



City of Westminster Cabinet Member Report

Meeting or Decision Maker:	Cabinet Member for Built Environment
Date:	6 September 2016
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Upper Vauxhall Bridge Road site development opportunity framework
Wards Affected:	Warwick, Vincent Square
City for All summary	Consultation on the development opportunity framework supports delivery of a number of “City for All” priorities. It supports the <u>‘City of Choice’</u> priority of creating opportunities for everybody to be active and healthy through improvements to the sports and leisure centre. It also supports the <u>‘City of Aspiration’</u> priority by supporting (i) the building of more affordable homes and supporting those who need help to get on the housing ladder, and (ii) the development of improved employment opportunities. By helping to promote a new, high quality, urban quarter it will also promote delivery of the <u>‘City of Heritage’</u> objective of protecting Westminster’s heritage, so that every neighbourhood remains a great place to live, work, invest in and visit, both now and in the future.
Key Decision:	Included in the Forward Plan of Key Decisions on 27 th April 2016.
Financial Summary:	There are no direct financial implications as a result of the recommendations of this report as any costs associated with public consultation will be met from existing budgets.
Report of:	Director of Policy, Performance and Communications

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet Member approval of the development opportunity framework (DOF) which has been prepared for the site at upper Vauxhall Bridge Road and agreement to issue it for public consultation for a minimum of four weeks. If adopted following consultation, the report would be a supplementary planning document (SPD) setting principles for development on the site in a non-prescriptive way and a material consideration in the determination of planning applications at the site (n.b. it is not a master-plan or planning brief).

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

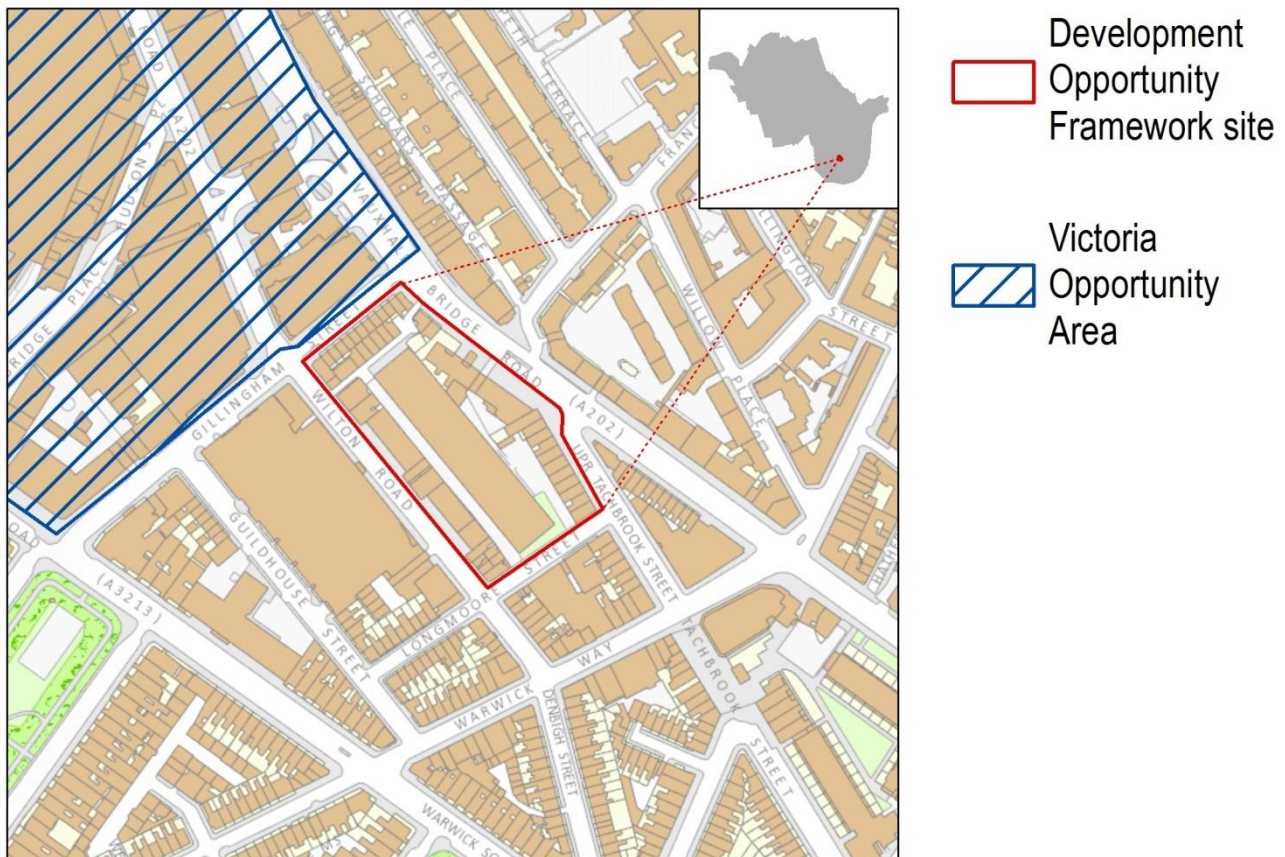
- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Built Environment approves the publication of the draft development opportunity framework for the site at upper Vauxhall Bridge Road and authorises officers to undertake public consultation in accordance with paragraph 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

3.0 REASONS FOR DECISION

- 3.1 This Cabinet Member Report deals with a proposed DOF for the development of an area at the Victoria end of Vauxhall Bridge Road, bounded by Gillingham Street, Wilton Road, Longmoore Street, Upper Tachbrook Street and Vauxhall Bridge Road itself and centred on the current Queen Mother Sports Centre (QMSC). The site is under-optimised, suffers from unappealing public realm and contains unattractive buildings in a poor physical condition which make an inefficient use of the space. It is immediately adjacent to the current boundary of the Victoria Opportunity Area identified in the City Plan and the changes in the area are already being reflected in the type and quality of new development nearby. There is also an increasingly pressing need to renew the sports and leisure facilities at the QMSC.
- 3.2 There is therefore high redevelopment potential at the site. The draft DOF provides the guidance to developers, local communities and other stakeholders about the council's policy ambitions for the site and its requirements for any development here to ensure it maximises the potential to secure local community benefits, creates a high quality place and supports the sustainable development of the Victoria area.
- 3.3 Consulting on the DOF will ensure that residents, developers and other stakeholders are aware of the vision the Council has for a well-planned, holistic approach to development that maximises community benefit and delivers a high quality, sustainable urban quarter that makes the most of its location. It will also give them the opportunity to comment on the draft DOF and provide insight and input into the identified priorities.
- 3.4 The subsequent adoption of the DOF as an SPD will strengthen its status in decision making and ensure this guidance will be useful in assisting with the determination of planning applications for the site. This will ultimately lead to the development meeting the objectives the council has set out for the site.

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The City of Westminster owns the freehold of the site operating the Queen Mother Sports Centre (QMSC) which is situated a few hundred metres from Victoria Station and transport interchange and it is the Council's most popular sports centre serving the local community and many commuters who work in the Victoria area.
- 4.2 While the entrance to the sports facility is located on Vauxhall Bridge Road, the main building is largely located within the centre of an island block surrounded by Wilton Road, Gillingham Row, Longmoore Street, Upper Tachbrook Street and Vauxhall Bridge Road.



- 4.3 The existing sports centre building is reaching the end of its useful life span and many of the facilities are now out of date. The low quality of the other buildings within the site boundary and the unattractive public realm means that there is an opportunity to redevelop the whole site to create a destination people will want to visit rather than pass by. Whole-site development would also provide opportunities to address the lack of permeability through the site, which disadvantages the shopping centre on Wilton Road from drawing in consumers from Vauxhall Bridge Road; and to provide open space in an area of current deficiency.
- 4.4 The site sits just outside the currently designated Victoria Opportunity Area boundary and given high developer interest in the Victoria area it is also timely to consider how the development at this site can contribute to the objectives for the

Victoria area, particularly given the scale and kind of development on adjacent sites (such as that on the western side of Wilton Road).

- 4.5 Work is underway to identify alternative sites for patrons of the existing sports centre to use during any redevelopment. Officers are confident that sufficient sites will be sourced and agreements (where necessary) should be put in place to ensure that reasonable access to sports and leisure facilities are maintained. This will be reflected in the DOF and in any publicity material issued to support it during consultation.

5.0 POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 Once adopted the DOF would have a formal status in the planning system as a supplementary planning document. It is being prepared through the process set out in regulations.¹ In keeping with legislation and national policy it does not add new policy but explains and adds further detail to adopted planning policies to help potential developers understand the council's policies and requirements and help them make successful applications.
- 5.2 The DOF references the London Plan (2015), Westminster's City Plan (2016) and Unitary Development Plan (2007) albeit with a recognition that the latter document is old in policy terms now and will soon be superseded by emerging development management policies.
- 5.3 Development of the site which follows the guidance in the DOF will contribute to the following strategic objectives of Westminster's City Plan:
- improved quality of life and health and well-being;
 - sustainable growth;
 - creation of attractive places;
 - increased employment opportunities; and
 - an increased supply of good quality housing.
- 5.4 The site falls within the Pimlico section of the Central Activities Zone (CAZ), is directly adjacent to the Victoria Opportunity Area (VOA), is partially within a CAZ shopping frontage, and partially within the Pimlico Conservation Area. It is also identified as an area of public open space and wildlife deficiency. The site contains retail, hotel, residential and social and community uses protected by planning policy.
- 5.5 Given the site's location within the Central Activities Zone and directly adjacent to the Victoria Opportunity Area, policies relating to mixed use and increasing employment and housing opportunities are highly relevant. The DOF explains that the sports and leisure use is protected by planning policy, but redevelopment to provide improved facilities will be welcomed. The DOF also sets out other policy requirements relating to transport, sustainability, open space and design and heritage.

6.0 CONTRIBUTION TO CITY FOR ALL

¹ Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

6.1 Development at this site will contribute to key aspects of the 'City for All' corporate programme:

City of Choice

- Improvements to leisure centres are a key commitment by the Council in City for All, as well as facilitating the improved health of Westminster's residents. The redevelopment of the Queen Mother Sports Centre will contribute to these priorities.

City of Aspiration

- It is expected that development of the site will deliver a substantial uplift in residential units on the site, including a proportion of affordable units and products which can support those who need help to get on the housing ladder.
- Given the site's CAZ location and vicinity to the VOA, it is also expected that there will be an increase and improvement in the commercial floorspace on the site – which will deliver improved employment opportunities.

City of Heritage

- Development at the site will provide an opportunity to deliver an improved urban quarter that protects and enhances the area's heritage and improves the neighbourhood as a place to live, work, invest in and visit, both now and in the future.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Work on developing the supplementary planning document is being met from existing budgets. The consultation on the SPD will be via email and through the post. There will be printing and mailing costs, but these will be met within existing budgets.

7.2 There are therefore no direct financial implications associated with the consultation.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The procedure for preparing Supplementary Planning Documents is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, and Government policy on the role of Supplementary Planning Documents is set out in the NPPF (2012). The first stage – to which this report relates – is to consult with those affected. The council is then required by Regulation 12 and 35 (public participation) to publish the draft SPD and a consultation statement (setting out the persons consulted at the first stage, the issues they raised and how it is proposed to deal with these in the draft SPD) on its website and make them available at its principal office for a period of at least four weeks. Any person may make representations during this period.

- 8.2 Once adopted, the Supplementary Planning Document will form part of the Council's planning policy framework. Although it will not have the same status as the Unitary Development Plan or Westminster's City Plan, it will be a material consideration that can be taken into account in determining planning applications.

9.0 BUSINESS PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Consultation on the DOF and its ultimate adoption as an SPD will enable well-planned holistic development of the site which will contribute to a number of business plan priorities within the Policy, Performance and Communications (PPC) and Growth Planning and Housing (GPH) directorates.

PPC Business Plan (2015 - 17)

- The consultation will engage fully with residents giving them the confidence that their fears, aspirations and perceptions are considered.
- The DOF will influence development at this site for the benefit of the city and ensure that residents are able to benefit from London's prosperity – reinvesting growth back into local services.

GPH Business Plan (2015 – 17)

Development which follows the DOF will lead to:

- the building of more affordable homes;
- ensuring investment in public realm;
- improved access for employment and business;
- revenue generation;
- potentially contributing to the extension of the Pimlico District Heating Undertaking.

10.0 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPACT ASSESSMENT INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The DOF is linked to the policies set out in the Westminster City Plan. A health and well-being assessment was undertaken as part of an Integrated Impact Assessment for the NPPF revision to the Core Strategy (now called Westminster's City Plan), also looking at equalities and sustainability. The initial versions of these policies set out in the Core Strategy were subject to Sustainability Appraisal Report which included a Strategic Environmental Assessment (2009) and a Health Impact Assessment. There are no specific implications raised by these appraisals in relation to potential development at this site.

11.0 IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

- 11.1 A screening report will be prepared to determine whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required under Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

12.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 The DOF includes translation information (including the option to obtain the document in Braille and large print), which will ensure the advice can be communicated to a wide audience. Officers have considered whether there are any equalities implications in terms of the public sector duty in the Equalities Act 2010 arising from the draft SPD and have concluded that there are none.

13.0 ENERGY MEASURE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The DOF directs that development will be expected to connect to existing district heating systems - either the Pimlico District Heating Undertaking or the combined heat and power facility at the NOVA development in Victoria. Development which follows the instruction of the DOF will therefore be more energy efficient than the existing buildings.

14.0 COMMUNICATIONS IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 A communications plan will be drawn up by officers in the Communications team before the consultation begins to plan how the consultation will be publicised. Once the consultation period has started, the DOF will be uploaded onto the Council's website for the public to view and comments will be welcome from anyone.
- 14.2 For stakeholders whom the Council consider to have a particular interest in the development opportunity at the site, they will be contacted directly via either an e-mail (where the council holds a valid address) or via postal letter. All residents and businesses which are within the vicinity of the site will all receive a letter in the post informing them of the consultation on the DOF.

15.0 CONSULTATION

- 15.1 The Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement states that consultation should run for *at least* four weeks – initial consultation on the DOF will run for six weeks to give consultees ample time to respond. During this time the Council will put into action its communications plan to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the consultation and the deadline for submitting comments.
- 15.2 Following the initial consultation period the comments received will be analysed and the DOF edited as appropriate. A statement will be prepared setting out the persons that were consulted, a summary of the main issues they raised and how those issues have been addressed.

- 15.3 This statement along with the final SPD (incorporating changes as a result of the initial consultation) will be consulted upon for at least the statutory four weeks required by Regulations and in line with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement.
- 15.4 The SPD will then be formally adopted by the Council.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact:

Kimberley Hopkins, Principal Policy Officer, Policy, Performance & Communications

0207 641 2935 khopkins@westminster.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

1. Development Opportunity Framework for site at upper Vauxhall Bridge Road.
2. Appendices to the Development Opportunity Framework.

Appendix A

Other Implications

1. Resources Implications

None

2. Risk Management Implications

None

3. Crime and Disorder Implications

None

4. Impact on the Environment

None

5. Staffing Implications

None

6. Human Rights Implications

None

7. Energy Measure Implications

None

NB: For individual Cabinet Member reports only

For completion by the **Cabinet Member for Built Environment**

Declaration of Interest

I have <no interest to declare / to declare an interest> in respect of this report

Signed: _____ Date: _____

NAME: **Councillor Robert Davis MBE DL**

State nature of interest if any

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(N.B: If you have an interest you should seek advice as to whether it is appropriate to make a decision in relation to this matter)

For the reasons set out above, I agree the recommendation(s) in the report entitled Upper Vauxhall Bridge Road site development opportunity framework

Signed

Cabinet Member for Built Environment

Date

If you have any additional comment which you would want actioned in connection with your decision you should discuss this with the report author and then set out your comment below before the report and this pro-forma is returned to the Secretariat for processing.

Additional comment:

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If you do not wish to approve the recommendations, or wish to make an alternative decision, it is important that you consult the report author, the Director of Law, City Treasurer and, if there are staffing implications, the Director of People Services (or their representatives) so that (1) you can be made aware of any further relevant considerations that you should take into account before making the decision and (2) your reasons for the decision can be properly identified and recorded, as required by law.

Note to Cabinet Member: Your decision will now be published and copied to the Members of the relevant Policy & Scrutiny Committee. If the decision falls within the criteria for call-in, it will not be implemented until five working days have elapsed from publication to allow the Policy and Scrutiny Committee to decide whether it wishes to call the matter in.