

Report to: Cabinet
Regeneration Panel

Date: 26 June 2008
23 July 2008

Subject: Wigan South Central Masterplan

Report of: Director of Environmental Services

Contact officer: Keith Molloy 01942 828988

Purpose / summary: To present to Members the strategic Masterplan for Wigan South Central and seek approval to progress actions identified in the delivery plan.

Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended: Not to proceed with the proposals contained in the master plan. This would have the consequence of not realising the opportunity for substantial future regeneration activity in this area of Wigan.

Recommendation / decision: That Cabinet agree the strategic Masterplan for Wigan South Central and authorise officers to prepare briefs for initial priority tasks within the action plan and also prepare and submit funding applications to support this activity. In addition that further work is carried out in considering an appropriate delivery mechanism for Wigan South Central and that this is reported back to Cabinet at the earliest opportunity.

Key Decision: This report involves a key decision within ground(s) 1.

The decision made as a result of this report will be published within **48 hours** and cannot be actioned until **seven working days** have elapsed, i.e. before 7 July 2008.

This item is included in the Forward Plan.

Risks / Implications:

Financial:	Further commitment will be restricted to the preparation of briefs and funding applications. Commissioning will be based on securing appropriate external funding.
Staffing:	The delivery plan recommends further action on delivery vehicles which will require more detailed consideration and a report to Cabinet in accordance with the action programme in the plan.
Policy:	The Wigan South Central Masterplan is consistent with relevant policy and will assist in the delivery of a broad school of outcomes.
Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted?	Yes
Wards affected:	Douglas, Wigan West, Wigan Central, Worsley Mesnes, Winstanley, Pemberton.

Property Implications – Does the proposal involve a reduction, addition or change to the Council’s asset base or its occupation?

No

If yes, have the property implications been agreed with the Corporate Property Officer?

Does this proposal have significant implications for the Council and the local population?

A full diversity impact assessment has been undertaken and is attached as an appendix to this report.

Does this proposal involve a new policy or procedure or significant changes to an existing policy or procedure?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

Has the Service Director - Borough Solicitor confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution?	Yes
Has the Service Director - Corporate Services confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget?	Yes
Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council?	No

For Cabinet reports only :

Categorisation of the report:	X
Discussion leading to a decision	X
Monitoring	
Sharing for corporate understanding	

	X
Discussion	
Decision	
Information	

Tracking/Process:

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
		26 June 008	

List of Background Papers in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972:

Document	Date	File Reference	Place of Inspection
Strategic Masterplan for Wigan South Central	May 2008		Member's Room or Economic Regeneration Office, Gateway House, Wigan
Strategic Masterplan for Wigan South Central – Delivery Plan	May 2008		Member's Room or Economic Regeneration Office, Gateway House, Wigan

Proper Officer Martin Kimber

Date 9 June 2008

1.0 Background

- 1.1 In 2005 officers of Wigan Council were requested by the North West Development Agency (NWDA) to prepare a regeneration based implementation strategy for an area which became known as Wigan South Central.
- 1.2 The background for this proposed strategy lay in the previous identification of this area as major development opportunity through the Mersey belt study carried out for the NWDA in 2002. A report was produced by officers and approved by the development agency at the time. The NWDA did not make a financial commitment at the time in endorsing the strategy. Any financial support from the agency will need to be considered on a project basis and appraised in accordance with the appropriate process. However the agency will not support projects which do not conform or clearly support the strategy.
- 1.3 The purpose of the proposed plan for Wigan South Central was to recognise and realise the opportunity to reposition and diversify the economic base of Wigan and tackle high levels of deprivation through attracting inward investment, whilst also providing the right conditions for the growth of local businesses.
- 1.4 These aims have remained consistent through the process and the purpose of the Wigan South Central Masterplan is to now act as a long term and sustainable vehicle for the continued reinvigoration of the Wigan economy and communities which support that economy.
- 1.5 In 2007 the NWDA indicated that they were ready to move to the next stage in the process and agreed in principle to fund the preparation of a Strategic Masterplan. This was subject to an appropriate funding submission and resulted in the employment of consultants to carry out the work jointly for the Council and the Agency.
- 1.6 Funding was secured and a procurement process undertaken in November 2007 a successful consortium of consultants were appointed to the role comprising DTZ as lead consultant with Faber Maunsell and EdawAecom supporting the process in relevant technical areas.
- 1.7 The process of preparing the Wigan South Central Masterplan has been overseen by a core group of officers from Wigan Council and with representation from the NWDA. The two documents emerging from this process, the Strategic Masterplan for Wigan South Central and associated Delivery Plan, can be viewed in the member's room.

2.0 Proposals

- 2.1 The following process was used in preparing and finalising an agreed Masterplan for Wigan South Central:
 - Producing a robust evidence base;
 - Carrying out stakeholder consultation;
 - Developing a range of options and appraise those options;
 - Refining and agreeing preferred set of options (produce the agreed Masterplan and Delivery Plan).

2.2 The strategic Masterplan identifies phased and prioritised actions across a number of sub areas within the defined Wigan South Central area as follows:

- Wigan Pier Quarter;
- Wigan Town Centre;
- Westwood Park;
- M6 Gateway and Pemberton;
- Robin Park and the North West Corridor;
- Worsley Mesnes and Parson's Meadow.

2.3 The plan includes tested indicative outputs, costs and values associated with the delivery of the actions. These will be essential in the subsequent process of attempting to secure the funding for the public sector interventions necessary in making the delivery of the masterplan possible.

2.4 Finally and as part of the briefs requirement DTZ were tasked with exploring in some detail the possible means for realising the Wigan South Central Strategic Masterplan. In this respect a number of options were considered and a preferred or recommended option identified. Further consideration needs to be given to these recommendations as a matter of some urgency both within the Council but of equal importance with potential funders and other potential private sector partners. A further report will be presented to Cabinet on this issue.

3.0 Alternative options considered and reason for the recommended option

3.1 Alternatives to the Wigan South Central would be limited to an approach based on reacting to market lead initiatives subject to the vagaries of the market place. As the current credit crunch is proving, where uncertainty develops the market becomes increasingly risk averse. When this happens, the ability to convince the private sector to address strategic issues such as intervention around infrastructure which are currently stifling development in Wigan South Central is extremely limited.

3.2 Any expectation for funding to support large scale capital project based outside of an agreed Masterplan framework is unrealistic in the current funding climate. NWDA and Manchester Enterprises have made clear the intention to consider in a serious manner proposals emerging from the Wigan South Central Masterplan and recent discussions have suggested the availability of specific funding for some of the early feasibility work identified in the delivery plan.

4.0 Conclusions

4.1 As the current Foundation Economic Development Zone comes to a close it is clear that much remains to be done in building on the achievements to date and maximising the very real opportunities that are seen to exist. Despite the ever diminishing funding pot available for public sector interventions, there is an opportunity in Wigan to maximise the development opportunity to the benefit of all partners public and private and most importantly to benefit the residents of this borough.

4.2 The strategic Masterplan for Wigan South Central is an essential next step in the process of delivering real economic change in the borough.

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 That Cabinet agree the strategic Masterplan for Wigan South Central and authorise officers to prepare briefs for initial priority tasks within the action plan and also prepare and submit funding applications to support this activity. In addition that further work is carried out in considering an appropriate delivery mechanism for Wigan South Central and that this is reported back to Cabinet at the earliest opportunity.

Martin Kimber
Director of Environmental Services
RP/ER/KM/LC/33.0P
9 June 2008

Diversity Impact Assessment form

Section: Environmental Services Department

Policy/Service Area: Regeneration and Protection Division

Person Completing Form: Keith Molloy

Date: 02/05/08

Do any of the below groups suffer specific disadvantage (please indicate)

	Yes	No		Yes	No
Race			Disability		
Ethnicity			Gender		
Age			Religion		
Class			Sexual Orientation		

Is there evidence of disadvantage or associated problems?

The Wigan South Central Masterplan includes major areas of deprivation in the Borough. The base line information used in the report is derived from standard statistical information.

How was the information collected and/or who have you consulted with?

The information used was standard statistical information supplemented through the consultation carried out directly by the consultants with a range of stakeholders through the process of producing Strategic Masterplan.

Action Plan – *What specific actions are planned to tackle any disadvantage identified?*

The outcomes of the delivery plan will address wide ranging issues associated with deprivation not least those specific to the economic well being of residents in the area, they will address issues such as access to employment, skills, transport and will broadly support an approach to spatial planning and development that will help deliver outcomes relative to both the Sustainable Community Plan and the developing Local Development Framework.

Is the policy in line with current equality legislation and relevant codes of practice?

The policy represented through the plan will be wholly consistent with best practice in addressing equality issues at every level.

Timescale	
Responsibility	
Comments	

Are the actions specified included in any other documents/plans?

Departmental Service Plan	
Section/Team Plan	
Other (Specify)	

Date for further review
