
**SINGLE PROGRAMME – TOWN CENTRE FRINGE MASTER
PLANNING**

Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor John Williams, Economy Portfolio

**Responsible Director – Richard Alty, Assistant Chief Executive
(Regeneration)**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek agreement to release £153,000 of capital funds for Town Centre Fringe Master Planning

Summary

2. Darlington Borough Council has received a Single Programme grant for the Town Centre Fringe Master Planning work which is to include identification of issues and options, assessment of feasibility, and recommendations on approach to delivery for taking forward the Town Centre Fringe.
3. This work will set the blueprint for taking forward the area and it will involve the gradual management of change in the area over a time frame of at least 15 years, through a strategy that encourages development through a planning framework - providing clear direction for private investment decisions, supported by public investment targeted on key sites and the public realm.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that Cabinet agrees the release of £153,000 of capital funding as detailed in the report

Reasons

5. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons:-
- (a) To assist in the master planning of a strategically important area of Darlington, which will have wider benefits for both the residents and wider economy of Darlington (including existing businesses and new businesses).
 - (b) To enhance the environmental, social and economic well-being of the Borough.
 - (c) To feed into the Council’s Local Development Framework – providing the tools necessary to promote and encourage high quality development which meets the needs of Darlington and its Community.
 - (d) Build upon existing Single Programme and Darlington Borough Council investment through the 1st Phase of the Master Planning exercise.

Richard Alty
Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration)

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.
 K McGready : Extension 2680

S17 Crime and Disorder	A vibrant and mixed use area is planned with activity throughout the day, contributing to a safer Darlington.
Health and Well Being	The regeneration of the area will have a positive impact upon areas of multiple deprivation. Also the improved connectivity to the east that would be afforded will increase opportunities for healthy transport choice.
Sustainability	Through the regeneration of the Town Centre Fringe there will be sustainable development opportunities, low carbon developments, and improvements to wildlife habitats that will come along with a comprehensive plan for the area for the next 15 years. With design as a priority the opportunity to create a well-designed part of town in the Town Centre Fringe.
Diversity	This area of Darlington abuts and is included within some of the more deprived wards. This work will improve the prospects for all of those who live within and around the area as well as creating the conditions for high quality employment and leisure. The

	community will be consulted with throughout the processes, and will follow the Councils Equal Opportunity Policies to ensure inclusion of all members of the community.
Wards Affected	<p>A key output from the Town Centre Fringe master plan will be the framework for change required to improve connections and linkages from the Town Centre to the east of the town, via Central Park. By connecting some of the town's most disadvantaged areas with the Town Centre and employment opportunities this regeneration project will contribute to rebalancing the wealth and opportunity Darlington has to offer for example by tackling the severance of the inner ring road the potential of the area can be realised, for the benefit of all.</p> <p>The Town Centre Fringe is made up of three wards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Central ward – which is within the top 3% most deprived wards in the Country (IMD 2007). * Northgate ward – which is within the top 7% most deprived wards in the Country (IMD 2007). * Bank Top ward – which is within the top 7% most deprived wards in the Country (IMD 2007). <p>A comprehensive master plan for the area will allow strategic change across these deprived wards, improving infrastructure, physical environment and quality of life.</p>
Groups Affected	NA
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This report is not a Key Decision
Urgent Decision	No

One Darlington:
Perfectly Placed

This project links in with all of the SCS's 5 themes as follows:

- Greener - Through the regeneration of the Town Centre Fringe there will be sustainable development opportunities, low carbon developments, and improvements to wildlife habitats that will come along with a comprehensive plan for the area for the next 15 years. With design as a priority the opportunity to create a well-designed part of town in the Town Centre Fringe is specifically referenced in this theme.
- Safer - A vibrant and mixed use area is planned with activity throughout the day, contributing to a safer Darlington.
- Healthy - The regeneration of the area will have a positive impact upon areas of multiple deprivation. Also the improved connectivity to the east that would be afforded will increase opportunities for healthy transport choices.
- Prosperous:
 - Quality of Life. This work on the Town Centre Fringe is specifically referenced under this theme. The cultural offer of the area is specifically mentioned alongside attracting high quality employment, transport choice and accessibility.
 - Employment Opportunities. A key work strand is to improve the range of high quality business premises, the opportunity to do this in a sustainable location is afforded by the Town Centre Fringe.
 - Distinctive Darlington. The Town Centre Fringe is an opportunity to capitalise on Darlington's heritage and identity.
 - Aspiring: The Town Centre Fringe provides the opportunity to connect the Town Centre more to Central Park, Darlington College and the new University building. It is also a clear representation of the Aspirations of the town and its future.

Efficiency	<p>By providing a clear framework for the development of the area the Development Management process will potentially be streamlined, saving costs to the Council.</p> <p>The project can be accommodated within officers' existing work programmes.</p>
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MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

Town Centre Fringe Area

6. The project activities will be delivered within Darlington's Town Centre Fringe area, which includes both land and property which predominately lies outside the inner ring road. The land stretches from Victoria Road to Valley Street, running between the Town Centre and the Central Park Development. This physical area is made up of three wards – Central ward, Northgate ward and Bank Top ward:-
 - (a) Central ward – which is within the top 3% most deprived wards in the Country (IMD 2007).
 - (b) Northgate ward – which is within the top 7% most deprived wards in the Country (IMD 2007).
 - (c) Bank Top ward – which is within the top 7% most deprived wards in the Country (IMD 2007).

Phase 1

7. The Council secured Single Programme investment for 2007/08 - 2008/09, to a value of £123,983 for Town Centre Fringe Master Planning. This funding developed the following resources which underpin and provide an invaluable baseline information on which the second phase has been built upon:-
 - (a) An initial Scoping Report undertaken by BDP which is being used as a technical background document to inform further work strands.
 - (b) The Feethams Planning and Development Brief which sets the scene for the redevelopment of the Feethams area of the Town Centre Fringe.
 - (c) An archaeological survey of the area.
 - (d) An Environmental Risk Assessment.
 - (e) An ecological and habitats survey of the area.
 - (f) A feasibility study for a combined heat and power network for the area.

Phase 2

8. In November 2009, the Council was successful in securing an additional £117,000 to undertake a comprehensive Master Planning exercise. This project to develop and build upon preliminary work already undertaken and funded

through Single Programme, to develop a full master planning exercise on Darlington's Town Centre Fringe.

9. The aim of this project is to include identification of issues and options, assessment of feasibility, and recommendations on approach to delivery for taking forward the Town Centre Fringe. This work will set the blueprint for taking forward the area and it will involve the gradual management of change in the area over a time frame of at least 15 years, through a strategy that encourages development through a planning framework - providing clear direction for private investment decisions, supported by public investment targeted on key sites and the public realm.
10. The project will deliver the following:-
 - (a) Strategic master plan identifying key connections, frontages, development sites and opportunities within the wider context of Darlington.
 - (b) Specific briefs and concept statements for sites that may come forward in the meantime.
 - (c) A development procurement and land assembly strategy.
 - (d) Area Action Plan for Town Centre Fringe - providing a clear framework for development, certainty and leverage for land assembly and acquisitions.
11. The following outcomes will be achieved through the regeneration of the Town Centre Fringe:-
 - (a) Significant inward investment to the town.
 - (b) Long term and sustainable high quality employment opportunities.
 - (c) A revitalised environment that is comfortable and safe and convenient to use - for the benefit of the whole town.
 - (d) Creation of a cultural quarter that enhances the quality of life and offer of the town.
 - (e) Regenerated housing development in the area creating a great place to live for the future, close to the town centre.
 - (f) Creation of attractive and purposeful open space.
12. A key output from the Town Centre Fringe master plan will be the framework for change required to improve connections and linkages from the Town Centre to the east of the town, via Central Park. By connecting some of the town's most disadvantaged areas with the Town Centre and employment opportunities this regeneration project will contribute to rebalancing the wealth and opportunity Darlington has to offer for example by tackling the severance

of the inner ring road the potential of the area can be realised, for the benefit of all.

Finance

13. The total project cost is £203,000 which is made up of £117,000 Single Programme capital funding, £36,000 Darlington Borough Council revenue contribution and £50,000 Darlington Borough Council in-kind (Urban Designer's time). Finance is broken down by activity and funder as follows:-

Table 1

	2009/10	2010/11	2010/11	2010/11	2010/11	2011/12
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1
Visioning and Preparation						
Consultation Venues	500	1000				
Connecting with Communities		10500				
Printing and publicity	1000	2500				
Community Development work	500	1500				
Facilitators	500	2000				
Baseline Reports						
Heritage Assets Survey	2000	8000				
Land Ownerships	5000					
Infrastructure and Utilities Information		5000	15000			
Economic Appraisals		5000				
Rents, Rates and Vacancies Survey	5000					
Car parking evidence base		7000				
3D Modelling	2000					
Highways feasibility work		5000	15000			
Procurement and land assembly assessment	5000	20000				
Consultations						
Venue hire				1500		
Connecting with Communities				10500		
Printing and publicity				4500		
Facilitators				2500		
Issues and Options						
Publications					5000	
Publicity						10000
TOTAL CAPITAL BUDGET	21,500	67,500	30,000	19,000	5,000	10,000
Master planning						
Internal Officer time in preparing and finalising master plan	8,350	8,350	8,350	8,350	8,350	8,250
TOTAL SPEND BY QUARTER	29,850	75,850	38,350	27,350	13,350	18,250
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	203,000					
Single Programme Funded	117,000					
DBC In Kind	50,000					
DBC Cash Contribution	36,000					

Resource Implications

14. The project requires the following resources:-

(a) Project Board

This group meets regularly and has the overall responsibility for the project during the delivery and closure phases. These responsibilities include providing strategic direction and support for the project, ensuring the project objectives remain aligned with corporate objectives, confirming project resources and tolerances etc. In line with the Council's project management procedures, the project board for the project consists of senior officers, One North East, and the Homes and Communities Agency will be invited to join this group as the senior user.

(b) Project Sponsor

The project sponsor is responsible for a wide range of activities including ensuring appropriate resources are available for the projects, monitoring and controlling the progress of the project at a strategic level, ensuring the project risks are being tracked and effectively mitigated etc. The sponsor of this project is John Anderson, Assistant Director - Regeneration Planning and Transport.

(c) Project Manager

The project manager is responsible for the day to day running of the project on behalf of both the project board and the project sponsor. The principal responsibility of the project manager is to ensure the project delivers the required products to the required quality standard within the specified time and cost constraints. The project manager for this project is Timothy Crawshaw, Principle Urban Design Officer. The time of the Urban Designer Officer is being used as in-kind match to the project, as it is their role to pull together the master planning document.

(d) Project Team

The members of this team are responsible for the completion of all tasks allocated by the Project Manager. This team will report to the project manager on a monthly basis and includes representatives from Transport Policy, Public Protection, Street Scene, Connecting with Communities, Countryside/Parks, Highways, Estates, Housing, Culture and Leisure, Economic Regeneration, External Funding and Strategy and Planning Development. The new Tees Valley Unlimited Delivery Team, One North East and Homes and Communities Agency staff will also be involved.

(e) Funding Support

The Single Programme Funding will be subject to quarterly claims and monitoring. The Project Manager will be lead and supported through this process by the External Funding and Strategy Team.

Outcome of Consultation

15. This project has been consulted on as follows:-

- (a) Feethams Planning and Development Brief, funded by the first phase of Single Programme money, was consulted upon widely in July and August 2008. Adopted by the Council in October 2008 it has already informed the recent DCSF development that received planning permission in October 2009 and sets the scene for the future development of the Feethams area. Through the consultation process the Brief was modified to include significant amounts of public space alongside the River Skerne and gained overall public support.
- (b) Town Centre Fringe Phase 2 will involve intensive community consultation.
- (c) Throughout the bidding process, Darlington Borough Council has consulted with Tees Valley Unlimited, the Homes and Communities Agency, One North East and key stakeholders. Representatives have been included in the Project Team and will therefore be consulted throughout the project and not just in its development.

Conclusion

16. £117,000 Single Programme Funding has been secured to build upon previous investment for Phase 1 of the Town Centre Fringe Master Planning work. This exercise aims to set the blueprint for taking forward the area and it will involve the gradual management of change in the area over a time frame of at least 15 years, through a strategy that encourages development through a planning framework - providing clear direction for private investment decisions, supported by public investment targeted on key sites and the public realm.