

Report to Rochdale South Township Committee



Date of Meeting	16 September 2021
Portfolio	Cabinet Member for Economy and Communications
Report Author	Kirsty Nicholls
Public Document	

Rochdale Station area Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Executive Summary

- 1.1 A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been produced for the Rochdale Station area to guide and support the continued regeneration and renewal of the area by providing detailed planning and design advice. The draft document which was published earlier in 2021 has been subject to further revision following comments made during the public consultation. The report seeks the approval of the Cabinet to adopt the amended SPD document following public consultation in accordance with the requirements of the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Recommendation

- 2.1
- Members of the Township Committee are requested to note the changes to the Supplementary Planning Document for the Rochdale Station Gateway area following consultation with key stakeholders, residents and businesses and comment on the revised proposals before consideration of this revised SPD by Cabinet

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

As a major gateway into the Borough, the regeneration and improvement of Rochdale 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 public realm and open space and to capitalise on the development and regeneration within Rochdale Town Centre. Rochdale Borough Council (RBC) are working towards a town-core regeneration plan, which includes plans for around 2,000 new homes, including within the proposed Station Gateway area. As part of its Rail Corridor Regeneration Strategy, the Council is seeking to promote transit led integrated development and place making around existing stations with the aim of unlocking the dormant potential of Rochdale station 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.

Rochdale Station's redevelopment and regeneration potential is the largest opportunity within the wider strategy and will offer existing and future residents and businesses an opportunity to develop a sustainable community with a vibrant mixture of living, working and recreational opportunities.

This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared in conjunction with the GM Stations Alliance 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.

Purpose of a SPD

The proposed Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will provide a development strategy for the Rochdale 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. 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.

There is also an opportunity to make more of Rochdale Town Centre as a location, creating places where people want to come and live and helping to make Rochdale Town Centre thrive.

The SPD will also be used by the Council as a material consideration when determining future planning applications. It will also provide context and certainty for investors and be used to support bids for external funding to support the delivery of regeneration projects across the area.

Participation and consultation so far

Early Consultation

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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.

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 masterplan for the existing stations within the Borough. Preparation of the Rochdale Station Masterplan has been widely consulted on with residents and businesses' within the area.

Rochdale Borough Council (RBC) commissioned WSP and Broadway Malyan in 2019 to prepare a masterplan for the Rochdale Station area and identify a vision and priorities in order for the aspirations of the Council to be realised.

The Masterplan was developed in consultation with Members and the GM Stations Alliance collaboration with the Council to ensure there was agreement on all elements of the masterplan, from the vision through to use framework. The process was supported by in depth discussions and consultations with statutory consultees and other interested bodies. The document also outlined key delivery and implementation mechanisms in order for the vision aspirations to be realised.

The Masterplan was developed from 2019 to 2020. The scope of the project was divided into the three distinct stages, which were as follows:

- Stage 1 – Data Collection and Scoping
- Stage 2 – Option Testing
- Stage 3 - Station Area Masterplan

At each stage, workshops were held, which helped to inform the key aims and objectives of each neighbourhood. There have been a number of workshops with key landowners and stakeholders since this date. Further to this, the Council has engaged with local businesses and communities to ascertain their invaluable perspective.

Formal Consultation

A six week public consultation was held from February 2021 to April 2021.

Elected Members have also been consulted on the SPD preparation process, including a presentation to the Rochdale South Township Committee on 16th February 2021 and Communities, Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24th February. Further briefings have taken place with Members and interested stakeholders.

In addition to the statutory planning consultees, the Council hold a database containing contact details of groups and individuals interested in the development of our plans, this is used to keep those registered, informed of progress and future consultations. People on this database were be consulted.

The consultation took the form of survey questions and also the ability to submit open ended comments. The survey questions were as follows:

1. Do you agree with the proposal to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists by removing vehicular traffic in front of the station to make way for a 'Station Square'? Will this be a positive improvement to the area?
2. The Council wishes to see the southern entrance to the station become the focal point for bus interchange and vehicular drop off, pick up and parking. Do you feel this is a positive improvement?

3. Is the creation of a 500 space park and ride facility and bus interchange with direct pedestrian links to the Miall Street station entrance a welcome proposal?
4. Will the development of brand new housing in the areas proposed be a positive addition?
5. Are the areas proposed for employment space appropriate?
6. Do you agree with the need to carry out improvements to the station entrance and facilities? If so, what would you like to see?
7. Will more space for pick up and drop off immediately around the station be positive?
8. Are the plans for better connectivity between the station area to shops and businesses in the wider Milkstone and Deeplish area appropriate and achievable? If so, how might this be done?
9. Will the improved crossings on Drake Street, enhancements of the Rochdale Canal towpath, improved wayfinding provide adequate opportunities for greater connectivity?
10. Will local businesses find the improvements a benefit to trade and footfall?
11. Would a Platform Community Park be a positive contribution to the area?
12. What other improvements could the document propose that would further act to enhance regeneration and renewal within the area?

There were 86 responses to the above survey question. In summary, the outcome was as follows:

- 86 responded to the survey questions;
- 83% of respondents agreed with question 6;
- All question, bar 11, scored over 60%.

Further comments were received during the public consultation, a total of 6 from members of the public and 4 from consultees.

The key issues raised include:

- Majority positive response welcoming the vision and regeneration objectives of the document;
- Lack of clarity on the exact road closures and the impact on residents and local businesses, in particular that the scheme would lead to the closure of parts of Milkstone Road and Lower Tweedale Street;
- Site specific comments in terms of the lack of understanding of context;
- The document did not include the re-instatement of the Rochdale Branch Canal.

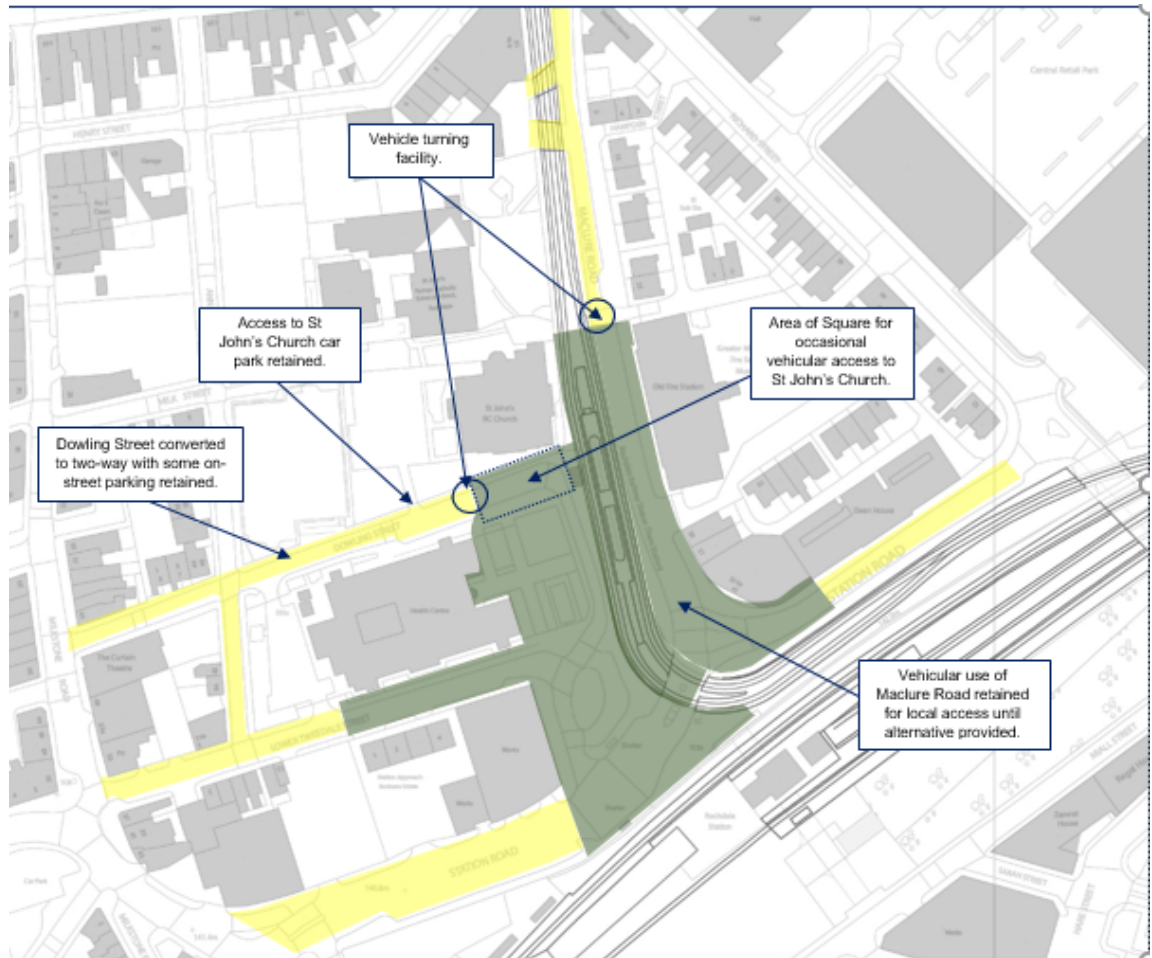
No objections were raised by consultees with comments raised on matters of clarification and strengthening of matters in terms of the following:

- Green Infrastructure
- Heritage Assets

Officers have addressed these concerns and made changes where appropriate, including:

- That the proposals will not result in the closure to residents or businesses of any section of Milkstone Road, Dowling Street or Lower Tweedale Street to vehicular traffic;
- Provide clarity on the proposed objectives of the creation of the Station Square and making it clearer there will be limited road closures;
- An updated image has been inserted to illustrate exactly where said changes will be occurring;
- Clarify the proposals will maintain access for services and emergency vehicles including access to a new local centre car park for circa 150 spaces;
- Clarify that the proposals will incorporate the introduction of a high quality material palette to the Dowling Street, Lower Tweedale Street, Station Road and Maclure Road with enhanced public realm ethos;
- Clarity on the incremental nature of the creation of the Station Square. The document is clear that the development of a scheme for the Station Square will take account of such factors as continuation of access to properties and businesses and this will inform a detailed phasing strategy. As and when more detailed proposals are developed these will be subject to further public consultation; and
- Include the importance of not just pedestrians but also cyclists in the improvements.

The document now includes the following image, of which makes it clearer the specific details of the pedestrian priority areas. It is envisaged that this will alleviate said confusion and provide clarity to local residents and businesses.



Key

No vehicles except for, Metrolink, servicing and emergencies.

Vehicular access for servicing, access to local properties & businesses, short-stay parking, and limited pick-up/drop-off

Further information is contained within the Rochdale Station SPD Consultation Statement (August 2021) (Appendix X).

Officers propose that the revised SPD (Appendix X) is adopted, and is effective from 1 September 2021.

Alternatives considered

Not adopting 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.

7.1

Background Papers	Place of Inspection
8. Rochdale Station area SPD	Council website
Consultation Statement	Council Website
Equalities Impact Assessment	Council Website

For Further Information Contact:

Mark Robinson, Assistant Director

mark.robinson@rochdale.gov.uk

Kirsty Nicholls, Principal Planning Officer

Kirsty.nicholls@rochdale.gov.uk