

Report to:	Cabinet Council	Date of Meeting:	Thursday 20 June 2024 Thursday 11 July 2024
Subject:	Bootle Area Action Plan - Publication		
Report of:	Executive Director (Place)	Wards Affected:	Derby; Linacre; Litherland; Netherton and Orrell;
Portfolio:	Cabinet Member – Housing and Highways		
Is this a Key Decision:	Yes	Included in Forward Plan:	Yes
Exempt / Confidential Report:	No		

Summary:

Report seeking approval for publication of Bootle Area Action Plan (Local Plan Document) for public comment and subsequent submission to Secretary of State for Examination in Public.

Recommendation(s):

That Cabinet:

- 1) recommend to Council that the Publication Draft of the Bootle AAP and supporting assessments be approved for publication for public comment and submission to the Secretary of State for examination.

That Council:

- 1) approve the Publication Draft of the Bootle AAP and supporting assessments for publication for public comment and submission to the Secretary of State for examination; and
- 2) delegate authority to the Chief Planning Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Highways and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economy and Skills, to make non-strategic changes to the Publication draft of the Bootle Area Action Plan or supporting assessments prior to publication and/or submission; and
- 3) delegate authority to the Chief Planning Officer, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Highways and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economy and Skills, to make minor editorial and presentational changes to the Publication draft of the Bootle Area Action Plan or supporting assessments prior to publication and/or submission.

Reasons for the Recommendation(s):

To allow the draft of the Bootle Area Action Plan and supporting assessments to be published for public comment and subsequently submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.

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

Not to do an Area Action Plan for Bootle. This is not appropriate as it is considered necessary to clearly set out a vision for the town and to provide the planning policy framework to allow the various planned and future regeneration projects and investment opportunities secure planning approval.

What will it cost and how will it be financed?

(A) Revenue Costs

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 Strategic Investment Fund (SIF).

(B) Capital Costs

There are no direct capital costs associated with the recommendations in this report.

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 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:

There are no equality implications.

The Publication draft Bootle AAP has been subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment. This concluded that the Bootle AAP would generally have a neutral impact on the range of protected characteristics, with a small number of positive outcomes from a number of policies. However, it is not expected that there will be any significant equality

implications from the Bootle AAP.

Impact on Children and Young People: Yes

The vision has been amended to have specific reference to children and young people (see paragraph 3.1 below). A specific objective of the AAP - *To recognise the needs and potential of children and young people in regeneration and place-making in Bootle* - has been added.

To help deliver on the vision and objectives in this regard, a number of policies in the Bootle AAP have specific references to children and young people so that any benefits of implementing the policy is focused on them. This includes:

BAAP1 'Design' – reference is made to design in new development should have particular emphasis placed on creating places that are safe and feel safe for women, children and young people and others who may feel vulnerable in public spaces.

BAAP3 'Bootle Central Area' and BAAP6 'Civic and Education Quarter' supports new educational facilities that will help maximise educational opportunities for our children and young people.

BAAP4 'Bootle Town Centre' sets out that the redevelopment plans for Bootle Strand should provide for facilities/uses should encourage leisure opportunities for all residents, including families, children and young people.

BAAP8 'Getting Around' sets out that to improve accessibility new development must ensure the needs of all residents and users of services, spaces and buildings, including children and young people and those with limited mobility, are met.

BAAP10 'Healthy Bootle' sets out the AAP will seek to protect and secure investment in existing public areas, open spaces, parks, playing fields and the links between them, encouraging people, particularly children and young people, to take physical exercise by providing opportunities for walking, cycling, outdoor recreation and sport.

BAAP11 'Public Greenspace' requires new development proposals should place particular emphasis on how children and young people can safely access areas of public greenspace from new development.

BAAP15 'Securing Opportunities for Employment and Skills from New Development' specifies that training and employment opportunities for children and young people is one of the priorities that should be prioritised within an Employment and Skills Plan.

BAAP18 'Housing for Older People and Supported Living' sets out an approach to ensure that only good quality and suitable homes are used for children's care homes and supported living.

BAAP22 'Open land between Irlam Road and the Asda Store' supports development on site with improvements to the adjacent open space, which could include new children's play equipment.

BAAP24 'Environmental Improvements' will secure financial contributions from new

development for arrange of environmental improvement. This will include improving public greenspaces with emphasis on facilities, equipment and activities for children and young people.

Climate Emergency Implications:

The recommendations within this report will

Have a positive impact	Yes
Have a neutral impact	No
Have a negative impact	No
The Author has undertaken the Climate Emergency training for report authors	Yes

Whilst the AAP will have a limited impact, as the effects will be restricted to the wider Bootle area only and to new development, there are policies in the plan that will have a positive impact on climate change implications. The key policy on this issue is BAAP ‘Best Use of Resources’ which requires major development proposals to incorporate measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions where practicable. The policy also seeks to ensure that new build housing developments should seek to be water efficient by seeking to encourage water consumption to fewer than 110 litres per person per day. The policy sets out that existing buildings should be re-used and retrofitted in preference to demolition and re-build unless it can be clearly demonstrated that loss of the buildings, through embedded carbon, is clearly outweighed by other factors. The policy also that development involving demolition and/or construction must implement measures to achieve the efficient use of resources, including minimising waste production and encouraging re-use and recycling materials.

Otherwise, the Bootle AAP generally supports to reuse of brownfield land in the Bootle area. This will help protect our greenspaces and greenfield land from future development if we can meet our development needs in our urban areas. It also supports development in central areas of Bootle which have good existing public transport connections. This will help reduce reliance on car use.

Contribution to the Council’s Core Purpose:

Protect the most vulnerable:

The AAP sets out policies that look to prevent new development having an unacceptable impact on all residents. It looks to secure sufficient sustainable homes, to help lower costs. It also includes policies that look to secure employment and training opportunities for some of our most deprived communities.

Facilitate confident and resilient communities:

The AAP is seeking to improve Bootle as a place and, if secured, this will help support Bootle’s communities.

Commission, broker and provide core services:

N/a

Place – leadership and influencer:

N/a

Drivers of change and reform:

N/a

Facilitate sustainable economic prosperity:

The AAP sets out policies that provide land for economic development, secures investment and looks to secure training and employment opportunities for local people.

Greater income for social investment: The AAP includes a policy that seeks to secure contributions towards local environmental improvements which may include supporting local groups to manage environmental projects.
Cleaner Greener The AAP includes a range of policies that look to secure improved places and best use of resources.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services (FD.7652/24) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5752/24) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

A member steering group was set up to inform and guide the Bootle AAP as it progressed to this stage. The steering group consisted of a ward member from each of the four wards that the Bootle AAP includes.

(B) External Consultations

The Bootle AAP has been subject to two previous stages of public engagement (see section two below). This include sending leaflets to every home and business in the area, public drop in events, and online workshops.

Implementation Date for the Decision

Immediately following the Council meeting.

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Appendices:

Publication Draft of Bootle Area Action Plan and Policy Map

Background Papers:

Draft Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment) of the Publication draft Bootle AAP

Draft Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Publication draft Bootle AAP

Equalities Impact Assessment of the Publication draft Bootle AAP

The above documents can be accessed from the [online library](#). If members would like a paper copy, they should contact the officer (details above).

1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 An Area Action Plan (AAP) is a type of Development Plan document that provides specific planning policy and guidance for a particular location or an area of significant change, for example a major regeneration area. AAPs can create new policy over and above the Sefton Local Plan within the designated AAP area. Unlike the Local Plan, having an Area Action Plan is optional.
- 1.2 The Council has been developing an Area Action Plan for the Bootle area (and parts of Seaforth and Litherland), titled the 'Bootle Area Action Plan – Our Future, Our Bootle' for the past few years. The emerging AAP has already been subject to two previous stages of public engagement.
- 1.3 The key purposes of doing an AAP for the wider Bootle area is:
- to promote and support regeneration, growth, and investment in the wider Bootle area and to make Bootle a sustainable place to live and work;
 - to provide the mechanism to secure planning approval for the various regeneration projects already underway in the area (notably plans for Bootle Strand);
 - to identify other areas of regeneration opportunity in the area and articulate the types of development the Council would wish to promote in the future in these areas;
 - to demonstrate to the public, landowners, businesses, the private sector, funding providers and others that the Council is supportive of and aspirational for growth and investment in the Bootle area;
 - to provide specific development management policies for the Bootle area to tackle issues particularly pressing in this area;
 - To show how the range of policies and development sites opportunities can contribute to a vision for the town.
- 1.4 This is the final draft of the AAP which will be published for public comment (hence it known as the 'Publication Draft'). Following a period for comment, the draft AAP, any comments made during the consultation period and any supporting evidence and documents will be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination. It is possible that examination hearing sessions will be required, but this will depend on the Inspector that we will be allocated and the comments made.
- 1.5 The Government has indicated that a new plan-making system is to be introduced later this year and plans that are currently being progressed under the current system, such as the Bootle AAP, must be submitted for examination no later than June 2025.

2. Previous Stages

- 2.1 This is the third stage of progressing the Bootle AAP. The Council approved an initial consultation document that set out some of the Issues and Options that the AAP could address. The 'Issues and Options' engagement took place between

November 2021 and January 2022 and details are available at www.sefton.gov.uk/bootleAAP.

- 2.2 All the comments made during this engagement period were used to inform the first full draft of the Area Action Plan (known as ‘Preferred Options’).
- 2.3 The ‘Preferred Options’ draft of the AAP was the first document that set out a vision, objectives, a range of policies and site allocations. The ‘preferred options’ of the AAP was approved by Cabinet for public engagement at their meeting on 22 June 2023. Following its approval, the document was made available for public comment during August to November 2023. Whilst changes have been made since the ‘preferred option’ stage, the publication draft of the AAP remains substantively similar.

3. Bootle Area Action Plan – Publication Draft

- 3.1 The Publication draft of the Bootle Area Action Plan starts by setting out an Introduction (section 1) and an overview of the context of Bootle as a place (section 2) before moving to set out the vision and objectives that the AAP is looking to achieve. The draft vision in the document is:

‘Our ambition is for Bootle to be one of the best places in which to grow up in the country. By 2040, a regenerated Bootle will be a place that provides a full range of opportunities to all its residents to live secure, fulfilling, healthy and supported lives whilst addressing key environmental challenges, including pollution and climate change. It will be a place that is open to sustainable business and provide skills, expertise, land, facilities and infrastructure that is attractive to a range of high-quality employers particularly those that would benefit from Bootle’s superb locational advantages. Key to Bootle’s success will be our children and young people who will have the spaces, opportunities, support and a voice to shape their town for the future.’

- 3.2 To help deliver on the vision, the Bootle AAP then identifies 15 objectives for the plan:

Obj1	To meet the housing needs of Bootle’s residents in a way that is safe and secure including affordable and aspirational housing, homes for families, older people, and people with special needs
Obj2	To ensure new buildings are resource efficient to help reduce running costs and especially fuel poverty and to support the retrofitting of existing homes and buildings with energy efficiency measures
Obj3	To prevent the building and conversion of poor-quality houses, flats and homes in multiple occupation that fail to provide a suitable and secure homes or integrate with the community
Obj4	To ensure that existing and future residents have access to a wide range of easily accessible and high-quality services and facilities with all key facilities and services within a short, safe and attractive walk or cycle ride
Obj5	To make land, premises and infrastructure available for sustainable economic growth that enables Bootle to build upon its excellent location in the city region, on the coast and close to the motorway and rail network

Obj6	To provide good quality, secure jobs, training and business opportunities for Bootle's residents
Obj7	To put measures in place to prevent, reduce and mitigate the harm that business and commercial activity can have on residential amenity and quality of life
Obj8	To improve Bootle Town Centre and the Strand shopping centre to consolidate its position as the main focus of shopping, leisure, cultural, community and other uses for Bootle's residents and those in the wider area
Obj9	To bring back into beneficial use vacant land, homes, and buildings
Obj10	To protect and enhance green infrastructure and nature as part of a high quality environment for Bootle, including identifying locations for tree planting, landscaping and ecological improvements
Obj11	To make Bootle a healthier place to live and to provide an environment that enables residents to live a healthier lifestyle
Obj12	To set high standards of design for new buildings, infrastructure and spaces that complement and improve the places that make Bootle special and which help design out crime and anti-social behaviour
Obj13	To set standards in new development that help the Council respond to the challenge of climate change
Obj14	To identify, protect and, where appropriate, find suitable viable uses for Bootle's valued built heritage.
Obj15	To recognise the needs and potential of children and young people in regeneration and place-making in Bootle

3.3 The vision and objectives above will be delivered through a range of policies set out in the AAP. These are summarised below.

Design and Best Uses of Resources

3.4 Policy BAAP1 'Design' looks to add a local dimension to the existing Local Plan policy on design and the National Design Guide. Specifically, this addresses issues such as design of new development needing to reflect Bootle's Victorian and Edwardian heritage. It also looks to avoid areas 'left over from planning' that have no public ownership and therefore can attract littering and fly-tipping. The policy also stresses the importance of public spaces that are well overlooked and provide safe spaces for all.

3.5 The policy refers to findings of the Design Code Pilot that Sefton participated in during 2021 and the Design Code that was produced for canal side sites in Bootle during that pilot. The policy also covers the design considerations for small infill development sites that are occasionally available in Bootle.

3.6 Policy BAAP2 sets out the approach to the best use of resources. It covers energy efficiency measures for major developments and looks to set water efficiency standards in new homes. The policy also looks to encourage re-using and retrofitting of buildings in preference to demolition if this is appropriate.

Bootle Central Area

- 3.7 Policy BAAP3 defines the central area of Bootle and the types of development that would be encouraged and acceptable in this area. This policy sets the context for the 3 key sub areas in the Central Area, namely:
- BAAP4 'Bootle Town Centre' – confirms that this is the focus for retail, leisure and other town centre uses and sets out the key principles for the redevelopment plans for Bootle Strand.
 - BAAP5 'Office Quarter' – looks to protect the key office accommodation in the area and provides a flexible approach to other buildings and sites.
 - BAAP6 'Civic and Education Quarter' – this policy set out the principles for the re-use of the Town Hall complex of buildings and supports expanded education uses in and around the existing Hugh Baird campus areas.
- 3.8 To help support the key opportunity sites that the AAP has identified in and around the Bootle Central Area (notably in the office quarter to the south of Merton Road), the Council propose to commission a Masterplan for the area. This will be a way to engage with local landowners to demonstrate to them the development opportunities that exist in the area in which they own land. The Bootle AAP would provide the mechanism to secure approval for these development opportunities whilst the Masterplan would be used to attract landowner and developer interest.
- 3.9 The Masterplan would in effect have a marketing role to 'sell' the vision for the area, show the type and mix of development that could occur and how this could link to other major regeneration proposals that are or could happen (such as Bootle Strand or the Hawthorne Road/Canal Corridor, see below).

Regeneration Opportunity Areas

- 3.9 There are several sites that have been identified as regeneration opportunity areas which the AAP promotes for a flexible range of uses to try to boost their chance of being developed. These include sites within the Hawthorne Road/Canal Corridor (Policy BAAP20) which could, in the longer term, form part of a wider new mixed-use neighbourhood.
- 3.10 As with the Bootle Central Area and office quarter (see above) it is proposed that a Masterplan is to be commissioned to support the Hawthorne Road/Canal Corridor allocation to demonstrate in a visual and engaging manner the potential development that could occur in this neighbourhood. At the moment the area is a mix of different uses including some lower quality employment land. The Council could use this masterplan approach to 'sell' the potential of the area for a new mixed use area anchored around a canal side residential area and gauge the potential interest in this from landowners, the public, the potential investors and funding providers.

- 3.11 The complex of buildings in Bootle Village (corner of Litherland Road and Waterworks Street) has been identified as a potential area for new uses (Policy BAAP21), as has a small overgrown piece of land to the west of Asda (BAAP22) and the land around Coffeehouse Bridge, Irlam Road (BAAP23). Bootle Office Quarter (BAAP5) also includes some areas that a flexible approach to new uses is given.

Employment

- 3.12 Policy BAAP12 identifies the employment sites in the AAP area and sets out what types of employment uses we would accept on each. This policy takes account of the different types of employment areas we have and that they have different characters and are suitable different types of businesses. Policy BAAP13 looks to protect these sites for employment uses and identifies the limited circumstances in which we would allow other uses on them. Policy BAAP14 set how we would assess proposals on employment sites so that it does not cause significant harm to residents. Policy BAAP15 looks to secure employment and training opportunities for local residents from large developments in the Bootle area.

Housing

- 3.13 Policy BAAP16 identifies the sites allocated for housing in the AAP area. These will contribute to Sefton's overall housing supply. It is estimated that the AAP could contribute approximately 1,500 new homes during the period up to 2040. Policy BAAP17 sets out a range of measures to try to diversify the housing stock in the Bootle area. The policy reiterates the Local Plan requirement for 15% of new homes on schemes of 15 homes or more to be secured as affordable homes. It sets out the tenure mix of those affordable homes. On large schemes (50+ homes) of 100% affordable housing, which are common in the Bootle area, the policy seeks to prevent all those homes being social/affordable rent and looks to secure at least half as affordable ownership homes. This is to help provide choice for residents and to assist people to get onto the housing ladder without moving away.
- 3.14 Policy BAAP17 also looks to secure a mix of house types (in relation to number of bedrooms) in both market and affordable housing on large housing developments (25+ homes). The policy also looks to secure all new homes to a minimum standard of accessibility and adaptability (i.e. Building Regs M4(2)) and 5% of new build homes on large schemes of 50+ at the higher standard for wheelchair users (i.e. M4(3)). In this regard it is more stringent than the current Local Plan requirement and reflects Bootle's higher proportion of residents who live with a limiting long-term illness. The policy also encourages the provision of plots for self/custom build homes on very large housing schemes (100+ homes) to help the Council to meet its responsibilities in relation to self and custom build homes.
- 3.15 Policy BAAP18 supports housing for older people but looks to restrict new assisted living care schemes to the social rented sector, which is the identified need in the Bootle area. The policy seeks to prevent an over-concentration of Residential Care Homes for Children in the Bootle area, with a restriction proposed that would prevent conversions to new care homes for children within 400m of an existing home. The policy also steers care homes for children with

educational, behavioural, or social difficulties (EBSD) to larger properties if there are more than one child to be looked after. The policy also requires a management plan to be submitted with all applications for children's care home use and to be supported by evidence of local need.

- 3.16 Policy BAAP19 looks to manage proposals for conversions to flats and Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). This includes having regards to impact on future tenants, existing neighbours, and the wider neighbourhood. This policy links to the existing detailed Supplementary Planning Document on this issue. This policy also looks to prevent the loss of homes that are suitable and in demand locally for continued use as family dwellings and commercial properties that are in demand for businesses.

Other policies

- 3.17 Bootle has a number of long shopping parades (e.g. Linacre Road, Stanley Road) that have high numbers of vacant units and provide too much retail space for modern requirements. Therefore, it is proposed to identify core blocks in these parades to be protected for local shopping and service provision (Policy BAAP7). For the other blocks on these longer parades, the Council will encourage redevelopment. On all parades, the Council will restrict conversion of ground floor units to residential except in very limited circumstances.
- 3.18 The AAP also contains a policy on nature (BAAP9) and looks to secure ecological improvements on all development sites. The AAP also seeks to secure contributions towards environmental improvements, including to open spaces.
- 3.19 Policy BAAP8 promotes ease of movement through and between new developments for all and identifies the key routes in Bootle which will be the priority for protection and improvement.
- 3.20 Policy BAAP10 looks to address health inequalities in the Bootle area. The policy links to the range of existing and proposed policies that can have a positive benefit on the health of residents. This includes making it a requirement that on large schemes an application must be supported by a Health Impact Assessment to show how the proposal will help address relevant health issues.

4. Supporting documents, evidence, and assessments for the Bootle AAP

- 4.1 The Bootle AAP, like all planning policy documents, is supported by a range of documents (many statutory), evidence and assessments. It is intended to publish these alongside the Publication draft of the Bootle AAP so that people can comment on these or to see how we are justifying our AAP policies.
- 4.2 The following supporting assessments will be published for comment alongside the Bootle AAP:
- Draft Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment) of the Publication draft Bootle AAP
 - Draft Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Publication draft Bootle AAP
 - Equalities Impact Assessment of the Publication draft Bootle AAP

4.3 Approval is sought to publish these supporting assessments alongside the Publication Draft of Bootle AAP.

5. Engagement and Next Steps

5.1 The Council recently had an informal meeting with a planning Inspector who acted as a critical friend on the draft Bootle AAP. The meeting provided an early opportunity for a government planning inspector to review the Bootle AAP before publication and submission. Whilst not binding, the outcome of the meeting was a list of questions and observations the Inspector had on the AAP. Many of these will be clarified and answered within topic papers which will support the Bootle AAP, whilst others may require some changes to the Bootle AAP prior to publication. These changes will be done under delegated authority as set out in the suggested recommendations of this report.

5.2 If approved, the Publication draft of Bootle AAP will be made available for comment. It will be published online, and hard copies will be made available in libraries and Council offices in Bootle. The AAP will be available for a minimum period of 8 weeks over the summer. Following a period for comment, the draft AAP, any comments made during the consultation period and any supporting evidence, and documents will be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination. It is possible that examination hearing sessions will be required, but this will depend on the Inspector that will be allocated to us. It is expected that the examination stage (including any hearings) will progress into the early part of 2025.

5.3 As set out above, the Council will commission two Masterplans (Bootle Central Area and the Hawthorne Road/Canal Corridor) and will engage on these throughout this summer. These will be useful to engage more deeply and specifically with relevant landowners and local residents on development options that are allowed by the Bootle AAP within these two areas. It is intended that the Masterplans would be commissioned by Planning, with the support of colleagues across the Council, and undertaken during this summer so that a draft will be available to submit alongside the Bootle AAP in November.

5.4 If adopted, the Bootle AAP will form part of the Development Plan for Sefton, alongside the Sefton Local Plan. These are both supported by a range of Supplementary Planning Documents which are introduced and updated from time-to-time.