the area is positively managed and guided by a robust planning framework. The AAP will inform the entirety of the development management process, from pre-application through to the determination of planning applications or related consents. A specialist consultancy team will be commissioned, via the Trafford Bruntwood JV, to commence preparation of the AAP on behalf of the Council and in consultation with the local community.
- 2.4 The initial AAP boundary for consideration is identified at Appendix 1 and incorporates Stretford Town Centre and its surrounds. The boundary covers an area from the A56 gyratory up to the Bridgewater Canal and incorporates Stretford Mall, Lacy Street, the Essoldo Cinema, Stretford Public Hall, Victoria Park and Stretford House.

- 2.5 The production and adoption of the Stretford AAP is following the stages below (indicative timeframes are identified):

| Stage of adoption process | Indicative Timescale |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Approval of Consultation Draft CQ AAP (Regulation 18) by Executive followed by public consultation | Autumn 2020 |
| Approval of Publication Draft CQ AAP (Regulation 19) by Full Council followed by public consultation | Spring 2021 |
| Submission to Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for Examination | Summer 2021 |
| Examination in Public (EIP)* | Autumn 2021 |
| Adoption of CQ AAP by Full Council* | Mid 2022 |

[*Note: these dates depend on the capacity of the Planning Inspectorate to timetable an Examination in Public in a timely manner which is outside the Council's control].

3.0 Wider Corporate Links

- 3.1 The Stretford AAP will be consistent with the Council's Corporate Plan (2019) and the Trafford Economic and Housing Growth Framework (2018). The Stretford AAP will sit alongside the adopted Core Strategy, albeit it will supersede the site specific and / or land allocation policies of the current adopted Core Strategy and the adopted Trafford Unitary Development Plan within the final AAP boundary. Work is currently underway on a new Local Plan, which once adopted, will replace the remainder of the Core Strategy and Unitary Development Plan, forming part of the Development Plan alongside other Development Plan Documents, including the Stretford AAP. The Stretford AAP is also aligned with the principles in the emerging Trafford Design Guide.
- 3.2 At a GM level, it will support the growth ambitions articulated within the GM Strategy whilst supporting the urban capacity work, housing and employment numbers for the emerging Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF). Specific proposals within the AAP will be developed in the context of the GM 2040 Transport Strategy, GM Congestion Plan, and Made to Move walking and cycling plan to identify improvements tackling traffic congestion, promote sustainable modes of travel and better integrate transport and new developments.

4.0 Other Options

- 4.1 The Council could continue to progress the proposals for the Stretford area under the existing Refreshed Stretford Masterplan or develop a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). However given the scope, content proposed, and scale of development envisaged for the area it is more appropriate to be brought forward through an AAP.
- 4.2 Stretford is not identified as a Strategic Location in the adopted Core Strategy and now needs an area specific set of planning policies to bring forward appropriate regenerative development in the area. The continued absence of a robust

overarching planning framework for the delivery of development in the Stretford area will not provide the Council with a strategic context within which to make decisions on future development in support of its priorities for economic growth and development. The final AAP will provide the statutory starting point for planning decision making and have sufficient weight to meaningfully influence and shape development activity in the area.

- 4.3 The final AAP will become part of the existing Development Plan for Trafford. To rely on the new Local Plan to bring forward the proposals for Stretford would present too much risk of a delay as this document is reliant on the production of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) and its associated timetable

5.0 Consultation

- 5.1 It is recognised that regular engagement and consultation feedback is essential to identify what is important to the community and partners and to inform the delivery of the proposals for the Stretford area. Significant consultation with the local community over the last five years has provided a robust basis for the development of a shared, sustainable and authentic vision and comprehensive approach to regeneration that will be set out in the AAP.
- 5.2 Following acquisition of the Stretford Mall site by the JV, a public consultation event was held on 11 November 2019 to provide an opportunity for local people and groups to share their thoughts about the priorities for the Town Centre and how they would like to see the Mall improved. A further consultation session was held on 25 January 2020 to outline feedback from the first event, and provide further opportunities for local people and groups to share ideas that can shape the future of Stretford. Both these events were extremely well attended. A further engagement event will be held on 7 March 2020.
- 5.3 Once a Consultation Draft Stretford AAP has been prepared the Council will undertake public consultation in line with its published Statement of Community Involvement and the Local Plan Regulations (2012). This consultation process will provide further opportunities to fully involve all interested parties, including local people, businesses and key stakeholders in the development of the formal proposals and ensure they reflect the views of the community and other key stakeholders.

Reasons for Recommendation

The Executive is asked to approve preparation of the Stretford AAP in accordance with the timescales set out in the report to provide a robust planning framework for the delivery of its objectives and ambitions for Stretford Town Centre and its surrounds.

Key Decision No

If Key Decision, has 28-day notice been given? N/A

Finance Officer ClearanceGB.....

Legal Officer ClearanceJC.....

DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE



To confirm that the Financial and Legal Implications have been considered and the Executive Member has cleared the report.