ROtherham Town Centre

Implementation Masterplan

Prepared by WYG for Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
June 2017
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Introduction
The Masterplan is crafted to ensure the following:

- It is implementation focused
- And defines specific deliverable projects
- It is ambitious... but realistic
- Being both commercially pragmatic... but bold
- It provides clear actions and responsibilities
- Setting out the how as much as the what with regard to the changes required
- Concluding with a programme of activity not a wish list

Introduction

WYG Group and Lambert Smith Hampton were commissioned by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council to prepare an Implementation Masterplan for Rotherham Town Centre. This is the first draft of the plan for consultation.

The masterplan is focused on developing the economic vitality of Rotherham Town Centre through an ambitious programme of development, landscape and placemaking proposals. The plan aims to bring more life, activity and spending back into the Town Centre.

The plan is bold but also realistic. The challenges facing the town are recognised and managed. The opportunities for growth and regeneration are identified and translated into key projects which can bring about transformational change.

The implementation plan builds upon the existing planning framework for the Town Centre. It also aligns with and reinforces developer and investor interest in the Town Centre. The masterplanning process has already achieved significant progress in this regard.

The Council is taking a pro-active approach. Through its various activities including use of public landholdings, through direct investment, through the facilitation of government funding, through partnerships with the private sector and through planning powers, RMBC is working tirelessly to see the plan delivered.

Private investment is however vital. The plan provides confidence in terms of the future direction for the Town Centre in terms of investment opportunities and the development agenda. The Town Centre is open for development and significant investment has already been committed to the Town Centre.

There is great potential for striking and meaningful change. The Town Centre is in need of this new lease of life and the implementation of this plan and programme of work is vitally important to secure future success.

Structure

This document is structured as follows:

- Introduction
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- Opportunity Sites
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- Town Centre Vision, Objectives and Strategy
- Masterplan Proposals
- Key Opportunity Projects
- Public Realm, Art & Lighting Proposals
- Implementation Programme
- Summarising Rotherham’s Vision
- Appendix A: Retail Planning Assessment
Rotherham is located to the north-east of the M1 motorway which provides strategic links nationally. It is also served by a rail services connecting to the region’s larger towns (Sheffield, Leeds, Wakefield & Doncaster) and into the national rail network; this will be further bolstered by the proposed arrival of the tram train. The town’s industrial heritage continues to shape the area, including the location of the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC) and Advanced Manufacturing Park (AMP) between Rotherham and Sheffield.

The Town Centre has been affected by out-of-centre retail, including Meadowhall and Parkgate Shopping Park, and it is therefore important to diversify and build upon the town’s strengths in order to attract further investment.

Although Rotherham is widely known for its industry, it is also located close to the Peak District National Park and is surrounded by open countryside. It is therefore important to reflect the significance of green space within the Town Centre.
Rotherham
Key Facts

Rail connections to Sheffield, Doncaster, Wakefield and Leeds. Bus services throughout the Borough. Investment in the bus interchange.

National Cycle Route 6 - Trans Pennine Trail along canal edge.

18 Grade II, one Grade II* and one Grade I listed buildings within the Town Centre Boundary.

2 million customers within a 30 minute drive of the Town Centre.

£23.8 billion economy - over 5,000 businesses & 9,000 jobs.

An emerging Town Centre residential market.


Town Centre annual pedestrian footfall of 8 million. 741,000 sq ft of commercial floor space.
£4.7 million High Street joint investment
Great British High Street Winner 2015

Rotherham United Football Club at the New York Stadium

Rotherham is home to the internationally renowned Advanced Manufacturing Park including firms such as Boeing & Rolls Royce

9,000 students at Rotherham College set to increase by 1,000

Projected population rise of 3.5% between 2015 and 2025, reaching 270,000 people

Town Centre attractions include the Rotherham markets, Clifton Museum & Park, Civic Theatre, independent shops and the Football Club

Recent and planned investment for Tesco, tram train, bus interchange and College campus

Council owned land assets provide opportunities to diversify the Town Centre offer
Planning Framework

Background

Rotherham Town Centre is evolving. Recent years have seen significant investment, with an aim to create a dynamic and economically successful place to live, work and visit.

This investment has been guided by policy, including the Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted in 2014 and through strategies such as the Economic Growth Plan, published in 2015 and more recently The Rotherham Plan 2025 (2017). Following the Renaissance Programme, established in 2005, and accompanied by a Strategic Development Framework (2005) more recent work has moved towards delivery of the ‘Ten Renaissance Goals’. Most recently, this included the Rotherham Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which sets out a policy framework for the Town Centre through a series of ‘Key Moves’. The aim of this Implementation Masterplan is to move towards delivery, building on the work to date. To do this we have drawn the Renaissance Goals and Key Moves into 5 simple objectives which are set out later in this document.

Background documents including a Public Realm Strategy (2008) and a study of the opportunities for Rotherham’s markets (2012, 2015), along with an approved application for the construction of a new Town Centre campus for Rotherham College have already begun to shape the future of the town.

Introduction

The Ten Renaissance Goals

- Make the river and the canal a key part of the town’s future. We want the river and the canal to become much loved parts of the town with public spaces and walkways lining their banks
- Populate the town’s centre by creating good quality living. To sustain the long term health of the Town Centre we want to improve existing housing stock and provide greater choice and accessibility to good quality housing
- Place Rotherham within a sustainable landscape setting of the highest quality
- Put Rotherham at the centre of a public transport network
- Improve parts of major road infrastructure
- Make Forge Island a major new piece of the Town Centre
- Establish a new civic focus that not only promotes a more open and accessible type of governance but also embraces culture and the arts
- Demand the best in architecture, urban design and public spaces for Rotherham
- Improve community access to health, education and promote social well being
- 10. Create a broadly based, dynamic local economy with a vibrant Town Centre as its focus

Statutory Development Plan

- Rotherham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)
- Rotherham Local Plan Sites and Policies document (following adoption)
- Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham Joint Waste Plan (2012)
- Saved Unitary Development Plan Policies (1999)

National Planning Policy

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Policy CS 13 Transforming Rotherham Town Centre sets a clear direction for future development. The Ten Renaissance Goals, as set out in the Rotherham Strategic Development Framework (2005), form a criteria of the policy.

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This document sets out eight key moves:

**Town Centre SPD Key Moves (2015)**
- Development of a central Mixed Use Leisure Hub at Forge Island
- Delivery of residential units on key sites within the Town Centre
- Creation of pedestrian ‘Gold Routes’ through the Town Centre, improving wayfinding and reconfiguring footfall
- Improving the Town Centre’s Gateways to create a strong sense of arrival and identity
- Opening up Rotherham’s riverside
- Support for ‘Making and Trading’ in the Town Centre
- Redevelopment of the Interchange to create a high quality environment with improved linkages to Rotherham Central
- A connected Green Network to deliver a Corridor of Healthy Living

**Supplementary Planning Documents of relevance**
- Rotherham Town Centre SPD (2016)
- Rotherham Transport Strategy (2016)
- The Rotherham Story (2017)
- Sheffield & Rotherham Joint Retail & Leisure Study (2017)
- South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide (2011)
- The Rotherham Plan 2025 (2017)
- Public Realm Strategy (2008)
- Rotherham Strategic Development Framework (LDA, 2005)
The Rotherham Story

The Rotherham Story is a narrative of the unique aspects of the town and how these will shape its future.

It highlights the identity of Rotherham which will be a key theme drawn through the designs produced as part of this Masterplan.

It is important to recognise and build upon the information which has already been generated through the SPDs and existing guidance documents. The Rotherham Story is of particular significance as it will provide a continuous link when designing individual sites in order to ensure a holistic vision for Rotherham.

There are three key themes to the Rotherham Story:

**Engineering Excellence**

Industry is a core aspect of Rotherham’s past, present and future. The Advanced Manufacturing Park and Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre are home to world leading manufacturing technology organisations and are instrumental in bringing the region’s industrial heritage to the 21st century.

**Living Green**

Despite the influence of industry on the town, Rotherham is home to a fantastic countryside with attractive landscapes and views.

Green space will become a core theme for the Town Centre through public realm improvements, tree planting and greening. Green connections to the surrounding countryside and along the River Don will be of strategic importance to the Town Centre.

**Pushing Boundaries**

Rotherham Town Centre will ‘do things differently.’ It’s ambition to build on past successes is particularly prevalent in the growth of the AMP and AMID.
The Rotherham Plan 2025 outlines a vision for the future of Rotherham. This document will build upon this vision and will integrate into the journey for the city. The game changers for Rotherham will be:

- Building stronger communities
- Skills and employment
- Integrated health and social care
- Integrated health and social care
- A place to be proud of
- Town Centre