

## Western Harbour Regeneration Project: Frequently Asked Questions

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### **What is the Western Harbour Regeneration Project?**

The Western Harbour Regeneration Project is the name Bristol City Council has given to the regeneration initiative at Cumberland Basin.


The Western Harbour Regeneration Project is seeking to redevelop the Western Harbour Project Area (*see Fig. 2 below*) to create a thriving new sustainable neighbourhood where people choose to live, work and visit and one that responds to the water and its unique location. The transformed area will include new homes, commercial and leisure spaces alongside high quality public open space and public realm.

### **What is the Western Harbour Growth and Regeneration Area?**

Western Harbour is the name for the proposed Growth and Regeneration Area identified in the council's Draft Local Plan Review centred on the Cumberland Basin area (*as identified in Figure 1*).

Bristol's Local Plan Review (2019) identifies Western Harbour as one of its Growth and Regeneration Areas. This 40ha area, centred on the Cumberland Basin, stretches from Baltic Wharf in the east to beyond where the River Avon meets the floating harbour in the west. To the south, the area follows Coronation Road and Cliff House Road then continues to take in the A370 Jessop Underpass and A3029 Brunel Way and extends west to the Portishead railway line. To the north of the Plimsoll Swing Bridge, the boundary follows Hotwells Road, Dowry Place and Oldfield Place. Regeneration is already underway in Western Harbour, with schemes being developed for Payne's Shipyard and the Baltic Wharf Caravan site.

The Western Harbour Growth & Regeneration Area is larger than the Western Harbour Project Area and it includes land that is owned by both the public and private sector. Therefore, development proposals may come forward in the Western Harbour Growth & Regeneration Area independently and earlier than developments in the Western Harbour Project Area, as the council continues to progress its plans for the Project Area.

 Western Harbour  
Growth and  
Regeneration area (Local  
Plan Review, 2019)



*Figure 1: Western Harbour Growth & Regeneration Area*

### **Where is Western Harbour Project Area?**

The Western Harbour Project Area is the area at the westerly entrance to the historic Floating Harbour, including the immediate areas north and south.

The Western Harbour Project Area is the area shaded purple on the plan in Figure 2 below and includes land on both the north and south of Cumberland Basin, as well as land to the north and south of The Cut occupied by the three Bonded Warehouses and the Riverside Garden Centre.

Bristol City Council owns the majority of the land within the Western Harbour Project Area; therefore, the council will be in control of how the land is brought forward for redevelopment.

The majority of the land within the Western Harbour Project Area is difficult to bring forward for redevelopment without first making alterations to the road network and addressing the significant flood risk in the area. The Western Harbour Regeneration Project provides an opportunity to bring together thinking on transport, flooding, and place shaping, to fully unlock the potential of the area.

Western Harbour  
Regeneration Project  
Area



Figure 2: Western Harbour Project Area

## **Why is change proposed at Western Harbour?**

Bristol's Local Plan Review identified a number of Growth and Regeneration Areas across the city, including Western Harbour. Alongside the Local Plan Review, a requirement to replace parts of the highway infrastructure at Cumberland Basin, which will require significant capital investment just to retain the current arrangements, also provided an impetus to look at potential for redeveloping Western Harbour.

There are several reasons why Western Harbour hasn't been considered for redevelopment until now – it is a complex area, carved up by road infrastructure, prone to flooding and located within a highly sensitive historic and landscape context. However, the need to replace parts of the highway infrastructure reaching the end of its life span has provided an impetus to look at this area afresh.

The regeneration of Western Harbour will need to balance local and city aspirations and priorities and be grounded in the context of the need to address some of the biggest challenges facing Bristol; a shortage of housing, recovering economically and socially from COVID-19, flood risk, and the ecological and climate emergency. Bristol's recently published One City Economic Recovery Strategy has committed to building back better and driving inclusive and sustainable growth in all that we do. The council is equally committed to embedding the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within future development. These principles will inform the transformation of Western Harbour.

Western Harbour is a once in a lifetime opportunity to transform one of Bristol harbour's last remaining neglected corners. The harbourside has become arguably one of the city's best loved destinations - a place where people increasingly want to live, work, and spend their leisure time. Western Harbour represents a tremendous opportunity to further expand and enhance the harbourside offer, deliver affordable housing, celebrate maritime heritage, and ensure flood defences are fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **What is the Western Harbour Advisory Group?**

The Mayor established the Western Harbour Advisory Group ('WHAG') to help steer the project and support engagement activities. The group includes representatives from local community and voluntary organisations, businesses including local visitor destinations, Senior City Council Officers and Youth Mayors. Members have a proven ability to convene, influence, champion and bring different organisations together, to help shape the future of Western Harbour. The list of members was drawn up to reflect both the local, citywide, and regional importance of a scheme such as this and includes the following:

- Bristol Chamber of Commerce & Initiative (Chair)
- Business West
- Bedminster BID
- Ashton Gate
- Homes England

- Destination Bristol
- Hope Community Church
- Cumberland Basin Stakeholder Group
- City Centre Revitalisation Group
- SS Great Britain
- Underfall Yard
- Bristol Property Agents
- Youth Mayor
- Voscur
- North Somerset Council
- Bristol City Council
- West of England Combined Authority

### **What stage is the project at and what is proposed next for Summer 2021?**

The next stage of the project is to develop a vision for the Western Harbour Project Area to guide the future transformation of the area.

In consultation with the WHAG, the council intends to commission an independent organisation to develop and deliver an inclusive city-wide engagement programme to listen to people's views and their aspirations for the future of the Western Harbour area. The outcome of this city-wide engagement process will be to produce:

- A long-term aspirational vision looking beyond the here and now to set out what Western Harbour could look like in 2050.
- Define the guiding Place Principles that will underpin the masterplan and future transformation of the Western Harbour area.

Once the vision is complete and agreed by Bristol City Council Cabinet, the next phase of the project will be to develop a Masterplan and associated delivery plan. The vision & associated Place Principles will underpin and inform the masterplan.

Whilst the Local Plan Review set out an indicative range of land uses and quantum of development across the Western Harbour Growth & Regeneration Area, the detailed approach to the project area will be shaped by the master-planning work.

The masterplan will not progress, until a Vision for the Western Harbour Project Area has been developed in collaboration with the City, local communities and stakeholders.



## What has happened so far?

In 2018, work started on the Bristol Local Plan Review. During March-May 2019, a consultation was undertaken on the draft Bristol Local Plan Review. In 2019 early engagement was also undertaken on potential new road layouts in the Western Harbour Project Area.

The review of Bristol's Local Plan is continuing. It will set out how Bristol will grow over the next 20 years.

In 2019 Bristol's Local Plan Review identified a number of Growth and Regeneration Areas across the city, including Western Harbour (see Policy DS4 for more details). Further details can be found on [Western Harbour webpage](#).

Alongside the Local Plan Review, a requirement to replace parts of the highway infrastructure at Cumberland Basin also provided an impetus to look at potential for redeveloping the Western Harbour area.

In 2018 Bristol City Council commissioned Arup, Alec French and JLL to undertake a Western Harbour Transport Feasibility Study to consider alternative design options for the highway infrastructure. A copy of the Western Harbour Transport Feasibility Study can be accessed via the [Western Harbour webpage](#).

In 2019 Bristol City Council embarked on early engagement into possible approaches to changing the road network within the Western Harbour Project Area and undertook: *Western Harbour Initial ideas for changes to the road network engagement*. Three possible ways to change the transport network were set out for public comment – the Western Approach, Eastern Approach and Hybrid Approach. Further information and a summary of the engagement responses can be found on the [Western Harbour webpage](#).

In February 2020 the council began a process of focused engagement with key stakeholders and local communities and businesses however this had to be paused due to COVID 19.

Further Information on the background to the project can be found on the [Western Harbour webpage](#).

## Has a road network been chosen already?

No decisions on the road network have been made. Options for road changes will be considered and refined as the project progresses through the master-planning stage.

In 2019 Bristol City Council embarked on early engagement into possible approaches to changing the road network within the Western Harbour Project Area. The existing road network is in need of significant investment and it was seen as an opportunity to start discussions, understand the art of the possible and whether different road solutions could open up the area for redevelopment.

Current estimates indicate the cost of replacing the highway structure would be between £37m-£43m. This would retain the existing layout and fail to release any land for new homes, address challenges associated with climate change, or improve the transport network. The council therefore wanted to explore alternative road layouts in the Western Harbour Project Area.

The intention of the 2019 highway's engagement was to capture early views on potential approaches, it was not about selecting a final option.

Several road network options were originally considered but only three approaches were presented during the 2019 engagement. The full report containing all options that were considered has been published and is available on the [Western Harbour webpage](#).

### **Where is the project in the development process? And what is the timeline?**

The Western Harbour Regeneration Project is at an early initial stage. The next phase of the project is to undertake city wide inclusive engagement to inform the creation of a vision for the Western Harbour Project Area.

Once the vision is complete and agreed by Bristol City Council Cabinet, the subsequent phase of the project will be to develop a masterplan and associated delivery plan for the Western Harbour Project Area. The Vision and the associated Place Principles will underpin and inform the masterplan.

The master-planning stage will be the start of the formal development process. At this stage more information will be provided on proposed design options and potential uses within the Western Harbour Project Area. Public engagement will continue throughout this process to ensure people's views inform emerging design options for the area.

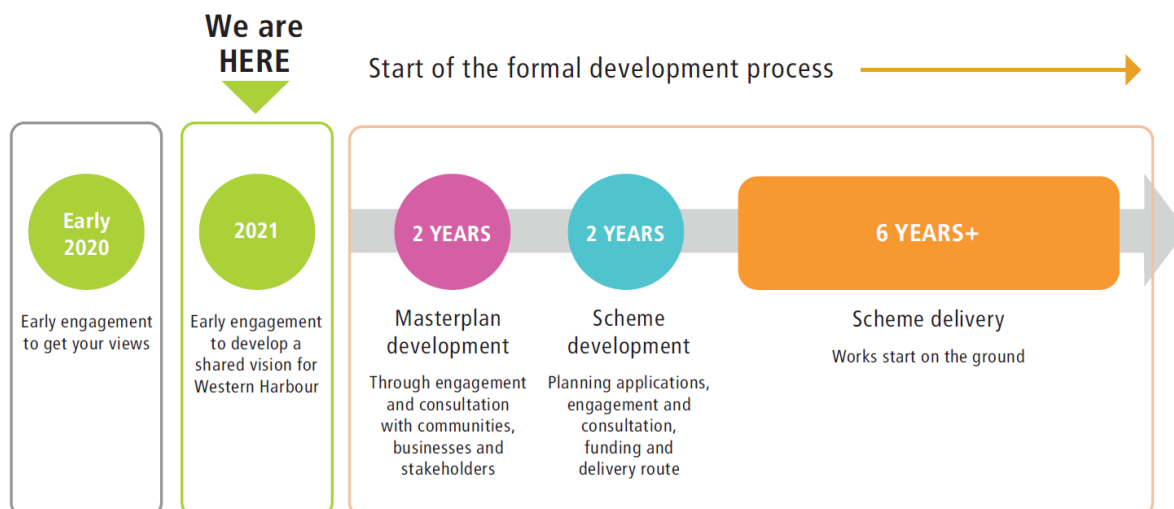
It is intended the masterplan will be considered for approval by Bristol City Council Cabinet once complete.

If the masterplan is approved by Cabinet, it will then inform the development and submission of detailed planning applications for developments and supporting infrastructure projects within the Western Harbour Project Area. Further public consultation and engagement will be undertaken on project specific proposals as they emerge, before moving on to delivery on site.

Engagement forms a key part of developing proposals for the Western Harbour Project Area. At each stage of the process Bristol Citizens and stakeholders will have an opportunity to help shape and feed into proposal for the Western Harbour Project Area. See below for an indicative process and timeline:



## Western Harbour Regeneration Project – Indicative Process



### What future engagement is being proposed?

In 2021 we are seeking to deliver a programme of inclusive and meaningful engagement to ensure citizens, businesses and stakeholders inform a vision for the future of Western Harbour.

To ensure we listen to the views of local residents, stakeholders and the wider city on their aspirations for the future of Western Harbour Project Area, the council wishes to take an inclusive, collaborative, creative approach to the next phase of engagement.

In consultation with the Western Harbour Advisory Group, the council is in the process of procuring an independent organisation to develop and deliver an inclusive city-wide engagement programme to listen to people's views and their aspirations for the future of the Western Harbour Project Area.

The council will work with the organisation once appointed to develop an engagement programme that seeks to build trust, capture diverse voices and engage inclusively to harness the passion, knowledge and ideas of Bristol citizens to shape a vision for the Western Harbour Project Area.

To achieve this, we believe that engagement should be underpinned by the following four key foundations:

- **Engage** - meaningfully and creatively to inspire and capture diverse voices
- **Listen** – sensitively and openly to understand a wide range of views and aspirations
- **Collaborate** –connect, integrate, and share ideas and opportunities
- **Co- Create** –build skills, shape plans, test ideas and spaces that meet needs

It is hoped these foundations will continue to inform our approach to engagement over the lifetime of the project.

The outcome of this city-wide engagement process will be to produce:

- A long-term aspirational vision looking beyond the here and now to set out what the Western Harbour area could look like in 2050.
- Define the guiding Place Principles that will underpin the masterplan and future transformation of the Western Harbour area.

Once the vision is complete and agreed by Bristol City Council Cabinet, the next phase of the project will be to develop a masterplan and associated delivery plan for the Western Harbour Project Area. The vision & associated Place Principles will underpin and inform the masterplan.

### **What will be the status of the Western Harbour Vision - how can I contribute to it and be involved in the project?**

The Western Harbour Vision will inform and underpin the development of a masterplan for Western Harbour Project Area – The vision will be produced in collaboration with both local and citywide communities and stakeholders.

In Summer 2021 a programme of city-wide engagement will commence to inform the production of a vision for the Western Harbour Project Area – when the engagement programme is confirmed it will be promoted to ensure residents and stakeholders can get involved.

If you would like to share your views and/or to hear more about how you can be involved in due course, please register on the [Western Harbour webpage](#).

### **How are the bonded warehouses involved?**

Two of the 3 Grade 2 listed bonded warehouses (referred to as A & B Bond) that sit at the heart of the Western Harbour Project Area will be an integral part any proposals coming forward.

The Western Harbour Project Area has lots of important heritage assets linking to Bristol's maritime past, and it is important these are celebrated. The master-planning phase of the project will consider and identify the future role and use of the bonded warehouses and other important heritage assets in the area.

Should the master-planning phase propose residential development being part of the vision for A & B Bond, Goram Homes will be the agent to bring this forward and would undertake consultation and engagement on any proposal.

Goram Homes is the council's owned housing company. Find more information about [Goram Homes](#) online.

### How will other developments in the area link up with the project?

The Western Harbour Growth & Regeneration Area is larger than the Western Harbour Project Area and it includes land that is owned by both the public and private sector. Therefore, development proposals may come forward in the Western Harbour Growth & Regeneration Area independently and earlier than developments in the Western Harbour Project Area, as the council continues to progress its plans for the Project Area.

Some of the other development projects coming forward in the Western Harbour Growth & Regeneration Area, or near it include:

- **Baltic Wharf** is a scheme being taken forward by Goram Homes, to build much needed affordable housing on a site already identified for development. A planning application has been submitted and statutory consultations will be launched shortly. Find more information about [Baltic Wharf](#).
- **Payne's Shipyard** is a private development and planning application has been submitted. The planning application is due to be considered by Planning Committee in June 2021. [Find more information about Payne's Shipyard](#).
- **Ashton Sidings** is a Homes England led development delivering much needed affordable homes. A planning application has been submitted. The planning application is due to be considered by Planning Committee shortly.

These three developments do not form part of the Western Harbour Project Area. (see map in Q2).

Citizens and stakeholders have an opportunity to share their views on the three identified development proposals through the formal consultation process during the pre-application and planning application stage process, as well as through any engagement activity developers undertake prior to submitting their planning applications.

As design proposals emerge for the Western Harbour Project Area, they will reach across the "red lines" of development and plan boundaries to consider and respond to the surrounding context, which will include any planned or existing developments within the Western Harbour Regeneration & Growth Area.

### Will the redevelopment of Western Harbour mean lots of tall buildings are built?

Taller buildings are one way of optimising the number of homes in a sustainable, central, location. They aren't the only way, and they are not appropriate in all circumstances. Any buildings will have to reflect the current character, mass, and sightlines in this historic area.

Bristol City Council is committed to making the most of the development land available in all its Growth and Regeneration areas, including Western Harbour, to support the significant increase in new-and-affordable homes and infrastructure we desperately need.

Bristol's Local Plan Review, supported by the Urban Living Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), sets out an approach to making successful places at a higher density. Urban living is all about the creation of compact, characterful, and healthy urban areas where people can live, work, and play with good access to high quality walking and cycling linkages and public transport. Such an approach looks to making the best use of urban land and building at optimal densities, adopting creative approaches to mixing land uses, and delivering a high-quality public realm. Densities are optimised by balancing the efficient and effective use of land, with aspirations for a positive response to context, successful placemaking, and making quality homes

Whilst tall buildings are one way of potentially optimising densities, they aren't the only way, and aren't appropriate in all circumstances.

Western Harbour has a particularly unique and special character. The whole of area lies within the City Docks Conservation area. One of the key aspects of the character of the area of the views to, from and across the area. It will therefore be important early in the master-planning stage, that early design concepts are rigorously tested to understand their visual impact from key vantage points using nationally prepared guidance. This, together with other appraisal techniques such as sunlight/daylight modelling, will help establish acceptable building envelopes which can then be developed in further detail. These assessments will be made available through the consultation process on the masterplan.

### **What type of development might be possible in Western Harbour?**

This has yet to be determined; the project is in its early stages and the formal design or development process has not yet commenced.

Once the master-planning stage begins, following the creation of a vision, more detail on the potential design and development of the Western Harbour Project Area will emerge. This will likely be 2022/23.

### **How will the project affect the harbour?**

The redevelopment of the Western Harbour area will breathe new life into this part of the harbour, creating a thriving new destination at the heart of the City which will be welcoming for all. The project will recognise and celebrate the important heritage assets as well as Bristol's long association with water and the docks. The project will seek to enabling more people to enjoy the waterside whilst ensuring the continuing operations of the working dock.

### **Will the climate and ecological emergency priorities be taken into account in this regeneration project?**

Yes. We are committed to embedding the delivery of the UN Sustainable Development Goals within the project and responding to the council's Climate Emergency Declaration, achieving Net Carbon Neutrality by 2030, and the council's

Ecological Emergency Declaration. These principles will underpin the transformation of the area.

The Western Harbour area will also be redeveloped to create a cleaner, safer city by improving air quality.

### **Further questions:**

#### **How does this project link to Cleaner air for Bristol?**

We're working to create a cleaner, safer city by improving air quality. We want to reduce pollution levels through further improvements around the city, building on new travel habits established following COVID-19. In addition, a Full Business Case for a Clean Air Zone has been approved by the council's cabinet and will now be submitted to Government. Further details can be found on the [Clean Air for Bristol](#) website.

#### **How does this project link to the Harbour Review?**

There are two parts to the Harbour Review both of which will be considered in the context of aspirations for the Western Harbour Project Area. Part 1 is a focus on operations – this will look at ensuring the Harbour operates effectively for vessels, residents, businesses, and visitors. Part 2 will look at wider placemaking and how the harbour contributes to the city as well and how residents across the city would like to see the harbour improve. The Western Harbour Project Area is very much part of the harbour and as such the projects will align with each other, each being able to influence the other as we move.

#### **How does this project link to the Bristol Avon Flood Strategy?**

Flood defences would be needed in this Western Harbour Project Area whether the area changed or not. The Bristol Avon Flood Strategy sets out the vision and principles for better protecting homes and businesses from flooding from the river. This is based on adaptive raised defences which can be integrated into the local area, actively looking to enhance areas with green space, active travel routes, improving and protecting heritage. There are no designs yet and it is envisaged that active engagement with communities will take place on flood defences in the context of any other possible changes taking place.

A public consultation on the Bristol Avon Flood Strategy took place from 26 October to 20 December 2020.

**How does this project link to the Strategic Development Strategy (SDS)?**

The Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) will set out the vision for how people will live, work and play in the West of England over the next 20 years and will help us deliver our commitment to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. The key objective of the SDS is for clean, inclusive recovery and growth for the region. It will influence where the homes and jobs in each local area will go and will be important in shaping future decisions on development and creating sustainable places.

West of England Combined Authority (WECA) will be working with its constituent councils – Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, and South Gloucestershire – as well as working with neighbouring North Somerset Council on a shared evidence base to support the SDS. The SDS will also feed into respective local plans.

As part of developing a shared evidence base for the SDS, a South West Bristol Infrastructure Investment Strategy is being developed. This is a separate piece of work led by WECA in partnership with North Somerset and Bristol City Council. This strategy will not only develop a shared understanding and evidence base for the Strategic Development Strategy, but also assist WECA and Bristol City Council in prioritising future infrastructure investment in the SW Bristol area, which includes the Western Harbour Project Area. The strategy outputs will focus on meeting the region's zero carbon targets and on, how we can best target infrastructure investment to promote growth across the South West Bristol area.