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**SUBJECT:** City Centre Action Plan and Master Plan  
**DATE:** 14<sup>th</sup> March 2013  
**RECIPIENT:** Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

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## **THIS IS NOT A DECISION PAPER**

### **SUMMARY:**

1. The City Centre Action Plan and Master Plan (the “Plans”) set out a development strategy for how the city centre will evolve as a place to 2026 and beyond. The Action Plan will form part of the development plan against which planning applications will be determined. The Master Plan sets out a more detailed design strategy illustrating how the city centre could develop in the longer term, through a series of visual images. It is a vehicle to raise the profile of the city centre nationally, illustrating its investment potential.

### **BACKGROUND and BRIEFING DETAILS:**

#### Context: The Core Strategy

2. The City Centre Action Plan is consistent with the city wide Core Strategy which sets out both the strategic approach and the overall development targets. A Partial Review of the Core Strategy is reducing the office and retail targets in the light of the recession, changing office working practices and internet retailing. However the reduced targets still represent major growth in office and retail sectors.
3. The Plans set out the approach for different topics as follows.

#### A Great Place for Business

4. Aim: To focus economic growth and jobs on the city centre.
5. Offices: Major office development is promoted, particularly by the Central Station and at Royal Pier. Change in existing office areas is managed.
6. Industry: Protect some industrial areas whilst redeveloping others to promote regeneration. Protect the mineral wharves but recognise the strong regeneration opportunities should they be relocated.
7. Port: Manage the relationship between the city centre and the port, particularly in terms of traffic and adjacent residential development.

#### A Great Place to Visit

8. Aim: To enhance Southampton as a vibrant shopping and leisure centre.
9. Retail: Protect and enhance the existing shopping area, and in the longer term promote an expansion of this area when appropriate.
10. Bars / restaurants / casinos / night clubs: Where planning permission is required, premises open beyond 11pm should be focussed in ‘evening zones’ or ‘late night hubs’. (Any large casino proposal will be subject to a separate licensing process).

#### A Great Place to Live

11. Aim: To encourage a greater range of people to live in the city centre.
12. Housing: Identify sites to accommodate 5,450 homes as part of mixed use developments. Encourage the provision of some family homes and promote purpose built student accommodation.

13. Education: Support the provision of new schools in the city centre. In the longer term there is likely to be a need for a new secondary school in the city. Protect further and higher education sites.  
A Greener Centre
14. Aim: To create an attractive and environmentally sustainable centre.
15. Parks: Protect existing open spaces, allowing some reconfiguration where the quantity and quality of open space is retained. Identify the potential for new open spaces. Promote the 'greening' of connecting streets.
16. Renewable and Low Carbon Energy: Support appropriate new energy plants and encourage connections to the district energy network.
17. Flood Resilience: Facilitate the provision of a flood defence to protect the city centre as sea levels rise in the longer term; and ensure that development is appropriately designed (eg residential on upper floors).  
Attractive and Distinctive
18. Aim: To create distinctive buildings and places.
19. Design: Promote high standards of design (eg respecting the city's heritage and surrounding areas, enhancing the public realm, protecting key views).
20. Tall Buildings: Promote high quality tall buildings which respect their surroundings; enhance the skyline; and are focussed on the Station Quarter, Charlotte Place, Marsh Lane / Terminus Terrace, adjacent to the Central Parks, along the waterfront / Western Gateway, or on other appropriate sites.  
Easy to Get About
21. Aim: To minimise congestion and enhance the environment by promoting a shift from car use to public transport, walking and cycling.
22. Transport: Ongoing enhancements to the Central Station and surrounding public realm; to key bus stops; cycle routes; taxi provision; and the ferry terminal. Enhanced pedestrian links, including 'strategic links' connecting the Central Station, waterfront, shopping area and other key destinations. Remodelling major roads to create more pedestrian friendly 'city streets'. Green travel plans. Ensuring appropriate provision for cars, managing new car parking, encouraging a shift in 'non shopper' parking to the edge of the centre.  
Quarters and Development Sites
23. The Plans set out the approach for each quarter of the city centre, and for likely development sites. In general they promote a mix of uses, including residential, office, retail, leisure and restaurant / bar uses. Some of the sites are likely to be developed over the next few years, others in the longer term.
24. Station Quarter: Major development by an enhanced Central Station. New offices and a mix of other uses.
25. Western Gateway: A comprehensive redevelopment is only likely to occur in the longer term. In the short to medium term the Plan continues to support the existing or similar leisure / industrial uses. However the Plan also promotes a comprehensive redevelopment to provide a 'landmark' entrance to the city centre. This could include new office / leisure uses; and residential / hotel uses where appropriate. The Plan does not restrict such redevelopment to the longer term should a developer wish to bring this forward at an earlier date.

26. Royal Pier Waterfront: High quality waterfront destination. Leisure, bar / restaurants, casino (subject to licence), speciality retail, office, residential, and hotel uses.
27. Heart of the City: Enhance the shopping area and in the longer term promote its expansion:  
 East Street Centre / Queens Buildings: Retail led uses including a superstore, with a mix of uses on upper floors. Improve links to St. Mary's.  
 Watermark West Quay: Visitor destination by town walls, including retail, leisure, bar / restaurant, offices, hotel and residential uses.  
 West Quay Western Site B: offices.  
 Asda / Marlands: Maintain a major retail / leisure destination to anchor the northern end of the shopping area, and create links through to the west.  
 West Quay Retail Park: Long term expansion of the shopping area.
28. Itchen Riverside: create new waterfront destinations.  
 Town Depot: Residential, leisure, bar / restaurant, marine employment, education and other uses.
29. Old Town: Protect and enhance the Old Town.  
 Fruit and Vegetable Market: Residential led mixed use development, linking the shopping area with the waterfront.  
 Bargate Shopping Centre and East of Castle Way: Retail led development which enhances the setting of the Bargate and Town Walls.  
 Albion Place / Castle Way car parks: new public open space, and new retail / residential development provided the Town Walls are respected.  
 144 – 164 High Street: Retail led mixed use.
30. Cultural Quarter:  
 Northern Above Bar: create link from Guildhall Square to the Central Parks. A new arts complex, leisure, restaurants / bars, and other uses on upper floors.  
 Mayflower Plaza: Tall building, with residential or student and mixed uses.
31. University Quarter:  
 East Park Terrace: University led expansion with a mix of uses, and a positive relationship with the Central Parks.  
 St Mary's Road: Residential, student, leisure, community or other uses.
32. Holyrood / Queens Park: Protect the park and enhance Oxford Street.  
 Duke / Richmond / College Street: Residential, office, and employment uses.
33. Ocean Village: Continue to enhance the quarter as a waterfront destination.
34. St. Mary's: Ground floor premises of St Mary's Road (part) and Old Northam Road protected for shops and similar uses.
35. Bedford Place: Maintain existing bars, restaurants, shops and offices.
36. Delivery  
 The plan sets out a range of:
- Actions the Council should take (eg working with developers, marketing) or consider (use of its land, compulsory purchase powers, investment in infrastructure);
  - Local people, developers and public agencies who will aid delivery;
  - Potential funding sources (including the Community Infrastructure Levy).

37. Public Consultation

The Plans were published as drafts for public consultation early in 2012. Approximately 700 comments were made from 61 organisations (developers, landowners, public agencies, business and community groups). All these comments have been considered. A summary of the key responses is included in Appendix 1, and a full schedule of responses has been placed in the members' room. The main changes from the draft to the latest plan, as a result of these comments or internal discussions, are to introduce:

- A recognition that the Plans look not only to 2026 but beyond;
- More flexibility regarding the provision of office development;
- A policy on the Port;
- A policy on education provision;
- More emphasis on considering connections to the district energy network;
- More reference to water infrastructure;
- More clarity on controlling bars / restaurants / nightclubs and an acknowledgement that any casino on the southern end of Royal Pier may need to open for 24 hours;
- More protection for Town Quay Park as designated open space.

**RESOURCE/POLICY/FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

38. Resources

Property: The Council owns an interest in a wide range of the sites allocated for development in this Plan.

39. Policy

The City Centre Action Plan will form part of the development plan. Planning applications will be determined in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Master Plan will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications where it is consistent with the Action Plan.

40. Financial

Capital:

Delivery of the Plans will mainly be achieved through private sector investment. However some projects, for example flood defence work, may be achieved in part through Council investment. Any requests for Council funding will be progressed through the normal approval process in line with the Financial Procedure Rules. This report does not commit the Council to any capital spending.

Revenue: The Plans are prepared within the existing planning policy budget.

41. Legal

Blight Notices:

Some of the provisions of the Plan, for example the safeguarding of land for a flood defence, may require the Council to purchase land through the blight notice procedure. However, given the way this procedure is framed, the extent of this is likely to be limited for flood risk.

## **OPTIONS and TIMESCALES:**

### 42. Options

Not to prepare the Plans. This would fail to provide clear guidance. The Council has a statutory duty to prepare a development plan.

### 43. Timescales and Decision Making

Cabinet approval is being sought on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2013 for the final City Centre Master Plan and the “proposed submission” City Centre Action Plan. The Action Plan must follow a statutory process before it is adopted. The anticipated programme following Cabinet approval is:

- June / July 2013 – formal consultation on the “proposed submission” Action Plan, supported by evidence (eg on the economy, retailing, open space, flood risk, transport and delivery).
- October 2013 – submission of the Action Plan.
- January 2014 – public examination of the Action Plan held by an independent planning inspector who will consider the representations made in June / July 2013.
- Summer 2014 – adoption of the Action Plan by full Council. Legally, the Council can only adopt the Plan if it follows the main changes made by the inspector. Therefore the decision sought in this report represents the last opportunity for the Council to shape the main aspects of the Plan.

### 44. Delegated Powers

The Cabinet will be requested to give delegated powers to the Head of Service for Planning, Transport and Sustainability, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources, to make changes to the Plan provided these do not affect its main policy direction. Initially these changes will be made to finalise the Plan prior to publication in June. The following types of change are anticipated:

- Address the results of the Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations, for example to acknowledge the Council will ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to mitigate effects on ecology designations (eg improving open space, managing traffic);
- Incorporate and update the results of further studies on deliverability;
- Include a section on monitoring the Plan.
- The proposals map (checking site boundaries).

After this, further changes are likely to be made to react to comments made during the formal consultation; or to discussion during the examination.

## **Appendices/Supporting Information:**

### 45. Summary of Main Comments and Council’s Response

#### **Further Information Available From:**

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