

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Executive
Date: 27 November 2023
Report for: Decision
Report of: Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration

Report Title

Sale Moor and Hale Place Plans

Summary

The Sale Moor and Hale Place Plans have been developed with the involvement of the local community, businesses and stakeholders and identify opportunities to further improve both centres for those who live, work, visit and spend time there. The Place Plans will assist in ensuring both centres meet their full potential and support the resilience of the areas.

The Place Plans will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and will sit alongside the Council's Core Strategy and be of value in the preparation and delivery of the emerging Trafford Local Plan.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Executive:

- (i) Approves the Hale and Sale Moor Place Plans.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Stephen James, Head of Growth, Communities and Housing
Oliver Shimell, Inclusive Economy and Communities Manager

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Hale Place Plan
Appendix 2 – Sale Moor Place Plan

Implications:

Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities	The Sale Moor and Hale Place Plans will support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan (2021-24), including priority 1 (Reducing Health Inequalities), priority 2 (Supporting people out of poverty) and Priority 3 (Addressing our Climate Crisis). The Place Plans will support the adopted Core Strategy and preparation and delivery of the Trafford Local Plan.
Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework	At a GM level the Sale Moor and Hale Place Plans will support the growth ambitions articulated within the Places for Everyone Plan (PfE) and the GM Strategy. Specific proposals within the Place Plans have been 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	The financial implications of any specific future developments will be assessed at the time based on availability of internal and external funding and overall value for money.
Legal Implications:	Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with development plans unless material considerations indicate otherwise (Section 38(6), PCPA 2004). There may be requirements for highway and traffic orders in the future when detailed proposals are drawn up.
Equality/Diversity Implications	Equality Impact Assessments will be completed as part of the process to deliver specific proposals outlined in the Place Plans.
Sustainability Implications	New development will be carried out in accordance with the Council's sustainability principles. The proposals will help deliver the Council's climate change / low carbon agenda and the GM Environment Plan by supporting more sustainable modes of travel, better use of existing land resource and promoting development in sustainable urban locations.
Carbon Reduction	Both Place Plans encourage greater use of active travel in accessing the centres and promoting an environment where there is less reliance on private vehicles.
Resource Implications e.g. Staffing / ICT / Assets	Existing staff resources are in place to support delivery of the Place Plans.
Risk Management Implications	The delivery of the proposals within the Place Plan will be supported by a risk register 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 In May 2019 Trafford Council appointed Nexus Planning, working alongside technical consultants WSP, Gillespies and Buttress Architects, to prepare two Village Place Plans for Sale Moor and Hale Village Centres.
- 1.2 The main purpose of developing Place Plans for Hale and Sale Moor Village Centres was to provide a framework for future changes/enhancements to the areas and to strengthen their performance as village centres through improvements to their visual and environmental appearance.
- 1.3 In 2019/20, a number of concerns were raised with the consultation process which have been set out in section 4 of the report and whilst consideration of how the issues had been addressed was being given, the global Pandemic started and officer resources who had helped develop the Place Plans were needed elsewhere which paused the final sign off of the Place Plans.
- 1.4 As the global pandemic subsided, there was the opportunity to revisit the Place Plans in order to have them formally agreed. However, in light of the time which had elapsed since the preparation of the original Place Plans and a global pandemic having taken place it was considered useful to update the Place Plans to ensure they reflected both the current and future needs of those using the village centres. As such, the consultant team were re-engaged to revisit the Place Plans and update the information. It was also considered vital to undertake a further comprehensive consultation approach to ensure local residents, businesses and key stakeholders were able to contribute to the process of updating the Hale and Sale Moor Place Plans (see Appendix 1 and 2 respectively).
- 1.5 The purpose of the refreshed Place Plans remains to help guide future policy, actions and investment within the village centres and assist in ensuring that Hale and Sale Moor meet their full potential as centres that serve their local communities.
- 1.6 A key element when updating the Place Plans has been to take stock of the past couple of years and reflect on how the centres had to adapt very quickly to the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been necessary to gain an understanding of how businesses and other key stakeholders sought to adapt how they operated to reflect the quickly changing demands from residents within the catchment of the centres. A detailed understanding of the commercial climate, future commercial trends and other potential implications has also formed part of the formulation of the Place Plans.
- 1.7 Through re-engaging Nexus to undertake the review of the Place Plans the following requirements were made of the review process:
 - i) Update the Place Plans to take account of the time that has lapsed, make them more user friendly and reflect the current commercial climate (and any changes that have taken place)
 - ii) Undertake an updated comprehensive consultation process with residents, stakeholders and businesses on the plans ensuring the concerns that were set out in sections 1.3 and 1.4 of the report were addressed
 - iii) Review and analyse all findings from the stakeholder consultation
 - iv) Produce revised final Place Plans for consideration by the Council's Executive

- 1.8 It should be noted that the Place Plans are not inflexible or prescriptive, nor do they represent a commitment to funding by the Council. However, there is substantial investment already approved within Sale Moor through the delivery of the MCF cycle and pedestrian link from Sale town centre to the Waterpark and the Place Plans will help to further guide how the centres can continue to evolve in the short, medium and longer terms.
- 1.9 The Place Plans have been prepared alongside the local community with a significant amount of engagement, including approximately over 400 attendees at consultation events and 1,708 questionnaire responses (across the four phases of consultation). Meetings have also been held with Ward Members and local stakeholders. A summary of the consultation process is set out in Section 4.

2.0 Hale Place Plan

- 2.1 Hale village centre is situated less than 1km to the south east of Altrincham town centre. Hale village centre is one of the designated district centres within the Council's adopted Core Strategy. The Hale Place Plan is intended to outline how the village can best serve its residents and businesses through the creation of a strategy that will provide clarity and confidence to attract future investment.
- 2.2 The Place Plan also identifies a physical framework through which to prioritise interventions. The Place Plan focusses on identifiable and deliverable objectives for Hale through the establishment of a new vision for the village and realistic and achievable objectives. Overall, the focus of the Hale Place Plan is to:
- i) Establish a clear Vision and development strategy for the area which is reflected in approaches to development management, design, investment, partnership working, transport and other matters;
 - ii) Provide confidence to partners in the prospects for Hale and to encourage further investment;
 - iii) Establish clear development and design principles to be used as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications;
 - iv) Identify the focus for public sector investment and support in unlocking the potential of Hale; and
 - v) Provide a focus for on-going stakeholder and public engagement in delivering the Vision for Hale
- 2.3 In developing the focus, the process of refreshing the Hale Place Plan has been informed and moulded through a comprehensive approach to consultation and engagement with stakeholders, key areas of feedback have been summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Hale – Summary of Feedback

Topic	Feedback
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns raised in respect of the overarching parking provision, with some respondents stating that the level available should remain as existing. However, some respondents were keen to see that the parking level is substantially reduced and the saw the village becoming significantly less car-centric. • Measure of success is footfall, not parking numbers. • The cost of car parking needs reviewing in order to attract people into the village. • Illegal parking needs resolving and additional control is required. • One way to reduce the level of car movements is to reduce the level of car parking.
Vehicular Movements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents are seeking a less car-centric village, which will bring pedestrian safety to the forefront. • Others do not believe that the proposed strategy will alter the level or speed of vehicular movement through the village. • Concerns are raised over the potential of Cecil Road becoming a 'rat run'.
Pedestrian safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pelican crossing is needed to ensure crossing is safe for all. • Concerns raised regarding the removal of formal crossings and replacement with the informal options, which are dependent on leaning towards a shared surface arrangement.
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making the whole village shared-space would enhance all of the key areas identified. • Concerns around the signage strategy and it introducing 'drab colours'
Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some respondents consider that the strategies presented would be a detriment to existing businesses, due to the alterations proposed to the level of on-street parking. • Respondents are keen to see diversification of uses within the centre but that there needs to be a collaborative approach internally to line up the rents, business rates etc.
Ashley Hotel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents are keen to see the hotel redeveloped. • It is a prime opportunity for the village
Public realm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to make the entire village shared surface so more potential for businesses. • Respondents consider that there is limited opportunity for further greenspace given the development limits but that where it is possible, it should be encouraged.

Clock tower proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirement to consider the implications on the strategy around the clock tower on the residents who front onto this area. • Considerations are required around the future of the clock tower itself.
Bowling green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the bowling green for anything other than bowling is not considered to be acceptable. • Consideration required around the appropriateness of providing a children’s play area around the bowling green, fronting onto Ashley Road. • Some respondents however, consider that the bowling green is a wasted space in the village and there is a real opportunity for it to be more inclusive and not just a facility used by a minority.

2.4 In considering the detailed feedback received, a number of specific changes have been made since the first iteration of the Hale Place Plan. In summary the changes include the following:

- General updates to the plans to incorporate comments from stakeholders, to include:
 - Conservation Area Appraisal policies
 - Streets for All
 - GM Transport Strategy
 - Design Code
- Update to car parking assessment
- Retention of the formal crossing – acceptance that it is required for pedestrian safety
- Updates to the bowling green area to reflect comments on the bowling green not currently being suitable for wider community uses
- Updates to the clock tower area to reconsider the area adjacent to the clock tower and residents’ parking
- Removal of shopfront strategy due to conflict with Conservation Area Management Plan

2.5 Table 1A below sets out the consultation response numbers for the Hale Place Plan that have taken place since 2020 through to the most recent consultation exercise that commenced in January 2023.

Table 1A – Hale Consultation Response Numbers

Hale Consultation Summary

Stage of Consultation	Dates and Information	Residents	Businesses Owners	Total
1-2	Online consultation 8 th August – 20 th September Qualitative questions seeking views on usage of the village and general aspirations	504	6	510
3	Public Consultation throughout December 2019 – March 2020 on the draft Place Plan	126	6	132
4	Public Consultation in 2023 on revised draft Place Plan (January to March 2023)	178	12	190

2.6 The Place Plan is broken down into a series of chapters and contains a useful action plan at the end of the document with a clear focus on potential actions that can be used to address the issues raised as part of the Place Plans along with an indicative timescale for each activity.

2.7 The focus of the action plan for Hale Place Plan is on the following areas:

- Monitoring the health of the centre
- To promote the Place Plan through the emerging Trafford Local Plan
- The regeneration and improvement of the clock tower and bowling green areas
- To enhance the public realm throughout the village
- Review the overall sustainability of Hale
- Signage / legibility strategy

3.0 Sale Moor Place Plan

3.1 In a similar approach to the Hale Place Plan, the Sale Moor Village Place Plan has been developed to ensure Sale Moor is a sustainable centre, which is well equipped to meet the current and future needs of its residents and visitors, and which effectively supports the role of local businesses.

3.2 The Place Plan identifies a physical framework through which to prioritise interventions. The Place Plan focusses on identifiable and deliverable objectives for Sale Moor through the establishment of a new vision for the village and realistic and achievable objectives.

3.3 Through a comprehensive approach to consultation and engagement with stakeholders, key areas of feedback have been summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2 – Sale Moor – Summary of Feedback

Topic	Feedback
Vehicular movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general acceptance that improvements are needed to the gyratory, and a leaning towards less vehicular movement along the high street. • Consideration is required with regard to the implications in terms of vehicular movement of the proposal onto Temple Road, Oak Road, Beech Road, James Street and Hampson Street (and so on). Significant concerns raised with regard to the safety implications should drivers choose to divert their trips along these ‘side’ roads and what this could mean in terms of road safety for residents. • Concerns raised with regard to the specific design of the junctions, queries raised relating to the associated movement priorities and how the cycle lane would fit in with this.
Cycle proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were a real mix of responses regarding the proposed cycle lane, with a number of respondents supporting the proposals, noting the importance of encouraging travel by bicycle, but others considering that the cycle lane would not be used and would have a negative impact on the businesses and overarching functioning of the village.

Pedestrian safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of the movement strategy on pedestrian safety both within the village and on the surrounding streets is a key concern raised by respondents, and particularly those which live on the neighbouring streets, and school users. • Opportunities for additional pedestrian crossings to make the village safer for those on foot.
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns raised in respect of the impact of the proposed strategy on the parking within the village. • Businesses concerned in respect of relocating on-street parking from directly outside the front of their business and what this could mean to future sales. • Previous version of the Place Plan included the opportunity to develop on the Warrener Street car park, with the loss of parking raised as a concern.
Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents consider there to be a high 'churn' in businesses, which could in part be due to the heavy traffic and wider public realm. • The mix of uses in the centre is both considered to be a positive of Sale Moor (providing an independent convenience offer for example) but also a negative (as residents have to travel elsewhere to meet their needs). • Respondents consider that the proposed strategies could result in a more diverse centre, including the encouragement of a night time economy.
Public realm and outdoor seating opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents to the questionnaire considered that improving the public realm, providing more vegetation and opportunities for visitors to enjoy the village would be a benefit. • Tilting the balance from a centre which is very vehicular heavy, to one which is focused more on pedestrians would also provide an opportunity to enhance the public realm and greenspace. Such opportunities could also feed into wider sustainability objectives.
Warrener Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity is sought in respect of the future opportunities to develop Warrener Street.

3.4 In considering the detailed feedback received, a number of specific changes have been made since the first iteration of the Sale Moor Place Plan. In summary the changes include the following:

- General updates to the plans to incorporate comments from stakeholders, to include:
 - Streets for All
 - GM Transport Strategy
 - Design Code
 - Bee Network
- Removal of Warrener Street as a development potential
- Update to the movement strategy to reflect the wider work required to assess junctions, traffic movements and implications on surrounding streets

- 3.5 Table 2A below sets out the consultation response numbers for the Sale Moor Place Plan that have taken place since 2020 through to the most recent consultation exercise that commenced in January 2023.

Table 2A – Sale Moor Consultation Response Numbers

Sale Moor Consultation Summary

Stage of Consultation	Dates and Information	Residents	Businesses Owners	Total
1-2	Online consultation 8 th August – 20 th September Qualitative questions seeking views on usage of the village and general aspirations	311	7	318
3	Public Consultation throughout December 2019 – March 2020 on the draft Place Plan	256	16	272
4	Public Consultation in 2023 on revised draft Place Plan (January to March 2023)	275	11	286

- 3.6 The focus of the action plan for the Sale Moor Place Plan is on the following areas:

- Monitoring the health of the centre
- To promote the Place Plan through the emerging Trafford Local Plan
- MCF pedestrian and cycling proposal within the village
- To enhance the public realm throughout the village
- Develop and adopt a formal shopfront strategy
- Review the overall sustainability of Sale Moor
- Promotion and branding
- Signage / legibility strategy

4.0 Consultation/Engagement

- 4.1 There is a significant history to consultation on the Place Plans dating back to 2019. Draft Place Plans were originally developed in 2019 and 2020. When the Place Plans were due to be presented to the Executive for formal sign off, a number of concerns were raised particularly around the consultation process which have been set out below:

Issue 1 – Public Sector Equality Duty

Concerns were raised that the report and Place Plans needed to evidence how the Council had complied with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The PSED requires that a public authority, in making any decision, must be able to show that the decision maker has had regard to the impact of the decision on persons with protected characteristics.

Issue 2 – Adequacy of Consultation

The adequacy of the consultation with businesses was brought into question due to the low number of returns from business through the consultation.

Issue 3 – Failure to summarise consultation responses

Concerns were raised that the consultation responses were not fully summarised within the Executive report and supporting documentation.

- 4.2 In considering the previous approach to consultation, concerns were raised that the Gunning Principles had not been adhered to. The Gunning Principles can be summarised into four key principles:
- (i) consultation must take place when the proposal is still at a formative stage;
 - (ii) sufficient reasons must be put forward for the proposal to allow for intelligent consideration and response;
 - (iii) adequate time must be given for consideration and response; and
 - (iv) the product of consultation must be conscientiously taken into account.
- 4.3 In updating both Place Plans, the consultants were set the task of ensuring that there were multiple and varied opportunities for interested stakeholders to engage with the process. In partnership with officers from the Inclusive Economy and Communities Team, a comprehensive stakeholder engagement process was put in place.
- 4.4 Following on from the initial consultation exercise where a number of issues were raised relating to the consultation approach, it was vital that the new approach sought to address previous concerns.
- 4.5 Set out below, is an outline of all the consultation approaches and methods which were used to refresh the Place Plans.
- Executive Member / Ward Member briefings to discuss the previous Place Plans – Throughout September 2022
 - Press release – issued following Executive Member / Ward Member briefings
 - Stakeholder virtual meetings – Throughout January and February 2023
 - Walk-around site visits offered for key stakeholder groups including disabled groups, key community groups and local businesses/business representative organisations in both villages. – During January and February 2023
 - Half day drop-in session for each centre (at Trinity Methodist Church in Sale Moor on January 23rd 2-7pm and St. Peters Church in Hale on January 24th 1-6pm. Invites publicised via online methods and by leaflets/posters within the centres themselves. Various methods of communication were used to publicise the events such as leaflets through the door of businesses, hand delivered letters to businesses, notification to community groups via email and online, online on the Council's website and social media. Details of all businesses were collated from the Council's database within a 500m radius of the centres.
 - Online survey via Citizens Space – an easy-to-understand online survey was widely distributed to residents, businesses and stakeholders. Results of the consultation were also publicised on Citizens Space at the conclusion of this part of the Place Plan development process.
 - Social media campaigns - links to Trafford website updates and the online survey was shared.

5.0 Delivering on the Place Plans

- 5.1 Both Place Plans have identified a wide range of potential actions to take forward, including next steps with estimated timescales.

- 5.2 It should be noted that there are no clear pathways in terms of funding or resources to take forward all of the actions outlined in the Place Plans. However, without the Place Plans having been completed, Trafford would not have the necessary information available to be able develop funding bids when opportunities arise.
- 5.3 Having undertaken the development of the Place Plans, there is now, for the first time in the two areas, a clear list of potential interventions which can be prioritised and form the basis for internal as well as external funding allocations and bids.
- 5.4 Although a number of actions will require significant finance to take forwards along with further, specific consultation such as any changes to road layouts, there are also a broad range of opportunities that may be appropriate to take forwards in the short term such as enhanced marketing and branding of the areas.

6.0 Wider Corporate Links

- 6.1 The Place Plans are consistent with the Council's Corporate Plan and will help to meet the Council's three Corporate Priorities of reducing health inequalities, supporting people out of poverty and addressing our climate crisis. In addition, completion of the Place Plans is a key action contained within the Council's agreed Inclusive Economy Delivery Plan.

7.0 Other Options

- 7.1 There has been the option to not develop Place Plans for Hale and Sale Moor and allow market conditions to dictate if and how the centres develop. This approach would not provide the clear steer of direction that has been provided from Hale and Sale Moor's communities that has driven the development of the Place Plans' content.

8.0 Consultation

- 8.1 There has been significant consultation and engagement carried out as part of updating both Place Plans which is set out in Section 4 of the report. The approach to consultation has been guided by the Gunning Principles and the Public Sector Equality Duty throughout the process. In addition, a summary of the feedback received in developing both Place Plans has been set out in the respective sections on Hale Place Plan (Table 1, Section 2) and for Sale Moor Place Plan (Table 2, Section 3).
- 8.2 Concerns raised in the previous consultation approach to develop the first drafts of the Place Plan have been comprehensively addressed in developing the latest iterations of the Place Plans.

Reasons for Recommendation

The Executive are asked to approve the Hale and Sale Moor Place Plans as they provide two high level documents which set out a clear vision and objectives for Hale and Sale Moor and are supported by initial actions plans which together, can be used as the basis to guide future activities and potential funding bids to improve the areas. The formally agreed documents would also provide useful information in contributing to the development of the emerging Local Plan for Trafford.

Key Decision Yes

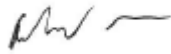
If Key Decision, has 28-day notice been given? Yes

In all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Finance Officer Clearance PC

Legal Officer Clearance IA

DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. W. ...', written over a horizontal line.

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