

EXETER CITY COUNCIL
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ECONOMY
19 JANUARY 2012

EXECUTIVE
7 FEBRUARY 2012

BUS AND COACH STATION AREA DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the Development Principles that have been prepared to guide development of the Bus & Coach Station area and to resolve whether to approve the Principles for engagement with key stakeholders and the public.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In January 2010 Scrutiny Committee considered a set of papers on the challenges facing the City in reducing carbon emissions over the next two decades. Specific attention was given to the city centre and the role of planning and transport issues in addressing carbon emissions.
- 2.2 City Centre Vision was subject to a consultation during 2011 and on 6 December 2011 Executive noted the results of the consultation, agreed the changes proposed, endorsed the use of the document to inform decision-making by the City Council and commended the document to the Exeter Vision Partnership.
- 2.3 The City Centre Vision was prepared to provide a development context for a City Centre Transportation Strategy and other potential studies and projects in the city centre; and form the basis of a vision for any future City Centre Action Area Plan.
- 2.4 The City Centre Vision document is split into two distinct components: A number of framework principles help to bring out and build on those elements that are, or could be, memorable and great about Exeter; and four big moves or development projects that represent one way of delivering change within this framework over the coming years to deliver the ambitions of a prosperous and growing city. The first Big Move as set out in the City Centre Vision involved 'creating space beyond the historic walls at the East Quarter as the first step in the regeneration of a compact centre'.
- 2.5 Members will be aware of the progress that is being made on the LDF Core Strategy; following the Inquiry in June the Inspector has concluded that the Core Strategy, with a small number of amendments, is sound. Members accepted that work should proceed on key city centre projects, such as: the redevelopment of the Bus and Coach Station site ahead of any City Centre Area Action Plan. Core Strategy Policies 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 14 & 17 are considered pertinent to development of the bus station site.
- 2.6 The Exeter Local Plan (1st Review 1995 – 2011) was adopted in March 2005. Policies of the Local Plan are saved until superseded by the LDF process. Local

Plan Policy KP3 is a site specific policy relating to the Bus Station site and includes all the land bounded by Sidwell Street, Cheeke Street and Paris Street.

- 2.7 The Bus Garage site is not covered by Policy KP3 but is identified as a development opportunity in the Urban Analysis carried out by Turley Associates, which was endorsed by members, and can be regarded as a city centre windfall site. The Urban Analysis also identified further adjacent areas as possible future development sites.
- 2.8 Policy KP3 provides for development of ... “an enhanced bus station, commercial leisure facilities, including potentially a multi-screen cinema, retail floor space, an extended street market, short stay parking and possibly non-family housing”. A Cinema has since been developed on an adjacent site.
- 2.9 Although Policy KP3 does not include office use, given that offices are a city centre use promoted in Exeter by the Core Strategy it is appropriate that a development scheme for the bus station site includes offices in addition to the other potential uses listed in KP3, subject to viability.
- 2.10 There is no conflict between policy KP3 and the broad based policies contained in the emerging Core Strategy.
- 2.11 A number of important background studies have also been completed and these have informed the Development Principles. These studies include: Sidwell Street and Environs Urban Analysis, Height Constraints Analysis, Exeter Planned The Architecture and Townscape of Sidwell Street, Archaeological Assessment a Retail Capacity Study and with Devon County Council a City Centre Transport Study.

3.0 SUMMARY

- 3.1 The Bus and Coach Station Development Principles have been drawn up to guide preparation of a development scheme for this area by a prospective developer, allowing a degree of flexibility whilst ensuring that key principles are delivered.
- 3.2 Progress on this project has been slower than advised to Members last year in large part due to the decision of the John Lewis Partnership to open a full line department store at 1-11 Sidwell Street. The John Lewis decision has major implications to the approach to the development of the site, and effectively work on the master planning has been delayed for the implications of the JLP decision to be assessed. The Development Principles have been reviewed in light of the John Lewis decision and considered to be sound and relevant.
- 3.3 The Development Principles were prepared in a series of four collaborative workshops. The Workshop included representatives from Exeter City Council and Devon County Council with Land Securities, Chapman Taylor Architecture, English Heritage, and the Commission for Architecture and The Built Environment (CABE).
- 3.4 The Development Principles prepared by this group are listed below for ease of reference and attached with the supporting explanatory text in Appendix A. A full illustrated draft version of the document is available in the Member's room.

There are 10 Development Principles:

- A Development must be viable.
- B Development must reinforce Sidwell Street, complement the High Street and Princesshay and form a gateway to the city centre.
- C The development will be a retail led mixed use development incorporating a new bus station.
- D Development must positively respond to context including the grain of city, archaeology and site levels.
- E Development must create a high quality public realm with active frontages.
- F Development must create a network of accessible open streets and spaces.
- G Building must be individual and of a high architectural quality, with landmark buildings and gateways formed at key locations using materials appropriate to the location.
- H Vehicular traffic, servicing and car parking must be accommodated in such way as to minimise their impact.
- I An accessible new bus station must be provided to agreed standards.
- J The development must adopt high standards of sustainable design and enhance biodiversity.

The Development Principles will be used to test development proposals for the Bus & Coach Station area.

4.0 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Public Consultation will be carried out for a six week period commencing 19 March. The timing of this is largely determined by the distribution of the Exeter Citizen in week commencing 19 March 2012.
- 4.2 The consultation will form round four key strands:
 - 2 briefings aimed at Stakeholders but open to public attendance;
 - 2 roadshow events, Bedford Street and Sidwell Street;
 - Static display in Customer Service Centre;
 - Website presentation.
- 4.3 The consultation will be publicised by press notice, notice in central library, posters in city centre and on site, an article in the Exeter Citizen which goes to all households, and direct email or letter to stakeholders including business umbrella groups, community associations. The press will be briefed and it is expected that the consultation will feature in local print and broadcast media.

- 4.4 The results of the consultation, and any proposed amendments to the Development Principles will be reported to Executive in June 2012.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 That Scrutiny Committee – Economy support and the Executive approve the Development Principles for the purpose of an engagement exercise with key stakeholders and the public.

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ECONOMY & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:

1. City Centre: Carbon Emissions, Air Quality and Traffic; Scrutiny Committee-Economy 21 January 2010; Executive 9 February 2010.
2. Transportation Strategy: Measures to reduce carbon emissions/proposed City Council input to DCC Local Transport Plan 2011-16; Scrutiny Committee-Economy 21 January 2010; Executive 9 February 2010.
3. City Centre Vision; Executive 6 December 2011.