

Classification: Open	Decision Type: Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 13 March 2024
Subject:	Adoption of Mill Gate 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 a draft Regeneration Framework, was developed. This work has been undertaken by the Mill Gate Joint venture and appropriate consultants.
- 1.3 The draft regeneration framework document was therefore 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.
- 1.4 Following cabinet sign off to consult on the draft regeneration framework, a period of public and stakeholder consultation has taken place. The results of which have been fully reviewed and amendments have been made in accordance with the results of the consultation where appropriate.
- 1.5 It is proposed that the regeneration framework at Appendix A is adopted to establish the long-term vision for the future development of the Mill Gate estate.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that cabinet:

- 2.1 Provide approval to adoption of the Mill Gate Regeneration Framework.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

- 2.1 The regeneration framework is a vital component of delivering the Bury Town Centre Masterplan.
- 2.2 The regeneration framework has been designed to support the Council's aims and objectives around inclusive economic growth in the Let's Do it! Strategy
- 2.3 The regeneration framework provides a clear long-term vision for redevelopment of the Mill Gate estate.

- 2.4 The regeneration framework will provide strategic guidance to enable coordinated delivery of development to maximise the environmental, economic, and social potential of Bury town centre.

Alternative options considered and rejected

- 3.1 Not applicable

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Background

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 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.

- 4.6 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.
- 4.7 Cabinet approved the JV to procure resources to deliver a draft 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.
- 4.8 Cabinet subsequently provided approval in November 2023 for the JV to carry out a formal period of public and stakeholder consultation on the draft regeneration framework produced. The project team then consulted with key stakeholders, organisations and the wider community. Consultees had several ways to be involved and have their say. These included a standalone website / consultation platform and in person events including two public consultation events on the 25th November 2023 and 6th January 2024.
- 4.9 The consultation concluded in line with the previous cabinet approval. All feedback received has been carefully considered and working collaboratively with the local community and other stakeholders has helped to shape the future plans for the Mill Gate and shape a number of amendments and additions to the framework now presented for adoption. From the feedback forms completed it is clear there is broad support for the vision outlined in the regeneration framework.
- 4.10 Changes made following consultation comments include;
- The updated regeneration framework fully recognises the importance of Bury's market offer and the requirement for the Mill Gate to celebrate and enhance the iconic and unique markets.
 - Accessibility was an important issue for a number of respondents and the regeneration framework states that proposals should ensure the public realm is accessible and inclusive addressing the needs of the diverse community.
 - A number of respondents suggested maintaining vehicle access to the town centre was a key issue (especially for those with reduced mobility). The Regeneration Framework recognises the key role the Mill Gate and Bury Town Centre will continue to act as a central hub for surrounding communities.

- Respondents welcomed improved green spaces and public realm however concerns were raised about maintenance of such spaces. The Regeneration Framework is clear that a long-term management strategy be put in place and that public realm within the joint venture ownership will be managed and maintained by the joint venture.
 - A number of comments regarding the importance of access to outdoor space for residents. The RF confirms that proposals should seek to ensure that future residents have access to sufficient provision of dedicated open space (private, communal and / or public).
- 4.11 Several comments were received that suggested that the masterplan doesn't go far enough and should include a wider area of the town centre. The Framework area is informed by the ownership of the joint venture but is mindful of the interfaces with the wider town centre and additional areas have been included to assist with future public realm improvements.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

- 5.1 The vision for the Mill Gate is intrinsically linked to 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 reference to the Council's Housing Needs and Demand Assessment, community strategies and inclusive growth agenda. 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 development of the Mill Gate provides opportunities for providing new community infrastructure including adult learning, civic facilities and other health related services and deliver 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 has been a focus through the consultation of the regeneration work, and this will continue as phased development is brought through the planning process.

- **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 of the Mill Gate estate 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:

- 6.1 The regeneration framework has been produced to be mindful of the Council's equality commitments and responsibilities. An EqIA (Equality Impact Assessment) has been undertaken.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

- 7.1 The regeneration framework makes specific reference to the policies in place to achieve sustainable development by delivering economic, social, and environmental benefits together. Sustainability is one of the key drivers for regeneration identified within the regeneration framework. Further information on Sustainability and Climate Change can be found from Page 25 of the regeneration framework.
- 1.2 To achieve a clean, carbon-neutral, climate resilient place, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's 5-year Environment Plan and Bury Council's Climate Action Strategy (2021) and Action Plan (2023) aim to progress to carbon neutrality by 2038.
- 1.3 The provision of sustainable transport options will contribute to achieving these targets, by reducing emissions from personal vehicle usage and decreasing levels of air pollution. Future proposals at Mill Gate offer the opportunity to promote sustainable and active travel by expanding green routes and improving connections to other parts of the town centre through this, residents and visitors will be encouraged to practice active travel and reduce car dependency
- 1.4 Low-carbon development at Mill Gate also presents an opportunity to support Greater Manchester and Bury's net-zero carbon goals.
- 1.5 The Bury Bruntwood Joint Venture is developing a sustainability strategy to ensure all new and existing buildings exceed or meet local and national targets, ensuring that the growth of Bury Town Centre is sustainable.

- 1.6 Biodiversity - Within the objectives of the regeneration framework, the joint venture partners will look to deliver the required Biodiversity net gain across the masterplan area. Proposals to enhance the public realm will seek to explore opportunities for urban greening to enhance biodiversity and ecological value.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation

Legal Implications:

The proposed Regeneration Framework is a non-statutory, informal document. There are therefore no statutory requirements for consultation or adoption of the document. If approved by Cabinet, it will not form part of the statutory development plan, and the force of s38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 will not apply to it. It will be a material consideration to which regard may be had in consideration of planning applications, but it will carry less weight than a Supplementary Planning Document. It will not be a document with which development control decisions must accord unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Financial Implications:

The costs associated with this are covered within the capital programme.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Mill Gate 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 \(bury.gov.uk\)](#)

Mill Gate Strategic Regeneration Framework – Cabinet November 2023

<https://councildecisions.bury.gov.uk/documents/s37663/Mill%20Gate%20Strategic%20Regeneration%20Framework.pdf>

Draft - Mill Gate Strategic Regeneration Framework

<https://councildecisions.bury.gov.uk/documents/s37664/Mill%20Gate%20Strategic%20Regeneration%20Framework%20-%20Appendix%201.pdf>

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

Term	Meaning
RF	Regeneration Framework
JV	Joint Venture