This report has been revised to correct the links to the draft East Norwich Stage 1 Masterplan in paragraph 17 and under Appendices.

NORWICH City Council

Committee Name: Cabinet
Committee Date: 17/11/2021
Report Title: East Norwich stage 1 masterplan

Portfolio:	Councillor Stonard, Cabinet member for inclusive and sustainable growth
Report from:	Executive director of development and city services
Wards:	Thorpe Hamlet, Lakenham

OPEN PUBLIC ITEM

Purpose
To consider the approval of the Stage 1 masterplan and the agreement to proceed to Stage 2 of the masterplan.

Recommendation:
To approve the Stage 1 masterplan and agree to proceed to Stage 2.

Policy Framework
The Council has three corporate priorities, which are:

- People living well
- Great neighbourhoods, housing and environment
- Inclusive economy

This report meets the corporate priorities People living well, Great neighbourhoods, housing and environment, and Inclusive economy.

This report addresses the following strategic actions in the Corporate Plan:

- Provide means for people to lead healthy, connected and fulfilling lives
- Maintain a clean and sustainable city with a good local environment that people value
- Continue sensitive regeneration of the city that retains its unique character and meets local needs
- Mobilise activity and investment that promotes a growing, diverse, innovative and resilient economy

This report helps to update the local plan for Greater Norwich by informing production of a supplementary planning document for East Norwich which will support delivery of the Greater Norwich local plan's policies. Once adopted the GNLP will replace the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk which currently forms a key part of the local plan for Norwich.

This report helps to meet the following objectives of the COVID-19 Recovery Plan:

- Housing, regeneration and development: this specifically includes the action of commencing the masterplanning process for the regeneration of East Norwich with the potential to deliver 4,000 new homes and create 6,000 new jobs; this work began in March 2021 and is well underway as noted in the main body of this report. Also, the masterplan will identify required infrastructure to ensure the regeneration of East Norwich in a timely manner. The acquisition of Carrow House by the city council gives it a stake in the regeneration of the wider area.
- Business and local economy: the masterplan will identify opportunities to promote sustainable travel in the city centre, with a focus on walking and cycling. The masterplan and acquisition of Carrow House is part of the Town Investment Plan which has secured £5m funding for investing in the East Norwich as part of the wider £25m investment programme.
- Climate change and the green economy: the masterplan and eventual supplementary planning document to be produced in stage 2 of the process will help ensure that future the regeneration of East Norwich is delivered to the highest possible environmental standards.

Report Details

Purpose

1. The East Norwich sites (comprising the Deal Ground, Utilities site, and the recently available Carrow Works site) present a once in a generation regeneration opportunity for Norwich, with the potential to transform this part of the city and deliver wider benefits for Greater Norwich and the wider region.

2. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for Stage 1 East Norwich masterplan, which has now been completed, and for progressing to Stage 2 of the masterplan. Funding is already committed to enable the work to progress to the next stage.

3. Members of the consultant team will be available at the meeting to respond to members' questions if required.

Background

4. The city council has been committed to maximising the regeneration potential of East Norwich for many years. This includes involvement in and commissioning of previous evidence studies and through determination of planning applications for example. In 2018 the council commissioned a study to explore the opportunities presented by the availability of the Carrow Works site: 'A Vision for East Norwich' (5th Studio, 2018). This study highlighted the scale of the opportunity in East Norwich to support sustainable growth of the city, and has helped inform the masterplan vision.

5. A report to Cabinet on 10 June 2020 highlighted the opportunity offered by the vacation of the Carrow Works site by Britvic/Unilever to act as a catalyst for regeneration of long-term vacant sites in East Norwich, suffering from a range of constraints to create a sustainable, high quality new district of the city. That report approved the terms of reference for a new partnership – the East Norwich Partnership – to steer development of a masterplan for East Norwich and agreed a draft brief as the basis for procurement of a masterplan.

6. Following the procurement exercise, Cabinet at its meeting on 10 February 2021 resolved to award a contract for multidisciplinary professional advice on the East Norwich Masterplan for the period 1 March 2021 to 31 March 2022. The consultant team appointed following that decision is led by Avison Young, and includes Allies and Morrison masterplanners, Hydrock, and RPS.

7. Production of a masterplan for the East Norwich sites is required to support policy in the emerging Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP). The draft plan (submitted to the Secretary of State in July 2021) identifies the East Norwich Strategic Regeneration Area and allocates this area under a single strategic allocation for residential led mixed-use development to include in the region of 4,000 new homes. The masterplan brief includes provision of a supplementary planning document for East Norwich to support the policy. The capacity of the site in the emerging policy is based on the 5th Studio work referred to above but

the policy makes clear that the housing capacity will be subject to detailed masterplanning.

8. It should be noted that Sustainable Development Panel has been briefed throughout the masterplan process. Comments from the recent Panel meeting on 9th November will be presented to Cabinet for consideration.

9. The masterplan work is in two stages. The key output of the Stage 1 masterplan, which is the subject of this report, is a high-level masterplan based on a preferred option, providing a clear understanding of the strategic infrastructure needs and other abnormal costs and the impact of this on the deliverability and viability of the scheme.

10. The outputs of Stage 2 of the process will include an Infrastructure Delivery Plan and refined Strategic Viability Assessment of the preferred option masterplan, informing a refined version of the masterplan. It will also provide evidence to support the allocation of the East Norwich allocation in the GNLP and for future planning applications. As noted above a key output will be the development of a supplementary planning document for east Norwich to support the GNLP policy.

Governance and budget

11. The East Norwich Partnership (ENP) is a public-private sector partnership led by Norwich City Council, and chaired by Cllr Stonard. The council is also the accountable body for procurement, managing relevant budgets, and project management. The ENP's purpose is for partners to work together in developing a masterplan for the East Norwich area that is deliverable and will address the need for investment in substantial new social and economic infrastructure to unlock the development potential of the site, enabling sustainable growth in this location.

12. Membership comprises: Norwich City Council, Norfolk County Council, South Norfolk Council, the Broads Authority, Homes England, Network Rail, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, and landowners of the Deal Ground / May Gurney site, Carrow Works, and the Utilities sites.

13. As noted under Implications below, financial commitment to date for the masterplan work totals £675,000. This comes not only from the public sector sources (including the city council, Norfolk County Council, Norwich Towns Fund, Norfolk County Council, the Broads Authority, Homes England, Network Rail, and the Norfolk Strategic Fund) but also from the landowners of the Deal, Utilities and Carrow Works sites who are key stakeholders in the regeneration of this area. The landowners and other funding partners are engaged in the masterplan development process through the East Norwich Steering Group which oversees progress on the masterplan.

14. This level of partner support has been instrumental to help drive the masterplan forward and demonstrates partners' commitment to work positively towards the regeneration of this area.

15. It should be noted that the council and the Towns Fund each contributed £100,000 towards masterplanning costs, and the council also recently acquired Carrow House through the Towns Fund which gives the council a landowner stake in the delivery of regeneration in East Norwich.

16. There is regular reporting on progress with the masterplan through the Towns Fund governance arrangements. This includes the Norwich Town Deal Board which provides strategic leadership to develop and deliver the Towns Fund projects, and the Internal Programme Board which oversees reporting, performance, delivery etc. for each project.

Stage 1 masterplan – development and content

17. The purpose of the stage 1 masterplan, available to view on the council's website [1] is to provide a clear understanding of the development potential of the East Norwich area in terms of a range of land uses including housing, employment and community/social infrastructure and the strategic infrastructure required to deliver these, taking into account estimates of abnormal development costs and an understanding of the impact these have on the deliverability and viability of the scheme. It is not a blueprint for development but instead provides a framework for the comprehensive regeneration of the East Norwich area for the long term, to help promote, direct and coordinate its development.

18. The Stage 1 masterplan is informed by a robust and comprehensive evidence base which has fed into the development of concept masterplan options. This includes desktop and site analysis of technical information, and an extensive process of stakeholder engagement.

19. The first stage of engagement involved an extensive process of 'listening and learning', involving one to one meetings with a range of stakeholders including ENP members and neighbouring landowners as well as member briefings, community workshops, meetings with statutory consultees, as well public drop-in sessions in late July over 2 days. These public events were very well received with over 180 people attending overall. Attendees were invited to complete an online survey which generated over 220 responses on a range of issues including the vision for the site, opportunities for potential uses including housing, open space, community facilities, employment, sustainability, transport, access and heritage assets. This engagement helped build the evidence base on which the concept masterplan was developed and has raised the profile of the masterplan in the wider community.

20. The second stage of engagement involved another public event over two days (15th and 16th October) where the consultants fed back the messages received from stakeholders regarding key themes and priorities for East Norwich and outlined initial concepts for the area which respond positively to these issues.

[1] Links to the draft stage master plan are available on the council's website in two parts: https://www.norwich.gov.uk/ENMPart1 and https://www.norwich.gov.uk/ENMPart2

Again this event was very well attended with almost 200 attendees. An on-line survey again took place and has informed the final version of the masterplan.

21. Details of the engagement process to date, including a summary of engagement feedback and how the masterplan has responded to this, are set out in sections 10 and 11 of the Masterplan document. In addition details of engagement are set out on the council's website.

22. In developing the concept masterplan the consultants have identified three primary strategic objectives for East Norwich including:

    - Celebrating Norwich's waterfront: by extending and celebrating the waterfront in east Norwich to create vibrant new riverside environments, support new and existing wetland habitats, and support water-based activities and enterprises.
    - Connecting the city with the Broads: there is potential for opening new connections for all modes between the city and the Broads. The sites have long played a significant role in the city's industrial history but have been largely inaccessible in recent years.
    - Framing the future with the past: by making the most of the great historical significance of east Norwich, particularly the Carrow Works site which includes Carrow Abbey and many listed buildings, with new development complementing existing buildings, to form connected neighbourhoods supporting a vibrant mix of uses, activities, tenures and environments.

23. The masterplan acknowledges the biggest challenges to be addressed which are flooding, the complex underground infrastructure particularly on the Utilities site, the adjacent mainline railway line and associated activities, and access to the sites which is most constrained on the Deal Ground and Utilities sites.

24. The challenge is also to create characterful places that are responsive to the river location and to existing development at Trowse for example, and to create opportunities to enhance landscape setting. To address this the masterplan proposes 4 distinct 'character areas' based on Carrow Works with its industrial heritage and listed buildings, Trowse village and Deal Ground which contains a significant amount of flood zone and open space, Waterside North based on the Utilities site on the north bank of the Wensum, and Waterside East which straddles the Wensum adjacent to Carrow Works and Norwich city football club. The masterplan proposals reflect the differing characteristics of these areas.

25. The masterplan consists of a series of strategies including the following:
    - a heritage strategy, setting out how the masterplan responds to the site's significance in terms of heritage and the built environment. The site's rich history is a unique asset and opportunity for the masterplan. The heritage strategy includes the retention of key built heritage assets and a framework for how their setting can be improved;
    - a movement strategy dealing with all principal modes of travel and outlining how the area can help deliver radically improved connections between the city centre and the Broads. The masterplan presents an opportunity to create a sustainable new quarter of the city as an

extension to the city core with major improvements to the walking and cycling network and an improved public transport network;
- a public realm strategy highlighting key spaces and connections within the masterplan area which offer opportunities to create durable and flexible environments;
- a land use strategy based on a mix of uses including residential and non-residential uses. The latter will be critical to the long-term success of the masterplan and creation of a desirable place to live, work and visit;
- A building height strategy sets out a contextual and sensitive approach to building heights, which varies across the sites in response to differing local characteristics.
- The masterplan also includes strategies for flood risk and mitigation, utilities, energy and ecology.

26. The concept masterplan also promotes a co-ordinated approach to infrastructure delivery noting that, to some extent, all the sites within the masterplan area will rely on provision across the masterplan area as a whole and that further work will be required in Stage 2 to identify how and when this infrastructure will be delivered. Key critical pieces of infrastructure are required to ensure that the full potential of the masterplan is met through a coordinated approach. These include new bridge infrastructure, roads, sustainable pedestrian and cycling connections, marinas, provision of a new school and appropriate community infrastructure, and public open and play space (not an exhaustive list) which is set out in figure 53.

27. Key elements of resulting masterplan include:

- Creation of new strong pedestrian and cycle connections east-west from the city centre/King Street to Whitlingham, and north-south to the Yarmouth Road, sustainably linking the sites into the surrounding neighbourhoods. Critical to this is new infrastructure in the form of an upgraded pedestrian and cycle underpass between Carrow Works and the Deal Ground, a pedestrian and cycle bridge between Carrow Works and Geoffrey Watling Way, and a new pedestrian and cycle bridge between the Deal Ground and Whitlingham Country Park.
- All modes vehicular connections through the sites particularly through the May Gurney and Deal Ground sites into the Utilities site, with new bridges across the Yare and Wensum.
- Bus routes potentially through Carrow Works, with possibility for a bus route in future through the Deal Ground linking to the north side of the Wensum.
- New marinas to potentially include a boating marina on the Utilities site and a small leisure marina on the Deal Ground site.
- Creation of a web of green spaces and public spaces within the sites.
- Landscape, ecology and planting proposals with opportunities to achieve biodiversity net gain across the sites
- A significant proportion of homes fronting open spaces and/or the water
- A land-use strategy responding to the sites' constraints, specifying a mix of uses including housing, employment, creative industries, community facilities, ancillary retail, etc, across the sites, and an indication of site

density with highest buildings generally close to the River Wensum frontage. The intention is that parking ratios will be kept very low.
- Social and community infrastructure including a two form entry primary school with contributions towards secondary school place provision, and appropriate community health facilities.

Site capacity and viability

28. The masterplan scheme that has been designed by Allies and Morrison will deliver 3,469 residential units with 33% affordable housing, and 731,700 sq ft of commercial floorspace. Affordable units are assumed to be 85% for social rent and 15% for shared ownership which is in line with the policy in the adopted Joint Core Strategy. The overall level of housing development is somewhat lower than that envisaged in the allocation policy in the emerging GNLP (4,000 units) but not significantly so, given the site constraints.

29. The emerging masterplan viability work suggests that the overall East Norwich development proposition will create some financial value, however there are likely to be challenges in terms of the relationship between the timing of costs and revenue. This is not uncommon in developments of this scale and complexity at this stage, and cost / value data is invariably highly sensitive subject to input assumptions.

30. The masterplan is structured to support delivery and viability but in order to unlock the potential of East Norwich, major upfront infrastructure investment is likely to be required. As noted in the masterplan this will need to be considered in further detail in stage 2 of the process. The challenges of funding necessary infrastructure are considered likely to be overcome, especially given the current partnership arrangements with all stakeholders working together to plan infrastructure delivery. The masterplan notes that a joined up approach to funding across both the public and private sector can be considered. The focus of stage 2 of the masterplan will be to look in greater detail at the timing of costs / receipts and develop appropriate strategies for both securing upfront investment and capture long term value to repay that investment.

Conclusions

31. It is important to note that the Stage 1 masterplan is intended to be a high level document which will be worked up in greater detail in Stage 2, particularly in relation to infrastructure provision, phasing, deliverability and viability.

32. The proposals address the objectives of the masterplan brief including delivery of sustainable connections, creating a diverse new quarter of the city making the most of the existing building stock on the Carrow Works site, provision of required infrastructure including new roads and bridge and social/community infrastructure, making the most of the river frontage, protection and enhancement of heritage assets, respect and enhance nature and biodiversity, addressing the implications of a potential replacement of Trowse rail bridge, provision of infrastructure to allow low-carbon shared heating and power, delivery of flood resilience, and promotion of healthy streets and healthy living.

33. Whilst high level, its proposals are based on robust evidence, flexibility and long-term thinking to ensure the development is sustainable in the longer term. It is informed by an extensive process of public and stakeholder engagement taking on board the views of the key partners including landowners.

34. The GNLP public examination hearings will be held in early 2022 and, whilst the Stage 2 work may not be completed by then, the fact that the Stage 1 masterplan has been produced and that the Partnership members, including landowners and national agencies such as Homes England and Network Rail, are working together in a positive manner should give the Inspectors confidence in terms of the site's eventual deliverability.

35. The Stage 1 masterplan will be considered by members of the Greater Norwich Development Partnership on 15th November, which includes members from South Norfolk, Broadland and the Broads Authority. Feedback from this meeting will be reported to Cabinet.

36. The council has achieved much in relation to East Norwich in the last couple of years as noted above, particularly in setting up the East Norwich Partnership and getting buy-in from key partners. It is rare that landowners can be part of such an opportunity and this is key to the success of the project to date and in moving forward. The Stage 1 masterplan shows what can be achieved with the commitment of all key partners, with huge potential benefits for the city and wider region. Stage 2 is required to further refine the masterplan on the basis of a more detailed understanding of viability and deliverability, and to produce a supplementary planning document to support emerging GNLP policy.

37. The Stage 2 process is anticipated to run from November 2021 to March 2022, and will deliver:
    - An infrastructure delivery plan and refined Strategic viability assessment
    - A refined masterplan
    - An evidence base to support planning applications and the allocation in the Greater Norwich Local Plan, and
    - A draft supplementary planning document (SPD) for East Norwich.

38. There will be further engagement on the draft SPD which will be subject to public consultation, expected in February-March 2022. Following that the intention is that the SPD will be adopted by the Greater Norwich authorities alongside the adoption of the GNLP in autumn 2022.

39. The recommendation is for members to approve the Stage 1 masterplan and agree to proceed to Stage 2.

40. For information the original masterplan brief includes a reference to a Stage 3, focused on the preparation of a detailed business case to unlock enabling funding to ensure the successful delivery of the overall scheme. Stage 3 falls outside the contract with Avison Young, but the Stage 2 work described above will feed into this further anticipated stage of work.

Consultation

41. Details of the engagement process to date, including a summary of engagement feedback and how the masterplan has responded to this, are set out in sections 10 and 11 of the Masterplan document. In addition details of engagement are set out on the council's website. Members of Sustainable Development Panel have also been kept informed by regular reports throughout the Stage 1 process.

Implications

Financial and Resources

42. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its Corporate Plan 2019-22 and Budget.

43. There are no proposals in this report that would reduce or increase resources. Partnership funding is in place to cover the costs of the masterplan production as noted in previous reports to Cabinet and Sustainable Development Panel.

44. Financial commitment to date for the masterplan work totals £675,000 from the following sources: Norwich City Council, Norfolk County Council, Norwich Towns Fund, Norfolk County Council, the Broads Authority, Homes England, Network Rail, the landowners of the Deal, Utilities and Carrow Works sites, and the Norfolk Strategic Fund. As noted earlier in the report the city council has contributed £100k to the project.

45. The overall level of funding covers the cost of the masterplan consultants, project management costs and other costs including commissioning of any additional work required to the end of the contract (anticipated at the end of March 2022).

46. The table below sets out the total project financial commitment of £675k, the payment that has been made to date, and what is due in Stage 2.

East Norwich Master Plan Total Commitment of Funds	Total Commitment	Stage One	Stage Two
	£000s	£000s	£000s
TOTAL FUNDING	675	482	193

47. Forecasted costs to the end of the project are currently £600k against a budget of £675k, with costs within the budget framework for this project.

Forecasted Costs	Full Project Forecast to Mar-22
Costs	£000s
Forecast	600
Budget	675
Variance	75

Legal

48. There are no legal issues arising from this report.

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and Diversity	This report does not have any direct implications for the council's equality and diversity considerations.
Health, Social and Economic Impact	This report does not have any direct implications for the council's health, social and economic considerations.
Crime and Disorder	This report does not have any direct implications for the council's crime and disorder considerations.
Children and Adults Safeguarding	This report does not have any direct implications for the council's Safeguarding Policy statement.
Environmental Impact	The masterplan will have implications for the council's environmental impact considerations. Impacts that are being specifically addressed through the masterplan include the need to manage traffic impact on the strategic road network in the east of the city which is at capacity, to address key areas of landscape and biodiversity value and the setting of heritage assets, to address and mitigate flood risk, to address and mitigate environmental impacts from adjacent activities and site contamination, and to address navigation rights in relation to the River Wensum part of the Broads network.

Risk Management

Risk	Consequence	Controls Required
This report is an update on the significant progress made to date and does not have any specific operational, financial, compliance, security, legal, political or reputational risks to the council. As noted in the report, funding for stage 2 of the masterplan is already committed. The masterplan is part of the Towns Deal project; risks have been identified as part of that project.	N/a	N/a

Other Options Considered

49. The production of a masterplan for East Norwich is a major opportunity to drive forward the regeneration of that area. Stage 1 is complete but stage 2 is required to further refine the masterplan work and produce an SPD to support local plan policy. The recommendation includes agreement to move to stage 2 subject to approval of the stage 1 report. Given that good progress has been made to date, and we are in the middle of the masterplanning process, the consideration of other options is not relevant at this stage.

Reasons for the decision/recommendation

50. The reason for the recommendation is that approval of the Stage 1 masterplan is required prior to moving forward to Stage 2.

Background papers: none

Appendices: 1 Stage 1 Masterplan available on the city council's website:

https://www.norwich.gov.uk/ENMPart1 and

https://www.norwich.gov.uk/ENMPart2

Contact Officer: Judith Davison
Planning policy team leader
Telephone number: 01603 989314
Email address: judithdavison@norwich.gov.uk