

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is not a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has not been included in the relevant Forward Plan

**Joint Report of the Director
Finance, Assets & Information
Services & the Director Place**

BETTER BARNSELY PUBLIC REALM – DEVELOPED DESIGN

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of the public realm RIBA Stage 3 developed design and the proposed palette of materials for the creation of a new public square at the heart of the Glass Works project and improvements to the existing public realm on Cheapside, Queen Street, Peel Square, Kendray Street and Midland Street.
- 1.2 The report seeks the approval of the business case for improvements to the public realm in the town centre which recognises that place setting is crucial to change perceptions and encourage investment, whether this is further public realm improvements or new public sector assets and agrees the allocation of the funding required to deliver the project.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **It is recommended that Cabinet approve the public realm detailed design.**
- 2.3 **It is recommended that Cabinet approve the expenditure of £8,128,000 for the phased delivery of the public realm improvements to be completed by spring 2020. The allocation of this funding was previously agreed by Cabinet in September 2017 (Cab.6.9.2017/17).**
- 2.2 **It is recommended that Cabinet approve public consultation on the proposed designs and the submission of a full planning application.**

3. Introduction

- 3.1 The public space (including green space and green infrastructure) between buildings, the so-called Public Realm, is one of the most, if not the most important element of a town: It's the place where people move through and interact and a large determinant of their quality of life. The document presented today is the detailed design for the Glass Works public realm and represents the design team's considered response to the project brief. The design team have prepared the detailed design report for the Council, which records the design details for the preferred option.
- 3.2 In February the RIBA stage 2 public realm concept design proposal was presented to Cabinet for comment and consideration. Following Cabinet

discussions the proposals have been developed taking into consideration the feedback from Cabinet alongside comments from internal and external stakeholders and specific focus groups.

- 3.3 The original scope of the project included a new public square at the heart of the Glass Works project and improvements to the existing public realm on May Day Green and Kendray Street. The area under consideration has been expanded during the developed design stage and now includes wider public realm improvements to Cheapside, Queen Street, Peel Square and Midland Street.
- 3.4 The scheme has been design to be deliverable within an allocated budget and uses a mix of natural and high quality concrete products to create a robust and sustainable palette of materials.
- 3.5 The programme of works will start In April 2018 On Cheapside and May Day Green to ensure that the frontage area around the Metropolitan Centre is completed to align with the opening of the Markets. The works will then continue in sequence on the remainder of Cheapside, the frontage of the Library @the lightbox and on to Midland Street to be completed by December 2018. In 2019 to works will move on to complete Queen Street, Peel Square, the area adjacent to the new Market gate Bridge and the main square which will be completed March 2020 to align with the opening of the remainder of the Glass Works project.

4. Consideration of alternative approaches

- 4.1 This approach to deliver the Glass Works project was agreed by Cabinet after the previous scheme working in partnership with a private developer partner failed to raise sufficient funds to commence the project. The Council remains fully committed to the Glass Works scheme including all of its previously approved individual elements. As such, whilst there are no alternative approaches being considered for the wider scheme, each of the separate work package business cases will set out options for the Council to consider, where appropriate, the delivery of those elements.
- 4.2 A business case has been submitted to Cabinet for consideration alongside this report.

5. Proposal and justification

- 5.1 A high quality public environment can have a significant impact on the economic life of our town centres and is an essential part of our regeneration strategy. As local towns centres increasingly compete with one another to attract investment, the presence of good public realm: squares, gardens and other public spaces become a vital business and marketing tool. Businesses are attracted to locations that offer well-designed, well-managed public places and these in turn attract customers and services.
- 5.2 The importance of public space has long been recognised as a key driver for economic activity and well-being. Public realm helps to create a sense of place and is considered the 'glue' that connects a town together. Recent good examples of investment in public realm in Barnsley Town centre include the

Barnsley Pals Memorial Square and the Urban Centre Infrastructure project. This project helps to link the new Glass Works developments with the rest of the town centre, ensuring connectivity between existing retail areas and the new town centre offer. The project has been developed to ensure a holistic design for the town centre linking into Glass Works Square.

5.3 **The Square** is the focal point of the new Glass Works scheme and creates a new location in the heart of the town centre for people to dwell. This is an important element of increasing retail expenditure and creating a sense of place. The features of the square include:

- Terraced steps from Interchange up to the Main Square
- Civic space in front of the Library with Astro turf / stone terraces creating an amphitheatre to view performances
- Cascading water pool running into an in-ground water rill
- Outdoor dining to retail units
- Market Stall Pod structure adjacent to Markets entrance
- One way controlled service vehicle route defined to May Day Green & Kendray Street

5.4 **Midland Street** is an important connecting route through from the Courthouse area down into the Glass Works. The proposals in this area seek to minimise vehicular movements and improve the pedestrian experience.

- Taxis relocated to Eldon Street
- One way vehicle access south for service and emergency vehicles only
- Gateway space at Eldon Street / Midland Street Junction
- Widened footpath on east side adjacent to the Interchange with trees and benches
- Designated loading bays on west side
- Pedestrian crossing point to Eldon Arcade

5.5 **Cheapside & Queen Street** form an important primary retail route through the town centre. The proposals for this area include:

- the creation of Gateway / Node Spaces at key junctions:
 - Alhambra Shopping Centre
 - May Day Green
 - Indoor Market Entrance
- Central 'vehicular route' to guide service vehicles

- ‘Craggy’ character to geometry creating interesting vistas and uniquely Barnsley
- Market structures in Linear and Pod form with stalls arranged to allow cross street movement between them

5.6 **Peel Square** is reimagined as a historic town square enhancing the original buildings that provide character to the space. The proposals for this area include:

- A simplistic square that re-defines this area as a key space for the town
- Removal of stalls and clutter to open up views of the fantastic buildings
- A flexible event space with opportunities for pop up stalls

5.7 **Trees** - Due to constraints such as building canopies and in-ground services, it may be difficult to locate areas for tree planting. If there is little opportunity to plant trees, specifying larger sizes can help create impact. Raised planters can also be used to provide more suitable locations, these can also be relocated for events. Consideration will be given to the long term health and maintenance of the trees by specifying suitable growth medium and support systems.

5.8 **Gateways**

This project will improve key gateways into the heart of the town. Nodal points have been identified at Peel Square, the entrance to the Alhambra, the junction of May Day Green / Queen Street / Peel Square and the area adjacent to the Transport Interchange.

This project is being design to link in with the Market Gate Bridge project approved by Cabinet on 4th October 2017 (Cab.04.10.2017/6) this will help to create a new gateway into Barnsley town centre creating links with the Trans Pennine Trail, the Dearne Valley Park, Barnsley Metrodome, Oakwell football ground and the housing to the East of the town. The final public realm designs for the area around the Interchange and the lower end of Midland Street will be completed once the bridge design and landing area have been approved. The same palette of materials will be utilised to ensure that the scheme fits together holistically.

5.9 **Materials Palette**

The scheme incorporates a range of paving, the materials that are proposed are appropriate to each area and its usage. The higher quality material is focused to public square, key gateway / nodal spaces as well as to features that may be found along the streets.

The design considers how certain spaces will be used and provides a robust surface whilst also providing interest along the street. Different paving textures can be used to mark edges of certain areas or delineate key routes. Kerbs and trims also help zone areas and using stone can help enhance the space.

The proposed street furniture represents the palette within the Barnsley Town Centre Public Spaces Strategy, which includes seating, signage, bins, bollards, tree grilles and cycle parking. This will enable the scheme to align with the wider town centre and assists with ongoing maintenance. There will also be bespoke elements of street furniture to highlight particular areas or help with wider site issues.

- 5.10 **Maintenance** - The lifecycle cost of maintenance has been a consideration for the palette of materials, balanced with the aesthetic design requirements. The lessons learnt from the Urban Centre Infrastructure project have been reviewed and considered as part of the design process.
- 5.11 **Management** - The new public square will be maintained as part of the Glass Works by the Centre Management Team. The remainder of the public realm will be maintained by BMBC.
- 5.12 **Accessibility** - Enhanced public realm will give greater accessibility for people with physical challenges related to sight, hearing and mobility, where the use of contrast in materials/colour, accessible benches and the use of water and street trees to enhance sensory stimulation are all key elements. Street design will be carried out in accordance with current national and local accessibility policies and best practice. These factors have been considered from the outset:

Width of Routes:

There is a focus on pedestrian priority to both Queen Street and Cheapside, a defined zone for pedestrian use has been created. A key width for access should be 1.8m wide for general use. This allows two wheelchair users to pass each other.

Removing Barriers, Hazards and Clutter:

As a rule, street furniture, such as signposts, litter bins, seats, and free-standing posts (e.g lighting columns) should be located at or beyond the boundaries of an access route.

Seating:

There will be a variety of seat heights, ranging from 380 mm to 580 mm. armrests will be provided to help people lower themselves onto the seat and stand up. A supportive back-rest will be incorporated on some of the seating.

Lighting:

Lighting also plays an important role in helping people use a space. It is vital that correct lighting lux levels are achieved throughout the scheme, but also that any feature or directional lighting does not make the space more difficult to use either.

6. Implications for local people / service users

- 6.1 The public space between buildings, and the routes that take people across and through the town centre, is one of the most, if not the most important element of a town: It's the place where people move through and interact and a large determinant of their quality of life.
- 6.2 The Glass Works public realm will have a significantly positive impact for Barnsley residents. It will create a vibrant and modern town centre, which will retain and attract in more visitors. The development of a town square will provide an outdoor venue for small to medium sized outdoor events. It will retain the outdoor market in the streets to drive footfall and animate the town centre. In addition, the new town square will enhance the heart of the town for people to meet and dwell.
- 6.3 Before the development is complete, there will be disruption to local people and businesses during the next three years. The project team are working hard to minimise the disruption by ensuring that regular communications are provided to the public detailing any changes and providing progress updates.
- 6.4 Regular town centre walkabouts are held particularly with vulnerable groups of service users who may find the disruption difficult to manage. These have proven very successful and have led to several mitigation measures being implemented to minimise the impact of the redevelopment works.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 Consultations have taken place with representatives of the Service Director – Finance (S151 Officer).
- 7.2 The Public Realm work in respect of the overall Better Barnsley scheme is expected to total £8.128M. This scheme is to be funded from monies set aside for Public Realm works as part of the Better Barnsley Phase 1 scheme, totalling £3.028M (Cab.6.9.2017/17 refers), plus an additional £5.1M approved in principle from the 2020 Future Council capital priorities in relation to Better Barnsley Phase 2 (Cab.8.2.2017/7 refers).
- 7.3 The expenditure is expected to be split over the financial years between £2.136M in 2018/19 and £5.992M in 2019/20.
- 7.4 The financial implications are shown on the attached appendix A

8. Legal implications

- 8.1 None arising from this report.

9 Employee implications

- 9.1 None arising from this report.

10. Communications implications

10.1 A communication plan is in place for the Glass Works scheme. The project team are committed to undertaking exemplar public consultation on the redevelopment proposals for Barnsley town centre and have prepared a detailed communication and consultation plan with the aim to:

- Increase borough wide awareness of the town centre development plans
- Develop and build positive relationships with Stakeholders
- Ensure that every stakeholder segment has the opportunity to inform the development plans
- Engage with and seek the views of the local community
- Gain credible, constructive input from the local community to shape aspects of the proposals
- Involve the local community to create opportunities to contribute to the regeneration of the town centre
- Inform and shape redevelopment proposals that will create a sustainable future for the town centre.

The communications and consultation plan is a living document which is regularly updated as each stage of the project progresses.

10.2 Press releases are issued as appropriate and information is provided to the public on the progress via social media and the Better Barnsley Newsletter.

11. Consultations

11.1 A consultation process has been utilised to help the community and stakeholders shape the scheme and to generate an informed debate on the proposals. The involvement of the community and stakeholders is a critical part of the development process for Barnsley town centre. The consultation work on this scheme started back in the summer 2014 and will continue throughout the redevelopment of the town centre.

11.2 Key communication activities and events:

Website

There is a dedicated webpage for town centre development (Better Barnsley), with regularly updated information and links to the weekly newsletter. Opportunities for consultation are promoted here.

Newsletter

A weekly electronic 'Glass Works' newsletter is published and the link to it shared with local media and council colleagues. The Newsletter has a circulation of 2000+ readers who are predominantly local residents and businesses. The newsletter provides an update on the progress of the project, the team involved and events and activities taking place in the town centre.

Social media

Regular updates and news items are shared via the council's Facebook and Twitter accounts. Any comments are shared with the development team. The project specific Twitter Page has 2,900 followers; it is updated on a regular basis to keep people informed of the latest news about the project.

Targeted events

Regular meetings, presentations and workshops have been held with the consultees and stakeholders. A series of town centre walkabouts have also taken place to give people the opportunity to discuss existing issues in the town centre and to gain a better understanding of the redevelopment proposals and how they integrate into the town. All the feedback from these targeted events is utilised by the project and design teams to inform the development of the project.

Further public and stakeholder consultation will be undertaken prior to the submission of the full planning application. The scheme has been presented to the Barnsley Urban Design Review Advisory Panel. The feedback from the panel has also been incorporated into the development of the proposals. The consultation has highlighted strong support for the project from both the local and wider community and from the various stakeholder groups.

In terms of informing the proposals:

- An overwhelmingly positive response has been received in relation to the creation of a large public square for events and to increase dwell time in the town centre. Improvements to public spaces have been very favourably received with requests to include a new water feature and increased planting and greenery.
- Other frequent concerns raised during consultation include issues with anti-social behaviour in the town centre and cleansing and maintenance issues.

The project and design teams will continue to consult with the community and stakeholders to ensure that views and issues where relevant and possible are taken on board and incorporated into the scheme evolution. It is considered that the consultation undertaken to date has played a valuable role in the preparation of the proposed scheme.

- 11.3 Specific public consultation sessions on the public realm concept design will be held in the Better Barnsley shop and in the markets. These sessions will help inform the next phase of design work and will be supplemented with workshop sessions with a variety of town centre user groups particularly those with accessibility requirements.

12. The Corporate Plan and the Council's Performance Management Framework

12.1 This proposal supports the Corporate Plan objectives of creating a 'thriving and vibrant economy' and creating 'strong and resilient communities'. We will achieve this through delivering the following outcomes as part of the wider Glass Works scheme:

- Develop a vibrant Town Centre
- Create more and better jobs and good business growth
- Strengthen our visitor economy
- Protecting the Borough for future generations

13. Tackling health inequalities

13.1 Landscapes have long been seen as places of delight and relaxation. Today, these associations are becoming more explicit: an increasingly strong evidence base demonstrates the positive effects that access to good-quality landscapes has on our health and wellbeing – and the negative effects when we don't. Much of the history of landscape architecture can be traced back to the need to create places that were beneficial for people's health and wellbeing.

13.2 The landscape design team are looking to achieve positive outcomes for people's health and wellbeing at all scales and all stages of development. By designing for the community, landscape architects understand how the aesthetic and functional qualities of a place can enhance quality of life. The following five principles from research undertaken by the Landscape Institute are believed to be essential to the creation of healthy places:

- Healthy places improve air, water and soil quality, incorporating measures that help us adapt to, and where possible mitigate, climate change
- Healthy places help overcome health inequalities and can promote healthy lifestyles
- Healthy places make people feel comfortable and at ease, increasing social interaction and reducing anti-social behaviour, isolation and stress
- Healthy places optimise opportunities for working, learning and development
- Healthy places are restorative, uplifting and healing for both physical and mental health conditions

13.3 The public realm improvements are being consciously planned and designed to promote social interaction. Attractive green spaces can also enhance property values and encourage tourism. A waymarked 'healthy mile' route will also be incorporated into the new public realm. All of these things benefit the socio-economic status of local populations and contribute to community cohesion and sustainable development, as well as benefitting wellbeing.

14. Climate Change & Sustainable Energy Act 2006

14.1 The Glass Works scheme has aspirations to respond positively to local and national sustainability requirements. Sustainability is embedded throughout the

scheme and includes all aspects of sustainability including social and economic sustainability as well as environmental sustainability.

15. Risk management issues

- 15.1 There is a comprehensive risk register for the project which is reviewed and updated on a regular basis in consultation with the Corporate Risk Manager. Risks are reported on at regular board meetings.
- 15.2 The overall risk to the Council in financial terms is considered to be minimal and costs will be managed within the overall project budget for the key elements to be delivered by the Council.

16. Health, safety, and emergency resilience issues

- 16.1 All health and safety matters in respect to the development will be addressed as part of the obligations placed upon the main works contractors.

17. Compatibility with the European Convention on Human Rights

- 17.1 No issues arising from this report.

18. Promoting equality, diversity, and social inclusion

- 18.1 The Town Centre Delivery Team are working closely with the Equality and Diversity Team. We understand that anyone with disabilities can face all kinds of challenges using the town centre. The project team will incorporate feedback from consultation sessions with disability groups.
- 18.2 Engaging with disabled people in our consultative process demonstrates our commitment to and valuing of, the disabled visitor/customer/user. As well as gaining insight into the more universal access issues, involving disabled people will bring more site-specific knowledge to the auditing process.

19. Reduction of crime and disorder

- 19.1 The Council is collaborating with the Police to address anti-social behavior across the town centre. Good, safe design principles will help and assist this work going forward.

20. Conservation of biodiversity

- 20.1 Biodiversity issues are being addressed through the planning and design process.

21. Glossary

- 21.1 Not used.

22. List of appendices

Appendix A – financial implications

Appendix B – IBI RIBA Stage 3 Detailed Design Report

23. Background papers

23.1 IBI RIBA Stage 2 Concept Design Report

Officer Contact: Jeremy Sykes

Telephone No: 774607

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