



## **REPORT of CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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**to  
PLANNING AND LICENSING COMMITTEE  
20 JULY 2017**

### **MALDON AND HEYBRIDGE CENTRAL AREA MASTERPLAN - REPORT ON PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND PROPOSED AMENDMENTS FOLLOWING PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To present the analysis and findings of the comments received through the public consultation via a power point presentation.
- 1.2 To outline the proposed amendments to the draft Masterplan following public consultation.
- 1.3 To enable preparation of a final document for endorsement by the Committee and subsequent adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) To seek the Committee's approval of the proposed amendments to the draft Masterplan following the public consultation;
- (ii) To seek the Committee's approval to prepare a final document for 14 September 2017 Planning and Licensing Committee with a recommendation for approval by the Council.

#### **3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 The Committee approved the draft Maldon and Heybridge Central Area Masterplan (**APPENDIX 1**) for public consultation as set out in a report to Committee on 19 January 2017 (Minute No. 889 refers). The draft Masterplan sets out the spatial framework for development and regeneration of the Central Area aligning with Policy S5, Local Development Plan (LDP) and supporting the LDP as a whole. The draft Masterplan articulates the economic, social and environmental priorities for the Maldon and Heybridge Central Area underpinned by a robust evidence base detailed on pages 7 - 10 of the document that has included significant stakeholder engagement.
- 3.2 The public consultation commenced on Monday 22 March and ended on Friday 28 April 2017. The public consultation was based on the overarching Masterplan Framework on page 16; the Movement and Connectivity Framework on page 18; the Green Infrastructure Framework on page 22 and the Development Framework on

page 24 of the draft Masterplan document. The 18 Masterplan Projects focus on the retail, commercial, industrial, community and tourism activities detailed on pages 26 - 75 including the timetable for project delivery and a priority rating for each project detailed in the Action Plan on pages 76 - 79 of the draft Masterplan document.

- 3.3 The public consultation documents included the draft Masterplan (**APPENDIX 1**) and the questionnaire and project summary leaflet (**APPENDIX 2**). The consultation material was available online with its own dedicated URL and hard copies at a static exhibition permanently on display in the Council offices for the duration of the public consultation with the opportunity for the public to speak to relevant officers. Two public events were held at Maldon Town Hall and Plantation Hall, Heybridge with the opportunity to talk to officers and consultants. 120 members of the public attended the events; 90 at the Maldon Town Hall event on 5 April and 30 at the Plantation Hall, Heybridge event on 12 April.
- 3.4 The consultation material (**APPENDIX 2**) was prepared with our consultants to enable the most useful and effective feedback on the draft Masterplan in its analysis and presentation to the Committee. 59 responses were received to the public consultation. Whilst 59 responses were received, some respondents did not completely fill in the questionnaire and others submitted comments by letter (including those received prior to 19 January 2017 meeting of the Planning and Licensing Committee) or e-mail or via arranged meetings during the consultation period. All comments have been recorded and analysed and are set out in (**APPENDIX 3**). **APPENDIX 3** will be projected at this point and explained for each question in the public consultation questionnaire. Conclusions to each question in the questionnaire will be given based on the public consultation analysis. Recommendations for amendments to the draft Masterplan based on the public consultation are at the end of this report.
- 3.5 Question 01 relates to the 18 Masterplan Projects and their priority rating in the Action Plan and asks: *In your opinion, which projects are the most important? Please complete the table below, giving a priority rating for each project, where 1 is very important and 5 is not very important.* The public consultation placed Project 2 'Lower High Street', Project 4 'Hythe Quay Improvement Initiative', Project 7 'Iconic Bridge' and Project 15 'Destination Hub' contrary to the priority rating in the draft Masterplan.

**Conclusion: Consider amendments to the priority levels for Projects 2, 4, 7, and 15 in the draft Masterplan.**

- 3.6 Question 02 relates to the 18 Masterplan Projects and asks: *How effective do you think these projects will be? Please tick one box stating whether you agree with the following statements and leave comments in the space provided.*
- 3.7 Referring to page 3 of **APPENDIX 3** Question 2a asks: *The projects will help to improve connectivity and movement around the central area of Maldon and Heybridge.*
- Of the 55 respondents 7% Strongly Agree, 33% Agree, 37% Neutral, 16% Disagree and 7% Strongly Disagree with the statement.
  - The questionnaire asks: *Why is this?* No respondent filled this in.

- The questionnaire asks: *Is there anything else you consider we can do to make connectivity and movement easier around the central area of Maldon and Heybridge?* 9 respondents said: signage and information Boards; 7 respondents said: Park and Ride; 7 respondents said: Improve parking facilities in town; 4 respondents said: better connectivity from High Street to Prom; 4 respondents said: new coastal / rural / heritage cycle path; 4 respondents said: new bridge connection; 3 respondents said: more car parks and 2 respondents said: better tourist office.
- **Conclusion:** 40% Agree, 37% Neutral, 23% Disagree that: *The projects will help to improve connectivity and movement around the central area of Maldon and Heybridge.*
- Having regard to the respondent's further comments to: *Is there anything else you consider we can do to make connectivity and movement easier around the central area of Maldon and Heybridge?*
- **The public consultation respondents confirm the projects will deliver improved connectivity and movement around the central Area of Maldon and Heybridge.**

3.8 Referring to page 4 of **APPENDIX 3** Question 2b asks: *The plans will enhance your experience and enjoyment of the waterfront environment.*

- Of the 58 respondents 43% Strongly Disagree; 26% Disagree; 3% Neutral; 16% Strongly Agree; 12% Agree with the statement.
- The questionnaire asks: *Why is this?* Key words and sentences from the respondents were stated as: A market would be detrimental to access and restrict views of the waterside and barges; working quay will be destroyed; quay loved by locals and visitors; historic and iconic waterfront.
- The questionnaire asks: *Is there anything else you consider we can do to enhance your experience and enjoyment of the waterfront environment?* 24 respondents said: negative perception of market on Quay; 12 respondents said: content with existing situation; 7 respondents said: improve eating/toilet facilities in Prom Park; 6 respondents said: overnight visitor facilities; 6 respondents said: enhance mooring facilities; 5 respondents said: positive perception of market on quay; 5 respondents said: improve signage to help follow route; 3 respondents said: enhance parking facilities.
- **Conclusion:** 69% Disagree, 3% Neutral, 28% Agree that: *The plans will enhance your experience and enjoyment of the waterfront environment.* 69% of respondents disagree with the statement and respondent's comments relate predominantly to Project 4 Hythe Quay Improvement Initiative and the location of kiosks on Hythe Quay; the kiosks impacting on existing views and the working quayside. Comments regarding: improving eating/toilet facilities in Prom Park, overnight visitor facilities enhancing mooring facilities, improving signage and enhancing parking facilities are covered in Projects 15 Destination Hub, 16 Promenade Park Management Plan and 17 Moorings in the Blackwater Estuary and referred to in paragraph 3.7 regarding movement and connectivity.
- **Consider revision to Project 4 Hythe Quay Improvement Initiative.**

- 3.9 Referring to page 4 of **APPENDIX 3** Question 2c asks: *The projects will successfully improve the retail offer in Maldon and Heybridge.*
- Of the 53 respondents 6% Strongly Disagree, 22% Disagree, 47% Neutral, 4% Strongly Agree, 21% Agree with the statement.
  - The questionnaire asks: *Why is this?* Key words and sentences from the respondents were stated as: Free parking at lower end of High Street.
  - The questionnaire asks: *Is there anything else you consider we can do to improve the retail offer in Maldon and Heybridge?* 10 respondents said: free or lower parking fees; 6 respondents said: encourage niche shops and restaurants; 5 respondents said: mitigate traffic on High Street; 5 respondents said: reduce business rates for smaller businesses; 4 respondents said: improve transport links with rural areas; 3 respondents said: improve lower High Street; 1 respondent said: improve existing market in Butt Lane.
  - **Conclusion:** 28% Disagree, 47% Neutral, 25% Agree that: *The projects will successfully improve the retail offer in Maldon and Heybridge.* The 28% of respondents who have disagreed with the statement focus on reasons that are outside of the draft Masterplan to lower business rates and allow free or lower parking fees and to improve transport links to rural areas. Encouraging niche shops and restaurants, mitigating traffic on the High Street and improving the Lower High Street are covered in Projects 1 Upper High Street, 2 Lower High Street and 3 Butt Lane Car Park and referred to in paragraph 3.7 regarding movement and connectivity. Whilst the ‘Disagrees’ are 3% more than the ‘Agrees’, most respondents are neutral at 47%.
  - **The analysis shows that the draft Masterplan cannot address the negative comments around business rates, lowering parking fees or improving transport links to rural areas. However, these comments can be taken account of through the project implementation and delivery stages of the Masterplan or through other areas of the Council’s services.**
- 3.10 Page 6 of **APPENDIX 3** Question 2d asks: *The projects will successfully improve the leisure offer in Maldon and Heybridge.*
- Of the 52 respondents 4% Strongly Disagree, 25% Disagree, 48% Neutral, 10% Strongly Agree, 13% Agree with the statement.
  - The questionnaire asks: *Why is this?* Key words and sentences from the respondents were stated as: Support cultural life of Maldon.
  - The questionnaire asks: *Is there anything else you consider we can do to improve the leisure offer in Maldon and Heybridge?* 7 respondents said: swimming lake at Prom Park; 7 respondents said: cinema away from waterfront; 5 respondents said: improvements to coastal path.
  - **Conclusion:** 29% Disagree, 48% Neutral, 23% Agree that: *The projects will successfully improve the leisure offer in Maldon and Heybridge.* The 29% of respondents that disagree with the statement focus on reasons that are outside of the draft Masterplan to restore a swimming lake in Prom Park and provide a cinema. The improvements to the coastal path are part of Project 18 Essex Coast Path and Northey Island and referred to in paragraph 3.7 regarding movement and connectivity. Whilst the ‘Disagrees’ are 6% more than the ‘Agrees’ most respondents are neutral at 48%.

- **The analysis shows that the draft Masterplan cannot address the negative comments around a new swimming lake and a new cinema but these comments can be taken account of through the project implementation and delivery stages of the Masterplan or through other areas of the Council's services.**

3.11 Page 8 of **APPENDIX 3** Question 2e asks: *The projects will help to grow the local economy, create jobs and enhance skills.*

- Of the 53 respondents 4% Strongly Disagree, 15% Disagree, 40% Neutral, 7% Strongly Agree, 34% Agree with the statement.
- The questionnaire asks: *Why is this?* No respondent filled this in.
- The questionnaire asks: *Is there anything you consider we can do to help grow the local economy, create jobs and enhance skills?* 4 respondents said: introduce job placement scheme; 2 respondents said: support small businesses; 2 respondents said: ensure emphasis on leisure front businesses (restaurants); 2 respondents said: encourage Business Park.
- **Conclusion:** 19% Disagree, 40% Neutral, 41% Agree, that: *The projects will help to grow the local economy, create jobs and enhance skills.*
- Having regard to the respondent's further comments to: *Is there anything you consider we can do to help grow the local economy, create jobs and enhance skills?*
- **The public consultation respondents confirm the projects will help to grow the local economy, create jobs and enhance skills.**

3.12 Page 9 of **APPENDIX 3** Question 2f asks: *The projects are sensitive to and will protect and enhance the important maritime heritage of the area?*

- Of the 54 respondents 33% Strongly Disagree, 30% Disagree, 17% Neutral, 7 % Strongly Agree, 13% Agree with the statement.
- The questionnaire asks: *Why is this?* No respondent filled this in.
- The questionnaire asks: *Is there anything else you consider we can do to protect and enhance the important maritime heritage of the area?* 11 respondents said: protect the current heritage assets on the waterfront; 10 respondents had a negative view of a market on Hythe Quay; 4 respondents said: protect natural environment; 4 respondents said: extend visitor moorings; 4 respondents said new bridge will enhance accessibility.
- **Conclusion:** 66% Disagree, 17% Neutral, 20% Agree that: *The projects are sensitive to and will protect and enhance the important maritime heritage of the area?* 66% of respondents disagree with the statement and respondent's comments relate predominantly to protecting heritage assets at the waterfront and having a negative view of market on Hythe Quay. Protecting the natural environment is covered by national and international designations and outside of the draft Masterplan projects. Extending visitor moorings and a new bridge are covered by Projects 7 Iconic Bridge and 17 Moorings in the Blackwater Estuary.

- **As detailed in paragraph 3.8 above regarding the waterfront environment, consider revision to Project 4 Hythe Quay Improvement Initiatives to remove kiosks from Hythe Quay.**
- 3.13 Page 10 of **APPENDIX 3** Question 3 asks: *What is your overall impression of the projects you have seen in this exhibition for the Maldon and Heybridge Central Area Masterplan? Excited, Generally Positive, Neutral, Unsure, Not Excited.*
- 33% of respondents were ‘Not Excited’, 20% of respondents were ‘Unsure’, 22% of respondents were ‘Neutral’, 20% of respondents were ‘Generally Positive’, 5% of respondents were ‘Excited’.
  - **Conclusion:** 33% Not Excited; 44% Unsure or Neutral, 25% Excited.
  - Applying these percentages to the questionnaire responses, it is apparent and confirmed by paragraphs 3.5, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10 and 3.12 above that certain elements of the draft Masterplan require revision or amendment.
  - **Paragraphs 3.14 – 3.19 outline proposed amendments to the draft Masterplan.**
- 3.14 **Amendments** are proposed to the draft Masterplan Action Plan on page 78 of **APPENDIX 1** relating to Question 01 Project Priority detailed in Paragraphs 3.5 of this report. Based on the public consultation responses and the overall consultation analysis presented:
- **Raise the priority level for Project 2 Lower High Street from *Medium* to *High* in the Action Plan.**
- 3.14.1 The Project Priority is retained for Projects 4 Hythe Quay Improvement Initiative, Project 7 Iconic Bridge and Project 15 Destination Hub as they support key projects in Policy S5 LDP relating to improving the visitor offer; improving connectivity and movement and access to the waterside.
- 3.15 **Amendments** are proposed to the draft Masterplan Project 4 Hythe Quay Improvement Initiative on page 41 of **APPENDIX 1** relating to Question 02 Waterfront Environment and Question 02 Maritime Heritage detailed in Paragraphs 3.8 and 3.12 of this report. Based on the public consultation responses and the overall consultation analysis presented:
- **Amend text and remove bullet points 1, 3, 5 referencing a food market, market management and market operations at Hythe Quay on page 41 draft Masterplan. Revise graphics on front cover and within the document as required.**
- 3.15.1 Provision of a high quality market in the Masterplan area is a key project of Policy S5, LDP and should remain as a requirement in the draft Masterplan but not located at Hythe Quay.
- 3.16 Comments were received from the Coast and Countryside Officer that Project 16 Promenade Park Management Plan on page 70 of **APPENDIX 1** should not show a brown line around the existing parking and just have a ‘P’ symbol placed centrally in the main space so that the actual location of parking in Prom Park can be determined through the future management plan.

- **Remove the brown line around the parking area and replace with a ‘P’ symbol on page 70 of the draft Masterplan.**
- 3.17 Comments were received from an existing business on the North Quay at Fullbridge relating to Project 6 North Quay on page 52 of **APPENDIX 1** that their business is staying in its present location for the foreseeable future.
- **Remove red line boundary around working flour mill and remove ‘Potential Future Site’ from graphics and keys on pages 52 and 58 of the draft Masterplan.**
- 3.18 Comments were received from the Economic Growth and Regeneration Officer at Essex County Council regarding the Project Lead on Projects 8, 9 and 10 in the Action Plan on page 79 of **APPENDIX 1**.
- **Remove ‘Essex County Council’ as the Project Lead from Projects 8, 9 and 10 and place under ‘Partners’ in the Action Plan. Replace with Maldon District Council as Project Lead.**
- 3.19 Comments were received from a private landowner at Chandlers Quay, Fullbridge relating to Project 5 Maldon Riverside Path on page 44 of **APPENDIX 1** that their landholding is not available to accommodate kiosks or any other activity that impacts upon the existing car parking arrangements or the water based maritime industries.
- **Remove part of bullet point 4 referencing ‘new activities along the waterfront’ on page 44 that relate specifically to Chandlers Quay. Revise graphics as required.**

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The draft Masterplan identifies 18 self-supporting projects to deliver the objectives and key projects in Policy S5, LDP to support the local economy, enhance the natural, built and historic environment, to improvement movement and connectivity, access to the waterside and to seek a sustainable approach to transport and car parking management. An accompanying Action Plan sets out the key partners and funding to deliver the projects and interventions.
- 4.2 The necessary public consultation has highlighted concerns that a certain element of a project in the draft Masterplan could impact negatively on waterside businesses and the character and appearance of the historic waterfront. The public consultation has also highlighted that certain projects should have a higher priority in the draft Masterplan. Generally, and as a whole, the draft Masterplan has been positively received and the overarching Masterplan on page 15 of **APPENDIX 1** will deliver and manage change in the Maldon and Heybridge Central Area to realise Policy S5, LDP.
- 4.3 Subject to the amendments set out in Paragraphs 3.14; 3.15; 3.16; 3.17; 3.18 and 3.19 of this report and any further comments or amendments proposed by the Committee to **APPENDIX 1**, officers will request our consultants to provide a final copy of the Maldon and Heybridge Central Area Masterplan document for the 14 September 2017 Committee Meeting as detailed in Paragraphs 2(i) and 2(ii) of this report.

## 5. IMPACT ON CORPORATE GOALS

- 5.1 The Maldon and Heybridge Central Area Masterplan supports corporate goals which underpin the Council's vision for the District and in particular protecting and shaping the District and creating opportunities for economic growth and prosperity.

## 6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – The character, vitality and cultural importance of the Maldon and Heybridge Central Area are critical to the economic prosperity of the District and to the quality of life of customers: residents, businesses and visitors.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – not applicable
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – Failure to appropriately masterplan the Maldon and Heybridge Central Area may result in uncoordinated development contrary to the best interests of the Council and its customers.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – The costs related to production of the Masterplan are in accordance with the project brief approved by the Committee.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – Project Management of the Maldon and Heybridge Central Area Masterplan is in-house by the Urban Design Officer.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – Masterplanning the Maldon and Heybridge Central Area will result in improvements to the local environment and support sustainable development that is appropriate for the area.

### Background Papers:

Local Development Plan, Policy S5

The Maldon and Heybridge Central Area Contextual Study (Allies and Morrison, June 2012)

The Maldon District Economic Prosperity Strategy (Maldon District Council, 2013)

The Maldon and Heybridge Central Area Intermediate Study (Allies and Morrison, August 2014)

The Causeway Regeneration Area Development and Improvement Plan, (BBP Regeneration, August 2015)

Report to the Planning and Licensing Committee dated 19 January 2017

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