

# Title of report: Draft Hereford City Masterplan

**Meeting: Cabinet**

**Meeting date: 2 March 2023**

**Report by: Cabinet member – Infrastructure and Transport**

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

Key

This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant having regard to: the strategic nature of the decision; and / or whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse, on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the authority to a significant number of people living or working in the locality (two or more wards) affected.

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Notice has been served in accordance with Part 3, Section 9 (Publicity in Connection with Key Decisions) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

## **Wards affected**

Aylestone Hill; Bobblestock; Central; College; Eign Hill; Greyfriars; Hinton & Hunderton; Holmer; Kings Acre; Newton Farm; Redhill; Saxon Gate; Tupsley; Whitecross; Widemarsh;

## **Purpose**

To approve the draft 'Hereford City Masterplan a Vision for Our City in 2050' attached at appendix 1 for consultation in June 2023.

## Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) **The Cabinet approve commencement of consultation in respect of the Draft Hereford City Masterplan; and**
- b) **To delegate to the Corporate Director Economy and Environment authority to agree minor amendments prior to formal publication of the draft plan, subject to consultation with the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and transport.**

## Alternative options

1. To not approve the Draft Hereford City Masterplan for consultation. This is not recommended as there would be a risk that transport and place based interventions would then be delivered in a piecemeal way without an overarching vision/masterplan for the City, potentially resulting in interventions not achieve the maximum potential benefit. The city faces some significant long term challenges, which won't be addressed without a clear vision and strategy.

## Key considerations

2. The Hereford Transport Strategy Review (HTSR) in 2020/21 identified a preferred strategy, comprising of four key elements:
  - a. active travel measures;
  - b. investment in buses;
  - c. demand management; and
  - d. a new road link and river crossing to the east of Hereford (the eastern road link

Cabinet agreed on 24 June 2021 to allocate £1.24m of New Homes Bonus and £250,000 from the Settlement Monies Reserve to progress this Hereford Transport Strategy.

3. The Hereford City Masterplan delivers on the first three elements identified in the HTSR by viewing transport interventions through a place-making lens to ensure a co-ordinated strategy, which will deliver the greatest outcomes when schemes are designed. A key role of the masterplan is to ensure that the transport interventions are informed by, and reflect how, the city functions now in terms of land uses and movement and how it may change over the long term. In particular, the work relates to creating urban renewal, resulting in a more vibrant and attractive city.
4. By developing an ambitious vision for the future with big ideas will help to reduce the dominating effect of vehicles of city streets which is fundamental in encouraging more sustainable modes of travel. It is also the case that a transport strategy, which considers the delivery of urban regeneration and development opportunities (particularly new homes) has a much greater chance of being funded.
5. The development of the Eastern River Crossing and Link Road (ERiC), which is a key part of the future vision for Hereford, is being progressed as a separate project. This is because given the scale and complexity and statutory processes that need to be followed in delivering £50+ million highway infrastructure, it requires a different consultancy skill set to the Hereford City Masterplan consultant team. A separate report elsewhere on this agenda outlines the progress with the Eastern River Crossing element of the HTSR.
6. Both the revised Hereford Transport Strategy and the draft masterplan are clearly aligned with the national Government objective that public transport and active travel will be the natural first choice for daily activities.

7. The development of the Draft Hereford City Masterplan (HCMP) has been undertaken by a multidisciplinary consultancy team as detailed below:
  - a. Phil Jones Associates (PJA) – Transport planning and strategy
  - b. Land Use Consultancy (LUC) – Land use planning and green and blue infrastructure
  - c. Element Urbanism – Public realm and urban design
  - d. SQW – Property market analysis and economic appraisal of council sites
  - e. Westco – Communications and Engagement
8. The Draft Hereford City Masterplan is attached as appendix 1. Alongside the draft masterplan PJA are developing a supporting movement strategy for the city, this work will be concluded over the next few months and the full movement strategy will be available to support the masterplan consultation in summer 2023. It will also inform the emerging Local Transport Plan which is the subject of a separate report. The executive summary of the supporting movement strategy is attached at appendix 2.
9. The masterplan identifies a vision of **‘Making Hereford An Even Better City – A Greener, Healthier, and Safer Place’** which is supported by the five strategic objectives defined below:

<b>MOVEMENT</b>	Expand choice for moving around, using an integrated transport network with better provision for active travel and public transport. This will help to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, tackle congestion, encourage healthier lifestyles and better meet the needs of different demographic groups.
<b>COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE</b>	Create a healthier and more equal city, by reducing deprivation and increasing equality across the city. This will provide greater opportunities for people to be active and healthy and to engage with their community.
<b>THE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES</b>	Re-invigorate the city, maximising opportunities for living, learning and creating. This includes providing new affordable, high-quality homes for a range of people and revitalised commercial and leisure opportunities and community uses. Also, supporting education and training opportunities and providing spaces to develop and grow businesses.
<b>LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE</b>	Provide a network of high-quality green and blue spaces, within the city and extending into the surrounding countryside, reducing pollution and providing nature-based solutions to help adapt to climate change and give people greater opportunity to interact with nature.
<b>PLACES AND SPACES</b>	Deliver outstanding design, which respects and enhances Hereford’s built and natural heritage and enhances the ‘sense of place’ within the city. Good design should make Hereford more attractive for those who live, work in and visit the city, help adapt to the effects of climate change and better meet the needs of an ageing population.

10. The masterplan articulates the following 12 ‘Big Ideas’ to deliver the above vision and strategic objectives over the short, medium and longer term to 2050.
11. Formal consultation will be undertaken on the draft masterplan (appendix 1) with stakeholders and the community as soon as practicable following the local elections 2023. Although not a formal or statutory planning document the consultation will take on board the principles of the Statement of Community Involvement. This will take place over a period of six weeks and will provide multiple opportunities for people to understand and comment on the draft masterplan, with information and feedback options provided both online and in printed form.

12. To assist with community and stakeholder understanding of the masterplan, a short video will be created that summarises the masterplan proposals. This will be posted on the Council's website and social media channels.
13. To ensure that those who do not have access to a computer can be fully involved, consultation will include a non-staffed public exhibition at one or more locations in and around Hereford.
14. Following the close of the consultation period, the draft masterplan will be updated as required and presented back to members for adoption as a final document and vision for the City to 2050.

### **Community impact**

15. The draft Hereford City Master Plan is fully aligned to and will directly contribute to meeting the vision of the County Plan 2020 to 2024 *'Respecting our past, shaping our future - we will improve the sustainability, connectivity and wellbeing of our county by strengthening our communities, creating a thriving local economy and protecting and enhancing our environment'*.
16. The County Plan's Delivery Plan 2022-23 makes specific reference to delivering the Hereford Transport Strategy and the City Masterplan. The masterplan and supporting sustainable transport strategy for Hereford will support the following objectives:

EN2 1 - Improve and extend active travel options throughout the county:

EN2.1 - Complete the Hereford Transport Strategy Review and begin implementation of the preferred options.

EN2.2 - Continue to deliver and extend the Choose How You Move sustainable and active travel programme to increase levels of walking and cycling.

EN2.4 - Explore feasibility for the development of a cycle super highway.

CO0 – Strengthen communities to ensure everyone lives well and safely together:

CO0.1 - Improve the overall mental and physical health and wellbeing of residents of all ages with a more diverse and increased level of support that helps people to make healthy food and lifestyle choices.

EC2 - Use council land to create economic opportunities and bring higher paid jobs to the county:

EC2.1 - Work with partners to develop and implement a £25m Town Investment Plan for Hereford, to be funded through the Stronger Towns Fund.

EC2.4 - Continue to support development of the Hereford Enterprise Zone.

### **Environmental Impact**

17. The draft masterplan identifies Climate change and the biodiversity crisis as 2 of the forces driving change. The strategy is aimed and helping to deliver net zero through promoting sustainable transport, sustainable development through its city living proposals and repurposing of existing buildings, alongside nature based green and blue infrastructure proposals.
18. The masterplan is aligned with the Government ambition for 'public transport and active travel to be the natural first choice for our daily activities'. Delivering more nature-rich spaces within and around Hereford to address biodiversity decline is another key driving force behind this masterplan.

## Equality duty

19. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities sets out that it must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
20. The draft masterplan is aligned with the recommendations of the Hereford Transport Strategy Review which assessed options and packages of options against a range of outcome indicators, including that which considers protected characteristics.
21. The consultation on the draft masterplan will include engagement with a broad spectrum of residents and stakeholders. This consultation will inform an Equality Impact Assessment of the final masterplan before it is adopted.

## Resource implications

22. As a draft long term vision document, the masterplan does not specifically commit the council to future expenditure at this point. However, following consultation and completion of the final masterplan it will be necessary to develop a delivery strategy based on short, medium and longer term deliverables and their indicative costings and possible funding sources. Whilst the masterplan is a vision for 2050 the speed at which this is delivered will be determined by the availability of council and government resources.
23. To realise the full ambitions set out in the draft master plan by 2050 the county will need to secure significant long term Capital public and private investment. Having a vision and strategy aligned to government's ambition puts the Council in a good position to seek government funding as relevant bidding opportunities come forward over the next 25+ years. As demonstrated by the successful £25.288million 'Levelling Up Fund' transport bid for Hereford which was recently announced.
24. The council will also need to work with government to identify long term sustainable revenue solutions to support the public transport and demand management aspirations of the masterplan which will be necessary to deliver on the governments decarbonising transport agenda.
25. Cabinet agreed on 24 June 2021 to allocate £1.24m of New Homes Bonus and £250,000 from the Settlement Monies Reserve to progress this Hereford Transport Strategy. This funding has been allocated as below:

Hereford City Masterplan	£1,028,000
Eastern River Crossing	£400,000
Local Transport Plan Development	£62,000
Total	£1,490,000

## Legal implications

26. The Masterplan is not a development plan document for the purposes of the Local Development Plan.
27. The Masterplan has not been prepared by the Council under the exercise of its powers as a local planning authority.
28. The Masterplan is a vision statement setting out the Council's aspirations for Herefordshire. Cabinet Member approval is required for consultation in connection with the projects and proposals contained in the Draft Master Plan
29. The Local Authority has wide powers to enter into arrangements such as those proposed in this report. Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 the local authority, has powers to do anything calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of its functions
30. The Local Authority has wide powers to undertake the arrangements such as those proposed in this report. Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council has powers to do anything calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

## Risk management

Risk	Mitigation
Insufficient in house capacity and/or expertise to progress the masterplan.	The masterplan has been produced by a multi-disciplinary consultancy team to provide specific technical expertise in a timely manner. This will assist interim and in-house staff to manage and direct the overall project plan and individual work packages. Project management support has been, and will be provided by the PMO.
Insufficient budget to complete the Final Masterplan	A strong focus on budget management and avoiding scope creep within the project, should enable sufficient resource to complete the consultation in summer 2023 and amend the plan in light of the consultation subject to the level of amendment required.
A number of major pieces of work are being developed on a similar timeframe, including the draft masterplan, the Local Transport Plan, Eastern River Crossing and the Local Plan. This runs the risk of confusion or consultation fatigue for partners, stakeholders and the public.	The development of these key strategies and plans will be coordinated through a single communications and engagement strategy so that the interrelationships between the various elements is fully understood.
Reputational risk of non-delivery.	The report sets out how external resources have been procured in order to boost capacity and capability of the project teams. Resources from the PMO will provide project management resources to help deliver projects on time and to budget.
The Masterplan is not delivered.	Following completion of the final plan a robust delivery strategy based on short, medium and

	longer term deliverables will be developed together with an appropriate Delivery Board structure
Circumstances and priorities change over the next 28 years, in setting a 2050 vision now.	It is recognised that circumstances will change, it is intended that the masterplan and supporting movement strategy 'live' document which will be reviewed and changed as needed.

## Consultees

31. An all members briefing on the vision, scope and objectives of the masterplan was held on 14 January 2022 and the project was broadly welcomed by those who attended.

### Early stakeholder and community engagement

32. Both the delivery director and consultant team had discussions with many stakeholder groups during 2022. A website (<https://herefordshire.commonplace.is/>) was established to allow for early stakeholder and community engagement in the development of the masterplan. This website was launched following a stakeholder exhibition event on 1 December 2022 and the exhibition was subsequently on display from 2 December 2022 in Maylords shopping centre. In addition the exhibition materials have been available at libraries' and community hubs around the county since early January 2023.
33. The website includes a map to allow respondents to make specific comments on particular locations and a survey form for respondent to complete. Paper based surveys have also been available at the exhibition and a free post address was established
34. 324 comments have been made at site specific locations on the map with a further 627 respondents having viewed those comments and agreed with specific comments. 373 survey responses have been received via the website and 161 respondents have viewed the comments and made agreements. An additional 20 paper responses have also been received.
35. The Survey Summary Report is attached at appendix 3.

### Political Group Consultation

36. Political group consultation took place on 31 January 2023 and the following key points were raised:
- a. As this is a long term vision to 2050 should we be more aspirational and be looking at additional bridges both east and west.
  - b. For residents outside of Hereford and visitors Park and Ride was seen as important and for it to be successful it should be free or very low cost.
  - c. 20mph limits in residential areas were welcomed.
  - d. The Wye and the Lugg were seen as significant assets to the County and recognising that in the masterplan is welcomed and could it be expanded upon by adding in a River Wye leaning Centre.
  - e. Public transport to the wider county was seen as poor and something that needed significantly improving across the county.
  - f. There was a view that there was a need to widen the work to ensure that Hereford connected into the wider county and had good access from the market towns, villages and rural areas.

- g. There is a risk that we could be seen as anti-car and that people will need to use the car especially in rural counties like Herefordshire.
- h. It will be interesting to hear what the public think of the plans.

## Appendices

- Appendix 1 Hereford City Masterplan a Vision for Our City in 2050 Consultation Draft Spring 2023.
- Appendix 2 Hereford City Movement Strategy Executive Summary, February 2023.
- Appendix 3 Hereford City Masterplan Feedback Report, 20/02/23.

## Background papers

None identified

## Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Governance	John Coleman	Date 30/01/2023
Finance	Louise Devlin	Date 24/01/2023
Legal	Sharon Bennett-Matthews	Date 25/01/2023
Communications	Luenne Featherstone	Date 24/01/2023
Equality Duty	Harriet Yellin	Date 30/01/2023
Procurement	Lee Robertson	Date 24/01/2023
Risk	Kevin Lloyd	Date 30/01/2023

Approved by	Ross Cook	Date 03/02/2023
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