

Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Commission

28th January 2021



Report of:

Title: City Centre Development & Delivery Plan

Ward: Central

Officer Presenting Report: Jason Thorne/Abigail Stratford

Contact Telephone Number:

Recommendation:

- To note the scope and indicative programme for the City Centre Development & Delivery Plan
- To note the Council anticipates receiving a number of planning applications for sites within the City Centre

The significant issues in the report are:

- To note the significant impact Covid 19 has had on Bristol City Centre



1. Summary

The City Centre of Bristol is a primary economic location in the West of England. With a high density of employment and economic activity, it is the administrative, professional, cultural, transport and educational hub of the City.

The Council is seeking to appoint a multi-disciplinary design team to develop an Integrated City Centre Development & Delivery Plan ('DDP') for Bristol City Centre. Taking a place-based approach, the DDP will be underpinned by a coherent vision which re-imagines the future role of the City Centre and set out how this vision can flexibly be translated and delivered on the ground.

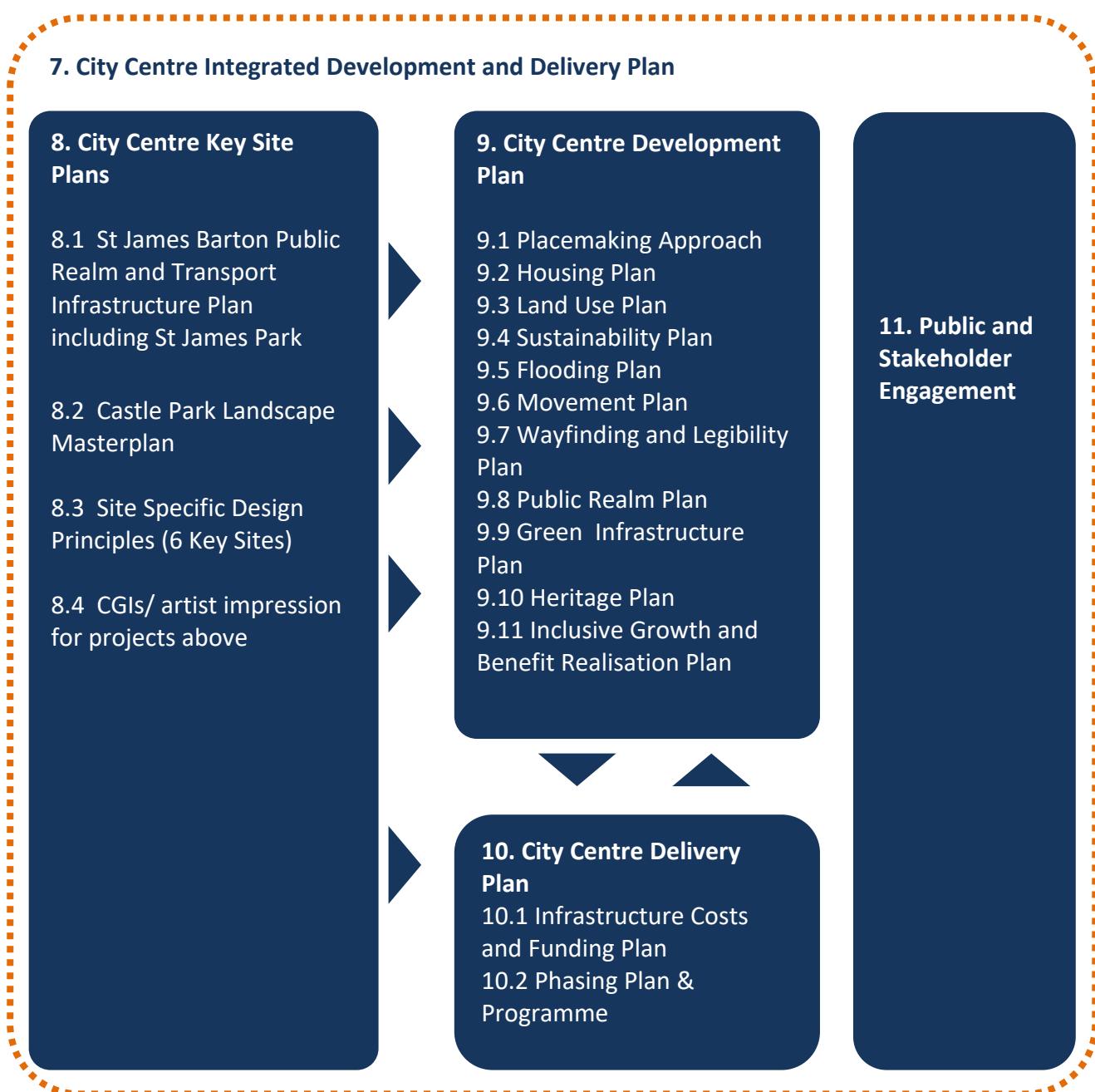
2. Context

In July 2020 Cabinet adopted the City Centre Framework which sets out proposals to improve movement, public realm and the approach to regeneration and development in Bristol City Centre.

The City Centre Framework is a material consideration in the planning process. The key objectives of this framework are:

- Creating a liveable, vibrant, safe and inclusive city centre for the benefit of people of all ages to live, work, learn and enjoy, both during the day and night.
- Tackling traffic congestion and improving air quality; making the city centre better connected, accessible and healthier.
- Supporting the city centre as the core retail, leisure and cultural heart of the region, by enabling regeneration, diversifying uses and promoting the offer.
- Ensuring the sustainable development of new homes, employment space, enhancement of heritage assets, streets and public open spaces; contributing to a carbon neutral and climate resilient city.

In July 2020 Cabinet also approved commissioning a City Centre Development & Delivery Plan. The DDP will build upon the principles established in the City Centre Framework and seek to provide an integrated approach to place-shaping, planning, transport, legibility and public spaces. It will need to be capable of standing the test of time and responding to changes in economic, property and funding environments. It is currently envisaged the DDP will comprise of the following 4 strands:



It is anticipated that the DPP will be completed within 12 months and presented to Cabinet for consideration in Spring 2022.

Retail & Leisure Study

A Retail & Leisure Study has been commissioned to consider and identify;

- Current and future shopping/leisure habits across the day and night time economies;
- How independent businesses can be supported;
- The major structural changes impacting the sectors and likely impacts on the city centre.

COVID-19 will be one of the factors considered alongside other trends, for example macro-economics, demographics and online shopping. The study will be complete in Spring 2021 (subject to Covid) and will be used as an evidence base to inform the City Centre DDP.

Covid- 19

The economic impact of Covid-19 has been an unprecedented shock for Bristol. The full impact of COVID- 19 on how people choose to live, work, visit and use spaces particularly, city centres, is still unknown. It is too early to understand the full impact of Covid-19, especially on the retail, hospitality, leisure sectors (including the evening/night time economy) and office sectors. Nevertheless, it is clear Covid-19 has and will continue to, accelerate changes in retail and leisure, which means that city centres will need to be reimagined. The DDP will need to use evidence-based research (including the Retail & Leisure Study, Economic Recovery & Renewal Strategy, Employment Land Study and transport data), alongside emerging best practice to understand the current and future impact of Covid-19 on Bristol City Centre and take a place based approached in responding to these changes.

A summary of the impact of Covid 19 on footfall during the pandemic in the City Centre is attached at Appendix A. Footfall has clearly been impacted by the important public health 'stay home' messaging and periods of lockdown. Property agent market reports are buoyant about the future of the city centre office market, and further schemes are underway or being planned. However, future occupation of space is likely to have changed due to people working from home. We will continue to work with Business Improvement Districts, the Bristol@Night panel, business groups, landowners and developers, property agents and other stakeholders to monitor and respond to trends.

As a result of the need to reimagine the city centre, the Council anticipates land owners and developers will seek to bring forward redevelopment proposals on a number of significant sites within the City Centre. The main areas of focus and future change are outlined in the City Centre Framework – Broadmead, St James Barton Roundabout, sites around Castle Park and the Old City.

3. Policy

One City - Economic Recovery & Renewal Strategy

The One City – Economic Recovery & Renewal Strategy sets out the how the Council and its partners will drive sustainable economic renewal, build back better and ensure the Bristol's recovery is sustainable and inclusive. The Strategy identifies the City Centre as a key priority place to ensure it remains a key destination for work, leisure, tourism and investment. The DDP will need to respond to this strategy.

Planning Policy Context

The Central Area Plan (2015), part of the Local Plan, sets out a vision and explores how Bristol City Centre will develop up to 2026. The Local Plan Review (2019) states ‘Bristol City Centre’s role as a regional focus at the centre of a global city will be promoted and strengthened. Development will include mixed uses for offices, residential, retail, leisure, tourism, entertainment and arts and cultural facilities.

4. Consultation

a) Internal

Not applicable

b) External

Not applicable

5. Public Sector Equality Duties

- 5a) Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:
- i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
 - ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
 - encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
 - iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to –
 - tackle prejudice; and
 - promote understanding.

- 5b) An equalities impact assessment was undertaken to support the development of the City Centre Framework, its raised awareness of issues facing equalities groups, which were considered and address in the Framework.
<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/s50586/Appendix%20E%20-%20EqIA%20City%20Centre%20Framework.pdf>. The EQIA raised the need to continually engage with equalities groups and particularly with more young people. The impact of COVID-19 of specific equalities groups will also need to be considered.

An updated equalities impact assessment will be undertaken as the DDP progresses and again key issues identified will be considered and addressed through the development of the DDP and presented to Cabinet for consideration alongside the DDP in Spring 2022.

Appendices:

Appendix A - City Centre Footfall Data

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers: