



ECONOMY REGENERATION & HOUSING COMMITTEE

Tuesday 16th July 2024

REPORT TITLE:	ADOPTION OF NEIGHBOURHOOD FRAMEWORKS & MASTERPLANS (CLEVELAND STREET NEIGHBOURHOOD, NORTHSIDE, DOCK BRANCH NEIGHBOURHOOD, NEW BRIGHTON MARINE PROMENADE)
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND PLACE

REPORT SUMMARY

The Council has been developing its regeneration strategy for Wirral Left Bank for a number of years. The Birkenhead 2040 Framework was endorsed by this Committee as the interim Regeneration strategy for Wirral in March 2022. This document set out that delivery of the Birkenhead 2040 Framework will be supported by more detailed Neighbourhood Frameworks and Masterplans setting out the regeneration objectives and strategies for specific areas. Policy WS6.3 of the emerging Local Plan also requires Masterplans to be approved for specified areas to ensure that development is coordinated and comprehensively planned.

Five of these documents are detailed in this report, four of which are recommended for adoption:

1. Cleveland Street Neighbourhood Masterplan
2. Northside Neighbourhood Framework
3. Scott's Quay Neighbourhood Framework
4. Dock Branch Neighbourhood Masterplan
5. New Brighton Marine Promenade Masterplan

The adopted masterplans will be a material consideration in the consideration of any planning applications submitted within the masterplan boundary, with all new development expected to conform to the masterplan proposals and requirements.

The adopted Neighbourhood Framework will be a material consideration in the determination of development in the area and will help guide future development.

The Scott's Quay Neighbourhood Framework is recommended for withdrawal as the council's regeneration strategy for the area, following the proposed modification to the Local Plan withdrawing the Regeneration Area and associated site allocations (see document

DSH26 on Local Plan examination web site - <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/files/dsh26-note-ra2-scotts-quay.pdf/download?inline>). Further work will be undertaken to explore the constraints and work with stakeholders to determine a sustainable regeneration strategy for the area.

Wirral Working Together – A Council Plan 2023 - 2027 sets out the Council's vision to secure the best possible future for our residents. The Neighbourhood Frameworks and Masterplans supports the delivery of the key themes:

- Early help for children and families
- Promoting independence and healthier lives
- People focussed regeneration
- Protect our environment
- Safe, resilient and engaged communities

This matter affects Bidston & St James ward (Cleveland Street Neighbourhood Masterplan), Seacombe ward (Northside and Scott's Quay Neighbourhood Frameworks), Birkenhead & Tranmere ward/Bidston & St James ward (Dock Branch Neighbourhood Masterplan) and New Brighton Ward (New Brighton Marine Promenade Masterplan).

This is a Key Decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee is recommended to:

1. Adopt the Cleveland Street Neighbourhood Masterplan as the council's approved planning strategy for the area;
2. Approve the Northside Neighbourhood Framework as the council's approved regeneration strategy for the area;
3. Withdraw the Scott's Quay Neighbourhood Framework and authorise the Director of Regeneration and Place to continue to work with Stakeholders to develop a regeneration strategy for the area;
4. Adopt the Dock Branch Neighbourhood Masterplan as the Council's approved planning strategy for the area; and
5. Adopt the New Brighton Marine Promenade Masterplan as the Council's approved planning strategy for the area.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The proposals within this report are intended to ensure that the Neighbourhood Framework and Masterplans are duly adopted as the regeneration strategies for the areas that they relate to and are used as material considerations in the determination of planning applications where appropriate.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Neighbourhood Frameworks and Masterplans were developed to better inform the regeneration delivery strategy for the Wirral Left Bank and support the Local Plan and the Council's Brownfield first housing strategy. The only other option would be to not take the Neighbourhood Frameworks and Masterplans through an approval process, but this would undermine the importance of these documents in outlining the council's regeneration strategy and would meet the requirements of the Local Plan.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Context

- 3.1 Masterplan areas are defined in the Local Plan in policy WS6.3. Masterplan areas are areas where significant change is expected and a co-ordinated and comprehensive approach to development is required. Masterplans are planning documents and should be in place before development in the area can be approved. Neighbourhood Frameworks align with regeneration areas in the Local Plan and set out the regeneration objectives and development potential of an area. The Neighbourhood Frameworks and Masterplans are essential to underpinning the Council's brownfield first housing strategy. They set out a clear approach to the regeneration strategy for the Left Bank and underpin the approach to housing delivery in the area.
- 3.2 The work on masterplans and neighbourhood frameworks has helped support and inform the evidence base for the Local Plan. The documents specifically help support the housing numbers that have been attributed to the "other developable area" or non-allocated sites in regeneration areas in the Local Plan.

Cleveland Street Neighbourhood Masterplan

- 3.3 The Cleveland Street neighbourhood today is predominantly employment focussed, but our approach is to introduce new homes to create a vibrant, mixed-use neighbourhood. The aspiration is to establish a place where families want to live, embracing the concept of a neighbourhood where residents can walk or cycle to a range of local facilities. New public realm and green streets will significantly improve the appearance of the area and support wellbeing. Some businesses will remain, but new developments will provide opportunities for new businesses to locate in the area in order that the place continues to support a high number of jobs.

- 3.4 The masterplan has identified the opportunity to provide up to 1,200 new homes in the area, with the aim of at least 60% of these being family sized (3-bedrooms or more) alongside a mixture of smaller one and two bedroomed dwellings to encourage people with different needs and ages to live in the area.
- 3.5 The Masterplan sets out the approach to comprehensive and coordinated development within the area and supports WS6.3 and RA 7 in the Local Plan. A delivery strategy will be prepared to support the implementation of the Masterplan.
- 3.6 The masterplan document is attached as Appendix 1, along with an Executive Summary (Appendix 2), Consultation Report (Appendix 3) and a Consultation Analysis Report (Appendix 4). The recommendation is to adopt this masterplan.

Northside Neighbourhood Framework

- 3.7 The Northside area is currently dominated by occupied employment sites and vacant sites. The vision for Northside is to retain the area in employment use, but develop new accommodation on vacant plots and under-developed sites to improve the visual appearance and attract new businesses into the area, thereby increasing the number of jobs and job density. The document supports policy RA8 in the Local Plan.
- 3.8 Northside is within the Freeport area which will act as a catalyst for employment related development of the area. Discussions are ongoing with landowners, developers and businesses seeking sites/new accommodation, and the financial incentives associated with the Freeport status should help overcome development viability issues that are likely to arise as a result of previous land uses.
- 3.9 The neighbourhood framework document is attached as Appendix 5, along with an Executive Summary (Appendix 6), Consultation Report (Appendix 7) and a Consultation Analysis Report (Appendix 8). The recommendation is to adopt this Neighbourhood Framework.

Scott's Quay Neighbourhood Framework

- 3.10 The vision for Scott's Quay was to redevelop vacant and/or under-utilised plots for a mixture of new residential and compatible commercial uses, changing the balance from industry to residential and more generally to improve the visual appearance and condition of buildings within the area. However, through various investigations and studies undertaken to support the development of the Neighbourhood Framework a number of significant development constraints were identified being:
- poor air quality near the dock edge associated with ships running their engines whilst berthed;
 - noise issues relating to some existing employment uses; and
 - an odour issue associated with the storage tanks by the docks.
- 3.11 Several of the existing businesses in the area also objected to the proposals for significant residential development as they felt it could adversely impact on their current operations. These constraints resulted in the proposed modification to the Local Plan withdrawing the Regeneration Area and associated site allocations (see document DSH26 on Local Plan examination web site).

- 3.11 Rather than adopt the Neighbourhood Framework, given the constraints and the Local Plan proposed modification it is proposed to undertake further work to explore the constraints and work with stakeholders to determine a sustainable regeneration strategy for the area. The draft neighbourhood framework document is attached as Appendix 9, along with an Executive Summary (Appendix 10), Consultation Report (Appendix 11) and a Consultation Analysis Report (Appendix 12). The recommendation is to withdraw this Neighbourhood Framework.

Dock Branch Neighbourhood Masterplan

- 3.13 Dock Branch Neighbourhood Masterplan focuses on the area around the former Dock Branch railway line, for which there is a separate project to create a new linear park, which is one of nine catalyst projects which form a key part of the Birkenhead 2040 Framework. The ambition is to deliver the transformation of the area into a thriving residential led mixed use urban community at the heart of Birkenhead.
- 3.14 The masterplan has identified the opportunity to provide up to 1,200 new homes in the area, proposing a mix of typologies including terraces, townhouses, maisonettes and apartments.
- 3.15 The Masterplan sets out the approach to comprehensive and coordinated development in the area. It supports policy WS6.3 of the Local plan. The Masterplan covers part of RA3 (Birkenhead Waterfront Regeneration area) and RA 4 (Central Birkenhead). A delivery strategy will be developed to support the implementation of the Masterplan.
- 3.16 The masterplan document is attached as Appendix 13, along with an Executive Summary (Appendix 14), Consultation Report (Appendix 15) and a Consultation Analysis Report (Appendix 16). The recommendation is to adopt this masterplan.

New Brighton Marine Promenade Masterplan

- 3.17 The Marine Promenade Masterplan focuses on the area extending from the Floral Pavilion to the west of Union Terrace in New Brighton. The Masterplan sets out a framework to deliver a high-quality, attractive and vibrant mixed-use area comprising a mix of cultural, hotel, leisure and residential uses which support the regeneration of neighbouring areas and facilities including the Floral Pavilion Theatre and the Local Centres at Victoria Road and Seabank Road. The Masterplan identifies potential for one or more appropriately designed landmark buildings and seeks to encourage active (e.g. commercial) uses at ground floor level.
- 3.18 The Masterplan identifies potential for up to 495 new homes focused on apartment typologies with at least 30 per cent 3-bed units to encourage a diverse mix of household types.
- 3.19 The Masterplan sets out design parameters for a range of site-specific proposals in order to provide flexibility regarding the form of new development. The Masterplan supports policy WS6.3 and RA10 of the Local Plan.

3.20 The masterplan document is attached as Appendix 17, along with an Executive Summary (Appendix 18), Consultation Report (Appendix 19) and a Consultation Analysis Report (Appendix 20). The recommendation is to adopt this masterplan.

Other Masterplans

3.21 The Local Plan identifies a requirement for the further following masterplans:

- West Kirby – further development, in consultation with Elected Members, is required on this masterplan but note that this masterplan does not impact on Local Plan housing numbers.
- Wallasey Town Hall Quarter – comments from the consultation process are being assessed and it is anticipated that the document will be ready for consideration by ERH committee in September 2024.
- Birkenhead Waterfront (Woodside) Masterplan – consultation on this masterplan has closed. Once the comments received have been analysed the document will be amended accordingly and should be ready for consideration by committee at the September 2024 ERH meeting.
- Birkenhead Town Centre - It is anticipated that this document will be issued for consultation in the summer and it will be ready for consideration by this committee in Autumn 2024.
- St Werburgh's Masterplan – further work is required on this masterplan following the recent committee decision on the relocation of Birkenhead market. It is anticipated that the document will be ready for consideration by ERH committee in September 2024.

3.22 Birkenhead 2040 Framework

Following the development of the masterplans and neighbourhood frameworks the Birkenhead 2040 Framework will require amending and adoption to reflect the current position. It is anticipated that this work will be undertaken this calendar year and be ready for committee consideration by March 2025.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no further costs associated with the development of these documents post adoption. Further development of the Scott's Quay neighbourhood framework will require additional financial resources and the delivery of the proposals within the masterplans and neighbourhood frameworks will require significant public investment to address viability issues and other constraints. Officers will continue to work closely with funding bodies, primarily Homes England and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, to secure the funding required to deliver.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The purpose behind the seeking of Members' approval to the Neighbourhood Framework and Masterplans is to provide weight to the documents as points of reference in programme planning for the various regeneration projects within their scope. The documents will provide strong supporting evidence for future grant

applications to the government and public bodies. Members' endorsement will give the documents weight to support the Local Plan.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no significant impacts in terms of staffing, ICT or assets in relation to the adoption of the masterplan /neighbourhood framework documents. Scott's Quay neighbourhood framework and the review of the Birkenhead 2040 Framework require further consideration and work which will have an impact on staff resources, and clearly the delivery phase of all masterplans and neighbourhood frameworks will have a significant impact of staff resources.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The process of approving Neighbourhood Frameworks and Masterplans does not in itself present any significant risks. However, in relation to their subsequent delivery the following key risks have been identified:

- Resourcing delivery – the staff resource required to deliver the proposals set out within the masterplans and neighbourhood frameworks is significant. This is mitigated by the additional resources for regeneration delivery secured at Policy & Resources Committee of 20th March 2024; and
- Securing external funding to deliver – the funding required to deliver the proposals set out within the masterplans and neighbourhood frameworks is significant. The Council has an excellent track record in securing external funding and has robust programme and project management arrangements in place to support the development of the necessary business cases and funding applications.

7.2 Key regeneration risks are detailed within the Directorate Risk Register and are regularly reviewed at the Regeneration & Place Departmental Management Team.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 In developing the Frameworks and Masterplans the Council has sought to engage as fully as possible with residents and key stakeholders. For most of the projects there was initial engagement work carried out before the first draft of the plans are created. This was to ensure that people's feedback was used to design the planning process and to enable the collective co-production of plans to ensure that community need is factored in.

8.2 In order for the engagement to be as inclusive and accessible as possible a wide range of different engagement methods have been used. These include in person events in different venues including schools, opportunities for full day Virtual Reality events using 3D models, walking tours, and use of BirkenEd's Place in Birkenhead Town Centre for people to take part in activities and talk to all involved. In addition, online engagement materials have included Ideas Boards, Mapping Tools as well as questionnaires. All the engagement was supported with multi-channel communications to ensure as many people as possible were aware of the

engagement opportunities. Reports of Consultation for each stage are published on the Council's "Have Your Say" webpage.

- 8.3 All the information from these initial engagement activities was then reviewed and shared with commissioned architects, planning teams and development specialists to enable the draft Masterplans and Frameworks to be produced for the next phase of engagement.
- 8.4 Once the Masterplan or Neighbourhood Framework was drafted each was required to go through two stages:
- Masterplan / Framework Phase 1 – Consultation with draft document published on the Council's "Have Your Say" webpage for a minimum of 6 weeks. Additional consultation exercises took place in the same period that the documents are on the Have Your Say website, with all the masterplans and neighbourhood frameworks subject to the recommendations in this report having exhibitions and consultation events in Ed's Place, with the exception of New Brighton Marine Promenade Masterplan where this in person exhibition was held at Wallasey Central Library; and
 - Masterplan / Framework Phase 2 – The comments and suggestions from the first stage of plan consultation were analysed and reviewed. The feedback was then used to amend the draft documents. It is the final version following this stage that this committee is being asked to consider.
- 8.5 Reports on the consultation for each masterplan and neighbourhood framework have been published on the Council's "Have Your Say" webpage and are appended to this report (appendices 3, 7, 11, 15, 19). These responses have been analysed and details of how responses have been addressed are detailed in the Consultation Analysis reports appended (appendices 4, 8, 12, 16, 20).

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.
- 9.2. A comprehensive Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken in relation to the Local Plan, of which the Masterplans and Neighbourhood Frameworks form part, which can be viewed at: <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/files/wirral-local-plan-eia-pre-submission.pdf/download?inline>

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Neighbourhood Frameworks and Masterplans are premised on the concept of creating low carbon neighbourhoods with energy efficient homes and densities that encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport rather than the car. Improved landscaping and public spaces will create the opportunity for biodiversity net gain.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Delivery of the Neighbourhood Frameworks and Masterplans will generate a significant number of jobs in the construction process itself, and the new neighbourhoods will provide opportunities for new jobs and social interaction.

REPORT AUTHOR: Thomas Booty
Head of Regeneration Delivery
Email: thomasbooty@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Please note that due to the number and size of the appendices for this report, they have been published separately as a supplement to the main agenda pack:

Appendix 1 – Cleveland Street Neighbourhood Masterplan
Appendix 2 - Cleveland Street Neighbourhood Masterplan – Executive Summary
Appendix 3 – Cleveland Street Neighbourhood Masterplan Consultation Report
Appendix 4 - Cleveland Street Neighbourhood Masterplan Consultation Analysis
Appendix 5 – Northside Neighbourhood Framework
Appendix 6 - Northside Neighbourhood Framework – Executive Summary
Appendix 7 – Northside Neighbourhood Framework Consultation Report
Appendix 8 - Northside Neighbourhood Framework Consultation Analysis
Appendix 9 – Scott’s Quay Neighbourhood Framework
Appendix 10 - Scott’s Quay Neighbourhood Framework – Executive Summary
Appendix 11– Scott’s Quay Neighbourhood Framework Consultation Report
Appendix 12 – Scott’s Quay Neighbourhood Framework Consultation Analysis
Appendix 13 – Dock Branch Neighbourhood Masterplan
Appendix 14 – Dock Branch Neighbourhood Masterplan – Executive Summary
Appendix 15 - Dock Branch Neighbourhood Masterplan Consultation Report
Appendix 16 – Dock Branch Neighbourhood Masterplan Consultation Analysis
Appendix 17 – New Brighton Marine Promenade Masterplan
Appendix 18– New Brighton Marine Promenade Masterplan – Executive Summary
Appendix 19 – New Brighton Marine Promenade Masterplan Consultation Report
Appendix 20 - New Brighton Marine Promenade Masterplan Consultation Analysis

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Wirral Working Together – A Council Plan for 2023-2027

<https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/documents/s50108688/Appendix%201%20Council%20Plan%202023-27.pdf>

Birkenhead 2040 Framework

[Birkenhead 2040 Framework | www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk)

Wirral Local Plan 2021 – 2017 Submission Draft May 2022

[file:///s02vs-uenv01.core.wcent.wirral.gov.uk/user\\$/bootyt/Downloads/SD1%20-%20Wirral%20Local%20Plan%202021-2037%20Submission%20Draft%20May%202022%20for%20Reg%2019%20Publication-Final%20260422-compressed%20\(19\).pdf](file:///s02vs-uenv01.core.wcent.wirral.gov.uk/user$/bootyt/Downloads/SD1%20-%20Wirral%20Local%20Plan%202021-2037%20Submission%20Draft%20May%202022%20for%20Reg%2019%20Publication-Final%20260422-compressed%20(19).pdf)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Economy, Regeneration & Housing Committee in accordance with 4.2 (g) of its Terms of Reference, overseeing the progress of major projects (including major building, infrastructure or other projects involving the erection or significant alteration of major permanent structures or landmarks) undertaken by the Council directly or as enabler, funder or joint enterprise partner, including but not limited to the Wirral Growth Company LLP.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
ERH: NEIGHBOURHOOD FRAMEWORKS & MASTERPLANS APPROVAL PROCESS	6th December 2023