



West End Masterplan Mid-Term Review 2nd June 2009

Report of Corporate Director (Regeneration)

PURPOSE OF REPORT			
To update members on the Mid-term Review of the West End Masterplan and recommendations arising from appraisal and outline the next steps in implementing and maintaining local scrutiny of the refreshed priorities.			
Key Decision	X	Non-Key Decision	Referral from Cabinet Member
Date Included in Forward Plan	26th January 2009		
This report is public			

RECOMMENDATIONS OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR (REGENERATION):

- (1) That Cabinet endorses Mid-term review recommendations and implementation plan and notes the independent appraisal and consultation feedback appended to the report.
- (2) That Cabinet advises which of the Options 2 to 5 (shown in section 7.0) should be taken forward.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In the light of the Lancaster district Local Strategic Partnership (LDLSP) refresh of economic priorities for the District, Cabinet agreed in October 2008 (minute reference 65) that officers undertake a mid-term review of existing and 'pipeline' West End Masterplan projects, in order to identify, match and prioritise them taking account of the current policy framework and funders' priorities.
- 1.2 The results of the review, and 'refresh' of the Masterplan detailed in this report show which of the proposed physical work elements in the West End will contribute to the objectives of the Economic Programme, are likely to attract external funding support and can realistically be delivered. This report presents the full analysis, describing processes and appraisal and proposes the next steps in the outline implementation plan for the priority projects.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Following October Cabinet officers prepared a report entitled "Draft West End Masterplan Review". The report gave a detailed summary of:

- The genesis and development of the original Masterplan document through baseline analysis, options, consultation and adoption by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document in February 2005;
- The formulation of objectives and prioritising of activity and the particular emphasis on housing and public realm interventions;
- An analysis of achievements and progress to date and any outstanding issues
- A current strategic view of emerging policy and funding considerations;
- A detailed analysis and interim recommendations for a renewed focus for the physical work in the West End.

2.2 Summarised below are the key points of the report:

Masterplan origins

The plan identified that the housing and social problems, and the associated environment and image issues, particularly in the West End, have a serious effect on the economy and therefore the economic future of the town. The development process that resulted in the Masterplan final report was widely consulted and has a considerable amount of endorsement from the local community, the Council and its strategic partners.

Progress and Issues

The first 3 years work concentrated on “Phase 1” projects and public realm and a number of achievements can be recognised:

- *Housing remodelling* has resulted in major tenure improvement along key streets including Clarendon Road and West End Road;
- *West End Gardens*: an outstanding improvement scheme incorporating public art, play areas and a new ‘destination’ café draws;
- *Private sector investment*: Investment in the Former Bus Depot and part of the Frontierland site can be linked to improved confidence in the area;
- *Commercial core*: Yorkshire Street public realm improvements have been well received and prompted a number of new physical investment proposals.

The original intention to create a ‘Central Park’ as a major public realm intervention failed ‘value for money’ test pointing to a need for greater ‘realism’ in public realm strategy. As a result Cabinet agreed in October 2008 (minute reference 65) to remove Central Park as a Masterplan proposal.

Emerging Policy and Strategic Considerations

Clearly there are a great number of policy documents produced by a range of agencies but at a district level the West End Masterplan ‘fit’ with the following is most important:

- *LDLSP “Economic Programme”*: The Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-11 identifies 5 key economic themes: Knowledge Economy; Heysham/M6 employment corridor; Reinventing Morecambe; Lancaster City and Riverside; Carnforth Northern Gateway.
- *Local Development Framework (LDF)*: The new planning system will provide a vital tool in achieving ‘step-change’ and supporting the Economic Programme. An Area Action Plan has been proposed for central Morecambe and it is prudent to set West End priorities in the context of the LDF’s approved Core Strategy and emerging Action Plan Framework to exploit synergy and economic linkages.
- *Lancaster City Council Corporate Plan*: The Council itself sets out its own objectives and priorities to ensure its officer and financial resources are applied to best effect.

- *Housing Capital Programme*: The detail of the programme beyond 2008-09 has not been decided but a broad programme has been agreed focussing on the original 'High Priority' Phase 1 Masterplan areas. There should continue to be synergy between economic regeneration and this housing work.

2.3 With the current economic climate in mind, and the fragility of the housing market being uppermost, there must also be recognition that deliverability – in the sense of the ability of projects to attract funding and which can be implemented with the resources in hand in a timely manner – is an important consideration in all strategic policy.

3.0 Details of Draft Review Document and Consultation

3.1 The West End Masterplan was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on 22 February 2005 by Cabinet (minute 149). Planning policy guidance states that councils should update SPDs where changing circumstances require it, and the significant changes in local and national policy as well as the projects already delivered mean that this review is timely.

3.2 The Draft Mid-Term Review has assessed each of the proposed work elements potential contribution towards high level objectives, in particular those of the LDLSP's emerging Economic Programme, against a standardised 'scoring' template. The template had previously been agreed by Cabinet at its October 2008 meeting (minute reference 65).

3.3 An independent scrutiny panel was convened by the Council's Programme Secretariat consisting of officers from the City Council experienced in aspects of: risk management; finance and funding; planning and policy; programme development and performance. The purpose of the Mid Term Review is to assess project viability in terms of:

- Fit to strategic aims and policy
- Deliverability
- Availability of funding
- Risk
- Value for Money

3.4 The overall strategic aims of the current Master Plan are considered to be relevant and appropriate. Concentrating future regeneration activity upon a focussed and prioritised list of projects making the best use of limited resources is supported as an appropriate way forward in the current financial climate.

3.5 A revised Draft Mid-Term Review report was presented to the West End Partnership (WEP) for feedback and comment. The partnership agreed with much of the Mid-term review but raised the following issues:

- *Bold Street proposal 'medium' should be changed to 'high' priority*: Bold Street exhibited the poorest property condition and officers originally considered it high priority. However due to a transcription error the information provided to the WEP was not updated. This error has been corrected and Bold Street is listed as a high priority project.
- *The Central Park proposal be reintroduced*: Cabinet resolved to remove Central Park from the Masterplan (minute reference 65) in October 2008 and nothing has changed to alter officers' views that the proposal is not feasible.
- *The low and medium priority classification assigned to West End Road and Clarendon Road East remodelling respectively*: The previous 'remodelling' strategy used was no longer economically viable and the officer recommendation is to review

alternate delivery models to see if the Masterplan aims of reducing low quality private rented properties, particularly HMOs, and the provision of more family homes for owner occupiers can be achieved for these properties.

The detailed consultation response from the WEP can be found in Appendix 1.

3.6 Following this process a Final Draft West End Masterplan Mid-term Review has been produced (Appendix 2). The high level recommendations now reflect appraisal comments and the consultation feedback. The ranking of proposals has also altered during this process. Listed below is the portfolio of proposals that have been prioritised as high or medium priority ranking:

High Ranking Projects/Areas

Offering greatest regeneration impact, secure best policy fit, have greatest chance of securing funding, provide value for money/additionality.

- Co-Op Building
- Commercial Core
- Regent Road
- Exemplar
- Bold Street and West End Gardens
- Marine Road West (public realm)

Medium Ranking Projects / Areas

Meeting most of the assessment criteria and viable but of a slightly lower priority or for implementation in the medium to long term.

- Clarendon Road Living Street
- Frontierland
- Heysham Road Gateway
- Bus / Illuminations Depot
- Regent Park
- Clarendon Road East
- West End Road
- Marine Road West (housing)
- Avondale / Barnes Road (workshops)

3.7 The remaining proposals are ranked as low or lowest priority – meaning in effect that the ideas offer limited or poor policy fit and should be deferred or no longer pursued or investigated as viable proposals unless strategic policy circumstances change in the medium to long term.

3.8 Appendix 1 also details the final recommendation listed against each Masterplan area following consultation and forms an outline implementation plan and the officer responsible for taking matters forward. If Members approve the Recommendations and Implementation Plan this will be included in a final Mid-Term Review document, and circulated as a record of the achievements and a formal statement of working priorities moving forward.

4.0 Masterplan Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

4.1 The following options have been identified:

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages	Risks
1. Do nothing – make no decision on West End Masterplan priorities.	No advantages identified.	No clear statement of direction, in either strategic or development terms, of Council priorities for economic	Potential for 'drift', confusion and waste in allocation of financial and human resources in development and

		regeneration in the West End.	delivery.
2. Cabinet endorses Mid-term review recommendations and implementation plan and notes the independent appraisal and consultation feedback appended to the report.	<p>Clear commitment to and direction for economic and housing regeneration work in the West End.</p> <p>Independent appraisal has endorsed recommendations.</p> <p>The West End Partnership has been consulted and provided formal feedback that has led to some changes in priority.</p>	Although formal community consultation feedback has been received appraisal process has essentially been officer led.	Usual risks associated with practical delivery relating to achieving development funding, managing and shaping projects and initiatives.

4.2 While the focus of the review is around the economic regeneration theme, it should be noted that particular economically 'low ranking' proposals may find support within the LDLSP's other Thematic Groups and their associated priorities. Essentially the West End Masterplan Mid-term Review and the implementation plan is a programme rather than a collection of individual projects. It provides a strategic overview and a framework for any projects that are supported. As individual projects are developed they will be subject to detailed internal appraisal and conform to the Council's project management systems.

5.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)

5.1 Option 2 is the preferred option as this provides a clear commitment and direction for economic and housing regeneration work in the West End through the stated priorities and outline implementation plan. Cabinet can be reassured by the fact that the projects and recommendations have been subject to independent appraisal and community consultation.

6.0 Local Governance and Scrutiny of Masterplan Implementation

6.1 The West End Partnership (WEP) was set up in order to give local input into three initiatives targeted specifically at the West End neighbourhood in past years. The initiatives were:

- The West End Masterplan
- Neighbourhood Management
- Cleaner, greener and safer community funding

The WEP is an independent partnership with an 'unincorporated' constitution, and was financially supported by the three funding streams.

6.2 The discrete Neighbourhood Management initiative for the West End has ended along with the associated budgets. There is no specific budget identified to fund

administrative support and provide for hire of rooms/refreshments for meetings. The cleaner, greener fund has now also ended.

Physical Masterplan priority projects will continue to be delivered in the West End but the Economic Programme focus is on integration and synergy across Morecambe's communities and economic linkages to the wider District and Regional economy rather than discrete neighbourhood work. The creation of a new Morecambe Parish Council (covering the wards of Torrisholme, Bare, Poulton, Westgate, Harbour and Heysham North) is also significant. The LDLSP is also undertaking detailed work on a Community Engagement Framework for its activities and areas of influence.

- 6.3 The previous WEP enjoyed a degree of authority and autonomy over resource allocation. However, it is now perhaps more appropriate for major resource allocation decisions to be taken at a more strategic level given the Economic Programme strategy. The correct 'scale' for the consideration of major strategic resources and projects is at City Council Cabinet and Corporate Director level. However, for any new or ongoing initiatives affecting a community such as the West End there will still be a requirement for local community input and engagement.
- 6.4 The role and purpose of the WEP in relation to 'governance' and scrutiny of the ongoing Masterplan project issues therefore needs to be considered. This is particularly pressing in the light of recent democratic and partnership changes. An analysis of the WEP's constitutional objectives and its involvement in issues is attached in Appendix 3. The options for local engagement arising from this analysis are outlined in the table under 7.0.

7.0 Proposals

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages	Risks/Issues
1. Do nothing	Council has no view on the future governance and community scrutiny of Masterplan projects/ proposals. No advantages identified.	No clear Council position on local engagement in strategic or implementation for the West End.	'Drift' and uncertainty of position in relation to local engagement in ongoing West End proposals/projects.
2. New Morecambe Parish Council takes on West End 'local engagement' – potentially through its own sub-group or WEP.	<p>The Parish Council can make a decision on resourcing 'neighbourhood' level input. It may choose to develop a new West End focus group or 'adopt' the WEP or some elements of it.</p> <p>Provides a democratic first 'port of call' for raising West End issues, proposals and initiatives with the community.</p>	The Parish Council has not made a decision on how it wants to conduct its business and whether it requires 'neighbourhood' level input.	<p>'Gap' until the new Council becomes operational and uncertainty of WEP position until elections and decisions on neighbourhood input requirements and resourcing.</p> <p>WEP (if a vehicle that the Parish Council wants to support) will still require its meetings serviced and a resource needs to be found to meet costs.</p>
3. WEP supported to continue as an independent body.	<p>Retains considerable local experience and capacity and could provide useful local commentary and input into projects and initiatives which have the potential to impact on the West End.</p> <p>Could interact, assist and co-operate with Parish Council on an informal basis.</p>	<p>No direct current funding to manage or distribute so relevance and usefulness of an independent body in the West End is questionable.</p> <p>Potential duplication of effort as issues will still need to be raised with the Parish Council and may work against achieving a clear community view with which to inform West End ongoing work.</p>	<p>WEP will still require its meetings serviced and a resource needs to be found to meet administration costs although the number of meetings could be reduced.</p> <p>Potential for uncertainty if an independent City Council supported group stands outside the new Parish Council structure.</p>
4. Input and scrutiny via a specific West End Cabinet liaison group or Overview and Scrutiny task group?	Direct West End Councillor involvement is maintained. Links to Parish Council and wider project based community consultation also maintained.	<p>City Council led and may be perceived as closed to wider community input.</p> <p>Issues will still need to be raised with the Parish Council with potential duplication of effort.</p>	No substantive role for WEP would inevitably lead to loss of a well developed group that has a detailed understanding of the Masterplan and other neighbourhood issues.
5. Utilise LDLSP Community Engagement Framework.	West End engagement could be accommodated within LDLSP's Community Engagement Framework.	<p>LDLSP has still to determine its optimum methods of engagement. Work is ongoing in evaluating which methods are working well and which solutions it will adopt.</p> <p>Detailed community input on particular proposals may be difficult to achieve or it may be inappropriate to channel such work through LDLSP.</p>	Uncertainty of position on West End local engagement until LDLSP makes a decision on its preferred engagement methods.

- 7.1 As noted in the options analysis there are a number of strategic engagement issues and ongoing analysis running alongside the need to maintain a specific community liaison /engagement in the West End Masterplan proposals and projects. Most pertinently there will be a 'gap' until many of the options identified come to fruition. The WEP's role must therefore be considered in this context and Cabinet Members are requested to consider the disadvantages / advantages of providing interim financial and administrative support for the continuation of the WEP.
- 7.2 Support for the West End Partnership from either City or Parish Council would mean retention of considerable local experience and capacity which could provide useful local commentary and input into projects and initiatives which have the potential to impact on the West End. However, with limited resource allocation powers and no current funding to manage or distribute the relevance of WEP and its current constitution is questionable. WEP will require its meetings serviced and a resource would need to be found to meet costs and these implications are outlined in the Financial Implications section.
- 7.3 Members should note that as an independent body WEP has to make a decision to 'stand down' itself, although this will clearly be influenced by a decision on continuing formal Council support.

8.0 Officer preferred option

- 8.1 Officers have considered all of the practical solutions to governance and would recommend that one of the options 2 to 5 would provide a robust governance structure.

9.0 Conclusion

- 9.1 The mid-term review of the West End Masterplan fits in with the Council's new corporate and strategic approach towards delivering economic regeneration placing emphasis of the overarching role of the LDLSP priorities, policy fit and 'deliverability'. The review should be welcomed for providing a renewed focus but also for taking stock of the physical achievements of the first three years. The review and outline implementation plan will assist more effective targeting on the deliverable 'high impact' projects that will build upon the positive changes seen in the West End and which will contribute directly to the wider regeneration of Morecambe.
- 9.2 Members are requested to consider the preferred method of engagement and scrutiny of West End projects. Members should consider the issues outlined in this report and comes to a recommendation on any continuing formal support for the WEP. The views of the West End Partnership will be available for the Cabinet meeting.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

The proposals for the start up service relate to the 2008/09 Corporate Plan through the Council's medium term objectives which include: 'Lead the regeneration of our District' and the Priority Outcome to 'improve economic prosperity throughout the Lancaster district'.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

Diversity – positive impact. The proposals delivered to date have been designed to provide "access for all". Future priority proposals will continue to contribute towards equality objectives including women, black and minority ethnic groups and people with disabilities leading to greater representation of these views and perspectives during design and implementation.

Human rights – neutral impact

Community safety – neutral impact

Sustainability – positive impact. The review highlights those proposals which are 'not viable' from the perspective of being sustainable and deliverable.

Rural proofing – not applicable

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Masterplan Priorities

The proposals under the preferred option (Option 2) have no direct financial implications for the City Council. The requirements for developing the priority projects, as per the outline implementation plan, can be achieved using in-house officer resources or 'bought-in' as external funding of such resources allows. The delivery and financial arrangements for individual project proposals will be considered under separate reporting procedures and will be subject to independent appraisal before any resources are committed. The proposals and projects identified in the Masterplan review will be delivered using external funding as no specific Council capital resources are currently allocated, or expected to be, requested.

Masterplan Scrutiny/WEP financial support

The cost of room hire and refreshments for the 10 WEP meetings undertaken over 2008/09 financial year was approximately £1,300. If Members consider the West End Partnership is the most suitable vehicle/method for local engagement and scrutiny of West End Masterplan proposals moving forward it should make a budget allowance for these meetings. However, it is also considered by officers that WEP business could be achieved with fewer meetings.

It is difficult to see how any of the other options could impact on the overall City Council budget at present, but they are unlikely to incur additional costs over and above core officer time and internal recharges. If additional costs are incurred they are unlikely to be as substantive as supporting an independent body such as West End Partnership.

It should be noted that should Option 2 be preferred (i.e. the new Morecambe Parish Council taking on West End local engagement) and the Parish agrees, this would be picked up in the parish functions / funding review being undertaken by the City Council in this year, further to the abolition of Special Expenses.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

No legal implications have been identified for the City Council in relation to the preferred option.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Summary of Recommendations and Implementation Plan
Appendix 2 – West End Masterplan Mid-Term Review Report (Final Draft)
Appendix 3 – Analysis of WEP responsibilities.

Contact Officer: Paul Rogers
Telephone: 01524 582334
E-mail: progers@lancaster.gov.uk
Ref: N/A

Appendix 3

Analysis of West End Partnership (WEP) Responsibilities

WEP Responsibilities (as noted in the current constitution)	Present Status
Overseeing the implementation of the Neighbourhood Management Programme.	The local Neighbourhood Management Programme has ended.
Overseeing the implementation of the ERDF, Priority 2, Action Plan.	The ERDF funding stream/programme has finished
Ensuring the Programme is kept under review and to roll it forward on an annual basis.	The local Neighbourhood Management Programme has ended.
Ensuring that effective consultation takes place with businesses, community, and mainstream service providers.	Local Neighbourhood Management has ended but Masterplan projects and proposals will continue to be developed and implemented and require local consultation.
Approval of an annual Delivery Plan to be endorsed by the Lead Body	The local Neighbourhood Management Programme has ended and there are no further delivery plans required.
Approval of Project Appraisals and allocation of Programme grants to projects with the endorsement of the lead body.	The local Neighbourhood Management Programme has finished.
Ensuring that the whole programme is kept under review, and that any matters relevant to the successful implementation of the scheme, including links to other initiatives, are considered.	The Neighbourhood Management Programme has finished although projects associated with 'Neighbourhood Management' such as PCSOs continue as 'mainstream' initiatives.
Advising on the implementation of the West End Masterplan	Masterplan projects and proposals will continue to be developed and implemented and require local consultation.
Establishment of any additional Sub-Groups relevant to the successful implementation of its programmes.	Neighbourhood Management has finished but Masterplan projects and proposals will continue to be developed and implemented, although the necessity for discrete sub-groups necessary for scrutiny is probably reduced.
Development of a forward strategy, and exit arrangements for the end of the Programme, ensuring sustainability of all relevant Programme sponsored projects and initiatives.	Neighbourhood Management has been 'mainstreamed' and the local funding allocation is no longer available.
Identifying who will take responsibility for continuing commitments, where appropriate, after Programme payments end.	Commitments for PCSO's and other initiatives have been 'mainstreamed' or taken on by other funders
Budget responsibility delegated to Project Director, Community Engagement or Project Director, Urban Renewal as appropriate, who are responsible for reporting financial monitoring to the Board as part of the overall programme review.	Neither of the Project Director post exists following the end of Neighbourhood Management and winding up of the local team. The budget, staff and support are no longer available and this includes the servicing of the WEP by Democratic Services (minutes etc). Final Neighbourhood Management Programme responsibilities and Winning Back Physical project responsibilities have been taken up by Programme Secretariat and Planning services respectively.
Receive recommendations from Sub Groups and where appropriate instigate action.	The continuation of sub-groups depends on the necessity for discrete sub-groups to provide scrutiny which is probably reduced in the current project workload.
Lancashire County Council are the Accountable Body for the Local Area Agreement and Lancaster City Council are responsible for the delivery of the Programme and are therefore the Lead Body for the purposes of this constitution.	The LAA funding is no longer available to the WEP for delivering a local programme and therefore the responsibilities in this section of the constitution are no longer relevant.