

<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet	<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	7 October 2021
<b>Subject:</b>	Bootle Area Action Plan - Issues and Options Consultation paper		
<b>Report of:</b>	Chief Planning Officer	<b>Wards Affected:</b>	Derby; Linacre; Litherland; Netherton and Orrell;
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Cabinet Member - Planning and Building Control		
<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	Yes	<b>Included in Forward Plan:</b>	Yes
<b>Exempt / Confidential Report:</b>	No		

### Summary:

Sefton Council is developing a Bootle Area Action Plan (AAP) Development Plan Document to guide development and investment for the wider Bootle area. Once adopted it will form part of the Development Plan for Sefton alongside the Local Plan. It is likely to cover a range of issues that have a land use component but can also look to address wider factors that influence the quality of place in which people live, work, shop, socialise, undertake leisure activities, visit and invest.

The preparation of an Area Action Plan must be done in accordance with national Planning Regulations. The first stage of preparation is the identification of the issues that the Council considers the Area Action Plan will need to address and some potential options for addressing those issues. These are set out in the attached Issues and Options Paper.

This report seeks to secure approval for the Bootle AAP Issues and Options paper so that the Council can engage with residents, community groups, businesses, landowners and other stakeholders.

### Recommendation(s):

That Cabinet:

- (1) approve the Bootle Area Action Plan Issues and Option paper for publication and public engagement; and
- (2) delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Planning and Building Control to make non-strategic changes to the Bootle Area Action Plan Issues and Options paper prior to publication; and
- (3) delegate authority to the Chief Planning Officer to make minor editorial and presentational changes to the Bootle Area Action Plan Issues and Options paper prior to publication

## Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To allow for the Bootle Area Action Plan to progress to the first formal stage of public engagement towards its progression towards examination and adoption as part of the statutory development plan for the area.

## Alternative Options Considered and Rejected: (including any Risk Implications)

Doing an Area Action Plan for a specific area is not statutory. However, choosing not to do one would miss an opportunity to set out a statutory framework for investment and regeneration in the Bootle area and to coordinate a land use respond to the various programmes underway in the Bootle area.

## What will it cost and how will it be financed?

### (A) Revenue Costs

See below

### (B) Capital Costs

None

## Implications of the Proposals:

### Resource Implications (Financial, IT, Staffing and Assets):

The cost for the production the Bootle AAP, including the various engagement stages, public examination and potential supporting studies had been estimated at £230,000. 40% of the costs (£92,000) will be covered by Sefton's core budget, with the remainder (£138,000) secured from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority's the Strategic Investment Fund (SIF).

### Legal Implications:

The preparation and engagement of the Bootle AAP will be undertaken in accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended.

### Equality Implications:

The equality Implications have been identified and mitigated. The Bootle AAP Issues and Options will be available for comment. How we engage on this is set out clearly in a Community Engagement Strategy. This has been to the Consultation and Engagement Panel who are content that the approach we intend to use will allow all residents and groups to engage in an appropriate manner.

The issues identified in the AAP Issues and Options Paper include many that would address issues in inequality, including in housing, health, employment and access to

services. As the Bootle AAP takes these issues forward and sets out policies to tackle them, it would be expected to have a positive impact on equality. Prior to the next formal stage of preparation, an Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken.

**Climate Change Implications:**

The recommendations within this report will:

Have a positive impact	
Have a neutral impact	✓
Have a negative impact	
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	<b>Yes</b>

Whilst Climate Change has been identified as an issue in the Bootle AAP Issue and Options paper, at this stage it is just looking at potential high-level options that could be used to reduce carbon emissions and mitigate the impact the climate change. However, at this stage they are just discussions points and wont, as yet, have a positive impact.

Reference paragraph 4.11 to the report.

**Contribution to the Council’s Core Purpose:**

Protect the most vulnerable: Not applicable
Facilitate confident and resilient communities: The engagement process will help support communities and make them aware of opportunities to influence Council policy in their local area
Commission, broker and provide core services: Not applicable
Place – leadership and influencer: There is an opportunity through the Bootle AAP process to shape Bootle as a place.
Drivers of change and reform: Not applicable
Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity: The Bootle AAP includes several economic issues. The engagement on these issues will look to secure consensus how best to improve economic prosperity in the Bootle area.
Greater income for social investment: The Bootle AAP includes several social issues. The engagement on these issues will look to secure consensus how best to improve social investment in the Bootle area.
Cleaner Greener The Bootle AAP includes several environmental issues. The engagement on these issues will look to secure consensus how best to improve a cleaner and greener Bootle.

**What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?**

**(A) Internal Consultations**

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.6529/21) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.4730/21) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

**(B) External Consultations**

None specifically on the Bootle AAP at this stage but community and stakeholder engagement has been undertaken as part of the wider regeneration aims for Bootle.

**Implementation Date for the Decision**

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting

<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Ian Loughlin</b>
Telephone Number:	<b>0151 934 3556</b>
Email Address:	<a href="mailto:ian.loughlin@sefton.gov.uk">ian.loughlin@sefton.gov.uk</a>

**Appendices:**

The following appendices are attached to this report:

Draft Bootle Area Action Plan – Issues and Options paper

Bootle Area Action Plan – Community Engagement Strategy (August 2021)

**Background Papers:**

There are no background papers available for inspection.

## **1. Introduction/Background**

- 1.1 An Area Action Plan (AAP) is a type of Development Plan Document (DPD) providing a planning framework for a specific area of opportunity, change or conservation. AAPs give a geographic or spatial dimension and focus for the implementation of policies for that area. AAPs can create new policy over and above the Local Plan, within the designated AAP area.
- 1.2 The Council is developing an emerging Area Action Plan for the Bootle area, titled the "Bootle Area Action Plan". This will become part of the Development Plan for Sefton, and as such is required to be subject to statutory consultation and examination. The final AAP document is required to be adopted by full Council.
- 1.3 The Bootle AAP will provide the land use context for much of the wider programmes and projects that are underway or proposed in the Bootle area, including the plans for Bootle Strand, the canal side site repurposing and the levelling-up agenda.

## **2. Why do an Area Action Plan for Bootle?**

- 2.1 Much work has been undertaken in recent years to drive regeneration and change in Bootle. However, none of this has been reflected into a formal planning document that would have sufficient weight in making decisions on planning applications. An Area Action Plan, once adopted, will be a material consideration in the planning process and is able to provide greater certainty to developers, landowners, residents and other users about what the vision of a place is. An Area Action Plan will also be rooted in delivery and will provide greater detail on how the vision, objectives, site allocations and policies will be achieved. As the Area Action Plan will reflect the Council's aspirations and priorities for the town it may assist in supporting funding bids that would help deliver the vision, objectives, site allocations and policies of the Area Action Plan.

## **3. Stages in the preparation of an Area Action Plan**

- 3.1 As the Area Action Plan is a statutory planning document must go through several defined stages which are set out in the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 3.2 The Council has to go through a number of stages to prepare the Area Action Plans. Stage 1 to Stage 3 will be subject to public consultation. These are:
  - Publication of Issues and Options, which seek the views of stakeholders on issues and options for the future development of the area which will inform the Preferred Options stage. This is the current stage.
  - Publication of 'Preferred Options': As the name suggests, the 'Preferred Options' document will set out the Council's preferred way forward for the area.
  - Following consideration of responses to this consultation, we will prepare the 'Publication Document'. This will be submitted to the Secretary of State. Representations made to the publication document will also be submitted to the Secretary of State.

- The fourth stage is the independent 'Examination' of the submitted document. The purpose of this is to consider the soundness of the AAP and representations. A Planning Inspector will be appointed by the Secretary of State to conduct the examination.
- The Planning Inspector will produce a binding report that sets out the final version of the AAP. This will then be 'adopted' by the Council and incorporated in the development plan for Sefton.

#### **4. Bootle AAP – Issues and Options**

- 4.1 The initial stage of an Area Action Plan, is the identification of the key issues that the document will seek to address. The Issues and Options Paper sets out a long list of issues that are relevant to the Bootle area. These have been identified through a number of ways:
- Review of evidence and data
  - Discussions with Council officers and ward members
  - Review of previous consultation responses
- 4.2 The issues cover a range of topic areas from housing, employment, recreation, health, access, services and climate change. They are not intended to cover everything that a land-use plan can cover, but rather concentrate on the issues that are particularly relevant to the Bootle area. Nevertheless, there are quite a few issues that have been identified that could be tackled through the Bootle AAP. For each of the issues several options for how these could be tackled have been identified. These options focus on land-use planning and are not intended to cover every intervention the Council can do.
- 4.3 As there are a number of issues identified, it is considered necessary to identify which are the most essential to address. These could be considered the strategic issues. Whilst it is important to set an approach to address all of the issues, it is these strategic issues that, if addressed, are critical to the regeneration of Bootle.
- 4.4 The Issues and Options are identified in Section 5 of the appended report. However, the following is a summary of the key issues that the report identifies:

#### Economic Growth

- 4.5 Bootle has significant challenges with its economic activity with a greater proportion of its residents who cannot access higher paid employment. Much of this is linked to a greater proportion of residents who have lower levels of qualifications and training, but also to a lack of suitable and available well-paid employment opportunities in accessible locations.
- 4.6 There are local economic consequences in the changing way people shop and work, with the Town Centre and Office Quarter currently experiencing high vacancy levels. The Bootle AAP will need to address this issue and explore alternative uses for these areas but also take advantage of the changing economy.

- 4.7 A key issue in the Bootle area is the impact of economic activity on the environment and residential amenity of residents. A number of employment areas, including the port and a number of industrial estates, have a detrimental impact locally and trying to balance economic activity and residential amenity is a key issue for the AAP to consider.

### Communities and Housing

- 4.8 Bootle has a strong sense of community and existing network of community and voluntary groups. Building upon these is a key task for the Bootle AAP. Putting communities at the heart of any plan and ensuring that they are supported with appropriate infrastructure and services with any growth or regeneration agenda is critical.
- 4.9 Meeting Bootle's diverse housing need is also a key issue. This includes market housing, affordable housing, housing for older people and other special needs housing. Bringing forward sites for housing to meet these needs will also be addressed through the AAP and how to do so with often challenging viability issues, largely caused by historic contamination issues.
- 4.10 Poor quality conversions to flats or Homes in Multiple Occupation is an issue in parts of Bootle and how this can be addressed is identified in the Issues and Options paper.

### Climate Change and the Environment

- 4.11 Dealing with climate change is an issue that all strategic planning documents must address in some form and the Bootle AAP sets out a number of options that could do this at a local level. Tackling a range of local environmental issues is also important for the AAP to consider, including air quality, contaminated land, opportunities for ecology and dealing with fly-tipping.

### Health & Recreation

- 4.12 Bootle residents generally have higher health inequalities than in other parts of the borough, and often this can be linked to a poorer environment. Finding ways to tackle poor health is complex and the role of planning is only one part of a wider approach that is necessary. Nonetheless there are things that can be done, such as protecting and providing spaces for recreation and exercise, limiting fast food outlets, tackling pollution and providing good quality homes and employment.

### Infrastructure & Services

- 4.13 Whilst Bootle has a range of accessible services and facilities there is always a need to protect and improve these to support a diverse community with a variety of needs. Through the Bootle AAP process discussions will be had with a variety of service providers and enabling them to deliver their services, including in they need space to grow and improve, will be a key challenge.

### Placemaking

4.14 Making Bootle a place that people want to live in, come to work to, open a business, go to school or college, shop or visit is the heart of what the Bootle AAP is seeking to achieve. There many factors that make a place successful and effectively all the issues, if addressed, would contribute to this. However, there are a number of key things that people often raise when they think of good placemaking. This includes well designed buildings and public spaces, good local environment free from pollution and litter, good choice of homes and jobs, access toe services and strong local identity. These issues are specially identified in the Issues and Options paper including a number of potential ways to deliver them.

## **5. Vision and Objectives of the Bootle AAP**

5.1 A planning strategy would ordinarily start with a vision that sets out what type of place that the Council would like to create if the planning strategy was implemented. The vision would be supported by a number of objectives that would identify more clearly defined, and measured, goals necessary to be achieved for the vision to be realised.

5.2 However, at this first engagement stage we thought it would be useful to allow the public and other stakeholders to influence the vision and the objectives by identifying the key issues that they wish the Bootle AAP to tackle. Section 6 of the Issues and Options paper sets out our approach to do this. A long list of phrases and words have been identified from the long list of issues in the paper. We are asking people to choose up to 5 phrases and words that they consider the most important. People can also identify their own phrase or word if it is not already listed. From the feedback we will generate a vision and list of objectives that will be made available for comment in the next consultation stage (i.e. Preferred Options stage).

## **6. Next Stages**

6.1 If approved the Bootle Area Action Plan – Issues and Options Paper will be made available for public engagement. The public engagement will be in accordance with the Bootle AAP Community Engagement Strategy which was approved in August 2021.

6.2 Specifically at this stage the Issues and Options paper and content will be available online and hard copies available at Magdalen House, Bootle Library, Bootle Town Hall and the One Stop Shop in Bootle. Copies can also be made available on request, including in other formats. The availability of the website and the documents will be advertised widely through social media, newspaper notices, posters across many public areas (e.g. leisure centres, gp surgeries, supermarkets, Bootle Strand etc), emails and leaflets to key organisations etc.

6.3 Alongside the website there will also be an opportunity to participate in several activities. These will include:

- Virtual workshops
- Static exhibition in Bootle Strand
- Focussed stakeholder discussions

Section 5 of the Community Engagement Strategy sets out in greater detail the engagement plans for the Issues and Options stage.

- 6.4 The public engagement will run for a minimum of six weeks. All comments received will be assessed and a report of consultation will be prepared. The consultation findings will be used to inform the preparation of the next stage of the document, namely the Preferred Options document. The Preferred Options document will be brought to Cabinet for approval. It is also possible that the comments received will identify gaps in our evidence and prompt the commissioning of studies on specific topics that may be required to inform the next stages.
- 6.5 The draft Bootle Area Action Plan: Issues and Options Report is appended to this report. However, it may be necessary to make minor changes prior to the consultation start date. This might include cosmetic adjustments, imagery and graphics, the correction of typographical errors and any minor factual changes. It is recommended that any such amendments be approved via delegated powers.