



Item

GRAFTON AREA OF MAJOR CHANGE – MASTERPLAN AND GUIDANCE DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

To:

Councillor Kevin Blencowe, Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport

Report by:

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Wards affected:

Abbey, Arbury, Castle, Cherry Hinton, Coleridge, East Chesterton, King's Hedges, Market, Newnham, Petersfield, Queen Edith's, Romsey, Trumpington, West Chesterton

Not a Key Decision

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The draft Cambridge Local Plan 2014: Proposed Submission (as amended) designates the area around Fitzroy Street, Burleigh Street and the Grafton Centre as the primary location for providing additional comparison retail in the City Centre along with other mixed uses including leisure uses under Policy 11: Fitzroy/Burleigh Street/Grafton Area of Major Change.
- 1.2 The Council, as the Local Planning Authority, has been working in partnership with local stakeholders to prepare an Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for change for the Fitzroy/Burleigh Street/Grafton Area of Major Change (AoMC). The work has been guided by input from local stakeholders, including residents groups, local Councillors and other interest groups, at a series of workshops.

The SPD will help guide the development of the area, promoting a number of key strategies for change. These aim to take advantage of the opportunities to provide an improved street environment including public realm enhancements as well as a positive and attractive destination to support the vitality and viability of the centre for retail and associated uses. The SPD envisages a phased approach to ensure the area continues to perform as a mainstream City Centre leisure and retail location while ensuring phased improvement will deliver the area's longer-term strategy.

- 1.3 The emerging Local Plan is still at the examination stage, which means that the Council is unable to adopt the Grafton AoMC - Masterplan and Guidance SPD until the Local Plan has been found sound and adopted. In the interim period, prior to adoption, the SPD provides context and guidance as a material consideration in the planning process.
- 1.4 In accordance with the process of preparing an SPD, consultation on the draft SPD was carried out over a six week statutory minimum period between 25 September and 6 November 2017.
- 1.5 Appendix A provides a brief summary of the key issues raised during public consultation. Appendix B provides summaries of the representations received to the draft SPD and sets out the proposed responses. Appendix C provides a track-changed version of the SPD, whilst Appendix D incorporates the Statement of Consultation.
- 1.6 A significant number of changes are proposed as a result of the consultation, although many of these are factual corrections and amendments to figures/diagrams. These are all set out in Appendix C, reflecting the comments received during the public consultation set out in Appendix B.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 This report is being submitted to the Development Plan Scrutiny Sub-Committee for prior consideration and comment before decision by the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

2.2 The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- To agree the responses to the representations received to the Grafton Area of Major Change - Masterplan and Guidance SPD (Appendix B) and the consequential amendments to the Grafton Area of Major Change - Masterplan and Guidance document (Appendix C);
- To approve the Grafton Area of Major Change - Masterplan and Guidance document (Appendix C) in anticipation of the adoption of the Local Plan, and to agree that it should be carried forward for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document at the same time as the Local Plan.

3. Background

Grafton Area of Major Change - Masterplan and Guidance SPD

- 3.1 The Grafton Area of Major Change site is located within the eastern edge of the City Centre, to the south of Newmarket Road and to the west of East Road. It is a 10 minute walk from the other part of the primary retail area in the city centre and the historic core across Christ's Pieces. The area is bordered to the west by New Square and includes the retail units along the north and south sides of both Fitzroy Street and Burleigh Street. The SPD area includes all of the Grafton Centre, its car parks and service areas.
- 3.2 The City Council as the Local Planning Authority has been working in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, the landowners and local interest groups to consider ways to deliver development on site in a successful manner. In preparing the draft SPD, two workshops took place in March and April. Comments from both workshops were instrumental in the development of the SPD. A summary of the points raised in each workshops can be found in Appendix D.

3.3 The SPD provides a summary of the challenges that the site faces. These are summarised as follows:

- The Grafton Centre has a significant impact on the setting of adjacent streets and Conservation Areas.
- The SPD area still suffers from the loss of grain and severance of streets and connections as a result of the development of the centre.
- Fitzroy Street and Burleigh Streets form weak destinations and thresholds, and could play a stronger role for the local area and the city.
- The Grafton Centre is let down by poor edges and un-welcoming spaces which create a negative perception and hinder movement.
- Public realm and spaces suffer from competing demands and a lack of clarity including servicing, cycling and street furniture.
- The area lacks diversity of uses which constrains the level of activity and footfall through the day.

3.4 The opportunities within the SPD area have been organised into four categories.

Landscape and Public realm:

- Improve and co-ordinate the public realm along Burleigh Street and Fitzroy Street.
- Improving the frontage and pedestrian environment along East Road.

Movement and access:

- Improve cycling and walking access through the area.
- Comprehensively review existing servicing areas. Secure improvements to provide better, more integrated servicing with the shopping centre and its context and review opportunities to convert redundant servicing areas to other use.
- Review the car parking provision and requirements and consider the redevelopment of the Grafton West Car Park (conditional on car parking evidence).
- Improve legibility along East Road.

Scale, massing and built form:

- A series of new buildings along East Road to provide more active frontages and introduce new uses along a new boulevard.
- Redevelopment of some sites surrounding the Grafton Centre of an appropriate scale and massing.
- Improve the historic environment including the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets
- Consider opportunities to positively coordinate redevelopment proposals with areas/streets abutting the AoMC SPD boundary.

Land use:

- Within the SPD area, to increase the comparison (non-food) retail and leisure space with new residential and student accommodation on the upper floors.

3.5 The Grafton Area of Major Change - Masterplan and Guidance SPD has been written to support the new Cambridge Local Plan (2014). This SPD will be adopted at the same time as the Local Plan is adopted.

Public Consultation

3.6 After being approved for public consultation at Development Plan Scrutiny Sub Committee (DPSSC) on 12 September 2017, the draft Grafton Area of Major Change - Masterplan and Guidance SPD was the subject of consultation for 6 weeks between 25 September and 6 November 2017.

3.7 In line with the consultation standards set out in the council's Statement of Community Involvement and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended), the consultation documents were sent to the statutory and other consultees. All of the consultation material was made available on the council's website and an online consultation system was utilised to allow people to submit their comments via the internet (hard copies of the response forms were made available to those who do not have access to the internet). A notice was placed in the Cambridge Evening

News on Wednesday 27 September 2017 containing information about the consultation and how people could get involved.

- 3.8 The draft SPD and its supporting documents remain available on the council's website at <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/grafon-area-of-major-change-masterplan-and-guidance-spd>.

Public Exhibitions

- 3.9 Two public exhibitions were held in the Grafton Centre during the public consultation. The first took place 30 September 2017 and was attended by 146 people. The main topics of concern included: the need for more affordable housing in the area rather than 'high-end' flats for foreign investors, the need to retain affordable shops along Burleigh Street; support for and against new student accommodation; new leisure uses in the area; issues to do with people cycling along Burleigh Street during the daytime when they are not authorised to do so.
- 3.10 The second exhibition was held 1 November 2017 and was attended by 185 people. The main topics of concern included: the redevelopment of buildings along Fitzroy Street, Salmon Lane and how existing residents might be affected; the loss of car/cycle parking; the need for a hotel in the area; the types of new shops that might be introduced; and support for more food/convenience shopping.

Results of consultation

- 3.11 At the end of the consultation period, a total of 340 separate representations were received, made by 44 respondents, of which 122 (36%) were supportive and the remainder, 218 (64%) were objections (including qualified supportive representations). The majority of responses came from statutory organisations and local people.

3.12 In summary, the key issues raised (see Appendix A) include:

- Cambridgeshire County Council:
 - Supports the principle of exploring cycle routes and pedestrian connectivity through Fitzroy Street and Burleigh Street, as well as other entrances to the Grafton Centre. Careful consideration of cycle parking will be needed to ensure enough is provided, whilst ensuring location of parking is convenient and does not detract from the streetscape;
 - Supports the need for positive streetscaping and accessible routes for both the mobile and mobility impaired;
 - Recognises the opportunity to change the form of East Road, however, requires arrangements to be discussed between Cambridgeshire County Council, public transport operator Stagecoach and Greater Cambridge Partnership following the outcomes from the Access Study.
 - Highlighted concern about sufficient provision of cycle parking close to retail units.
 - Is not supportive of the reinstatement of Fitzroy and Burleigh Street for motorised vehicular traffic including taxi services due to safety implications for vulnerable road users.
 - The lack of details regarding future retail unit servicing arrangements including areas for taxi pick-up and drop off points.
- Universities Superannuation Scheme Limited support the mixed-use approach to the redevelopment, however clarification is sought about the retail evidence base.
- Historic England supports the proposals for re-instatement of historic shopfronts.
- Various other supportive representations included:
 - Support for cycle routes that avoid pedestrian areas.
 - The redesigns of inactive or service areas fronting the streets can be greatly improved through high quality design.
 - Development offers an excellent opportunity to restore Salmon Lane as a Regency mews within the Kite Conservation Area.
 - The need for flexibility of design allowing for significant adaptation in the future.
 - The retention and increase of cycle parking spaces however, cycle parking must be spread out with a variety of short and long stay parking. The SPD does however require additional detail as to how 1,000 spaces will be achieved.

- Objections to the SPD included
 - Making changes to servicing operations without clear evidence that they are redundant e.g. Burleigh Street is not wide enough to take over this functionality.
 - The development of high buildings destroying the character of the Victorian and Georgian residential surrounding area.
 - The development on the car park as properties on Maids Causeway which will be significantly impacted in terms of historic value/beauty.
 - The suggestion of a hotel in the area which is not suitable.

- Concerns were registered about:
 - The loss of pedestrian precinct with taxi access strongly unnecessary.
 - The size, height, mass and scale of the development in comparison to the surrounding area. The building of 2-3 storey houses on Salmon Lane and concerns for the privacy of local residents.
 - The period when the Grafton West car park is not operational as this will impact users of facilities such as Eden Chapel, particularly older and less able users.
 - Objection to the suggestion of a hotel as the area is not suitable.
 - Future-proofing is not just in terms of building use, but also transport terms too – development must aim for fewer cars and delivery vehicles.

- Other objections were submitted regarding:
 - The dangerous use of ‘floating’ bus stops on East Road is dangerous enough;
 - The provision of a segregated cycleway in the pedestrian area;
 - The loss of affordable shops that serve local people e.g. charity shops and vacuum cleaner shops.
 - The lack of affordable social housing with concerns for the likelihood of penthouse apartments and hotels.
 - The potential increase in vehicle traffic accessing Salmon Lane.
 - Student accommodation in an area that does not provide housing for lower paid workers or 40% affordable housing.
 - Other matters raised included the need for youth and community provision in the area with a limit to night time activities to avoid the disturbance of local residents.

3.13 Following the public consultation, a meeting in December 2017 was held with representatives of the Grafton Shopping Centre and the County Council regarding their concerns raised by the draft SPD, in particular these related to:

- Sufficient provision of short term cycle parking close to each retail facility. In response, the SPD has been amended requiring the development of a cycle parking strategy for the Grafton Area.
- The introduction of vehicular access along Fitzroy/Burleigh Streets. In response, the SPD has been amended to indicate these streets will be shared surfaces for pedestrians and cyclists removing the potential for vehicular access.
- Details about vehicular servicing access. In response the SPD has been amended such that new proposals requiring servicing access (including taxis where applicable) will be subject to a clear servicing strategy.

3.14 A further meeting was held between representatives of the Grafton Shopping Centre and the Cambridge Cycling Campaign to discuss the SPD's contents. The Cycling Campaign key considerations for the SPD are as follows:

- A reduction in the appearance of clutter in Fitzroy Street and Burleigh Street.
- Locating cycle short stay spaces along the entrance to side roads, including an audit of surplus/available areas (in side street entrance plazas) to locate short-stay cycle spaces in residential streets.
- A reference in the SPD to off-gauge spaces (i.e. tricycles and cargo-style bikes), as well as prioritised spaces for adapted cycles used by persons with disabilities.

During the SPD consultation, the Cycling Campaign requested the following words to be included in section 2.7.5 of the SPD, 'improving cycling and walking access through the area'. These have been included in the final draft version.

3.15 A number of changes related to factual corrections/omissions regarding heritage sites and clearer annotation of/correction of the Figures themselves. In terms of textual changes, many relate to the specific referencing of all the Figures in the SPD and clarifying heritage classifications. In response to Historic England's concerns regarding the importance of retaining or restoring historic shopfront features, amendments are proposed supporting opportunities to retain and

restore historic shop fronts in recognition of the positive contribution they make to the character of the area.

- 3.16 Appendix A summarises the key points raised and key proposed changes to the SPD in response to the public consultation. Officers have worked through all representations and have drafted responses. Summaries of all representations and proposed responses with recommended changes to the SPD have been attached as Appendix B to this report. Amendments to the draft SPD are proposed to address many of the concerns and are attached in Appendix C.

Next Steps

- 3.17 Subject to approval by the Executive Councillor, the public consultation responses will be published and loaded on the council's public consultation website.
- 3.18 In terms of status, the emerging Local Plan is still at the examination stage, which means that the council is unable to adopt the Grafton Area of Major Change - Masterplan and Guidance as an SPD until the Local Plan has been found sound and adopted. In the interim period, prior to adoption of the SPD, the Grafton Area of Major Change - Masterplan and Guidance provides context and guidance as material consideration in the planning process.

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

None – the costs of the document are included in the current budget for Planning Policy.

(b) Staffing Implications

None – the document has now been completed.

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

Yes – An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for this SPD.

(d) Environmental Implications

The project has been rated as Net Low Positive; overall, it is considered that the Grafton Area - Masterplan and Guidance and associated emerging local plan policies will have a net low positive climate change rating (rising to medium to high for some aspects). Although the precise detail is still to be developed as part of the development of planning applications, the Grafton Area - Masterplan and Guidance provides site wide guidance on sustainable design and construction to improve the environmental sustainability of new development. Issues addressed in the planning and development brief include:

- Health and well-being of future occupants;
- Energy efficiency of new buildings;
- Design for climate change;
- Water use;
- Flood mitigation and sustainable drainage systems;
- Use of materials and resources;
- Waste and recycling;
- Employment opportunities;
- Pollution;
- Transport and mobility.

(e) Procurement Implications

There are no direct procurement implications arising from this report.

(f) Community Safety Implications

There are no direct community safety implications arising from this report.

5. Consultation and communication considerations

The consultation and communication arrangements for the SPD were carried as outlined in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.8.

6. Background papers

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

- (a) Cambridge Local Plan 2014: Proposed Submission (as amended)
<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/local-plan-review-proposed-submission-consultation>
- (b) Equalities Impact Assessment for Grafton Area of Major Change - Masterplan and Guidance SPD
https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/default/files/eqia_0.pdf

7. Appendices

- (a) Appendix A - Summary of key issues and SPD changes
- (b) Appendix B - Consultation representations and Council's responses
- (c) Appendix C - Grafton Area of Major Change - Masterplan and Guidance SPD (with annotated changes)
- (d) Appendix D - Statement of Consultation

8. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Sharon Brown, New Neighbourhoods Development Manager, tel: 01223 – 457294 , email: Sharon.brown@cambridge.gov.uk & Bruce Waller, Senior Planning Policy Officer, tel: 01223 - 457171, email: bruce.waller@cambridge.gov.uk.