

# ESG MASTERPLAN

## PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITY: ENVIRONMENT AND STRATEGIC HOUSING

CABINET

11 SEPTEMBER 2008

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### Wards Affected

Wards in Hereford City.

### Purpose

To seek endorsement of the ESG Masterplan as a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications.

### Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

### Recommendation

**THAT the ESG Masterplan be endorsed as a basis for the ongoing development of the ESG area and as a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications both within and outside the ESG area where such applications are of relevance to the ESG proposals.**

### Reasons

To define the status of the ESG Masterplan as a material consideration within the planning process.

### Considerations

1. ESG Herefordshire Ltd have been engaged in the review and finalisation of a Masterplan to provide a framework within which the regeneration of the area can proceed. Developed on the basis of original proposals in 2004, a draft Masterplan was issued in 2007 and subject to wide consultation.
2. Following consideration of responses, the Masterplan was adopted by the ESG Board in May. A successful public launch was held in early July.
3. A copy of the Masterplan is available in the Members room for information.
4. The Masterplan has been developed to take forward UDP policies which provide for key aspects of the ESG proposals. In doing so, it has been prepared in full cognisance of the adopted Supplementary Planning

Document for the area, which establishes a design framework. The UDP, SPD and Masterplan have been developed to be complementary.

5. The Masterplan is a flexible framework for the delivery of the ESG regeneration scheme within the context of planning policy. It includes significant retail, residential and leisure development and necessary infrastructure provision, as envisaged in the UDP. The Masterplan provides more detail and develops several areas of new thinking, reflecting the experience to date of implementing the overall scheme including the selection of partners. These areas include:
  - emphasis on addressing and improving connectivity between the Retail Quarter and the wider city centre;
  - renaming the Civic Quarter as the Catherine Street area, with a wider range of city centre uses now proposed, reflecting the more recent emphasis on providing public sector 'back office' accommodation elsewhere;
  - Identification of sites for West Mercia Constabulary, University and transport hub;
  - Clearer focus on the Blackfriars Urban Village as a sustainable community in the north of the area;
  - A number of other minor variations to scheme details as set out in the UDP. For instance, reflecting concerns over the viability of moving the Football Club stadium to the north of the ESG area as suggested in the original 2004 proposals and the UDP, the Masterplan provides for its redevelopment in situ.
6. Overall the Masterplan is consistent with and supportive of planning policy, providing a sound basis for the implementation of the UDP's proposals for the regeneration of the ESG area. The Masterplan will thus support both the expansion of Hereford city centre and help meet other development needs identified in the UDP, as well as contribute to the wider sub-regional role of the city envisaged in the Regional Spatial Strategy.
7. It is now recommended that the Council endorse the masterplan as a material consideration within the planning process. As such it will have an acknowledged and defined importance in the determination of planning applications, whilst not overriding the Council's established development plan policies in the UDP, the SPD and the emerging elements of the Local Development Framework. It is worth recording that Inspectors at recent planning appeals (Holmer Road) have referred to the draft masterplan and given it weight in their deliberations.
8. Endorsement of the Masterplan in the terms now proposed will underline the role of the Masterplan in delivering planning policy, aid in the defence of the Council's planning policies, and complete the package of local policies and guidance that will influence and shape the regeneration of the ESG area.

## **Financial implications**

No direct financial implications.

## **Risk Management**

No specific risks associated with the decision.

## **Alternative Options**

Not to adopt the Masterplan.

## **Consultees**

ESG Herefordshire Ltd

## **Background Papers**

ESG Herefordshire Ltd., Masterplan, June 2008.