

DRAFT EPSOM TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

Head of Service:	Justin Turvey, Interim Head of Place Development
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	Appendix 1 – Consultation Draft Epsom Town Centre Masterplan (November 2023)

Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to publish the Draft Epsom Town Centre Masterplan for public consultation for a period of four weeks commencing on the 24 November 2023.

The then emerging Epsom Town Centre Masterplan informed draft allocations SA1 – SA4 detailed in the Draft Epsom and Ewell Local Plan (2022-2040) that was consulted on between 1 February and 19 March 2023.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Approve the publication of the Draft Epsom Town Centre Masterplan for public consultation for a period of four weeks to commence on the Friday 24 November 2023 at noon and conclude on Friday 22 December at midnight.**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The Epsom Town Centre Masterplan will form a key part of the evidence base for the emerging Epsom and Ewell Local Plan. It is important that the public and other interested parties can provide comments and feedback on the draft Town Centre Masterplan prior to the document being finalised.

2 Background

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- 2.1 In May 2022, the Council commissioned David Lock Associates (DLA) to produce an Epsom Town Centre Masterplan which would form a key part of evidence for the emerging Local Plan but also to form a material consideration in the assessment of relevant planning applications.
- 2.2 In Summer 2022 a hybrid public consultation strategy was undertaken to invite local residents and those with an interest in the borough's views on some initial proposals for the town centre. The consultation consisted of both an in person consultation event at the Ashley Centre and the use of a virtual PropTech platform. The consultation was undertaken between the 25 July and 31 August 2022 and a total of 1,979 unique responses were received.
- 2.3 The responses highlighted local residents' interests, attachments and aspirations for the Epsom Town Centre. However, it also uncovered some inconsistent sentiments which the Masterplan has sought to address in order to deliver a suitably ambitious and practical framework for managing change over the local plan period.
- 2.4 The then emerging work on the Masterplan informed the town centre draft site allocations (SA1 - SA4) contained within the Draft Epsom and Ewell Local Plan (2022-2040) that was consulted on between 1 February and 19 March 2023.
- 2.5 In Summer 2023, engagement was undertaken by DLA with Councillors and the landowners (freeholders) and where relevant the leaseholders of the four opportunity sites.
- 2.6 The public and other interested parties have not had the opportunity to review the options for each opportunity site or the wider Masterplan document which covers a range of matters (see paragraphs 2.9-2.10). It is therefore important that stakeholders have the opportunity to comment on the draft document.
- 2.7 The Town Centre Masterplan is a key document to support the development of the Local Plan to Pre-Submission stage (Regulation 19) but can also inform the emerging Epsom and Ewell Local Cycling Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP).
- 2.8 Following the consultation, the feedback received will be considered by DLA and council officers prior to the document being finalised. Once finalised the document will form part of the evidence base for the Local Plan and will be a material consideration for decision making. The Masterplan will not be a statutory planning document (Development Plan Document or Supplementary Planning Document) following its adoption.

Draft Epsom Town Centre Masterplan

- 2.9 The Draft Town Centre Masterplan sets out clear and comprehensive guiding principles for development of the Epsom Town Centre, centred around a holistic Masterplan, to address:

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- The parameters for development of the key sites (the Ashley Centre/Global House, Southern Gas Network/Hook Road site, Depot Road car park, and the Town Hall/Hope Lodge car park and Epsom Ambulance Depot site).
- The placemaking objectives that would support the development of key sites.
- Environmental and travel improvements to the Town Centre that could be facilitated through development proposals (through development itself, CIL and S106).
- Key principles for retention, enhancement, or repair of those parts of the Town Centre that would not be subject to major development proposals.

2.10 The Draft Masterplan document itself is broken down into six sections, which are detailed below:

- Introduction and Vision – this includes a vision statement, diagram of the Epsom town centre and the masterplan principles.
- Masterplan Evolution – this section details how the masterplan evolved from looking a range of opportunity sites before refining this list of sites down to the four sites detailed in section 5.
- Character Areas Frameworks – ten-character areas are identified within the town centre with information provided on the character and potential development strategy for each area.
- Public Realm and Sustainable Transport: identifies a high-level transport strategy for the Town Centre including some potential targeted interventions / additional proposals that would improve the public realm and active travel.
- Opportunity Sites: Provides potential development options for the four opportunity sites. It is this section of the Masterplan that informed site allocations SA1 – SA4 in the Draft Epsom and Ewell Local Plan (2022-2040).
- Appendices: This includes a townscape and heritage view analysis and baseline report.

2.11 It is important to reiterate that the document will not form part of the statutory development plan for the borough and that it forms part of the evidence base to support the emerging Local Plan. It will however be a material consideration that carries weight for the determination of planning applications in Epsom Town Centre.

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3 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

3.1 Equality Impact Assessment

3.1.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared to appraise the Draft Town Centre Masterplan to ensure that the plan itself promotes equality and does not discriminate. The work concludes that the Draft Masterplan will not impact negatively on specific groups.

3.2 Crime & Disorder

3.2.1 None arising from this report.

3.3 Safeguarding

3.3.1 None arising from this report.

3.4 Dependencies

3.4.1 The delivery of key corporate objectives/actions are dependent on progressing the Draft Masterplan, including:

- The Epsom and Ewell Local Plan
- Epsom and Ewell Climate Change Action Plan

3.5 Other

3.5.1 None arising from this report.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 Funding for the Town Centre Masterplan was secured from the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership which has enabled the progression of the Masterplan to this point. Additional funding will be required to finalise the Masterplan post consultation, however this has already been accounted for in the Local Plan budget, where funding is allocated to fund specialist external support in the preparation of technical evidence base documents.

4.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 As the Draft Masterplan is evidence base to inform the emerging Statutory Development Plan for the borough (Local Plan), there are no legal or procedural issues to satisfy.

5.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** As above.

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6 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

6.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged:

- Green and vibrant,
- Cultural and Creative,
- Opportunity and Prosperity,
- Smart and Connected.

6.2 The Town Centre Masterplan is a key piece of evidence base to support the Local plan. The Local Plan is core to the delivery of the Council's Visions and Objectives identified in the Four-Year Plan.

6.3 **Service Plans:** The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan, however it is a key piece of evidence to support the Local Plan which is included.

6.4 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:**

6.5 There are no climate or environmental implications from this report

6.6 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:**

6.7 The Epsom Town Centre Masterplan and the Local Plan have a key role in delivering sustainable development.

6.8 **Partnerships:**

6.9 There are no partnerships issues arising from this report.

7 Background papers

7.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports: None