

Eastern Gate Visioning Document

Approved by:
Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth
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Introduction

1.1 Introduction & background

The need for co-ordinated change

Situated to the north east of the city centre, the 'Eastern Gate' study area stretches from the Crown Court (East Road) and Elizabeth Way roundabout to the beginning of the retail park (refer to figure 1). Over the years, the area has experienced significant change. The large-scale highway interventions of the 1970's, the application of standard highway solutions and the introduction of unsympathetic bulky buildings that have little relationship with the public realm have eroded the qualities of place and severed neighbouring communities.

For some time now, there has been widespread recognition for the need to improve the environment within the Eastern Gate study area. Over the years, many sites within the area have been subject to a number of planning applications, some of which are still extant. In addition, fragmented landownership further complicates matters.

However despite these challenges, attractive, well-established spaces and neighbourhoods, with a strong sense of community, surround the Eastern Gate study area. There is much opportunity and exciting potential for transformation...there is a great need for guidance to co-ordinate positive change within the area.

This 'Visioning' Document is the first step towards producing a formal Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) that will co-ordinate and guide future

redevelopment in line with the Council's local plan policies.

The study area

The study area (refer to figure 3) has been drawn to include areas, which contain potential development sites, both allocated in the 2006 Cambridge Local Plan and unallocated, as well as areas where the quality of the public realm has been significantly undermined by the application of standard highway solutions.

What is the process?

The proposal sites of 7.01 and 7.03, as identified within the Cambridge Local Plan (2006), fall within the Eastern Gate study area (see figure 3). The production of a Development Framework for the area will further expand upon these area-based allocations, as well as the saved policies contained within Chapter 3 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2006), in particular policies: 3/4 Responding to Context, 3/6 Ensuring Coordinated Development, and 3/7 Creating Successful Places. In addition, it will form part of the Local Development Framework for Cambridge.

In progressing the SPD, it is proposed that the work is split into two parts. Firstly to produce a Visioning Document in consultation with the local community, members and key stakeholders, and then secondly, use the Visioning Document to feed into the production of a Development Framework (SPD) for the Eastern Gate area.

This Visioning document forms part of this first key stage and will form part of the evidence base for the production of a formal SPD to co-ordinate and guide redevelopment of the area.

Therefore, the overall purpose of producing a SPD in the form of a Development Framework for the Eastern Gate area is threefold:

1. To articulate a clear vision and build consensus about the future of the area;
2. To establish a Development Framework to co-ordinate redevelopment within the area and guide decisions (by the Council and others); and
3. To identify a series of key projects, to guide investment (by the Council and others) within the area.

The adjacent flowchart (figure 2) provides further detail regarding the key stages in the SPD process.

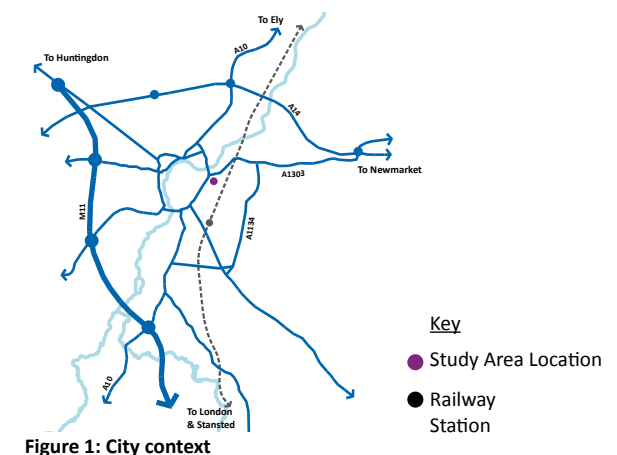


Figure 1: City context

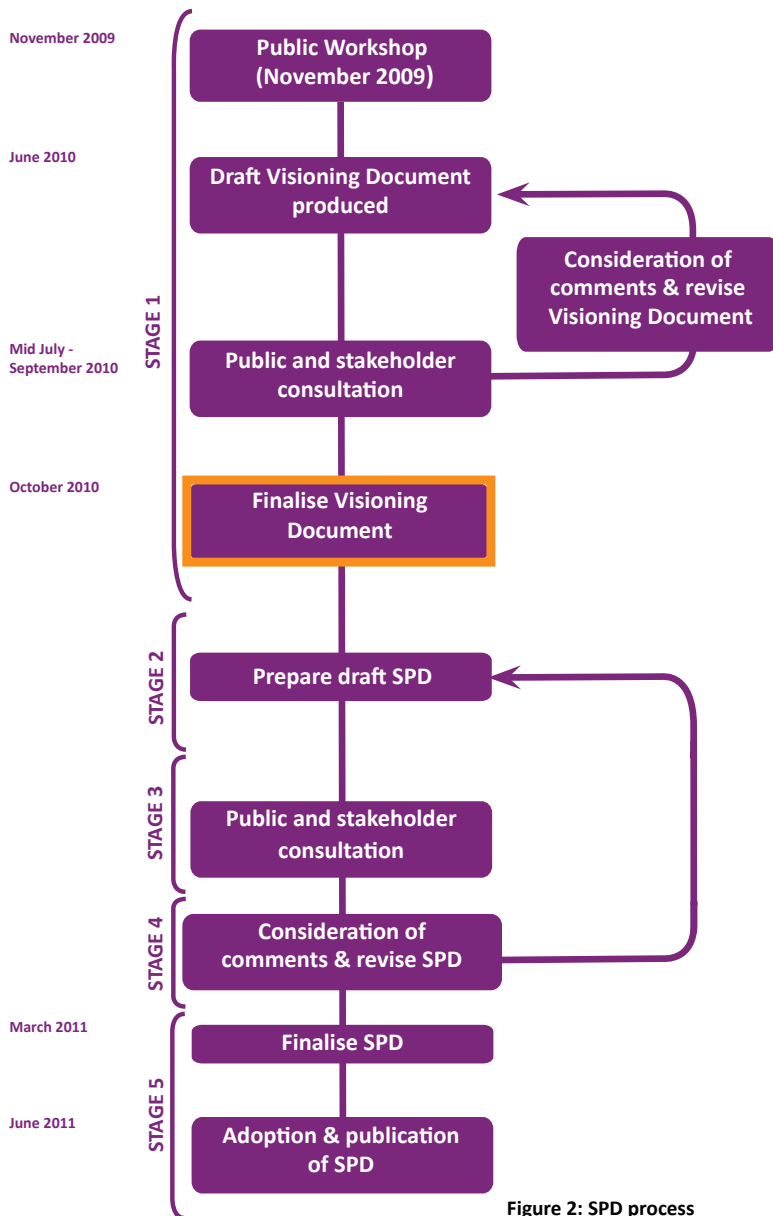


Figure 2: SPD process

What is the purpose of this Visioning Document?

This Visioning Document is the first step towards producing a framework to guide redevelopment within the area.

At this initial stage, the issues, opportunities, redevelopment aspirations and potential key projects offered in this visioning document, are intended to stimulate ideas and discussion. This document is very much intended as a tool for engagement with the community and key stakeholders such as the County Council and landowners.

It is not a static document. The strategies and ideas set out in this Visioning Document will be tested, honed down and refined through collaboration with local residents, members and key stakeholders. Once finalised, the Visioning Document will be used to inform the production of the Development Framework (SPD) for the area.

A suggested vision:

*‘Breaking down the barriers...
reconnecting people, reconnecting place’*

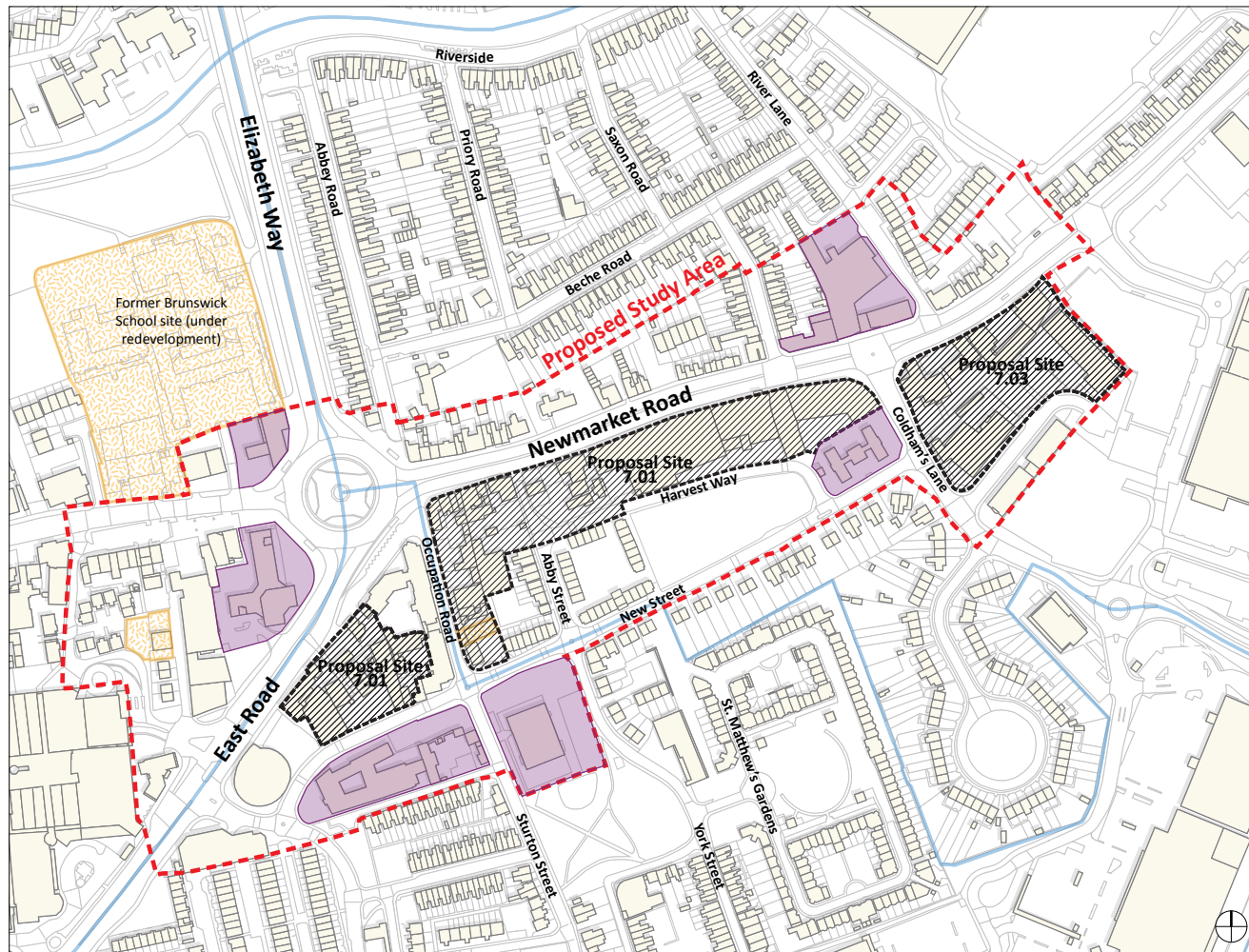


Figure 3 - Eastern Gate study area



Document structure

This Visioning Document has five main chapters:

- **Chapter 1: 'Introduction'** forms the introduction and background to this work, explaining the overall SPD process and the purpose of the Visioning Document;
- **Chapter 2: 'Public Consultation to date'** visually summarises the hands-on public event, which took place in November 2009;
- **Chapter 3: 'Existing Situation'** provides a contextual analysis of the area;
- **Chapter 4: 'Strategies for Change'** offers redevelopment aspirations for the area, through a series of high level strategies and development principles related to: movement & circulation; open space, landuse and activity; built form, scale and massing; and public art; and
- **Chapter 5: 'Key Projects'** begins to develop some of the aspirations identified in Chapter 4, into a series of key public realm and infrastructure projects that are fundamental to achieving the overall vision for the area.