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| Classification: Open | Decision Type: Key |
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| Report to: | Cabinet | Date: 07 November 2023 |
| Subject: | Mill Gate Strategic Regeneration Framework | |
| Report of | Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategic Growth | |

Summary

- 1.1 The Council acquired the Mill Gate shopping centre and wider estate in April 2022 with Joint Venture (JV) partner Bruntwood. The site was acquired to operate the asset and develop it for the future.
- 1.2 Following Cabinet approval (July 2023) to undertake initial public and stakeholder engagement and thereafter to develop a draft Strategic Regeneration Framework, this work has been undertaken by the Mill Gate Joint venture.
- 1.3 A draft SRF document has therefore been produced which as stated in the earlier cabinet report will provide a greater level of structure and flexibility to govern the development process for the Mill Gate.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Provide approval for the Mill Gate JV to carry out a formal period of public and stakeholder consultation on the draft strategic regeneration framework.
- 2.2 Note that following the public and stakeholder consultation, a full review of consultation feedback will be undertaken and required amendments will be made before the Strategic Regeneration Framework is brought back to Cabinet for formal adoption in Spring 2024.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

- 3.1 It is important for the JV to continue to engage with the Public and other stakeholders in order to refine the emerging vision for the Mill Gate estate via the Strategic Regeneration Framework.
- 3.2 Public and Stakeholder consultation and development of the Strategic Regeneration Framework for Mill Gate enables large scale development to progress in accordance with the emerging vision of the Mill Gate Joint Venture vehicle and the strategic objectives set out during the acquisition of the asset.

Alternative options considered and rejected

4.1 Not Applicable

Report Author and Contact Details:

Name: Steve Manifold
Position: Major Project Manager
Department: Business, Growth & Infrastructure
E-mail: s.manifold@bury.gov.uk

Name: Robert Summerfield
Position: Assistant Director of Regeneration
Department: Business, Growth & Infrastructure
E-mail: r.summerfield@bury.gov.uk

Background

- 5.1 The Council acquired the Mill Gate Shopping Centre and wider estate alongside joint venture (JV) partner Bruntwood in April 2022 following approval by Cabinet in November 2021.
- 5.2 A competitive tender exercise was undertaken by the JV concluding in August 2022 to secure the services of an architectural and master planning consultant. BDP Architects were successful in this tender process, and they were instructed to undertake a review of the Mill Gate estate and establish a vision and highlight opportunities to unlock the potential for the Mill Gate and secure its long-term future.
- 5.3 The architect's brief was clear in its direction to consider the pre-existing Bury Town Centre Masterplan and the principles of the Councils Vision 2030, 'Let's Do It!' strategy, in addition to statutory and best practice design guidance.
- 5.4 The work undertaken to date has involved local stakeholders and Council officers to provide a clear ambition and delivery plan for the introduction of new homes but also to deliver a sustainable town centre retail asset for the future. The reimagined Mill Gate will add to the existing town centre and create space that local people will be proud of, and visitors will be keen to use.
- 5.5 The proposed regeneration of the Mill Gate Estate is highly aspirational and over the next 15 – 20 years will enable the delivery of a successful new neighbourhood for Bury. This has the potential for the joint venture to deliver one of the North West's most ambitious regeneration projects.
- 5.6 Permission was granted by Cabinet in July 2023 for the JV to undertake engagement activity over the summer period to introduce the emerging masterplan for the Mill Gate estate and the associated development principals.

- 5.7 Cabinet also approved the JV to procure resources to deliver a draft Strategic Regeneration Framework for the Mill Gate estate. This draft document has now been completed and is appended to this report. Public engagement events took place in the Mill Gate on 21st and 22nd July 2023. A retailer event briefing was also held prior to this. The objectives of this were centred around visioning and undertaking a listening exercise. The feedback from these events has been collated and represented within the draft regeneration framework. The engagement event was well attended, and JV representatives spoke to many members of the public who completed surveys on site or took away paper surveys. An online survey sat alongside the engagement events.
- 5.8 Future engagement and consultation will be undertaken in line with the joint venture consultation strategy and plan which has been directly informed by the Council Statement of Community Involvement (2023).

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

- 6.1 The evolving vision for the Mill Gate leans heavily on the ‘Let’s do it!’ strategy and aspirations. It also directly refers to other projects currently in development or delivery in the town, defined and managed under the Bury Town Centre Masterplan. Significant input has been received from a variety of stakeholders and there has been particular reference to the Council’s Housing Needs and Demand Assessment, community strategies and inclusive growth agenda.
- 6.2 The regeneration of Bury Town Centre supports delivery of the ‘Let’s Do It!’ strategy and the five themes that underpin this vision. As we move towards a future in urban areas where people travel less, buy locally, work and access local services, we need vital and liveable neighbourhoods. This means the Council must think carefully about neighbourhoods and how they can be either built or re-designed to work well. The five themes are summarised below and how they link into the vision for Bury Town Centre:
- **Healthy Communities:** The acquisition of the Mill Gate provides options for providing new community infrastructure including adult learning, civic facilities and other health related services will be a true connection to the community. The implementation of active travel, walking and cycling routes connecting people with local amenities and increasing the availability of public open space will enable the community in Bury Town Centre and surrounding suburban to reconnect and thrive.
 - **Carbon neutral:** We need to use every opportunity to ensure that development in Bury Town Centre on our land is carbon neutral and prioritises active travel.

- **Inclusion:** making sure that everyone's voice is heard, this will absolutely be a focus through the consultation of the regeneration work.
- **Digital first:** the full fibre roll out has enabled access to faster speeds and future-proofed infrastructure. This presents an excellent opportunity for the businesses and community with Bury Town Centre being the ideal location to cultivate new business growth, encourage start up SMEs, promote digital growth, and deliver tech enabled employment space.
- **Inclusive Growth:** the regeneration scheme at the Mill Gate in Bury Town Centre will include investment in physical infrastructure (roads, cycle ways and public transport); creating more flexible and innovative/digital workspaces to encourage more businesses to open and remain in Bury; to ensure residents have the best chance to access good jobs.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

7.1 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows: A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. If proposals are brought forward to Cabinet in due course for comprehensive redevelopment, a full resident and wider community engagement strategy will be included.

7.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be developed alongside the creation of the Strategic Regeneration Framework document and will be updated as the regeneration project moves forward. The EIA will be made available for the consideration of Elected Members when approval is sought from Cabinet to adopt the SRF itself. The overall vision for the Mill Gate development is to deliver inclusive growth opportunities for Bury residents and the development process will adhere to specific duties required under the Equality Act 2010, alongside related statute, and policies.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

- 8.1 The Council has a pledge to be Zero Carbon by 2038. This means that the current estate needs to be rationalised and modernised.
 - 8.2 Bury Town Centre is a highly sustainable location, with a major transport interchange which links to the 100-station Manchester Metrolink system, the town centre is also a major bus hub for north Greater Manchester and contains cycling and walking infrastructure. The Mill Gate Estate itself is on a 15.2-acre brownfield site in the centre of the town. This presents the opportunity to introduce a significant residential capacity in the heart of a highly sustainable town-centre, one which is not car-dependent. The Centre itself is of a certain age and the opportunity for refurbishment and redevelopment will enable the estate to reduce its carbon footprint over time.
 - 8.3 Sustainability remains a key theme for the joint venture, and this runs through the work undertaken as part of the SRF. There is the opportunity to repopulate the town centre and promote sustainable town centre living.
 - 8.4 Along with environmental consideration of new build accommodation there is the opportunity to decarbonise existing buildings within the Mill Gate estate.
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Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

- 9.1 The development of the SRF will advance the design and business justification for investment in the Mill Gate asset. This will guide the delivery strategy for the development. The creations of the SRF does not pose a risk to the overall project, although the additional development/design activity will be used to identify specific risk(s) to regeneration delivery and operation of the asset in the medium to long run.
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Legal Implications:

- 10.1 The draft SRF is a non-statutory document so there are no statutorily prescribed procedures for consultation. It is for the Council to determine the most appropriate consultation methods ensuring fairness and compliance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.
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Financial Implications:

- 11.1 The strategic regeneration framework seeks to establish the long term vision in order to understand the future development opportunities for the Millgate estate. It is an essential tool to help to inform future decision making by both the joint venture and the Council. These future decisions on any particular developments and subsequent required investments will then be subject to future Cabinet papers and JV Board papers. The Council and the JV will also

seek to secure external funding and grants to support this investment wherever possible.

Appendices:

Draft: Bury Millgate Regeneration Framework

Background papers:

Acquisition of Mill Gate - November 2021

<https://councildecisions.bury.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=3667>

Bury Town Centre Masterplan – Cabinet March 2022

<https://councildecisions.bury.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=126&MId=3262&Ver=4>

Mill Gate Shopping Centre & Estate: Joint Venture update and development principles - Cabinet July 2023

[Mill Gate Shopping Centre Estate - Joint Venture update and development principles.pdf \(bury.gov.uk\)](#)

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

| Term | Meaning |
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| SRF | Strategic Regeneration Framework |
| JV | Joint Venture |