

TRAFFORD CIVIC QUARTER AREA ACTION PLAN EXAMINATION HEARING APRIL 2022

OPENING STATEMENT

Good morning and welcome to Trafford Town Hall. It is a pleasure to be able to host the Civic Quarter Area Action Plan Examination here at the very heart of the Civic Quarter. This is the first Local Plan Examination in Trafford since 2011 and represents a significant step towards a new planning policy framework for the Borough, with the Joint Development Plan – Places for Everyone and the emerging Trafford Local Plan following closely behind.

I would firstly like to thank my colleagues in both Planning and Development and Strategic Growth for all their efforts, in very difficult circumstances, in getting this Plan to Examination. I would also like to thank our consultant team who have assisted with the Plan and its evidence base. We have all had to change our ways of working, and of engaging with communities and stakeholders, in the last two years. It is a credit to everyone that the Inspector will hear speak from the Council this week, and others beside, that this Plan has continued to positively progress to this important milestone.

Securing the successful regeneration of this location has been a longstanding Council priority. The Civic Quarter is home to Lancashire Cricket Club, University Academy 92, Trafford College and established communities and businesses. The Council purchased the former Kelloggs headquarters site in 2017 to bring forward UA92 and a new community, including a primary school. UA92 is now in its third year of teaching activity, and a reserved matters application for 630 dwellings on much of the remainder of the site is imminent. Other planning applications have come forward for high density development and there is much developer interest.

The Civic Quarter AAP grew out of a vision for the Civic Quarter first expressed in a Masterplan and consultation draft Supplementary Planning Document in 2018. It became obvious, however, that this area of significant transformational change required more than planning guidance to bring it forward successfully. It needed a statutory policy framework and one that was able to go further than that in the adopted Core Strategy. The Council is committed to placing its planning function at the heart of place making, and a statutory plan at the local level was the right mechanism to secure and manage change in this area. Consequently, the Civic Quarter AAP, the supporting SEA and evidence base underwent Regulation 18 consultation in February to April 2020 and Regulation 19 consultation in January to March 2021. The Council's Planning Committee approved the submission draft of the Area Action Plan in November 2021.

The Plan has a vision that puts place based regeneration at its heart. The Plan builds on the area's unique sporting and built heritage, centred on Lancashire Cricket Club and Trafford Town Hall and seeks to deliver up to 4000 homes and 50,000sqm of workspace, all on brownfield land. Alongside this, there is a focus on significant new public realm and sound urban design principles. Even in a highly accessible location like the Civic Quarter, such significant change cannot take place without supporting infrastructure and services, and the Plan provides an innovative equalisation strategy to ensure delivery of the infrastructure the area needs. Taken as a whole this will create a new, diverse, resilient and vibrant mixed use neighbourhood. The Plan provides a robust policy framework to ensure that a sustainable and balanced community and a place with its own identity is delivered.

The Plan comes before the Inspector for his consideration with only 34 objections having been made. There are now only two representors attending. Agreement has been reached with Lancashire Cricket Club and all public bodies. The outstanding concerns are largely site specific and relate to height,

quantum, infrastructure and viability. As to height and scale of development, in the Council's view the parameters plan is sound reflecting local context and that the ambitions implicit in the objections are inconsistent with the context. As to the infrastructure requirements, it is considered that they are CIL Regulation 122 compliant. The Council considers that the infrastructure is required to enable the scale of the development envisaged and that stand alone high density developments are not acceptable without it. In respect of viability, there is now dispute on some of the inputs from Derwent but the Council's case remains that for all sites, the equalisation payments and the AH is viable. There may be a special case based on site specific abnormalities or high existing use value in respect of White City to justify a site specific assessment. These issues will be addressed on day 4.

The Plan also reflects the Council's three corporate priorities: reducing health inequalities; supporting people out of poverty and addressing our climate crisis. In doing so, the plan is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy. It meets the tests of soundness.

I therefore commend this plan to the Inspector for his consideration.