

**Cabinet**

**7 March 2012**

**Stanley Town Centre Masterplan**

**Key Decision R&ED/01/12**



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**Report of Corporate Management Team**

**Ian Thompson, Corporate Director Regeneration and Economic Development**

**Councillor Neil Foster, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Economic Development**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. This report seeks approval for the Stanley Town Centre Masterplan and to establish timescales for the delivery of the initial elements of the proposed regeneration programme.
2. Subject to approval of the masterplan, this report seeks approval to the principle of the use of Compulsory Purchase Powers to facilitate the completion of land acquisition needed to implement a consented development highlighted in the masterplan.

**Background**

3. The Council is committed to improving the County's main towns and villages. A key first step is identifying how this can best be achieved and to this end a series of plans and frameworks are being drawn up to help facilitate this.
4. As one of the main priority towns in North Durham, Stanley presents significant opportunities for regeneration and improvement. In recent years there have been successful developments in the town while additional investment is planned including the Academy and a food retail scheme at the Clifford Centre.
5. It is apparent however that the town centre is underperforming and does not function as well as it could, and indeed should. There remains a pressing need to set out a clear plan for how the town should be developed and improved. The Masterplan is a mechanism to ensure new developments are successfully integrated into the town and give confidence for businesses to invest in Stanley. The plan will also help to maximise the potential of the numerous development opportunities (e.g. well-located sites).

6. This document provides a guide for regeneration and investment over the next 15 years, creating a vision for the town in terms of its distinctive role and identity within the County. A copy of the full Baseline report, along with the Masterplan has been placed in the Member's Library for reference.

### **The scope of the Masterplan**

7. The Stanley Masterplan sets out the main actions that will help to create a revitalised, accessible and attractive town centre. It introduces the main characteristics and challenges affecting the town, and sets a Vision and Objectives to help to frame the actions of the plan. The Masterplan also sets out the level of priority and timetabling for delivering the Proposed Actions within a Delivery Plan which is included in the plan. Progress made against the Delivery Plan will be monitored and the delivery Plan updated to reflect progress and any changes in circumstances.
8. The results from the consultations have been used alongside Sustainability Appraisal and a Baseline Report to inform the selection of the most appropriate suite of Proposed Actions to be taken forward in the Masterplan. The Proposed Actions in the plan are grouped under the following six themes:
  - Creating development and inward investment opportunities
  - Improving permeability
  - Improving the town centre offer
  - Improving town centre facilities
  - Improving the appearance of the town centre
  - Supporting local businesses
9. In the short term, the Masterplan provides a focus on realistic and deliverable interventions, recognising the current economic situation and the need to stimulate private investment wherever possible. In order to maintain an improvement in the town's fabric in the longer term, investment by DCC alongside that of other public bodies will need to be closely co-ordinated to maximise the *Whole Town* approach and improvements to service delivery.
10. Committed investment by both public and private sector partners in support of the place shaping aspirations is detailed in the Delivery Plan section of the Masterplan. More fundamentally, whilst public sector expenditure is expected to be limited for the foreseeable future, its sensible use should seek to stimulate and work with the local property market to deliver the long term objectives of the framework.

11. The short term (1-5 year) interventions recognise the availability of some capital programme resource and opportunities for the use and re (use) of Council land and property to drive forward the regeneration plans. The tables below identify the County Council and other Partners resources already allocated or programmed for each of the identified priorities within the town centre over the short-term (2012-2017).

Table 1 Confirmed Council short term interventions across Stanley

Theme	Interventions	Proposed DCC Allocation
<b>Improving the town centre facilities</b>	Develop a new Customer Access Point which will include the relocated Library	£1.2 million
	Construction of North Durham Academy	£ 31.5 million
<b>Supporting local businesses</b>	Targeted Business Improvements Scheme	£100,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£32.8 Million</b>

Table 2 Confirmed short term interventions to be funded by others

Theme	Interventions	Proposed Allocation
<b>Improving the appearance of the town centre</b>	Public realm improvements through the Tesco development	Works to be completed along Clifford Road as part of Section 106 legal agreement (c£200,000)
	Stanley Heart – general environmental improvements through Stanley Town Council.	£40,000
<b>Improving permeability</b>	Physical enhancements to South Stanley by Derwentside Homes	£500,000

12. These financial commitments (above) are done so with the expectation that this investment will be used to maintain progress with the regeneration programme until such time as the land and property market recovers. Options to take forward the longer term aspirations in plan (currently estimated at least £1.9 million) beyond the approved contributions derived from the Councils capital programme will form the basis of subsequent detailed reports.

## **Status of the Masterplan**

13. The Masterplan will set out the Council's Regeneration Policy for Stanley town centre. Whilst it will not have statutory Development Plan status elements of it which have planning policy implications (e.g. designation of the primary retail core) will be taken forward as 'preferred options' within the relevant sections of the forthcoming County Durham Plan. The Masterplan will be an adopted Council document and will be used to guide and co-ordinate future decisions and actions affecting the town centre. It will be regarded as a material consideration when considering and negotiating on planning applications.

## **Consultation**

14. Two rounds of extensive consultation with local businesses, the community, Stanley Town Council, Stanley AAP and other stakeholders have been carried out during the preparation of the Masterplan. The first consultation took place in February 2011 and focussed upon the key issues affecting the town centre and informed the finalisation of the Town Centre Baseline Report. The results of this exercise were fed into the next round of consultation which set out a range of options for consideration, and took place over the summer 2011 for six weeks.
15. Participation levels have been high throughout the preparation of the Masterplan. The results of the consultation have been used to inform the development of proposed actions and are contained within the Baseline Report.

## **Deliverability**

16. One of the key issues in developing the Masterplan has been to ensure that the proposals contained within the plan are deliverable, particularly given current commercial markets and public sector funding constraints.
17. One of the major development areas, identified within the Masterplan for significant private sector investment, is the redevelopment of the Clifford Road site. This site currently has planning consent for a major foodstore development and associated car parking, which is an investment of approximately £30 million and anticipated to create in excess of 400 jobs.
18. The developer for the scheme has progressed to an advanced stage with the site assembly associated with the project. However, after protracted negotiations, an impasse has been reached for the freehold acquisition of the remaining plots across the site, preventing the delivery of the Foodstore project.

19. In view of the central nature of the proposed development to the aims of the masterplan, the Council has been approached by the developer to consider the use of Compulsory Purchase powers to secure remaining land interests within the development site and allow the new development to come forward.
20. It is anticipated that the Clifford Road scheme will deliver a range of significant economic, social and environmental benefits to an area which is much in need of regeneration and improvement. Details of these benefits, the need and justification for the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO), and the Council's purpose in seeking to acquire land for the scheme, would be required to be set out in detail in a 'Statement of reasons' for consideration before an order can be published.
21. Under the use of such powers if approved, there will be an opportunity for all affected parties to object to the Order, possibly culminating in a Public Inquiry. Should the Compulsory Purchase Order be confirmed by the Secretary of State, appropriate compensation will be available to those entitled to claim under the relevant statutory provisions.

### **Recommendation and Reasons**

20. It is recommended that to support the regeneration of Stanley, Members approve the Stanley Town Centre Masterplan and its associated Delivery Plan.
21. Subject to approval of the Stanley Town Centre Masterplan, approval is sought to develop further a Compulsory Purchase Order to complete land acquisition and facilitate development of the foodstore site at Clifford Road, Stanley, with a further detailed report to be presented detailing all relevant information required to prepare the order for submission to the Secretary of State.

### **Background Papers**

Statement of Consultation for Stanley Town Centre Masterplan  
Stanley Town centre Baseline Report.  
Planning Application: 1/2010/0096

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Finance -**

The Masterplan includes proposals which will require finance through the Capital Programme and Local Transport Plan. Elements identified within table 1 of the report already have approval through the Town Centre Element of the RED Capital Programme.

Potential cost implications associated with the use of Compulsory Purchase Powers will be detailed in any further report subject to approval.

### **Staffing -**

Some staff resources will be required in the preparation of the finalised Masterplan.

### **Risk -**

A risk assessment has been completed and one reportable risk has been identified, details of which are attached at appendix 2.

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty -**

An EIQA has been carried out and no significant implications have been identified.

### **Accommodation -**

The relocation of the Customer Access Point and Library and reuse of the existing Council offices on Front Street are included within the Masterplan proposals.

### **Crime and Disorder - None**

### **Human Rights -**

None associated with consideration of the masterplan. Any consideration of the use of Compulsory Purchase Powers will require the Statement of Reasons to sets out the Council's justification for compulsory acquisition and include reference to how regard has been given to the provisions of Article 1 of the First Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights and Article 8.

### **Consultation -**

Consultation with high participation rates has been carried out and has informed the preparation of Masterplan.

### **Procurement - None**

### **Disability Issues - None**

**Legal Implications -**

Should approval be granted to prepare further detailed report in the use of a Compulsory Purchase Order, The powers to be used and procedure to be followed are set out in Section 226(1) (a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and in the Acquisition of Land Act 1981.

## Appendix 2

### Reportable Risk

Risk Description	Potential Impact	Measures to mitigate the risk (if not already in place state implantation date)	Risk Owner
Continued decline of the town centre	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Inability to attract inward investment, employment; housing development etc.</li><li>2. Local economy will suffer.</li><li>3. Social inequalities may increase.</li><li>4. Public dissatisfaction.</li><li>5. Reputational damage.</li></ol>		Ian Thompson