



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Inner North West Masterplan</b>
<b>Date:</b>	7th November 2018
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<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Some time in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to present the final draft of the Inner North West Masterplan for approval by Members.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is requested to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• approve the final Inner North West Masterplan;</li><li>• note the supporting documentation for the Masterplan, including the public consultation report, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), Rural Needs Assessment and EQIA Screening; and</li><li>• note that further details of a Delivery Plan aligned to the Masterplan will be brought back to Committee in the near future setting out proposed priorities.</li></ul>

3.0	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p data-bbox="272 264 448 293"><b>Background</b></p> <p data-bbox="272 315 1469 741">As per previous reports, Members are aware that as part of the delivery of the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (BCCRIS), a number of more detailed plans were to be commissioned to help support and shape city centre developments. The Inner North West (INW) Masterplan is part of the implementation of BCCRIS and the City Growth and Regeneration Committee gave approval in October 2016 for master planning work to be undertaken. Following a workshop with Members in November 2017, a draft Masterplan was brought to Committee in January 2018 and it was agreed to go out for consultation on the basis of the draft Masterplan that was brought to Committee. Details of the subsequent consultation is set out below.</p> <p data-bbox="272 819 400 848"><b>Location</b></p> <p data-bbox="165 871 1469 1151">3.2 The INW area as shown in the Masterplan forms a critical part of the city centre and is bounded by the Millfield/Carrick Hill road to the northwest, College Street to the south, Fountain Street to Fountain Lane to the south and Royal Avenue to the east and covers 17.2 hectares (42 acres). The area is located at the convergence of four different types of land uses: residential to the west and north; retail to the east; education to the north and mixed use to the south, including the new Transport Hub (See Location Map, Appendix 1)</p> <p data-bbox="165 1218 1469 1599">3.3 As outlined to the Committee in October 2017, the purpose of the Masterplan is to guide development in this part of the city. The area is currently underdeveloped and in need of significant investment to ensure coherent proposals come forward as part of wider strategic development of the city. The Inner North West is experiencing significant change, mostly as a result of a number of approved and planned development opportunities in the wider area and will benefit from a more holistic consideration of the key issues associated with these emerging activities such as transport, connectivity, built heritage, mixed-use developments, residential accommodation, and design.</p> <p data-bbox="272 1677 911 1706"><b>Engagement and communication programme</b></p> <p data-bbox="272 1727 679 1756"><i>Public consultation programme</i></p> <p data-bbox="165 1778 1469 2107">3.4 In January 2018 the Committee agreed to a 12-week public consultation and the 12-week formal consultation period began on 13 February 2018 and concluded on 8 May 2018. Effort was made to engage with a diverse range of stakeholders, including residents, businesses, statutory partners and developers. The detail of the engagement process and responses was reported to Committee in August 2018. In total, 16 different engagement activities took place and these were attended by approximately 225 people. The consultation report is included in Appendix 7.</p>

*Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment*

3.5 The statutory consultation on the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment ran between 9th July and 1st October, 2018. The feedback from this consultation, combined with the findings from the INW consultation, has formed the final Masterplan.

*Statutory partners*

3.6 Engagement with statutory partners included the Department for Communities, Department for Infrastructure, Translink, Northern Ireland Environment Agency and the Historic Environment Division. The feedback received from them shaped the final document and discussions will continue during the development of the delivery plan. Feedback was also received from council departments.

*Party Group Briefings*

3.7 As part of the ongoing engagement with Members, Party Group Briefings were held in October on the final Masterplan. In addition to discussion about content within the Masterplan, the following issues were highlighted by Members:

- City centre living important if Belfast Agenda growth ambitions are to be realised but importance of high quality housing and good management highlighted.
- Represents a significant opportunity in city centre for mixed use development.
- Shared and mixed tenure housing to be considered as part of overall development proposals.
- Alignment of city centre living and licensing requirements /night time economy
- Significant public sector owned land in the area provides public sector the opportunity to drive and shape development in the area.
- Links and connectivity to surrounding neighbourhoods is critical to development in the area and city centre development should not be inward facing.
- Consultation on the Masterplan represents a point in time but there remains a need to react to changing circumstances – as with the Bank Buildings fire.
- Renewed focus to be given to that area most impacted by the Bank Buildings fire.
- Various views expressed on whether or not pedestrianisation of parts of the study area should be considered as part of future development proposals.
- Impact of the inner ring road on air quality and new developments.
- Role of Section 76 agreements to deal with impacts of development in the area.
- Importance of open and green spaces as an integral part of overall development of the area.
- Importance of heritage in regeneration

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The University Ulster should have a pivotal role in ensuring that the impact of their proposed development and increases in student numbers is properly managed and reflects the aspirations of the INW Masterplan for those lands adjoining the UU.</li> </ul>
3.8	<p>Many of the comments from the Party Group Briefings are also reflected in the attached Consultation Report.</p>
3.9	<p><b>Final draft Inner North West Masterplan</b></p> <p>The final draft Masterplan, as enclosed with this report, reflects the public consultation process on the Masterplan as well as the subsequent Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment consultation processes. As set out in the Masterplan it provides a framework to help shape the emerging opportunities in this part of the city and ensure a more comprehensive approach to development to create a new city centre mixed neighbourhood which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>incorporates a mix of uses, including residential, commercial, retail and leisure, all integrated through a strong and cohesive public realm;</li> <li>takes into consideration the heritage of the area and the historic urban grain;</li> <li>reinstates the historically vibrant economy of the Inner North West area;</li> <li>promotes ‘city centre living’, with its social and environmental benefits;</li> <li>strengthens the city centre’s urban fabric and streetscapes;</li> <li>supports and strengthens pedestrian connections within the city centre and to/from adjoining neighbourhoods; and</li> <li>delivers the ambitions of the Belfast Agenda, in line with the Local Development Plan.</li> </ul>
3.10	<p>As a result of the feedback to the public consultation and to the subsequent Strategic Environmental Assessment the draft Masterplan has been amended, in particular, the vision has been updated and states:</p> <p><i>‘The INW will be transformed to create a vibrant place to live, work, shop and relax across a series of mixed-use, shared neighbourhoods. The existing heritage and community assets alongside new investment including commercial, residential and higher education developments will produce a welcoming quarter embodied by creativity, innovation, quality design, culture and well-being in the heart of the city centre’.</i></p>
3.11	<p>The following objectives as set out in the final draft Masterplan support this vision and largely remain the same from those in the initial draft (except for the first point, which includes a focus on the environment):</p>

1. **Heritage and Natural Environment:** To reuse and integrate the existing heritage and respect the natural environment
2. **Homes:** To deliver a variety of residential accommodation or tenures
3. **Workspaces:** To provide high quality and distinctive work and employment spaces
4. **Retail:** To support city centre retail activity
5. **Leisure and culture:** To improve and support the existing offer and create links to new and existing create and cultural activity
6. **Public realm:** To provide a high quality public realm to create green, walkabout and cyclable space
7. **Well-Being:** To promote sustainable communities, quality urban design and help create a welcoming and attractive place for everyone
8. **Transport:** To upgrade and manage the transport and parking facilities and promote active and sustainable transport

3.12 The Inner North West Masterplan is underpinned by robust urban design principles that will help shape proposals coming forward and has at its heart the intention to create a new city centre, mixed neighbourhood. Whilst a number of these have been reworded and the supporting text amended as a result of the consultation the over-arching focus on reducing severance, creating a mixed and vibrant quarter and creating a strong street hierarchy and integrated parking remain. These principles shape the proposals outlined within the ten character areas highlighted in the Masterplan, which include: Queen Street, Castle Street and King Street, North Street and Carrick Hill/Millfield amongst others.

#### **Planning policy context and the Local Development Plan**

3.13 Members will be aware that the draft LDP Plan Strategy is open for consultation until 15 November. The INW Masterplan is in line with the emerging policies in the Local Development Plan (LDP) draft Plan Strategy that supports population growth, sustainable development and the city's ambitions in relation to the inclusive growth agenda. However, it will still be considerable time before we are in a position to bring forward the site specific Local Policies Plan (LPP) setting out details at a more local level and a providing significant element of the spatial articulation to the adopted policy.

3.14 The process for the development of the LPP is likely to involve a review of documents and frameworks, such as the INW Masterplan. The LDP Plan Strategy may then provide a container for such documents to be brought forward as a form of Supplementary Planning Guidance and thereby give weight to the principles or elements of the Strategy as a more detailed articulation of LDP policy. This, subject to a consultation and adoption process at

	<p>that stage, would provide for more weight to be afforded to the document in the decision making process for planning.</p>
3.15	<p>Until the adoption of the Plan Strategy the INW masterplan and similar documents have limited statutory weight in formal planning decision making. However, it should be recognised that they can, in common with other documents, still be material to and enhance the consideration of development proposals especially where additional or more up to date data informs the context for a decision.</p>
3.16	<p>In recognition of the timing of the approval of the INW masterplan in relation to the public consultation process on the LDP Plan Strategy, the ‘Planning Context’ section of the Masterplan has been amended with the following text:</p> <p><i>“At present the Inner North West Masterplan is a non-statutory document. However, following the adoption of the LDP Plan Strategy, the Council will be in a position to review the INW Masterplan with a view to bringing it forward as a form of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). In order for it to have more weight as a SPG document the Council would have to take it through a formal process involving consultation. Following this, the principles or spatial elements of the Masterplan could then be considered to provide a more detailed articulation of LDP policy.”</i></p>
3.17	<p><b>Next Steps/Delivery</b></p> <p>Development in the INW will be driven by investment from both the public and private sectors. Whilst private sector investment is essential there is also a significant role for the public sector, working with the private sector and other stakeholders, in helping to shape and deliver regeneration in this part of the city. There is also a significant amount of publicly owned land in the area which provides the opportunity for the public sector to influence and drive development in a co-ordinated manner. The Masterplan has been produced in consultation with the Department for Communities (DfC) and the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) with a view towards collaboration in delivering the Masterplan’s vision.</p>
3.18	<p>Following agreement on the Masterplan it is proposed to bring forward an aligned INW Delivery Plan setting out proposed priorities and projects (in collaboration with others). The draft Masterplan sets out some proposals in the Delivery Section as to how the Council will work with others to help realise the ambitions in the Masterplan. The Delivery Plan elements remain to be agreed in detail and will be brought back to Committee in the near future but the Masterplan notes the following proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with DfC and the private sector to review their land holdings within the Inner North West, and consider which sites may be brought forward for development.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support DfC and DfI to bring forward additional public realm improvements where funding permits.</li> <li>• Proposed Infrastructure Study to reflect need for improvements to public transport in and around the Inner North West.</li> <li>• Utilise this document to inform discussions with developers as they come forward with proposals in the area.</li> <li>• Use Masterplan to inform drafting of the LDP and LPP.</li> <li>• Engage with private sector landowners to understand barriers to development.</li> <li>• Bring forward the development of the Belfast Telegraph building.</li> <li>• Consider targeted business support and economic regeneration initiatives.</li> <li>• Explore opportunities for meanwhile or interim uses.</li> <li>• Focused action plan for those areas most impacted by the Bank Buildings fire.</li> </ul>
3.19	<p>As a result of the recent fire at Bank Buildings it is recognised that there needs to be a renewed focus on this part of the city. As a key part of the proposed Delivery Plan for the Masterplan it is intended to bring forward a focused action plan for the area surrounding Bank Buildings to address the shorter and longer-term impacts of the recent fire. Further reports will be brought back to Committee on this.</p>
3.20	<p>It is also worth noting that the Council remains involved with a number of other strategic projects such as Streets Ahead, York Street Interchange, Clarendon Masterplan, Clifton Street Gateway and Belfast Region City Deal, all of which will affect the INW and provide opportunities to increase connections, support coherent development and achieve the aspirations of the Masterplan.</p>
3.21	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>Consultation on the draft EQIA Screening was held as part of the Inner North West Masterplan. The Rural Needs Impact Assessment found that the Masterplan involves the development of an inner city area and will have no direct impact in rural areas.</p>
3.22	<p><b><u>Finance and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>None directly associated with this report.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	<p><b>Appendix 1</b> Location map</p> <p><b>Appendix 2</b> Inner North West Masterplan</p> <p><b>Appendix 3</b> Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)</p> <p><b>Appendix 4</b> Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)</p> <p><b>Appendix 5</b> Rural Needs Assessment,</p> <p><b>Appendix 6</b> EQIA Screening</p> <p><b>Appendix 7</b> Consultation report</p>