



Report subject	<b>Avenue Road and Commercial Road Development Brief</b>
Meeting date	26 October 2022
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>The Development Brief sets out principles for the intensification of part of Bournemouth Town Centre, focussed around the former Marks and Spencer site and neighbouring Avenue Centre, but also including surrounding sites.</p> <p>This Development Brief demonstrates the good opportunity that exists to respond positively to the economic, social and environmental needs of Bournemouth Town Centre and its high street; to promote new commercial and community space, new homes and enhanced public realm.</p> <p>The Development Brief has been prepared following developer interest in the sites and the need to test with stakeholders how the area could best accommodate change and intensification. Also, to provide further clarification to existing planning policy and assist with decision making.</p> <p>The Development Brief is being brought to Cabinet to agree the content and to seek agreement to turn it into a Planning Supplementary Document (SPD). This will involve further stakeholder and public consultation, before coming back to Cabinet for reporting of results, amendments and then adoption.</p>

<b>Recommendations</b>	<p><b>It is RECOMMENDED that:</b></p> <p><b>(a) Cabinet agrees the contents of the Development Brief</b></p> <p><b>(b) Cabinet delegates authority to the Interim Director of Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Development, Growth and Regeneration, to:</b></p> <p><b>(i) make any amendments required by Cabinet to the contents of the Development Brief;</b></p> <p><b>(ii) develop the contents of the Development Brief into a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD);</b></p> <p><b>(iii) undertake a period of public consultation on the draft SPD; and</b></p> <p><b>(iv) bring back to Cabinet for consideration, the results of the public consultation and proposed amendments to the Draft SPD, with a view to adoption of a final version.</b></p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>To contribute to the Council's corporate vision and strategic priorities - helping to create dynamic places, investing in the homes our communities need, revitalising and re-inventing our high streets.</p> <p>To enable further public and stakeholder input to the Development Brief and to provide the clarity and weight for Planning decision making purposes.</p>
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Philip Broadhead, Development, Growth and Regeneration
Corporate Director	Sam Fox, Interim Director of Planning
Report Authors	Caroline Peach, Urban Design and Conservation Manager
Wards	Bournemouth Central;
Classification	For Decision

## Background

1. BCP Council has prepared a Development Brief for the Avenue Road, Commercial Road area of Bournemouth Town Centre. It is an area which has the potential to make a significant, positive contribution to the economic and social regeneration of Bournemouth Town Centre and provide environmental enhancement of the public realm.

2. The Development Brief sets out the opportunities to redevelop vacant and under used sites, focussed on the former Marks and Spencer site and Avenue Centre, but also including sites in the surrounding area.
3. The Development Brief would contribute to the Council's objectives in the Big Plan:
  - i) Iconic – We will invest in an iconic townscape
  - ii) Act at scale – We will act at scale and aim to deliver more than 15,000 new homes for people of all incomes

Council Strategic Priorities:

  - iii) to support an innovative, successful economy in a great place to live, learn, work and visit
  - iv) by leading our communities towards cleaner, sustainable future that preserves our outstanding environment for generations to come
4. This area has been identified through the local development plan for intensification (Bournemouth Town Centre Area Action Plan – Policy A7). This Development Brief supports and provides more detail for this planning policy.
5. The Development Brief has been prepared exploring key themes, including: heritage, building heights, land uses, transport and movement. The Development Brief proposes key elements:
  - i) Maintaining commercial and community uses on the ground floor
  - ii) New homes to the upper floors
  - iii) A mid-rise increase in building heights (up to 9 storeys)
  - iv) Creation of an actively fronted public connection between Commercial Road and Avenue Road
  - v) Improvements to the surrounding public realm
6. The views of key stakeholders, including BCP Future Places, have been sought in the preparation of the brief through 1 to 1 interviews and workshops. Stakeholders have included those with interest and expertise in:
  - i) land ownership/development
  - ii) local businesses (Town Centre Business Improvement District – BID)
  - iii) Local Ward Councillors and Portfolio holder
  - iv) heritage
  - v) destination and tourism
  - vi) economic development
  - vii) transport, movement and public realm
7. The Development Brief, as it stands, provides a widely informed approach to facilitating change in the area. However, Cabinet's support is sought to turn the Development Brief into a Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for public consultation to:
  - i) further test stakeholder opinion

- ii) to give the opportunity for wider public and community opinion to be sought about change in this area and
  - iii) to strengthen and clarify the weight and status in Planning decision making
8. Following a period of public consultation (6-8 weeks), the consultation responses and amendments to the SPD would be considered by Cabinet, with a view to adopting it.

### **Options Appraisal**

9. An alternative to progressing the Development Brief into a Planning SPD, is for Cabinet to note/adopt the Development Brief as it is. This would:
  - i) Give a steer for developers now, without further process or procedure
  - ii) Not allow any further public or stakeholder input to the Development Brief
  - iii) Not provide the sufficient clarity and weight for Planning decision making purposes

### **Summary of financial implications**

10. The Development Brief has been prepared by Turley - a planning and development consultancy, with oversight from officers in Planning. The cost of preparing the brief has been £25,000. If Cabinet agree to turning the Development Brief into an SPD, then this work would be carried out by officers. There may be some work or input needed by Turley to facilitate this, but this is expected to be minimal and would be paid for using existing Planning budgets. A financial decision waiver will be required if further work is needed by Turley due to the level of expenditure already incurred.

### **Summary of legal implications**

11. If Cabinet agree to turning the Development Brief into an SPD, then there would be specific Planning procedures and regulations to be followed.

### **Summary of human resources implications**

12. There are no human resource implications.

### **Summary of sustainability impact**

13. A Decision Impact Assessment indicates that the Development Brief would support several of the Sustainable Development Goals:
  - Good health and well-being
  - Decent work and economic growth
  - Gender equality
  - Reduced inequalities
  - Sustainable cities and communities
  - Life on land
14. The Development Brief supports: the efficient use of resources, communities and culture, economy, health and well-being, enhancement of and connection to the

natural environment, sustainable transport- walking and cycling. The Development Brief can be used to steer detailed development proposals towards sustainable development.

### **Summary of public health implications**

15. Creation of new, homes designed to modern standards, will address the amenity needs of the residents. This means considering proximity and relationship to neighbouring buildings and access to outdoor and other social space.
16. The Development Brief seeks to improve the quality of the public realm around the development sites. Spaces which allow people to dwell and socialise, which include trees and other planting, will be a benefit to public mental health. Well-designed streets that encourage walking and cycling, will also benefit public physical health by encouraging and supporting active travel.

### **Summary of equality implications**

17. An EIA conversation and screening form has been completed. This is due to be presented and considered by the EIA panel on 20 October.
18. Creation of new, homes designed to modern standards, improved surveillance of the street, particularly Avenue Road, improved access to new shops, community and other facilities, improved public realm which is less vehicle and more people dominated, will all assist in making the environment of this part of Bournemouth Town Centre feel more welcoming and safer for protected characteristics of: age (young and old), disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status.
19. The Development Brief seeks to reduce opportunities for crime and increase opportunities for positive and celebratory social interactions. There will also be opportunities for new skills and jobs to be created, which will benefit young people, ethnic groups and women in particular.
20. Although higher quality new homes could, over time, reduce the availability of accommodation for lower income households, planning policy requirements for affordable housing, will help to mitigate this.

### **Summary of risk assessment**

21. There would be reputational risk to the Council in not further testing stakeholder and public opinion before adopting the Development Brief.

### **Background papers**

[Bournemouth Town Centre Area Action Plan](#) (adopted 2013)

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Avenue Road and Commercial Road Development Brief