

News

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Transformational town centre masterplans for Earlestown and St Helens approved

The vision for once-in-a-generation transformation of Earlestown and St Helens town centres is closer to becoming reality as councillors sign off on the Masterplan Development Frameworks.

On Wednesday, 2 February, St Helens Borough Council's cabinet approved the final plans for the two town centres, which incorporated changes based on the highly positive feedback from businesses, residents and visitors.

St Helens Borough Council and its partner regeneration experts, The English Cities Fund (ECF), launched draft Masterplan Development Frameworks for the regeneration of the two town centres in November last year.

ECF is a national development joint venture between leading urban regenerator, Muse Developments, Legal & General and Homes England.

Welcoming the decision Councillor Richard McCauley, cabinet member for regeneration and planning, said: "This is a huge step forward for our borough and as a Cabinet we are delighted that the plans have had the backing from the public. It shows that businesses, residents and visitors are ready for us to get to work in transforming Earlestown and St Helens town centres.

"Now our focus is on putting forward the planning applications for the first phase of each project, which will be submitted in the coming months, so that the much-needed transformation of these town centres can start as soon as possible. We are also advancing discussions with our ECF partners to ensure that local employment and supply chain opportunities are maximised for our residents and businesses during the construction phase in accordance with our inclusive growth commitments."

Leon Guyett, development director at ECF, said: "It's fantastic to reach this significant milestone in our partnership with St Helens Council, as we receive Cabinet approval on our proposals to breathe new life into the town centres of St Helens and Earlestown.

"It was great to speak to many members of the community, which has informed the masterplan as it stands. We look forward to continuing on with the delivery stage of our partnership, as part of our collective commitment to delivering place-changing, sustainable regeneration that will drive direct benefits to all areas of the borough."

"We will provide regular updates on progress in the coming weeks and months, as I'm sure that all our communities are eager to stay involved and, like me, cannot wait to see our shared vision become reality."

Both town centres are the subject of separate Masterplan Development Frameworks, which set out multi-million-pound visions and principles for each.

The updated plans now include for new high quality parking provision in St Helens town centre that will cater for shoppers and night-time visitors alike, and working closely with traders on the right type of weather-proof market space for the historic Earlestown Market.

The first phase in St Helens town centre will include:

- An enhanced sense of arrival with a new bus station
- A new market hall in the centre of the town
- New high quality office space
- High quality homes for town centre living
- An international hotel brand
- Extensive public realm improvements

The first phase in Earlestown town centre will include:

- Enhancing Market Square with a partially covered market area, flexible events space and landscape improvements
- Improvements to key high streets between the rail station and the Market Square to make the environment more welcoming and pedestrian friendly in support of local businesses

Work is continuing to support existing businesses that may be affected by the transformation, alongside progression on a number of acquisitions to deliver the first phase of the masterplans.