

Public Report with Exempt Appendices  
Cabinet

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**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Cabinet – 07 July 2025

**Report Title**

Mainline Station and Strategic Acquisition

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

Yes

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Andrew Bramidge, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

**Report Author(s)**

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**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

Rotherham has an opportunity to create a transformational change in the way in which the Borough connects to the wider region and beyond. While the Borough's ambitions for growth continue, its potential is stifled as a result of poor rail connectivity.

The Council is working with partners to promote the development of Rotherham Gateway Station. This mainline and tram-train station will be a catalyst for growth, improving local, regional, and national rail connectivity for all communities and businesses across the Borough, breaking down barriers, driving investment, attracting businesses, creating employment and supporting the development of high-quality new homes.

To ensure this opportunity brings the greatest benefit to Rotherham communities, the Council undertook the development of a Masterplan, exploring how development in the vicinity of the station could contribute to wider regeneration and growth objectives across the Borough and act as a catalyst for investment. The Masterplan explores the potential scheme benefits, presents designs for the mainline and tram-train interchange and promotes good connectivity to the Town Centre and neighbouring communities.

This report presents the Masterplan for Cabinet endorsement.

To progress the implementation of the Masterplan there is a requirement to proceed with the negotiation and acquisition of relevant land and property. This report seeks approval to progress these negotiations and allocate capital funding.

This report is also seeking a Resolution in Principle to investigate use of powers to acquire by Compulsory Purchase or through use of a Transport and Works Act Order. In the event that it is not possible to acquire any or all of the properties by agreement, and the investigation into the use of Compulsory purchase powers indicates an acceptable likelihood of success, a further report will be submitted to Cabinet seeking formal resolution to acquire the property interests through use of Compulsory Purchase or Transport and Works Act powers.

## **Recommendations**

That Cabinet:

1. Endorses the Rotherham Gateway Station (Mainline and Tram-Train) Masterplan, attached at Appendix 1.
2. Approves undertaking public engagement on the Masterplan in the autumn of 2025.
3. Delegates authority to the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy to prepare and submit a Strategic Programme Business Case for the Masterplan to South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA).
4. Authorises the Assistant Director of Property and Facilities Services to agree the acquisition of properties in exempt Appendix 2 in consultation with the Council's Section 151 Officer, Strategic Director for Regeneration & Environment, Cabinet Member for Jobs & the Local Economy and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Community Safety.
5. Approves the allocation of the Strategic Acquisitions Fund agreed at the March 2025 Budget Council to progress the acquisition of the sites as outlined in exempt Appendix 2, including potential holding costs that the Council may incur.
6. Grants a Resolution in Principle to investigate the use of powers, under a Compulsory Purchase Order or Transport and Works Act Order.

## **List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1	Rotherham Gateway Station Masterplan
Appendix 2	EXEMPT Rotherham Gateway Masterplan Land Acquisition Costs
Appendix 3	Part A Initial Equalities Screening
Appendix 4	Part B Equalities Assessment
Appendix 5	Carbon Impact Assessment

## **Background Papers**

[Regeneration Programme: Strategic Land Assembly, March 2022](#)

[Town Deal and Levelling Up Fund: Update and Implementation, May 2022](#)

[Rotherham Integrated \(Mainline & Tram Train\) Station Land Acquisition & Project Update, September 2023](#)

Budget and Council Tax 2025/26 and Medium Term Financial Strategy

[REPORT TEMPLATE FOR CABINET & COMMISSIONER](#)

[Strategic Economic Plan \(SYMCA, 2021 – 2041\)](#)

## **Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

None

## **Council Approval Required**

No

## **Exempt from the Press and Public**

Yes

*An exemption is sought for (Appendix 2) under Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 is requested, as this report contains as this report contains financial information relating to potential future land acquisitions for the Masterplan.*

*It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information because potential future negotiations and financial information should remain confidential between the parties.*

## **Mainline Station and Strategic Acquisition**

### **1. Background**

#### **1.1 Rotherham Gateway Station**

Rotherham has an opportunity to create a transformational change in the way in which the Borough connects to the wider region and beyond. While the Borough's ambitions for growth continue, its potential is stifled as a result of poor rail connectivity.

- 1.2 The Council is working with partners to promote the development of Rotherham Gateway Station. This mainline and tram-train station will be a catalyst for growth, improving local, regional, and national rail connectivity for all communities and businesses across the Borough, breaking down barriers, driving investment, attracting businesses, creating employment and supporting the development of high quality new homes.

- 1.3 In February 2025, the Rotherham Gateway Station Outline Business Case (OBC) was submitted to SYMCA and the Department for Transport for assurance and approval to release £11.35 million for Full Business Case development, approval of which will lead to the delivery of the station. A decision on the OBC is due in the autumn of 2025.

#### **1.4 A Masterplan for Rotherham Gateway**

Following a rigorous options assessment by Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) in 2021, a site was selected for the Station on Forge Way in the Parkgate area of Rotherham. This site was selected for the mainline proximity to the tram-train (branch), offering the opportunity to create a transport interchange. The site had also benefitted from remedial works by the developer EV Waddington with support from the European Regional Development Fund. These works mitigated against flood risk, providing value for money when weighed against the other options.

- 1.5 Initial plans were drawn up by NPR for a 'parkway' style station, one which typically serves a park and ride, rather than a town or city, similar to those found at Liverpool South, Bristol and Birmingham International. However, it is recognised that there is a far greater opportunity to contribute to Rotherham's growth ambitions by considering the station as a catalyst for wider investment and development. This vision required a Masterplan to understand the wider potential of this transport-led scheme.

#### **1.6 The Masterplan Vision**

*'Rotherham is well-placed to position itself as an economic hub between Sheffield and Leeds; leveraging its existing strengths in advanced manufacturing and new technologies to drive investment to a new innovation campus adjacent to the new station. The ambitious Masterplan is purposefully designed to support Rotherham's economic future, improving opportunities for all residents. A strong employment offer will precede the introduction of other uses in the long-term, including housing.'*

- 1.7 This report seeks endorsement of the masterplan as well as approval to progress actions which will see its implementation over the next twenty years, these include the acquisition of property and development of funding packages.

## **2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 Rotherham Council secured £31.6m from the Town Deal programme (now Pathfinder) in June 2021. £10 million from the funding was allocated to pursue land acquisition for the proposed Station at Forge Way and for master planning the wider area of opportunity

- 2.2 The Council appointed Weston Williamson and Partners to prepare a Masterplan for the station in August 2022. London and Continental Railways (LCR) were appointed to assist officers in managing the creation of the Masterplan. The aim of the plan was to design the layout of the Station and tram-train interchange and determine land requirements for the scheme. It would also ensure good connectivity to the Town Centre and neighbouring communities such as Eastwood and take account of future opportunities such as the development of Bassingthorpe Farm.

- 2.3 Further Masterplan development explored how to maximise the benefit of the station investment and deliver a longer-term vision for the immediate site and wider regeneration opportunities. This provided a phase-by-phase approach and a twenty-year timescale for delivery. The completed Masterplan outlines the vision for the development of the station and the surrounding area and breaks this down into phases, with a development potential totalling in the region of £134m.

### **2.4 Phase 2 – 2030 to 2040 (target date)**

Phase 2 focuses on the development of the Innovation Campus (proposed 16,420 square metres of development space) to the west of the Core Station Area:

- Renewing the existing industrial character, turning its focus towards high-quality employment in the advanced technologies sector.
- Connecting the Innovation Campus via a new spine road between Greasbrough Road and the Station Quarter.
- Creating opportunities for socialising and public amenities with active frontages, for example, food and beverage or retail use to extend the experience of the Station Quarter and provide natural surveillance, creating an overlooked and safe space.

### **2.5 Phase 3 – 2040 to 2045 (target date)**

Phase 3 will achieve the regeneration of industrial property in the North-west quarter with potential for 13,042 square metres of development space:

- Extending the Innovation Campus, renewing the existing industrial character and creating high-quality employment in advanced technologies.
- Creating a new multi-storey car park to the North of the mainline to free up land on the Core Station Area.

- Developing the free Core Station Area plots for active uses such as Food and Beverage and/or offices.

## 2.6 **Phase 4 – 2045 onwards (target date)**

To the east of the Station Quarter, the Masterplan encourages residential use and the development of a Living Quarter with 204 flats and 37 townhouses:

- Encouraging natural surveillance for the Station Quarter.
- Characterised by traffic-calmed streets and community courtyards, encouraging active use of the green common areas as well as the canal side with improved public rights of way (PROW).
- Limited parking for a low car usage estate (due to good transport links), facilitated below the courtyards of residential blocks and limited on-street parking.

## 2.7 **Land Acquisition**

- 2.7.1 Following the initial design work of the Masterplan, and the development of a land assembly strategy for the site, authority was sought from Cabinet in September 2023 to acquire properties deemed essential to facilitate the delivery of the Integrated Station along with two further parcels of land which would bring significant benefit for the implementation of the Masterplan. This report also approved the investigation of the use of powers to acquire the properties through use of Compulsory Purchase Orders or use of a Transport and Works Act Order should acquisition by agreement not be possible.
- 2.7.2 Following Cabinet approval, the Council has been in discussions with owners to purchase the land essential for the Station. One of the three key sites has already been acquired, and negotiations are progressing positively on the remaining two sites.
- 2.7.3 To deliver the wider Masterplan, further land acquisition will be required. The estimated costs for the acquisition of the required land parcels are presented in exempt Appendix 2
- 2.7.4 In March 2025, the Council approved the allocation of a further £2m toward the acquisition of strategic property to progress the regeneration of Rotherham. This was in addition to the previous allocation of £3m (over two years) to continue acquiring sites of strategic importance with the outcome of progressing the Council's ambitions for regeneration.
- 2.7.5 Acknowledging the strategic nature of the fund, it is therefore proposed that this tranche of £2m is allocated to the acquisition of further land and property to facilitate the delivery of the Station Masterplan.
- 2.7.6 It is noted that the indicative costs of the land in Phases 2, 3 and 4 far exceed the Strategic Acquisitions allocation. The Assistant Director of Property and Facilities Services will agree the acquisition of properties in exempt Appendix 2 in consultation with the Council's Section 151 Officer, Strategic Director for Regeneration & Environment, Cabinet Member for Jobs & the Local Economy and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Community Safety.

- 2.7.7 Acquisition of land may therefore need to be prioritised. should this occur an exercise will be undertaken in consultation with Assistant Director of Property & Facilities Services, the Council's Section 151 Officer, Strategic Director for Regeneration & Environment, Cabinet Member for Jobs & the Local Economy and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Community Safety.
- 2.7.8 In the negotiation of land and property, consideration will be given to the potential for holding costs and any revenue streams associated with the properties once they are acquired by the Council. Though it is difficult at this stage to be clear on estimated costs without possession of the properties and without access to them at this early stage, the Council considers that costs should be minimised as there are tenancies in place on several of the sites and these sites are hard surface with minimal landscaping and as such will require little maintenance. A percentage of the £2 million Strategic Acquisitions budget will be set aside in order to cover these holding costs.
- 2.7.9 Consideration has also been given to acquiring an 'option' to buy the required land and properties. This would give the Council the contractual right to purchase land on defined terms from a Seller subject to the satisfaction of any defined conditions within a defined period in exchange for an option fee. The agreement will prevent the landowner from selling the land to a third party for the agreed option period. This would help to de-risk the project and the ongoing management of the properties until such time when the land is required for the station development.
- 2.7.10 If the Station scheme does not go ahead, the Council could explore the benefits of continuing the Masterplan/Innovation Campus with the assembled land, addressing the employment land shortage and expansion requirements of the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District.
- 2.7.11 Acquisition by agreement is the Council's preferred route to secure the necessary land and property for the Masterplan and is a precursor to any Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) or Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO). However, given the length of time and cost implications of the Council pursuing acquisition powers it is important that the Council prepares for this potential route. This report seeks a Resolution in Principle to investigate the use of CPO or TWAO powers. If the use of formal powers is required, it will be the subject of a further report to Cabinet for authority to make any such order.

## 2.8 **Additional Projects - Station Business Centre – Phase 1**

To activate the Core Station Area, and create a well-used, safe space, the Masterplan proposes the development of a Business Centre on site. This should be a high-quality, flagship building of architectural merit to act as a gateway into Rotherham, incorporating the station facilities into the Business Centre ground floor. It would also be an anchor building for the Innovation Campus and catalyse further development.

## 2.9 Additional Projects - Effingham Street Active Travel Route – Phase 1

It is essential that the town centre benefits from the development of the station, and key to this will be ensuring commuters can easily travel between the two locations. The proposed station site is located 10 minutes walk outside of the town centre. The creation of a tram-train stop at the Rotherham Gateway site will ensure commuters are able to connect quickly and easily into the town centre via the tram network within an estimated 2 minutes.

A key route along Effingham Street has been identified for active travel. A comprehensive scheme has been proposed for this vehicle dominated route that could incorporate a new cycle/foot bridge, landscape improvements, and improving pedestrian crossings.

## 2.10 Programme Business Case

To progress the Masterplan, the Council proposes the preparation of a Programme Business Case covering the four Masterplan phases, the land acquisition and the priority projects coming out of the Masterplan. This would be a 'high-level', strategic Business Case that highlights the priorities to SYMCA, with a view to securing development funding to further progress the projects through the Business Case gateways.

## 3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 RMBC could choose not to pursue the Masterplan and instead locate just the Station but not the wider development on the Forge Way site. This would miss capitalising on the wider regeneration opportunity that the Station presents and opportunities to secure jobs and growth for the Borough. **This option is not recommended.**
- 3.2 RMBC could choose to do a smaller scale development, for example, just developing the Core Station Area. This could just focus on a Station building, rather than the Station building and Business Centre, and not pursue the further phases including the Innovation Campus to the West. Again, this would miss the opportunity for the Borough to benefit from regeneration potential that the Station scheme offers. **This option is not recommended.**
- 3.3 RMBC could choose not to progress the wider land assembly for the Masterplan at this stage, however, there would be significant impacts on the timescale for delivery of the Masterplan as a result. The acquisition of the land is essential for the wider Masterplan to capitalise on the economic regeneration potential of the Station. **This option is not recommended.**
- 3.4 RMBC could consider allocating the Strategic Acquisitions fund to Town Centre projects, an approach which has been taken for previous year's funding. Allocation of the funds to the Gateway station is in recognition of its strategic importance and potential. The funds will help to kick start and de-risk the scheme by acquiring the land and ensuring the progression of the Masterplan coincides with the Station development. **This option is not recommended.**



- 3.5 It is recommended that Cabinet endorses the full Masterplan and progresses the wider land assembly to ensure that the full benefits of the Station scheme are realised for the Borough. **This option is recommended.**

#### **4. Consultation on proposal**

- 4.1 Stakeholder consultation was undertaken throughout the masterplanning process. This was facilitated by the Project Governance structure. Partners presented opportunities through the Station Board and Station Steering Group that fed into the masterplanning and design process. This included rail stakeholders such as Network Rail and Transport for the North as well as Train Operating Companies. The masterplanning team has worked closely with Network Rail on the design development of both stations (mainline and tram-train) and the completed designs reflect the requirements of the project stakeholders.
- 4.2 Consultation took place with stakeholders such as emergency services, utilities (including Northern Powergrid), Secure by Design and colleagues managing car parking/EV charging. The draft Masterplan was circulated for feedback from internal teams, including colleagues in Planning to explore the implications for the longer-term vision for the Masterplan area. Engagement sessions also took place with developers to inform the Delivery Strategy for the Masterplan and explore market conditions.
- 4.3 Engagement on the wider scheme has taken place with local and regional stakeholders including representatives of local businesses, education and community partners via internal and external boards. The Town Board has been updated regularly on the project and is supportive of the scheme.
- 4.4 Events such as the Rotherham Show have provided a platform for sharing plans and obtaining public feedback. Following approval, officers propose to launch the Masterplan and the wider Station scheme at the Rotherham Show in September 2025.
- 4.5 In the coming months, work with stakeholders will continue to obtain feedback before work starts on the Full Business Case for the Station and the Strategic Programme Business Case for the wider masterplan. This will include follow-up sessions with the stakeholders and partners who were consulted as part of the Masterplan development. This review work will be crucial to guide the next stages of the Masterplan design work.
- 4.6 The Council's agent, supported by Property Services, is in dialogue with the landowners affected by the proposals. Initially, this will raise awareness of the scheme and direct owners to sources of further information or advice should they require it. All efforts will be made to acquire the land by negotiation and offer opportunities for relocation of businesses to retain them within the Borough. Should the Council need to pursue powers, affected parties will have the option of legal representation and all due consideration will be given to equalities implications as outlined in Section 10 of this report.

- 4.7 Property Services will lead on these proposed negotiations, supported by Regeneration and will discuss the detail of each transaction with the agents so that they are happy that the proposed purchases represent a reasonable consideration for the property interests that are being acquired.

## **5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

5.1	Station Masterplan endorsed at Station Steering Group/Board	June 2025
	Notifying landowners, refreshing land surveys	June 2025
	Cabinet Decision	July 2025
	Opening negotiations with landowners identified as priority acquisitions	August 2025
	Submit Programme Business Case (PBC) to SYMCA	August 2025
	Public Engagement on Masterplan at Rotherham Show	September 2025
	PBC approved – being draw down for Priority projects from development funding	October 2025
	Rotherham Gateway Station Outline Business Case Approval	November 2025
	Full Business Case and Masterplan continuation	December 2025 onwards

## **6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications**

- 6.1 At this point there are no direct procurement implications associated with the recommendations detailed in the report.
- 6.2 The station masterplan is an ambitious regeneration programme which will bring many economic benefits. An external consultant has estimated the potential costs of this programme to be £134m, however this report provides no further breakdown of this. At this stage, funding has not been identified for most of the programme.
- 6.3 The estimated values of the land acquisition required for the programme are detailed in the exempt appendix. It is recommended that the Strategic Acquisition Fund provides some of the budget requirement for these purchases. The acquisitions required for the programme are far in excess of this fund.
- 6.4 In addition to the potential acquisition costs in the exempt appendix, there will also be property holding costs. It is understood that it is difficult to estimate these at this time, but given the nature of the sites, as detailed in 2.7.7, they are thought to be minimal. An allocation towards these costs will be made from the Strategic Acquisitions fund. There is a risk that the Council purchases properties and the scheme doesn't transpire, therefore a suitable exit plan is required. This report does not reference the overall estimated costs of delivering the full Masterplan.

## **7. Legal Advice and Implications**

- 7.1 The recommendations in this report are in line with existing decisions and the Council's constitution. Other than as outlined in the report there are no substantive legal implications arising from the content of the report.

## **8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

- 8.1 There are no direct HR implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

- 9.1 There are no direct implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

- 10.1 Both an Initial Equality Screening and Full Equality Analysis have been completed and are attached as Appendices 3 and 4.
- 10.2 The Masterplan aims to meet the needs of various communities by enhancing accessibility for all protected characteristic groups under the UK's Equalities Act. It will provide improved access to transport links that will facilitate easier travel for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and those with young children, while promoting economic growth and creating job opportunities for local communities, adjacent to one of the most deprived Boroughs in the region. Enhanced safety measures and inclusive design will ensure a welcoming environment for all, fostering social inclusion and reducing barriers to mobility. During construction, there may be potential disruption to neighbouring communities, however, this will be monitored closely and mitigated by Construction Management Plans.
- 10.3 Equalities implications will be continually considered throughout negotiations with affected landowners. Should acquisition by negotiation not be possible, the Council will explore the use of Statutory powers. During this process due regard will be given to the landowners and tenants rights under the ECHR/ Human Rights act 1998 as well as under the Equalities act 2010, to this end landowners and tenants will be included in the consultation process as per Part B of the Equalities Impact Assessment completed as part of this report (Appendix 4).

## **11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change**

- 11.1 Approving the Masterplan is a key step towards sustainable transport infrastructure, with long-term benefits including reduced emissions and improved economic resilience and wellbeing for Rotherham. The wider scheme will boost public transit use, reducing reliance on private cars and lowering overall emissions in the Borough. The development of Active Travel routes will

further decrease carbon emissions and enhance residents' health and wellbeing.

- 11.2 Emissions as a direct result of a decision to endorse the masterplan and approve Strategic Acquisitions funding will be minimal, with potential for a small increase as a result of council staff and surveyors visiting proposed sites for acquisition. Emissions can be mitigated with valuations of land etc being conducted online and surveyors/council staff car-pooling to their destination.

## **12. Implications for Partners**

- 12.1 Partners and stakeholders have been involved in the development of the Masterplan through specific engagement activity and updates via the Station Board and Steering Group. They are supportive of the Station scheme and the wider Masterplan. There are no specific implications at this stage of the scheme.

## **13. Risks and Mitigation**

- 13.1 **Risk:** Programme Business Case not taken forward by SYMCA and development funding not available to progress the Masterplan.
  - 13.1.1 **Mitigation:** There has been engagement with SYMCA throughout the development of the Station/Masterplan and positive, initial conversations have taken place with SYMCA officers. The scheme compliments the wider work being undertaken by colleagues at SYMCA on the development of Advanced Manufacturing and Technology sectors.
- 13.2 **Risk:** Rotherham Gateway Station Outline Business Case is not approved by SYMCA and DfT and scheme is not continued to FBC resulting in the Masterplan not having the transport-led scheme to lead it.
  - 13.2.1 **Mitigation:** As with the Masterplan, there has been engagement throughout the scheme via the Station Board and Steering Group and partners are working positively together to progress the scheme. There is scope to continue the masterplanning work, even if the Station does not progress, exploring the demand for land for Advanced Manufacturing purposes.
- 13.3 **Risk:** Wider political support for the scheme is not achieved.
  - 13.3.1 **Mitigation:** A Communications Strategy is currently under development, aimed at reaching out to politicians to share key messages and encourage high-level partners to advocate for the scheme.
- 13.4 **Risk:** Inability to acquire the land and infrastructure for the scheme.
  - 13.4.1 **Mitigation:** The council has already made good progress in negotiations with landowners regarding the Station floorplan. Additionally, the council has appointed surveyors to provide an accurate value of masterplan land and to raise awareness among landowners affected by the wider Masterplan. Any

future requirements for consultancy support in this matter will be in consultation with Property Services.

**14. Accountable Officers**

Simon Moss, Assistant Director Planning, Regeneration and Transport  
Kevin Fisher, Assistant Director Property & Facilities Services

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	<b>Named Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp OBE	Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	18/06/25
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	18/06/25

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