

Victoria Site Redevelopment

Response by Victoria Forum* to Sanctuary Masterplan



January 2018

General

The Victoria Forum welcomes the on line publication in December 2017 of a Masterplan for the site by Sanctuary. We think the architects and consultant planners have provided an excellent and easily readable overview of the context, design principles and their rationale behind the previously submitted planning application.

As Sanctuary acknowledge, the Masterplan is limited to the site only. The impacts, environmental and financial, on the surrounding area are not considered. Sanctuary state that it is the City Council which would be expected to first produce a wider Masterplan which would consider these issues and we agree with them.

Detailed Comments

The Sanctuary Masterplan quotes from the Government's PAN 83 Advice notes on preparing a Masterplan, but omits the following from the same Advice notes (Pages 6 and 7 : "Masterplans should :

- Include an " accurate interpretation of **the social, environmental and economic context of the site and its surroundings**"
- Be based on " **collaboration with communities**"...and "The local community's **understanding of the needs** of an area are invaluable in establishing priorities and arriving at a vision for a place"

As stated we think that Sanctuary has presented a very good analysis which underpins their design principles and many of the development proposals do meet the aspirations and deal with the concerns of the local community. We will therefore only comment on those aspects **which differ significantly from the expressed views and needs of the community (see Community Masterplan**

<https://newoldvicky.org>)

Housing

Notwithstanding the Sanctuary Masterplan section on Housing Market analysis and demand for house purchase **there is as yet no social or economic analysis underpinning the proposals** (se PAN 83) and no assessment of **housing need**.

1. The choice of 413 units rather than, say, 300 or 500 is not explained and appears to be the result of design criteria
2. The rejection of any town houses is based on design grounds despite the expressed wish of the community for some individual family units. Well designed town houses can achieve a similar density to flats.
3. The predominance of 1 and 2 bed units (91%) is stated as being the result of “research and feedback from the local community”. This is not evidenced. There is a general statement of wider house purchase demand but no analysis of actual local need. The Community Masterplan, based on public consultation, proposed 20% 3 bed or more. It also appears that very few, if any, of the “affordable” rented units will be 3 bed or more, thus biasing the development against lower income larger families.
4. The choice of 100 “affordable” houses is based on an offer of this number by GCC and not on housing need assessment. It is not clear what % of these, if any, will be social housing. We are informed that planning is “tenure neutral” but City Policy and Housing is not. The City’s objective is for mixed developments to meet all needs, and so the inclusion of social housing is surely a key component of a large scale housing development such as this.

Children’s Play Area

The need for a small children’s play area within the residential mix (ie not Queens Park) in Battlefield/Langside is a strongly expressed wish of the community. The Victoria site is the only land available in the whole area. Sanctuary rejects this on management grounds. Their proposal to part fund one beside the Library is not based on discussions with Glasgow Life and, to our knowledge, has already been rejected by them on access, noise and safety grounds.

Community Room

Sanctuary state that a community facility “can be accommodated on site”, but there is no detail of size, or where, or a guarantee that this is actually in the proposed development.

Traffic and Pedestrian Safety

Sanctuary recognise that a new pedestrian crossing will be needed across Langside Road opposite the Park entrance and possibly also at Grange Road. There is no offer to fund these, nor any indication of discussion with Council officers.

Public Realm

The Community Masterplan suggests that the block in the south-west corner is too large and unsympathetic to the site. There is ongoing City Council assessment of options for public realm space around the Battlefield Rest, one of which relates to this corner of the site. Until this is determined all options for the type and scale of building there should be kept open.

Next Steps for the Masterplan and Consultation Timetable

The letter from the Director of Planning in Feb 2017 to Langside Community Council stated that once the Masterplan was produced “we would expect that there would be an extended period for consultation,... which would allow for a more considered representation to be made by the community”. We have also been informed that a separate Report by City planners will be written sometime in January 2018

In order to move forward with amending the partial Masterplans produced to date (Sanctuary’s and the Community’s) to provide and agreed comprehensive one based on the advice in PAN 83 and the Director of Planning’s expressed wish to have a Masterplan which “would allow for a more consider representation to be made by the community”, we propose the following

1. Further analysis of the social and economic need of the area are required, especially housing numbers, size, type and tenure- in order to assess the adequacy or adjust the proposals
2. Based on this and other assessments (including impacts on surrounding areas and financial implications for the City) Council officers (or an independent Consultant) are asked to produce a composite Masterplan Plan. (Tripartite meetings between the Council, Sanctuary and Community Representatives could iron out most issues and be a speedy way of achieving this)
3. The final composite Masterplan and Officers’ Reports on the impact on schools, traffic, environment etc are then open for a short period of consultation before presentation to the Neighbourhoods Committee (not before the March 2018 Committee date)
4. If adopted this becomes a material consideration in determining any planning application

Victoria Forum *

The Victoria Forum is a group with representation from Langside, Battlefield and Camphill, Mt Florida, Shawlands and Strathbungo and Pollokshields Community Councils. Its aim is to encourage meaningful community involvement in the development process and ensure that both the Masterplan and subsequent development of the site and adjacent areas achieve maximum benefit for the local community. It produced its own Community Masterplan in 2017 based on local consultations. This has been available since May 2017 for public scrutiny and comment on the Forum website <https://newoldvicky.org>

