

Report to Pennines Township Committee



Date of Meeting	8th September 2021
Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Economy and Communications
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Public Document	Public

Draft Littleborough Station area Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Executive Summary

- 1.1 A draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been produced for the Littleborough Station area to support the redevelopment and renewal of the area by providing detailed planning and design advice. This report seeks the views of the Township Committee on the content of the Draft SPD as part of a consultation with key stakeholders.

Recommendation

- 2.1 Members of the Committee are requested to note the content of the Draft Supplementary Planning Document for the Littleborough Station area, and comment on its key objectives and proposals prior to the commencement of a subsequent a consultation to take place with key stakeholders, residents and businesses.

Reason for Recommendation

- 3.1 As set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, Supplementary Planning Documents build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on the policies in the Local Plan. Regulations 11 to 16 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 set out the requirements for producing SPDs. Regulation 12 requires that consultation is undertaken prior to the adoption of an SPD

Key Points for Consideration

Background

- 4.1 During 2018/19 almost half a million passengers used Littleborough railway station. As a gateway into the Borough, the sense of arrival and legibility with the town centre is poor. The regeneration and improvement of Littleborough Railway Station, and the surrounding land and buildings, represents a strategic priority for the Council to attract new residents and businesses to the area, contribute to an improved housing offer, create new attractive public realm and open space, re-purpose vacant land and buildings to improve this sense of place, and to capitalise and support further development and improvements to the rail network, including investment in infrastructure and services. Rochdale Borough Council is seeking to promote transit led integrated development and place making around all our existing stations with the aim of unlocking the dormant potential of Rochdale's stations through dynamic urban regeneration and the creation of a Transport-Orientated Community (TOC). The approach aims to add commercial benefit through access to transport but critically also aims to realise social value.
- 4.2 Littleborough Station's redevelopment and potential is an important vision which offers residents and businesses an opportunity to develop a sustainable community with a vibrant mixture of living, working and recreational opportunities.
- 4.3 This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared to establish an appropriate framework to guide and deliver development by setting out the development, design and accessibility principles, and the identification of focus areas where more specific guidance is necessary.

4.4 **Participation and consultation so far**

The Council worked with the GM Stations Alliance, a newly established partnership between Rochdale Council, GM Combined Authority, Network Rail, LCR Property and Transport for Greater Manchester to prepare a regeneration masterplan for the existing stations within the Borough. Preparation of the Littleborough Station Masterplan has been widely consulted on with residents and businesses' within the area.

- 4.5 The Alliance proposes to consult on these draft proposals with landowners, residents and businesses with the aim to have an adopted Supplementary Planning Document in place to guide future development of the Littleborough station area and support investment in transport and other infrastructure.

Purpose of a SPD

- 4.6 The proposed Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will provide a development strategy for the Littleborough Station area. It outlines potential development opportunities within the area including options for the scale and mix of future proposals on a number of different sites and to enhance the marketability of vacant or under-utilised brownfield land and buildings for new development through enhanced public realm, traffic management and parking, and giving greater priority to the needs of pedestrians and cyclists to promote shorter journeys by sustainable modes of travel. The SPD will provide further detailed guidance in order to achieve coherent and comprehensive development within the area and ensure the delivery of the necessary new infrastructure to provide a coherent and sustainable strategy to support new developments coming forward within the area.

- 4.7 There is also an opportunity to make more of Littleborough town centre as a destination, , creating places where people want to live, work and visit driving footfall to support existing business growth as well as attract new residents, business and investment to create a vibrant and thriving Town Centre, including boosting the evening and leisure economy.

- 4.8 The SPD will also be used by the Council as a material consideration when determining future planning applications.

- 4.9 The SPD will therefore provide further detail on how relevant policies in the Local Plan will be applied to the sites and principles for how development of the sites would best be taken forward. Notably Core Strategy policy SP3/P – The Strategy for the Pennines specifically sets out key development principles and proposes the following:

- Promoting its role as the borough's recreation and leisure destination and gateway to the South Pennines;

- Encouraging new and specialist retail within the town centre;
- Encourage visitor growth and boost the leisure and evening economy
- Enhancing the public transport interchange at Littleborough station;
- Improving the public realm and enhancing the conservation area; and
- Improving links and signing to surrounding tourism and visitor destinations including Hollingworth Lake, the canal corridor and South Pennines.

4.10 The Supplementary Planning Document content

The following is a summary of the content and structure within the consultation draft SPD:

Introduction, vision, purpose and status of the SPD	Explains why the SPD has been produced and how it is structured.
Background, planning policy framework, relevant plans and strategies	Sets out the broad policy framework that applies to the site, highlights the main Local Plan policies and relevant key plans and strategies that have informed the SPD.
Development Context	Describes the SPD area and provides a spatial portrait of the site. It also looks at the relationship with the adjoining areas.
Development Principles	Establishes the principles and parameters to guide future development for the next 10-15 years in the surrounding area. Specifically looking at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce new residential uses that provides for a mix of types and densities in close proximity to the station; • Define a village 'heart' centred around the junction of Church Street/Hare Hill Road and station approach • Improve the arrival/gateway experience at the railway station and connectivity to the village centre; • Increase the station parking provision; • Improve the pedestrian experience, with greater priority across the town centre; • Refurbishment of the railway arches and disused buildings for commercial uses; • Improve the existing public realm accommodating local servicing and parking requirements in addition to maintaining through route; • Create opportunities for street tree planting; • Create opportunities for cycle parking;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for public open space and links to the canal towpath (and beyond) • Complementary residential infill development, reinstating street frontages to Peel Street/Victoria Street.
Design Principles	<p>Sets out an approach for landowners to follow when designing their schemes which will help ensure a high standard of design comes forward. Specifically looking at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Realm • Urban design principles
Transport and Access	<p>Explains what the concept of Transport Orientated Communities and which parking considerations, vehicle movements and connections are required within the SPD area and how transport issues will be considered in policy terms.</p>
Focus areas	<p>Sets out three broad areas of focus – each with different development considerations and guidance suitable for that area. It also sets out principles for the form and the types of uses which would be permitted within the potential focus areas, such as improving and creating new connections and public spaces, improved public realm, providing a mix of types and styles of homes for the community.</p> <p>The three focus areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harehill Road and Village Centre Area • Station and Area • Canal Side Area.
Delivery and Implementation	<p>Explains how the development and infrastructure set out in the SPD is needed to support it will be secured and delivered.</p>

Next Steps

Members of the Committee are requested to review the Draft Supplementary Planning Document for the Littleborough Station area, and comment on its key objectives and proposals ahead of a public consultation with key stakeholders, residents and businesses. Subject to Members views, a six

week period of public consultation on the document would commence later in September 2021.

Alternatives considered

Not producing this SPD will result in less clarity in terms of guidance to applicants and developers within this important regeneration area. This may result in proposals which do not properly deal with planning requirements and result in poorer quality schemes being submitted. Furthermore, there could be a consequence should the Council consider to invoke its powers through the Compulsory Purchase Order process.

Costs and Budget Summary

- 5.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendations within this report or for the Council's involvement in the process at this stage. Consultation costs will be covered by existing planning budgets.

Risk and Policy Implications

- 6.1 There are no specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report.

Consultation

- 7.1 The Council will begin publicising and consulting for a period of six weeks in September 2021. During this time the document and supporting information will be published on the Council's website. Due to restrictions that have arisen due to Covid-19, it is not proposed to hold any public meetings on the Supplementary Planning Document but a hard copy of the document will be made available for public inspection within open libraries within the Township area.

Stakeholders on the Council's planning policy database will also be notified by letter or email.

