

Subject:	Draft Planning Brief for Edward Street Quarter		
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 7 March 2013		
Report of:	Geoff Raw, Strategic Director of Place		
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Ward(s) affected:	Queens Park		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 This report seeks Members approval to consult on a draft planning brief (attached as Appendix 1 to this report) that has been prepared in respect of the Edward Street Quarter development area. The draft brief is intended to provide a planning framework for development that integrates the new American Express building into the surrounding area and secures a strategically important mixed use urban quarter including offices, residential units, ancillary retail and other services.
- 1.2 Public consultation will be undertaken over a six week period. The results of the consultation will be used to inform changes to the draft planning brief, which will be brought back to the Economic Development and Culture Committee for formal approval in the summer of this year.
- 1.3 The approved planning brief will inform the Development Control planning process as a material planning consideration at both the pre-application and planning application stages.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Economic Development and Culture Committee approve the Edward Street Quarter draft planning brief attached as Appendix 1 to this report for consultation with members of the public and other stakeholders

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/ CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

Purpose of the draft brief

- 3.1 Much of the geographical area covered by the draft planning brief is the subject of the Edward Street Quarter Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 04 (adopted in March 2006). The SPD was intended to guide redevelopment in the area based upon the retention of the old 1970s American Express building which, at the time of the SPD's adoption, reflected the intended development strategy of the company. However, American Express reconsidered its strategy and later

sought the replacement of the Edward Street building with a new building on adjacent land.

- 3.2 Planning permission was granted in 2009 for the construction of a new building for American Express' European operations immediately to the north of their existing building. The planning permission (ref: BH2009/01477) was subject to a Section106 agreement which included a requirement for the demolition of the existing American Express Edward Street building which is anticipated by 2016. This has highlighted the need for new planning guidance to secure a more appropriate neighbouring scale of development to the adjacent new building. The draft planning brief, when finally approved for development control purposes, will effectively supersede SPD 04.

The development area

- 3.3 The development area covered by the draft brief encompasses various parcels of land to the north of Edward Street, bounded by William Street to the west and White Street to the east, as shown in the Draft Brief (Appendix 1, Fig 1). Since the publication of SPD04 in 2006, the concept of the Edward Street Quarter has been expanded to include:

- Development to the west of John Street; and
- Dorset Gardens Peace Park to the south of Edward Street.

This is in recognition that both of these areas, which are on the periphery of the existing American Express site, have a significant role to play in the wider regeneration of the development area.

- 3.4 With regard to existing buildings that fall within the area covered by the brief (i.e. the Job Centre Plus building, the Sussex Police HQ, the Magistrates Court and Family Court) it is entirely possible that these buildings will remain undeveloped for the foreseeable future (other than the old Amex House). Nevertheless, it is recognised that the presence of the new American Express building, along with the required demolition of the old Amex House provide a potential catalyst for the future redevelopment of the wider neighbourhood.
- 3.5 With the exception of the new American Express building, the area is generally characterised by poor public realm and unattractive townscape. High quality design, public realm and strong pedestrian and transport linkages will be important aspects in achieving a successful new urban quarter in this part of the city. With regard to open space to serve the area, Dorset Gardens Peace Park on the south side of Edward Street is a substantial existing open space which is currently underutilised. The park clearly has the potential to better serve its current and future communities and that is why it has been included within the development area of the draft brief.
- 3.6 The draft brief includes information on indicative heights and massing of new buildings, together with a possible mix of uses and quantum of development likely to be acceptable. In line with best practice identified in paragraph 173 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the draft brief tests various scenarios and identifies a preferred development option that is considered viable and appropriate within the context of the site's location and surrounding buildings. There will be an opportunity for stakeholders and members of the public to

comment further on this preferred development option during the six week consultation period.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The draft planning brief has been prepared by the council with assistance from CBRE and EPR Architects, who represent the main landowning interest in the core site, American Express.
- 4.2 Meetings to discuss the content of the draft brief have been held with local ward councillors as well as the Chair and Deputy Chair of the council's Economic Development & Culture Committee.
- 4.3 The draft brief was also circulated to internal officers of the council for comment in October 2012, including officers within the Transport, Economic Development, Planning Policy, Development Control, Heritage and Sustainability teams. Comments and feedback received from officers has been used to inform the development and content of the draft brief.
- 4.4 Two local community organisations (Tarnier Area Partnership and Green Sea) have also been contacted in the early stages of the development of the draft brief to establish their views about the future redevelopment opportunities for the site. Their concerns about the transport infrastructure and greening strategy in relation to the wider development area (including Edward Street) have been addressed through the content of the draft brief.
- 4.5 Other key stakeholders including the Local Economic Partnership, local businesses/ retailers, residents, community organisations etc. will be consulted as part of the wider six week consultation period on the draft brief and informed about how to make representations.

Next stages

- 4.6 Public consultation will be undertaken over a six week period. There will be an online consultation for the draft brief using the council's consultation portal. A public exhibition will also be held in an appropriate location to maximise participation by key stakeholders and encourage their feedback on the draft planning brief.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report. The costs of the Planning Brief will be met from within existing budgets.

Finance Officer Consulted:

Name: Jeff Coates

Date: 24/ 01/13

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 Although the planning brief does not have the status of a statutory planning document, once adopted it will nonetheless be accorded weight as a material planning consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications.

It is not considered that any adverse human rights implications arise from the report.

Lawyer Consulted: *Name Hilary Woodward* *Date: 29/1/13*

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) of the Planning Projects service was undertaken in 2010. This included good practice in relation to the preparation and consultation on planning briefs. An EQIA has also been conducted in support of the Proposed Submission City Plan Part 1 Feb 2013, which has involved an extensive consultation programme. Officers have followed this best practice to ensure that the consultation on the draft brief does not exclude people from the process and encompasses hard-to-reach groups.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Sustainability is an integral element of the brief, which includes a section specifically on sustainability expectations with regard to such aspects as energy efficiency, district heating etc. The brief aspires towards zero carbon - or where that cannot be achieved – carbon neutral development across future sites with the development area in order to provide exemplars of sustainable development and assist the city's bid to achieve UNESCO Biosphere Reserve status.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 The draft brief promotes the creation of a safe and successful new urban quarter of the city by encouraging greater accessibility, active frontages at ground floor and 'passive' surveillance of public spaces. It also suggests a range of measures to enhance the use of Dorset Gardens Peace Park which is intended to provide an attractive and accessible environment for the use by all members of the public, that should help to deter anti social behaviour.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 There is a risk that planning briefs may advocate development options which are unviable to develop and thereby fail to meet the requirements of the National Policy Framework. To mitigate this risk, the draft brief tests various scenarios and identifies a preferred development option that is considered viable and appropriate within the context of the site's location and surrounding buildings.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 The draft planning brief advocates a mix of uses in the development area, including residential development. The brief requires all residential units to be

built to lifetime homes standards and, in line with the Local Plan/ City Plan, 40% affordable housing units. Where appropriate, financial contributions will be sought from developers, to mitigate the impact of development on the local area e.g. through open space, health, education contributions etc.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 As a large brownfield site, the Edward Street Quarter is of significant importance to the city. With precious few sites available in the city, it offers a rare opportunity to deliver a genuine mixed use development capable of generating substantial employment and inward investment opportunities.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 An alternative option is to “do nothing” i.e. not to produce a planning brief. This option has been discounted because of the need to address the future regeneration of this area in a comprehensive manner. Under the existing Section 106 Agreement, there is a requirement for the former American Express building to be demolished by no later than 2016. This has highlighted the need for new planning guidance to provide clarity to developers regarding the appropriate scale of development, potential land uses and other material planning issues with regard to any future proposals and planning applications in the development area.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Public consultation in respect of planning documents is an integral element in ensuring that wide ranging views are taken into account and inform the council’s decision-making process.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Draft Edward Street Quarter Planning Brief

Documents in Members’ Rooms

None

Background Documents

1. Brighton & Hove Local Plan (2005)
2. Proposed Submission City Plan Part 1 Feb 2013
3. National Planning Policy Framework 2012

