

Decision Pathway – Report



PURPOSE: Key decision

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 07 March 2023

TITLE	Whitehouse Street Framework and Bedminster Green regeneration		
Ward(s)	Southville, Windmill Hill and Bedminster wards.		
Author: Máire Grogan	Job title: Regeneration Manager		
Cabinet lead: Mayor	Executive Director lead: Stephen Peacock, Executive Director Growth and Regeneration		
Proposal origin: Other			
Decision maker: Cabinet Member Decision forum: Cabinet			
Purpose of Report:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To seek approval of the Whitehouse Street Regeneration Framework which will facilitate the delivery of up to 2,000 new homes, employment and community space, new active travel routes along with improved public realm. To seek approval to extend the 'Threshold' approach in the Affordable Housing Practice Note 2022 (AHPN) to cover the Whitehouse Street Regeneration Framework Area until 31st December 2024. To seek approval of feasibility funding to develop designs for the new active travel routes and public realm to inform future external funding bids. To provide an update on social infrastructure that will help local residents participate in the regeneration of the area and support community cohesion. To seek approvals to enter into contract(s) to deliver the River Restoration project adjacent to Plots 1 and 3 in Bedminster Green. 			
Evidence Base:			
Whitehouse Street			
Development of Framework			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Whitehouse Street Regeneration Area defined dark red on plan at Appendix A(i) has been identified as an area of Growth and Regeneration. Bristol City Council, Hill Residential Limited (The Hill Group) and GHL Bedminster Bristol (Galliard Apsley) all own sites within the Whitehouse Street Regeneration Area. Spring Street is a Bristol City Council owned site within the regeneration area, that has been allocated to Goram Homes for mixed-use, residential-led development. Since 2021, Bristol City Council has been working in partnership with The Hill Group, Galliard Apsley, Goram Homes and the local community to develop a regeneration framework for Whitehouse Street to guide and inform the future transformation of the area into a genuinely mixed-use community of new homes, employment and community spaces. 			
Planning Policy Background			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Whitehouse Street Regeneration Area forms a significant portion of the emerging Central Bedminster allocation (Draft policy DS8); an area identified for growth and regeneration due to its location close to the city centre and Bristol Temple Quarter and the presence of strategic public transport routes. The intention is 			

that this allocation will replace the Principal Industrial and Warehousing Area (PIWA) designation that exists for a large part of the Whitehouse Street Regeneration Area. The Central Bedminster allocation envisages regeneration of a more urban scale and form of development that includes a mix of residential, workspace and community uses, guided by the Urban Living SPD.

5. Draft policy DS8 states there is potential for at least 2,500 homes and the provision of high-quality workspace as part of mixed-use development. Development is expected to reinforce the Bedminster area as a mixed and inclusive community with a diversity of land uses providing opportunities to live, work, for leisure and to access services.

Purpose of the Whitehouse Street Regeneration Framework

6. The purpose of the Whitehouse Street Regeneration Framework is to guide and influence future developments that come forward within the Whitehouse Street area and, subject to Cabinet endorsement, the document will become a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications. The framework will also inform the emerging Local Plan Review.

Whitehouse Street Regeneration Framework summary

7. The Whitehouse Street area was historically a dense and active neighbourhood that combined homes and industry. The vision of the framework is to create a new vibrant and sustainable neighbourhood which incorporates a mix of uses including homes, employment space and community space, new active travel routes along with improved public realm. The regeneration of Whitehouse Street aims to deliver:
 - Around 2,000 new homes
 - Up to 15,000m² of employment space to ensure no net loss of jobs across the regeneration area, and the potential for jobs growth
 - Employment that complements the existing businesses on East St and Bedminster Parade, and increases footfall to support the high street
 - New and improved public realm incorporating pedestrian public spaces, new street trees and sustainable urban drainage
 - Active travel routes connecting Bedminster to Temple Meads and the city centre
 - Improvements to Victoria Park
 - New community infrastructure, to be developed in conjunction with the community.
8. The framework is a high-level document which sets out six key principles to guide redevelopment of the area over the next 10-15 years and delivery of the above objectives. The principles were devised using the priorities as set out in the Community Manifesto (further detail under Engagement & Consultation).
9. A copy of the Whitehouse Street Regeneration Framework can be found in Appendix A (ii).

Engagement & Consultation

10. The development of the Framework has been informed by inclusive and meaningful community involvement throughout. Prior to any design work being undertaken, local community organisation, Action Greater Bedminster (AGB) were commissioned, with support from BCC Community Development and Cadence PR, to undertake extensive engagement with local stakeholders, including residents and businesses, and produce a Community Manifesto, which set out the community's priorities for the regeneration of the area.
11. Alongside the Community Manifesto, BCC produced a Scope of Influence, which sets out different considerations that need to be considered when delivering regeneration projects. The Scope of Influence also sets out the degree of involvement and influence the community could have on the various design elements of the framework and communicates where other influences need to be considered alongside community aspirations.
12. The Community Manifesto has been a continual reference point throughout the development of the framework to ensure the framework has considered and responded to these priorities. 'You Said, We Did' updates were produced for the engagement events held throughout the process so the community could clearly see how the priorities were being responded to.
13. The formal consultation period ran for 8 weeks from 17th Nov 2022 to 8th January 2023, with numerous events held to hear people's feedback on the draft document:
 - Focus groups with local residents with disabilities and with young people from the area

- 1:1 meetings with businesses in the area
 - Online webinar and two in-person events at Windmill Hill City Farm
 - Walking tours with local stakeholders, including Windmill Hill and Malago Community Planning Group (WHaM), BS3 Planning and Totterdown Residents Environmental & Social Action (TRESA).
14. Feedback from these events and online consultation have been analysed and the Framework has been updated as follows:
- Further explanation as to what Biodiversity Net Gain is and how its calculated, and explicit reference to Bristol Tree Replacement Strategy
 - Wording updated and street section enlarged to make it clearer that new footpaths and cycle tracks will be segregated
 - Further explanation of proposed one-way system included
 - Clarification that proposed changes to the vehicle network and traffic circulation will be subject to further consultation prior to any changes being made
 - Explanatory text added under some images.
15. Further information on the engagement and consultation process, analysis of the feedback from the formal consultation and response to feedback received from the consultation, can be found in Appendix B(i) and (ii).
16. As part of the consultation, respondents were asked for suggestions as to how BCC can continue to engage with and involve the community as the regeneration progresses. Responses to this are being considered and will be discussed further with stakeholders.

Viability and Affordable Housing Practice Note (AHPN)

17. Through working collaboratively with developer partners during the framework process, it has been identified that during the early phases of delivery as Whitehouse Street transitions from a predominantly light industrial area to a mixed-use community, due to financial viability, it will be challenging to meet the full affordable housing policy requirement.
18. To encourage early delivery and the implementation of the Framework, approval is sought to extend the AHPN 'Threshold' approach to cover the Whitehouse Street Regeneration Framework Area until December 2024.
19. Within the AHPN, there is a "threshold" approach applied to specific zones in Bristol. Where the applicant's affordable housing offer meets a 'threshold' of at least 20% affordable housing within certain zones, the offer will not be subject to viability testing at the application stage provided that they meet certain conditions, which are set out in the AHPN.
20. The Threshold approach does not apply to land owned by Bristol City Council.
21. Future phases will be expected to be fully policy compliant, and on council-owned plots, the council will seek to maximise affordable housing provision.

Supporting delivery

22. The framework identifies the physical, social and community infrastructure that is required support delivery of the regeneration of the area.
23. It is anticipated that developments will deliver a share of the infrastructure or make financial contributions towards doing so, secured through Section 106 agreements. However, given the anticipated viability challenges in the first phase of delivery, BCC will seek to support delivery through:
- **Infrastructure funding**
BCC will explore the use of Strategic CIL (SCIL) and external funding sources to fund the delivery of the highways and public realm within the area to support the viability of schemes. Up to £600k of feasibility funding from SCIL is sought to develop outline designs for delivery of the highways and public realm and associated costings to help inform future funding bids.
 - **De-risking delivery of employment space**
BCC will engage with workspace operators who could take the head lease of employment space delivered by developers and curate and manage the marketing and sub-leasing of those spaces. There could also an opportunity for BCC to take the head lease subject to relevant approvals.
 - **Business support package and resourcing**
The support BCC can offer to businesses in the area is currently very limited, particularly given the

financial pressure the council is under. Through conversations with businesses in the area, BCC will continue to explore what package of support is needed and external funding opportunities as appropriate to support businesses to move into the new employment spaces delivered or relocate.

- **Social infrastructure**

Officers will continue liaising with the local NHS Integrated Care Board to inform them of planned growth in Bristol, including Whitehouse Street, to assist in planning future healthcare provision in Bristol. Conversations will continue with the local community to determine what community facilities are needed to support community cohesion and need within the Whitehouse Street regeneration area. There are, however, immediate opportunities to support delivery of community infrastructure in the wider area to strengthen links between the existing community and then extend to supporting integration of new residents that move into new homes being delivered in Bedminster Green, Whitehouse St and Mead St. These include:

- *Delivery of a community hub on East St*

There is a long-identified need for a community hub in the Bedminster area to provide services to the local community and provide a meeting space for residents. BCC has been working with local stakeholders Windmill Hill City Farm and Action Greater Bedminster and have identified an opportunity to secure a space on East St on a meanwhile basis to test out different ideas before looking to secure a more permanent home for the hub. This would have the added benefit of increasing footfall to East St and encouraging evening activity on the street.

Section 106 funding towards community facilities in the area has been identified as a potential source of funding, and officers will work with Area Committee 5 (as this funding fulfils s106 devolution criteria) to explore using this funding to support delivery of a community hub on East St.

- *Public Art Plan*

The Framework identifies the need for an area-wide Public Art Plan to be commissioned, which will benefit individual developments as they come forward by collectively identifying common themes, priorities and opportunities, adding value and impact to scheme public art planning and supporting discharge of planning conditions. The Public Art Plan will be developed with input from local stakeholders and will contribute to vibrant placemaking, quality design, community cohesion, and support cultural funding bids.

24. The delivery of infrastructure will be continually reviewed as developments progress in the area and funding sources sought, if required.

Eco-Impact Assessment – summary of impacts and mitigation

25. The significant impacts of the regeneration proposals are a short-term increase in climate changing gases through the construction works and the embodied emissions in the construction materials used.

26. The proposals include improving the attractiveness and accessibility of active modes of travel to reduce NO2 air pollution and reduce CO2 pollution by reducing the need for private car use; new trees will be provided as part of project delivery; a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain is expected; developments will be expected to connect to the district heat network and minimise energy demand.

27. The net effects of the proposals are helping support resilience to the impacts of climate change through increased planting of trees and low-level vegetation to absorb CO2 and reduce the urban heat island effect, and infrastructure to encourage active transport modes, helping reduce CO2 and NO2 emissions in the medium-long term by reducing reliance on private car use.

Bedminster Green

River Restoration

28. The restoration of the River Malago is an important infrastructure project to open up and enhance the river to create an environmental and community asset, and to improve flood resilience. Officers are working closely with developers of Plots 1, 3 and 5 in Bedminster Green to design and deliver the project.

29. In November 2021 Cabinet approved funding and delegated authorities to procure all necessary contracts to deliver the river restoration works.
30. Plot 3 is on site and delivery of the student accommodation scheme is scheduled for completion in August 2024. One of the planning conditions on Plot 3 requires the scheme to have appropriate flood risk measures in place in time for occupation in September 2024, which includes delivery of the river restoration project adjacent to Plot 3.
31. Plot 3 is a constrained site, and construction of the river restoration project will need to be very carefully managed to minimise delays, construction risk and costs to BCC.
32. To mitigate this risk and expedite delivery of the river restoration project, various delivery routes are being explored by BCC to undertake the construction of the river restoration project on both Plots 1 and 3, including a direct award to developer currently on site.
33. Delivery of the river restoration project on Plot 5 is estimated to be delivered 2025-26, and the most appropriate procurement route will be explored.

Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:

That Cabinet:

Whitehouse Street Recommendations:

1. Approve the Whitehouse Street Regeneration Framework and note that it will be a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.
2. Authorises the Director Economy of Place to extend the 'Threshold' approach in the Affordable Housing Practice Note 2022 to cover the Whitehouse Street Regeneration Framework Area until 31st December 2024.
3. Approve up to £600k SCIL funding to develop outline designs and business case for the highways and public realm and associated costings to inform future funding bids.
4. Authorises Executive Director for Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Mayor to procure and award the contract(s) (which may be over £500k) necessary to develop the outline designs and business case for the highways and public realm works.
5. Authorise the Executive Director of Growth and Regeneration in consultation with the Mayor to spend the approved funding as outlined in this report.
6. Authorise the Executive Director of Growth and Regeneration, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Mayor, to explore, submit funding bids, accept any funding award and enter into funding agreements for business support packages.
7. Note the consultation reports at Appendix B.

Bedminster Green Recommendations

8. Authorises the Executive Director Growth and Regeneration, in consultation with the Mayor, to enter into all necessary contracts by way of direct award (for goods, works or services) to expedite delivery of the river restoration and flood alleviation works on Plots 1 and 3 in Bedminster Green, within the previous funding allocation as set out and approved in November 2021 Cabinet report.

Corporate Strategy alignment:

1. Homes and Communities – the regeneration of Whitehouse St will deliver much needed new homes, including affordable homes, helping to increase footfall and support traders on the nearby East Street and Bedminster Parade.
2. Economy and Skills – the regeneration seeks to secure new employment space, including industrial floorspace, that seeks to support inclusive growth and complements the existing economy East Street and Bedminster Parade.
3. Transport and Connectivity – the sustainable transport and public realm improvements will improve connections across the city and support active and sustainable travel, by making it easier to walk, cycle or take public transport. This, combined with new trees and vegetation planting, will help support the level of growth coming forward in the area, improve air quality and help improve climate resilience.

- Health, Care and Wellbeing – making active travel easier and creating a high-quality pleasant public realm, combined with improved green space for people and wildlife will support healthier lifestyles. Provision of new community space will encourage integration of existing and new communities.

City Benefits:

- The Whitehouse Street Framework supports making efficient use of land; delivering new homes alongside a significant quantum of employment space to ensure no net loss of jobs.
- Approximately 2,000 new, good quality homes, including affordable housing, will help create greater equality of opportunity and quality of life. Creating a mixed and balanced community with a strong sense of place and liveable environment can help benefit mental and physical health, social interaction and security.
- Employment space delivered will complement the uses on East St and Bedminster Parade, and new resident footfall will help support high street businesses.
- Improvements to highways and public realm will support climate resiliency by: i) increasing tree cover and reducing the urban heat island effect, ii) provide infrastructure to support more active forms of travel and the resultant benefits to health, air quality and congestion.

Consultation Details:

Consultation details have been summarised in the main report, with further detail in Appendix A and B.

Background Documents:

- [Local Plan Review](#)
- [Community Manifesto](#)
- [Transport Assessment](#)
- [Nov 2021 Bedminster Green Cabinet report](#)

Revenue Cost	£0	Source of Revenue Funding	
Capital Cost	£600,000	Source of Capital Funding	CIL
One off cost <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/>	Income generation proposal <input type="checkbox"/>

Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:

1. Finance Advice:

The report provides Cabinet with the Final Draft Framework for Whitehouse Street regeneration and request Cabinet endorsement of the same. This framework will be used when determining future planning applications.

To encourage early delivery and the implementation of the Framework, approval is sought to extend the AHPN 'Threshold' approach to cover the Whitehouse Street Regeneration Framework Area until December 2024. While this may not have any direct financial implications to the Council, it does limit the number of affordable housings that may be provided by private developers within that period, and thus affect the Councils targets for affordable housing

This report also seeks Cabinet approval for up to £600k of SCIL funding to be allocated to develop outline designs and business case for the highways and public realm and associated costings to inform future funding bids. The work will help inform future bids for funding to cover the implementation costs of any future highways and public realm work and will be the subject of a future report.

Approval of the SCIL funding does not commit the Council in any way to any future implementation costs.

The report also asks Cabinet to note the intention to expedite Plot 1 & 3 of the Bedminster Green project, with the intention of a Direct award as recommended by Officers and with professional views from Legal & procurement. It is important to note that the project has a pre-allocated funding envelope, and the direct award will only be acceptable if it can be achieved within such.

Finance Business Partner: Kayode Olagundoye, Interim Finance Business Partner, Growth & Regeneration, 22nd February 2023

2. Legal Advice: The project team has available to it the benefit of legal advice on an ad hoc basis from the Council's Commercial and Governance and Property teams. Ordinarily the proposed restoration works for plots 1 and 3 would be subject to competition, however the project team has expressed the view, supported by procurement colleagues, that the Council's financial and practical interests are best served by directly awarding this part of the river restoration works to a contractor already working on site, and has further advised of various logistical and practical reasons for opting to procure the whole of the restoration works in potentially discrete work packages at different times and by different contractors. The potential for legal and other problems to arise from such an approach are understood (e.g. in the event of any construction or practical defect arising at a junction between 2 or more contractors' work, the potential for each contractor to lay blame on the other(s) etc). Such issues will require very careful management and the team has been advised to ensure its consultants are briefed and tasked accordingly.

Legal Team Leader: Eric Andrews, Team Manager: Commercial and Governance Lawyer, 8th February 2023

3. Implications on IT: I can see no implications on IT in regard to this activity.

IT Team Leader: Alex Simpson, Senior Solution Architect, 10th January 2023

4. HR Advice: There are no HR implications evident.

HR Partner: Celia Williams, HR Business Partner, 9th January 2023

EDM Sign-off	John Smith, Director Economy of Place	11 January 2023
Cabinet Member sign-off	Mayor Rees	19 January 2023
For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off	Mayor's Office	6 th February 2023

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal	YES
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	YES
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	NO
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix G – Financial Advice	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Exempt Information	NO
Appendix J – HR advice	NO
Appendix K – ICT	NO
Appendix L – Procurement	NO