

CABINET

7 SEPTEMBER 2010

BEST STREET/HIGH STREET MASTERPLAN

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Jane Chitty, Strategic Development and Economic Growth

Report from: Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture

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Summary

At the meeting on 30 March 2010 Cabinet approved a six-week programme of public consultation on a masterplan for the Best Street/High Street area of Chatham. The consultation has now been completed, the results are set out in this report and approval is now sought to adopt the revised masterplan

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 The costs of preparing the masterplan and the consultation have been met from the Medway Renaissance budget. The masterplan will be a supplementary planning document prepared in conformity with the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Therefore, this is a matter for Cabinet.
- 1.2 The report does not directly relate to any Local Area Agreement (LAA) target. The eventual implementation of the masterplan could however contribute to a number of such targets relating to economic development and regeneration.

2. Background

- 2.1 A crucial element of the Council's regeneration plans is the development of Chatham as a regional centre. The South East Plan supported this but that plan has now been revoked. Policy TC1 identified Chatham as one of 12 centres for significant change in the region and the focus for significant growth with provision made for major retail development and other town centre uses of a large scale.

- 2.2 Although this policy no longer applies, it is important that the case for Chatham continues to be actively promoted both regionally and nationally. It is also significant that this strategic approach is already reflected in a number of Council plans and strategies, including saved local plan policies, the Medway Renaissance Strategy 2004 and the Sustainable Community Strategy. It is therefore established Council policy and has broad community support.
- 2.3 A successful town centre needs a combination of features to thrive and be successful. The most important is a good retail offer as this acts as the catalyst for other forms of investment, for example leisure, entertainment and employment uses.
- 2.4 A strong retail offer is therefore considered crucial in establishing the overall image and confidence of a town. Chatham's ranking as a retail centre has declined in recent years. Maidstone, Canterbury and Tunbridge Wells have had new retail developments in the last few years while Chatham has not.
- 2.5 As a result, Chatham's retail ranking has slipped below competing towns even though these have smaller populations than Medway. Consequently Chatham's relative position is below where it should be. Without substantial investment in the shopping offer the position can only worsen which could seriously undermine the Council's wider regeneration efforts.
- 2.6 A Medway wide Retail Capacity Study was completed in 2009 and has proved to be robust in its findings. It recommends that Chatham:
- should be developed as a major regional centre
 - in Medway terms it should be the focus for major retail developments, large scale leisure and other uses that attract large numbers of people
 - the retail strategy should focus on the re-occupation of vacant floorspace and the delivery of new development to provide at least 30,000 square metres of additional floorspace.
- 2.7 The additional floorspace should not preclude development in Medway's other centres but these should be geared to serving local catchment areas, while Chatham should serve the whole of Medway. The figure of 30,000 square metres is proposed, as it would have the critical mass to change perceptions of the town centre amongst retailers, investors and the local community.
- 2.8 Following this study Urban Practitioners were commissioned to produce a masterplan for the Best Street/High Street area of Chatham concentrating initially on the retail offer as all other considerations should naturally flow from this.
- 2.9 **Please note that appendices 1 (consultation responses) and 2 (Masterplan) have been circulated separately to Cabinet Members, Ward Members, Group Rooms and is also available at the Council's main receptions and on the Council's website via**

Further copies are also available from the Cabinet Office. Please contact 01634 332509/332008 for further details.

3. Options

- 3.1 The draft masterplan has already been out to public consultation. It has generally been positively received and it is considered to provide a practical way forward in attracting private investment to Chatham.
- 3.2 The alternative of not adopting the masterplan would lead to a lack of clarity regarding the future of the Best Street/High Street area and its development potential.

4. Advice and analysis

- 4.1 Urban Practitioners were asked to have full regard to the proposed Pentagon extension of 15,000 square metres. This is half the identified critical mass that the centre needs to realise its potential. They have also had regard to the importance of retaining Debenhams and ensuring that sufficient provision is made for car parking.
- 4.2 A detailed analysis of the town centre was undertaken and the draft masterplan proposal emerged. The key proposals were:
 - Incorporation of the Pentagon extension as previously proposed
 - Selective redevelopment of poorer quality buildings along the High Street. This has the benefit of better connecting an enlarged Pentagon with the High Street as well as strengthening the High Street itself
 - The possible redevelopment of the Trafalgar Centre and areas around it plus improving the setting of Debenhams.
 - Opening up a large area to the rear of this part of the High Street, up to and running along Best Street. In this area the proposal is for a substantial car park together with larger floorplate stores such as furniture showrooms etc and potentially a large foodstore.
- 4.3 The draft masterplan was underpinned by specific principles including:

Retail Provision

- A new retail heart for the town centre between Best Street and Richard Street with a major food retailer incorporated into new frontage on Richard Street, with upper level parking accessed from Best Street, split over two storeys, to support this.
- New retail development along the northwest section of Best Street, accessed from Richard Street, with upper level parking accessed from Best Street.
- The potential to expand Primark to the rear of the block with frontage to Richard Street as well as the High Street.
- Selective redevelopment of some High Street properties at sensitive, punctuated points to allow for the creation of a new

retail quarter connecting the Pentagon extension to a rejuvenated High Street.

- New retail development on the site of the current indoor market, with potential for provision of small units for high quality small retailers to create an attractive boutique retail environment.
- Coordination with the proposed Pentagon Extension, providing two levels of retail plus upper floor car parking.

Cultural/Leisure/Community Provision

- Potential expansion of the Central Theatre, with the addition of cafe and backstage facilities and adjoining cultural enterprise and associated offers.
- Accommodation of the proposed Primary Care Trust building, located in a central location with access from Richard Street and Best Street.
- Creation of a new community/civic cluster around Meeting House, with retail frontage onto the High Street.
- Possible hotel development as a landmark feature at the eastern end of New Road - creating a key gateway into the town centre and benefiting from proximity to the High Street/Best Street and upgraded pedestrian crossings.
- Support for the evening economy with greater activity around the pumping station and access to the eastern end of the High Street.

Employment space provision

- A workspace cluster at the eastern end of the High Street, fronting onto the new junction.
- New workspace development between Best Street and New Road, creating an active and attractive frontage to Best St, whilst simultaneously allowing for rationalisation of movement between these two streets.
- New work space provided onto the Brook, which would also provide frontage onto this important route
- Potential for workspace to be included in the landmark feature building at the eastern end of New Road.

Street scene improvements

- Remodelling of the Iceland building and neighbouring sites to create a new north-south route from the Brook to the High Street, allowing completion of the Brook frontage and ground level parking in the courtyard.
- Remodelling of Debenhams to wrap the block and create an active frontage to Richard Street.
- Creation of a new square around the pumping station to the north of the High Street, with restaurants and cafés fronting this.
- Creation of a new square around the Clover Street church.
- Creation of a strong north-south pedestrian route linking the Brook and Best Street, through these two new squares.
- Creation of a clearly defined public space at the High Street/Railway Street junction

- A legible and attractive route for pedestrians at the Railway Street/Best Street junction.
- Potential creation of a new square around a refurbished St John's Church.
- Paving, lighting, planting and street furniture improvements throughout and to Best Street, the High Street and Richard Street in particular.

4.4 The proposals build successfully on the Chatham Town Centre and Waterfront Development Framework – Supplementary Planning Guidance 2004. Implementing the whole masterplan is likely to take at least ten years but it has the potential to be broken down into a number of phases some of which are capable of being brought forward in the short term.

4.5 The regeneration of Chatham as a major retail centre is a considerable challenge. It is considered however there is enormous potential and the draft masterplan reflects this.

4.6 A Diversity Impact Assessment is set out in **Appendix 3** to the report. The outcome was that the masterplan does not require a full Diversity Impact Assessment.

5. Risk Management

5.1 There are considered to be limited risks associated with this project at this stage. The main risks are considered to be associated with a failure to progress the work as indicated below.

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk
Failure to progress	Would lead to a planning policy vacuum in this part of Chatham with associated implications in terms of uncertainty in development decisions and a failure to attract investment	Strong support from the Council and the local community will provide investor confidence and act as a catalyst for future capital funding

6. Consultation

6.1 The consultation exercise on the masterplan complied with the Local Development Framework Statement of Community Involvement. The masterplan has been in preparation for some time and has benefited from the input of officers and external bodies. The consultation statement (**Appendix 4**) gives all the details of the consultation process. The consultation involved:

- Article in Medway Matters publicising the consultation

- Consultation leaflets distributed to town centre businesses and local residents
- Letters sent to landowners
- Posters advertising the consultation in local shops and businesses
- Information on the Council's web site
- All member briefing on 22 June
- Advert in the Medway Messenger and a legal press notice
- Exhibition in the Central Theatre
 - Staffed drop by sessions held in the Central Theatre on:
 - Saturday 12 June 10am-2pm
 - Monday 14 June 10am-2pm
 - Saturday 26 June 10am-2pm
 - Thursday 1 July 10am-2pm
 - Friday 9 July 10am-2pm
 - Wednesday 14 July 10am-2pm
- Letters and the masterplan document sent to key stakeholders including statutory consultees
- Masterplan documents placed in Council offices and libraries
- A dedicated website www.beststreethighstreet.com which attracted 613 hits with 425 accessing the document
- Presentation given to the World Heritage Site Steering Group and subsequent display at the World Heritage Partnership meeting on the 28 June
- Presentations to Medway Youth Parliament and Medway Access Group
- Briefings to major retailers
- Briefing to Brompton Pact and Mid Kent College.

6.2 The consultation/summary leaflet specifically asked for comments on key issues.

6.3 Comments received related to both strategic and detailed issues. Furthermore, many respondents commented on a number of issues within their responses. Details of the replies received and proposed responses are set out in **Appendix 1**.

6.4 In response to the question whether the masterplan proposals would significantly improve Chatham as a place to shop and visit, 75% said yes and 25% said no.

6.5 Officers also worked closely with Rainham Mark year 10 students who each year, as part of an enterprise week, undertake a research project. This year the students investigated Urban Regeneration in Chatham and they carried out their own surveys in Chatham town centre. Approximately 150 people of all age ranges were surveyed.

6.6 The findings of the students were:

- The main purpose of people going to Chatham is to shop. However people also believe that the quality of shops in Chatham is not to a good enough standard, therefore believe that better, high-end shops are needed, e.g. Marks & Spencer

- The conclusion that safety is not as big a problem in Chatham as it is perceived to be
- Chatham needs to be modernised as the findings say that it is very unattractive and out dated.

6.7 Given the findings of this research and the generally positive response to the wider consultation it is considered that the draft masterplan, with appropriate minor changes (see **Appendix 1**), should be adopted and actively promoted to the development and investment community.

7. Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 18 August 2010

7.1 The Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this report on 18 August 2010.

7.2 Members were advised that significant efforts had been made to consult widely and that no major changes to the masterplan were suggested. Certain minor changes were however proposed, as set out in the schedule of consultation responses included with the report.

7.3 Members raised a number of issues, including:

- Impact on traffic
- The high level of consultation responses achieved by students from Rainham Mark school
- Empty and derelict buildings close to the masterplan area and the impact on people's perception of the area
- Nucleus Art Centre should be recognised in the masterplan, given its potential to act as a catalyst for change
- Concern that the attitude and opinions of the public, as detailed in the report, will continue despite regeneration.

7.4 The Committee recommended that Cabinet should adopt the masterplan, having regard to comments made at Committee.

8. Director's Comments

8.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee were advised that the highway implications had been fully assessed. The masterplan proposed two key arrival points for car traffic to the centre, via Best Street and the Brook. This would rationalise the current complex pattern of movements. The Nucleus Arts Centre is an important new feature of the town centre and its regeneration potential will be recognised in the masterplan. There are, inevitably, some negative perceptions of Chatham at present but there are numerous examples from around the country of how city centre regeneration has radically altered local attitudes and market perceptions.

8.2 It is noted that the Committee consider that the masterplan should be adopted and it is proposed that limited changes are made to ensure that the proposals take full account of the potential offered by the Nucleus Arts Centre.

9. Financial and legal implications

- 9.1 If adopted the masterplan will become a supplementary planning document prepared in conformity with 'saved' Medway Local Plan policies S5, R1 and R2 and in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. As an adopted supplementary planning document the masterplan will carry considerable weight in the determination of future planning applications.
- 9.2 In order to be adopted as a supplementary planning document the preparation of and consultation on the development brief must be in accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.
- 9.3 The costs of preparing the masterplan and the consultation have been met from the Medway Renaissance budget.

10. Recommendation

- 10.1 That the High Street/Best Street Area Masterplan be adopted as a supplementary planning document, subject to the Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture (in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Development and Economic Growth) being given delegated authority to incorporate the minor changes set out in Appendix 1 of the report and appropriate references to the Nucleus Arts Centre.

11. Suggested reasons for decision

- 11.1 To ensure there is an up to date planning framework for this important part of Chatham that will guide investment and planning decisions.

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Background papers

- Medway Local Plan 2003
- Local Development Framework Statement of Community Involvement.

Diversity Impact Assessment: Screening Form

Directorate RCC	Name of Function or Policy or Major Service Change Best St/High St Supplementary Planning Document	
Officer responsible for assessment Brian McCutcheon	Date of assessment 19 August 2010	New or existing? New
Defining what is being assessed		
1. Briefly describe the purpose and objectives	<p>A planning masterplan for the Best St/High St area of Chatham town centre</p> <p>The masterplan identifies key projects and aspirations to guide the future regeneration of this part of Chatham town centre.</p> <p>As an adopted supplementary planning document the masterplan will be a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications.</p>	
2. Who is intended to benefit, and in what way?	<p>Future developers, investors and landowners. Residents and businesses in Medway. Medway Council.</p>	
3. What outcomes are wanted?	<p>Guidance for landowners, developers and investors on the potential development opportunities within Chatham town centre.</p>	
4. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	<p>Contribute</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity of document • Approval of document • Support of stakeholders and interested parties 	<p>Detract</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear document • Document not approved • Support from stakeholders and interested parties lacking
5. Who are the main stakeholders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medway Council • Landowners, developers and investors • General public 	
6. Who implements this and who is responsible?	<p>Implementation will come through the operation of the statutory Town planning system.</p>	

Assessing impact		
7. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>racial/ethnic groups</i>?	YES	The Masterplan is about spatial, physical regeneration and is not targeted at any particular group
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	The consultation carried out was compliant with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which is required under the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2004. The SCI requires consultation with a wide range of groups and individuals via a wide variety of means. The consultation therefore will have reached a wide cross section of the community. The Medway Ethnic Forum and Medway Inter Faith Action were targeted as specific consultees. During the consultation no issues relating to this matter were raised.	
8. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>disability</i>?	YES	The Masterplan is about spatial, physical regeneration and is not targeted at any particular group.
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	The consultation carried out was compliant with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which is required under the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2004. The SCI requires consultation with a wide range of groups and individuals via a wide variety of means. The consultation therefore will have reached a wide cross section of the community. The Medway Access Group was included in the list of groups consulted. Responses were received relating to this matter. This is a spatial planning document. Detailed designs will follow as part of the town planning process when issues regarding disability will be addressed in accordance with legislative provisions.	
9. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>gender</i>?	YES	
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	The consultation carried out was compliant with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which is required under the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2004. The SCI requires consultation with a wide range of groups and individuals via a wide variety of means. The consultation therefore will have reached a wide cross section of the community.	

10. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>sexual orientation</i>?	YES	The Masterplan is about spatial, physical regeneration and is not targeted at any particular group.
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	The consultation carried out was compliant with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which is required under the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2004. The SCI requires consultation with a wide range of groups and individuals via a wide variety of means. The consultation therefore will have reached a wide cross section of the community.	
11. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a have a differential impact due to <i>religion or belief</i>?	YES	The Masterplan is about regeneration and is not targeted at any particular group.
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	The consultation carried out was compliant with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which is required under the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2004. The SCI requires consultation with a wide range of groups and individuals via a wide variety of means. The consultation therefore will have reached a wide cross section of the community	
12. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to people's age?	YES	The Masterplan is about regeneration and is not targeted at any particular group.
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	The consultation carried out was compliant with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which is required under the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2004. The SCI requires consultation with a wide range of groups and individuals via a wide variety of means. The consultation therefore will have reached a wide cross section of the community. The Medway Youth Parliament and Medway Older People's Partnership and Age Concern are age-related groups/organisations that were consulted. During the consultation no issues were raised in relation to this matter.	
13. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>being transgendered or transsexual</i>?	YES	The Masterplan is about regeneration and is not targeted at any particular group.
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	The consultation carried out was compliant with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which is required under the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2004. The SCI requires consultation with a wide range of groups and individuals via a wide variety of means. The consultation therefore will have reached a wide cross section of the community.	

14. Are there any <i>other</i> groups that would find it difficult to access/make use of the function (e.g. speakers of other languages; people with caring responsibilities or dependants; those with an offending past; or people living in rural areas)?	YES	The document was produced only in English.
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	The SCI states if requested, documents will be produced in other languages. No such request has been made. As detailed proposals come forward through the statutory planning system consultation letters do specifically state that information will be made available in other formats and languages.	
15. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a have a differential impact due to <i>multiple discriminations</i> (e.g. disability <u>and</u> age)?	YES	The Masterplan is a spatial document and any issues would not be known at this stage.
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	Further consultation undertaken as part of the statutory planning process will be undertaken. This will identify impacts that could cause multiple discriminations.	

Conclusions & recommendation		
16. Could the differential impacts identified in questions 7-15 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact?	YES	There were no issues raised through the consultation that would suggest there could be a potential adverse impact.
	NO	
17. Can the adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or another reason?	YES	
	NO	
Recommendation to proceed to a full impact assessment?		
<u>NO</u>	This function/ policy/ service change complies with the requirements of the legislation and there is evidence to show this is the case.	
NO, BUT ...	What is required to ensure this complies with the requirements of the legislation? (see DIA Guidance Notes)?	Minor modifications necessary (e.g. change of 'he' to 'he or she', re-analysis of way routine statistics are reported)
YES	Give details of key person responsible and target date for carrying out full impact assessment (see DIA Guidance Notes)	

Action plan to make Minor modifications		
Outcome	Actions (with date of completion)	Officer responsible

Planning ahead: Reminders for the next review		
Date of next review	The Development Brief is a planning policy document whose aim is to provide certainty. As such it is not intended to review the document for at least 5 years other than to respond to any significant changes in planning policy at a local or national level.	
Areas to check at next review (e.g. new census information, new legislation due)		
Is there <i>another</i> group (e.g. new communities) that is relevant and ought to be considered next time?		
Signed (completing officer/service manager)	Date	
Signed (service manager/Assistant Director)	Date	

**Best St/High St masterplan
Draft Supplementary Planning Document, September 2010.**

Consultation Statement

Introduction

A draft of the Best St/High St masterplan has been issued for the purpose of public consultation as required by the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/2204).

Planning Background

Medway Council is currently preparing a review of planning policies within its area. The result of this process will be the production of a development plan, known as a Local Development Framework (LDF). It will contain a range of general planning policies. The timetable for the production is set out in the Medway Local Development Scheme (LDS), which is available from the Development Plans & Research Team at the Council, and on the website.

The Local Development Framework has not yet been completed. The proposed supplementary planning document for the Best St/High St area of Chatham is therefore based upon saved Medway Local Plan (2003).policies S5, R1 and R2..

The Medway Waterfront Renaissance Strategy, adopted as supplementary planning guidance in 2004, sets out a development strategy for the Medway Waterfront for the next 20 years. The aspirations and opportunities identified in the strategy include

- Greatly improve shopping and leisure facilities in Chatham
- Introduction of a range of new housing to increase community activity in the area.
- Promote creative and cultural activity and business development particularly at the waterfront and in the Lower High Street.
- Strengthen the relationship and physical links between the High St area and the waterfront.

The Chatham Centre and waterfront Development Framework: Supplementary Planning Guidance (2004) aspires to transpire Chatham's town centre into the thriving and vibrant centre of Medway.

The Chatham Centre and Waterfront Development Brief: supplementary Planning Document builds upon objectives identified within the Medway Waterfront Renaissance Strategy and aspires to transform Chatham into a city centre for Medway

Purpose of consultation statement

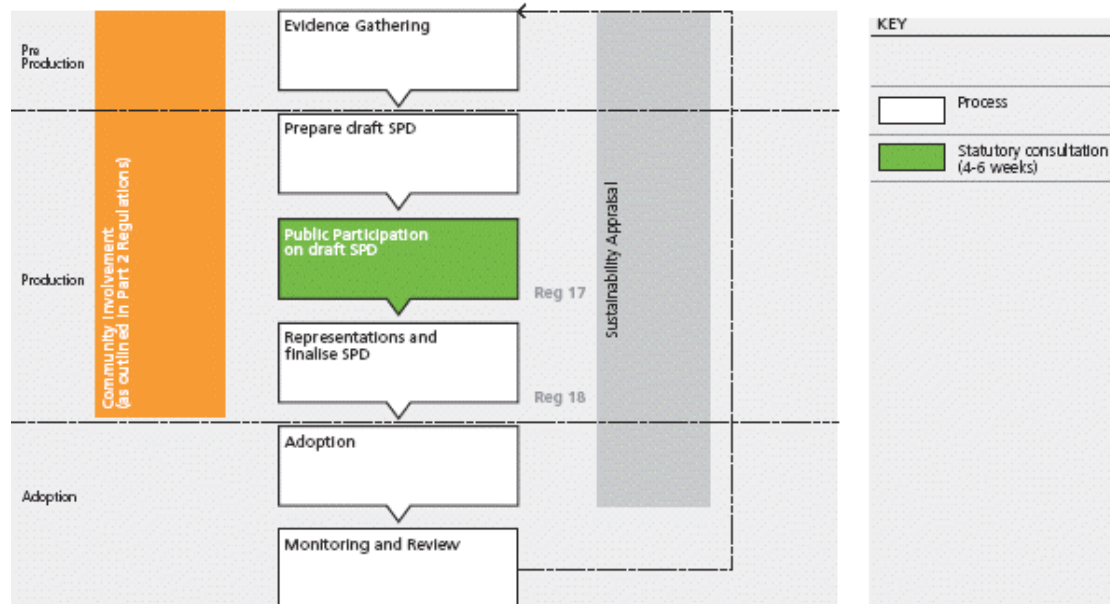
The purpose of this Statement of Community Consultation is to demonstrate how and who the Council has consulted with regard to the draft Best St/High St Masterplan. Following the consultation process the Council is now

considering whether to 'adopt' the draft masterplan as a supplementary planning document. Once adopted the masterplan will be one of a number of 'supplementary planning documents' that supplement the new Local Development Framework. It will be used by the Council to guide the development and make decisions when a developer submits a planning application.

The process of producing a supplementary planning document

Guidance on the process of producing Supplementary Planning Guidance is set out in Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 12 on Local Development Frameworks (2004). There are a number of stages the Council is obliged to go through in producing a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and the diagram below illustrates this process:

The Supplementary Planning Document Process



The Council is now at the 'consider representations and finalise SPD' stage of producing the supplementary planning document, having carried out public participation on the draft SPD.

The public participation stage was undertaken from 17 June until 19 July 2010, complying with the requirements of *Regulation 17* of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 that the document is made available for consultation purposes for between a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 6 weeks.

Following the end of the period of public consultation, the Council is now considering all representations received as required by *Regulation 18*. The document is being reported to the Cabinet for adoption purposes in September 2010 in accordance with *Regulation 19* of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

Local Development Framework – Statement of Community Involvement

The Medway Local Development Framework Statement of Community Involvement was adopted in December 2006. The document sets out the Council's preferred approach to consultation on the Local Development Framework (LDF), its constituent development plan documents, supplementary planning documents, and major planning applications.

With regard to supplementary planning documents, the SCI states that different combinations of the following consultation methods will be required:

Dissemination of information

Consultation will consist of the following methods:

- 1. Statutory notices in the local press*
- 2. Making all documents available on the web site*
- 3. Deposit of documents in Council offices*
- 4. Press releases containing sufficient information for an article to appear in the local press*
- 5. Send notification and documentation to individuals and bodies as necessary*
- 6. Use site specific notices for site-specific issues*

All these methods have been used with regard to the draft Best St/High St masterplan. Additionally leaflets outlining the development framework and arrangements for consultation were delivered to houses and businesses close to the site.

In addition to the above, staffed and unstaffed exhibitions were held.

Participation- continuous community involvement

Participation will include:

- 1. Discussions with the Local Strategic Partnership*
- 2. Programme of public meetings, round tables, or forums on large or controversial sites or issues*
- 3. Discussions and correspondence with developers and other interested parties seeking to promote or object to specific development or specific policies*
- 4. Workshops involving schools or interested parties to provide an early input into the formulation of proposals for specific sites or action area*
- 5. Consideration by the Local Development Framework Advisory Group (*

All these methods have been used with regard to the draft Gillingham Town Centre Development Framework with the exception of (1) - although the Local Strategic Partnership were consulted on the proposals and 5 which was because the masterplan is area site specific and does not cover Medway wide policies.

In line with the Statement of Community Involvement, consultation had been directed towards those bodies, organisations and individuals with a particular interest in the draft Best St/High St masterplan.

Responses

The main methods of considering responses are:

- 1. All representations will be considered by the Council and the reasons given for accepting or rejecting them*
- 2. When considering representations, they will be measured against national and regional planning policies, locally adopted guidance and other circumstances*
- 3. A report on the council's responses to objections and representations will be published. This will also recommend amendments to documents*
- 4. Revised documents will be published*

All these methods have been or will be used with regard to the draft Best St/High St masterplan. Following the responses from the consultation, amendments are now being proposed to the document that will be considered by the Cabinet.

The pre-production stage (pre-production evidence gathering)

The draft Best St/High St masterplan builds upon the guidance within the Medway Local Plan (2003).

As a part of the evidence base for the 2009 LDF Core Strategy Issues and Options Report, a Medway wide Retail Capacity Study was completed. It recommends that Chatham

- should be developed as a major regional centre
- in Medway terms it should be the focus for major retail developments, large scale leisure and other uses that attract large numbers of people
- the retail strategy should focus on the re-occupation of vacant floorspace and the delivery of new development to provide at least 30,000 square metres of additional floorspace.

Public consultation on the draft Supplementary Planning Document

As a requirement of Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2004, the Council has undertaken the following in relation to the draft Supplementary Planning Document.

Regulation	Requirement	How the Council has complied
17(1)(a)	<p>Before a local planning authority adopt an SPD they must make copies of the SPD documents and a statement of the SPD matters*¹ available for inspection during normal office hours</p> <p>(1) at their principal office (2) at such other places within their area as the authority consider appropriate</p>	<p>The relevant documents and a statement of SPD matters were made available during normal office hours at:</p> <p>(1) all Medway Council offices and contact points (2) all the Medway Libraries</p>
17(1)(b)	<p>Before a local planning authority adopt an SPD they must prepare a statement (the consultation statement) setting out:</p> <p>(1) the names of any persons whom the authority consulted in connection with the preparation of the SPD (2) how these persons will be consulted (3) a summary of the main issues raised in those consultations (4) how these issues have been addressed in the SPD</p>	<p>This document comprises the consultation statement</p>
17(2)(a)	<p>At the time the local authority complies with the requirements of Regulation 17(1)(a) they must publish on their website the SPD documents; the SPD matters; and a statement of the fact that the SPD documents are available for inspection and of the places and times they can be inspected.</p>	<p>The requirement has been met and all documents appeared on the Council website www.medway.gov.uk for the period of the consultation from 7 June to 19 July.2010.</p>
17(2)(b)	<p>At the time the local planning authority comply with the requirements of Regulation 17(1)(a) they must send copies</p>	<p>Copies of the relevant documents have been sent to the following specific consultation bodies:</p>

	<p>of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft SPD • Any relevant supporting documents • A notice of the SPD matters; and • A statement setting out that the documents are available for inspection and the place and times at which they might be expected <p>to each of the <u>specific bodies</u> to the extent that the authority thinks the SPD affects that body.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment Agency • English Heritage • Natural England • Highways agency • Kent County Council • Maidstone Council • Gravesham Council • Tonbridge and Malling Council • Southern Water • Southern Gas • EDF
17(2)(b)	<p>At the time the local planning authority complies with the requirements of Regulation 17(1)(a) they must send copies of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft SPD • Any relevant supporting documents • A notice of the SPD matters; and • A statement setting out that the documents are available for inspection and the place and times at which they might be expected <p>to each of the <u>general bodies</u> to the extent that the authority</p>	<p>Letters have been sent to a variety of general consultation bodies drawing their attention to the consultation and the availability of the relevant documentations.</p>

	thinks the SPD affects that body.	
17(2)(c)	At the time the local planning authority comply with the requirements of Regulation 17(1)(a) they must give notice by local advertisement of the SPD matters and the fact that the SPD documents are available for inspection and the places and times at which they can be inspected.	The Council has complied with the requirements by placing a notice in the local press (Medway Messenger) to coincide with the commencement of the consultation period.
17(2)(d)	At the time the local planning authority comply with the requirements of Regulation 17(1)(a) they must make a request under section 24(2)(b) or 4(b) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to ensure conformity with the regional strategy.	For Supplementary Planning Documents, the Council may if required request the opinion of the Regional Planning Board as to the general conformity of the document with the Regional Spatial Strategy. As the proposals in the Best St/High St complemented the aims of the former South East Plan, policy TC1 in particular no request has been made to the Regional Planning Board. This approach is consistent with the advice given to Local authorities by the South East England Regional Assembly on when to consult.

In addition to those consultations required under Regulation 17, the Council has undertaken the following:

- Article in Medway Matters publicising the consultation

- Consultation leaflets distributed to town centre businesses and local residents
- Letters sent to landowners
- Posters advertising the consultation in local shops and businesses
- Information on the Council's web site
- All member briefing on 22 June
- Advert in the Medway Messenger and a legal press notice
- Exhibition in the Central Theatre
 - Staffed drop by sessions held in the Central Theatre on:
 - Saturday 12 June 10am-2pm
 - Monday 14 June 10am-2pm
 - Saturday 26 June 10am-2pm
 - Thursday 1 July 10am-2pm
 - Friday 9 July 10am-2pm
 - Wednesday 14 July 10am-2pm
- Masterplan documents placed in Council offices and libraries
- A dedicated website www.beststreethighstreet.com which attracted 613 hits with 425 accessing the document
- Presentation given to the World Heritage Site Steering Group and subsequent display at the World Heritage Partnership meeting on the 28 June
- Presentations to Medway Youth Parliament and Medway Access Group
- Briefings to major retailers
- Briefing to Brompton Pact and Mid Kent College.

5 Procedure following the closure of public consultation

Following the end of the publicity period, the Council is now considering the representations (letters and e-mails) received and will prepare an adoption statement which:

- sets out the main issues raised
- states how these have been addressed in the Supplementary Planning Document the Council intends to adopt.

The statement, together with suggested amendments to the Supplementary Planning Document, will be considered by the Council's Cabinet for adoption as a finalised document on 7 Sept 2010.

Following adoption, the Council is required to comply with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. It will

- make the adopted Supplementary Planning Document (together with a finalised adoption document) available for inspection during normal office hours at its principal offices and libraries
- place the documents on the Council's website
- send copies of the documents to any person who has specifically requested them

- place a notice in the local press confirming the adoption of the supplementary planning document

6 More information

For further information contact

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