

Report to Cabinet Meeting to be held on 17 August 2022	Electoral Ward Affected City Centre
Report submitted by: Director of Development and Housing	
Portfolio Holder: Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulation	
Preston Station Quarter Regeneration Framework	
Appendix 1 – (Preston SQRF); Appendix 2 - (Area boundary); and Appendix 3 – (Consultation Statement) refers	

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek adoption of the Preston Station Quarter Regeneration Framework (SQRF)
<https://intranet.intra.preston.local/Planning/StaffDocuments/Forms/AllItems.aspx> .
- 1.2 The Preston SQRF (see Appendix 1 for area boundary) provides a spatial vision for the area and includes general design principles to assist in the delivery of co-ordinated and comprehensive development. It provides additional guidance between the provisions of the development plan and the requirements of a planning application, informing design and infrastructure expectations in the area.
- 1.3 The SQRF is consistent with, and referenced to, the relevant development plan documents and policies. The SQRF does not allocate land or introduce new policies.
- 1.4 The Regeneration Framework will have less planning weight than a Supplementary Planning Document. However, it will be capable of being a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications in the area covered by the SQRF. It will also help to encourage and facilitate appropriate investment and regeneration, together with the provision of associated infrastructure.
- 1.5 This matter is a key decision and has been included in the Decision Making Plan.

2. Decision Required

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to adopt the Preston Station Quarter Regeneration Framework as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

3. Information

- 3.1 The SQRF was produced by a team of consultants, led by BDP, working on behalf of, and in partnership with Lancashire County Council, Preston City Council and UCLan.
- 3.2 The SQRF area is located almost entirely within Preston City Centre, with part of the SQRF area located within the Corporation Street and Winckley Square Opportunity Areas, which

are defined in the City Centre Plan for mixed use development. Consistent with the City Centre Plan, the SQRF encourages improvements to the public realm and pedestrian environment.

- 3.3 The SQRF provides a vision and general design principles to assist in the delivery of a coordinated and comprehensive development of the area (and the necessary infrastructure) as a mixed-use commercial quarter, as envisaged in Preston's City Investment Plan. The SQRF provides guidance on how the Council would like to see the requirements of the City Centre Plan, as is relevant to the SQRF area, implemented.
- 3.4 The SQRF provides guidance on increasing the amount of homes, offices and commercial development in the SQRF area and on accommodating the expansion of UCLan's facilities. However, such development opportunity sites are not allocations in the SQRF. An area profile, design principles and illustrative design guidance is provided with four character areas identified. These Character Areas and the development envisaged within them is summarised below:
- University Walk
Covering most of the Corporation Street Opportunity Area, the Character Area should include education, enterprise and innovation development, with scope for some residential use. Corporation Street and Ringway should accommodate development with prominence, containing mixed use active frontages. Provision of public realm improvements to promote active travel at Corporation Street.
 - Station East
This area is the focus for the most Grade A office space (at the Fishergate Shopping Centre car park) and apartments within the SQRF boundary, adjacent to new public realm 'Welcome Square' and a mobility hub at Butler Street. Station East could include education or innovation space. Fishergate Shopping Centre could be fully or partly redeveloped for mixed-use with upper floor hotel use / conference facilities / apartments. Retail, leisure, food and beverage use provision will improve perceptions of personal safety in the evening with new and enhanced pedestrian routes linking to the north and south.
 - Station West
The SQRF shows indicative long term flexibility at the Royal Mail and Network Rail sites for housing development. Aligned to the proposed HS2 upgrade, demand may be generated to support retail, food and beverage and car parking / mobility uses. The station accessibility and passenger facilities should be improved. Collaborative, flexible workspace and meeting facilities could be accommodated. Public realm provision at Christian Road would complement any new western station entrance and wayfinding, as would active travel route enhancement between Fishergate, Christian Road, West Cliff and the parks.
 - County Hill
A mixed use pedestrian focused campus environment of offices, business, residential use with ancillary amenities, hotel / conference facilities and a Multi-Storey Car Park is illustrated within this area, including redevelopment of County

Hall surface car parking. Provision of a pocket park at the corner of Fishergate Hill and Bow Lane. New streets include a route through the Character Area between Fishergate and Marsh Lane.

- 3.5 The Draft Preston SQRF was subject to informal consultation at workshops held in July 2021 and January 2022, led by BDP consultants. The workshops were attended by a range of stakeholders and organisations as detailed in Appendix 3 (Consultation Statement) and were focused on the themes of:
- Vision and Economy
 - Planning and Design
 - Transport and Movement
 - Delivery and Implementation

Public Consultation and feedback (see Appendix 3 – Consultation Statement)

- 3.6 A draft version of the SQRF was consulted upon for a period of 4 weeks from 23 March 2022 to 20 April 2022. The consultation, including details of how and when to make representations, along with the draft SQRF, was publicised on the Invest Preston website on the Preston City Council news webpage on 23 March 2022 and on the Preston City Council social media accounts. The email shot went out to 1,496 consultees, including to all 111 statutory consultees.
- 3.7 The 42 consultation responses are summarised within Appendix 3 (Consultation Statement) to this report (within Appendix 7 of the Consultation Statement), along with the City Council's response. Resultant amendments are summarised within Appendix 3 (Consultation Statement) to this report (within Appendix 8 of the Consultation Statement). Generally, the comments were supportive and some were beyond the scope of the SQRF. Numerous minor changes were made to the SQRF to reflect that the indicative housing development shown at the Royal Mail site is theoretical / illustrative and would only come to fruition should Royal Mail be in a position where this could be considered. It is considered that comments from United Utilities, Sport England and the Wildlife Trust (Lancashire) are already generally addressed by the SQRF and that pre-application discussions and consultation responses can address the detailed matters raised.
- 3.8 The final version of the SQRF to be adopted is at Appendix 1.
- 3.9 As indicated in paragraph 5.3 below, new development and investment in the Station Quarter will deliver social value and community benefits through the implementation of the Building Foundations project. The SQRF will stimulate and promote high quality city centre development and investment in line with Preston's City Investment Plan and the City Centre Plan, reinforcing Preston's city status. The SQRF will help to retain and attract jobs and to grow city living within an attractive public realm, including the provision of affordable housing and office space to modern energy efficiency standards.

4. Implications

- 4.1 Financial: The costs associated with producing the SQRF has been met from within existing budgets.
- 4.2 Legal: There are no legal implications arising from the draft SQRF. Strategic Regeneration Frameworks provide additional guidance to applicants and are material considerations in the determination of planning applications. Strategic Regeneration Frameworks are not part of the statutory development plan.
- 4.3 HR: There are no HR implications arising from this SQRF.

5. Impact Statement

- 5.1 Services Users: Having an SQRF in place will encourage active travel and the provision of and improvement to the public realm, thereby positively impacting on public health of people within or visiting the area. This is because such measures, together with increased provision and choice of housing in the area, the resultant opportunities for human interaction and incorporation of green infrastructure, should positively impact on well-being, mental health and activity levels, thereby also contributing to improved physical health.
- 5.2 Council Plans and Services: The SQRF is a non-statutory planning document prepared in consultation with stakeholders and the local community. The SQRF is intended to provide additional information to assist with the interpretation and implementation of policies set out within the Preston City Centre Plan. Preston's City Investment Plan 2020 - 2035 identifies delivering a new commercial district at Preston Station Quarter as a strategic priority. The scale and location of the Station Quarter and of development opportunities within it, can deliver a step change in the City's office market. The provision of Grade A office space will help to retain and attract employers to the city centre aligned to the proposed HS2 station upgrade. The SQRF area is therefore well positioned, with development potential to integrate additional public realm and infrastructure improvements, to support high quality city living, hybrid working, collaboration and economic growth. It will also complement both the knowledge economy and UCLan.
- 5.3 Fair Employment / Living Wage: There is likely scope for social value to be achieved in Preston via implementation of the Central Lancashire Employment Skills SPD where it is triggered by major development proposals in the SQRF area. Furthermore, once any office and commercial developments in the area complete, they may provide new employment opportunities in the area.
- 5.4 Equality Impacts of service changes / new services: The SQRF will encourage development and will provide detail on how the adopted City Centre Plan should be implemented in the Preston SQRF area. An equality impact assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken and found sound on the parent policy documents of the City Centre Plan (EqIA dated October 2014, adopted June 2016), the Preston Local Plan and the Central Lancashire Core Strategy (EqIA dated November 2010, Core Strategy adopted July 2012). It is considered that the SQRF would not generate any additional adverse equality impacts beyond any identified in the EqIA for these parent documents.
- 5.5 Climate Change Statement: The SQRF area is in the City Centre Ward which is a sustainable and accessible location for development. The SQRF area has excellent public

transport connections and contains Preston Railway Station. It also encourages active travel within the SQRF area and towards key city centre destinations such as Preston Railway Station, Fishergate, Friargate, UCLan and Avenham and Miller Parks. This will contribute towards minimising carbon emissions by reducing the need to travel by private transport. The indicative provision of green infrastructure where provided, will help to absorb and store carbon.

- 5.6 It is estimated that 25% of carbon emissions in the North of England arise from domestic dwellings. Improving the energy efficiency of housing therefore has the potential to significantly reduce carbon emissions. The SQRF has potential to make a positive impact on city centre carbon emissions by encouraging major new build office and residential development in the city centre to modern energy efficiency standards.

6. Reasons For Decision

- 6.1 Preston Station Quarter is identified as a strategic priority in Preston's City Investment Plan (CIP) and is referenced in the Your City section of the Corporate Plan – Achieving Preston's Priorities. The SQRF (see Appendix 1 for area boundary) provides a spatial vision for the area. It includes general design principles to assist in the delivery of co-ordinated and comprehensive development of the area (and the necessary infrastructure) as a mixed-use commercial district. It provides additional guidance between the provisions of the adopted Preston City Centre Plan (June 2016) and the requirements of a planning application, informing design and infrastructure expectations in the area. Although the SQRF will have less planning weight than a Supplementary Planning Document, it will be capable of being a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications for those sites located within the SQRF area. It will also help to encourage and facilitate appropriate investment and regeneration, together with the provision of associated infrastructure.

7. Alternative Options Considered And Rejected

- 7.1 Not preparing a Strategic Regeneration Framework for the Station Quarter. This option was rejected because there would be less influence on development proposals coming forward in the area without a Regeneration Framework and it would not meet corporate objectives for city centre regeneration as set out in the City Investment Plan.
- 7.2 Preparing an SPD was an option that was rejected because an SPD would be a more appropriate approach following consideration of the need for a detailed statutory planning policy through the Local Plan review process.

8. Reason for Inclusion in Part B, if appropriate

- 8.1 N/A

Background Documents:

Background documents open to inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972:

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Ext
Preston City Centre Plan	June 2016	https://www.preston.gov.uk/citycentreplan
Preston's City Investment Plan 2020 - 2035	July 2020	https://www.preston.gov.uk/cityinvestmentplan

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