

MEETING: Town Forum Informal Group Meeting
PROJECT: St. Maurice’s Covert Public Realm (SMC)
LOCATION Eversley Room, 2nd Floor, Guildhall Winchester
DATE: 29th September 2016
FILE REF: 1632
PRESENT: Alex Scott-Whitby (ASW) / (SWS)
 Cherg-Min Teong (MT) / (SWS)
 Eloise Appleby (EA)
 Councillor Hutchison (LH)
 Councillor Mather (FM)
 Councillor Tait (IT)
 Catherine Turness, Winchester Business Improvement District (BID) (CT)
 Fay Johnson, Store Manager, Debenhams (FJ)
 William McWilliam, General Manager, Mercure Winchester Wessex Hotel (WM)

REF	Item	ACTION
1.00	APOLOGIES	
1.01	Councillor Tod, Adrian Browning, Emma Williams	
2.00	MINUTES OF MEETING OF 11 AUGUST 2016	
3.00	DISCUSSION OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	
3.01	MT took members through the draft Stage 2 report and through the key recommendations	
3.02	Jet washing – SWS to liaise with the street cleaning team regarding the grout- FM wondered if it was possible to re-grout every few years? SWS to ask this question at drop in session	SWS
3.03	SWS noted that in situations where there has been opposition to changes made in the Covert- persisting through has yielded results (like the street cleaning)	
3.04	ASW updated members on the discussion with the Historic Environment Team: they were positive about the proposal, subject to a few issues, such as the location of the bins and desire lines SWS to issue out stage 2 report to Historic Environment Team	SWS
3.05	Decluttering the space- Bins – It was agreed that a mixture of bin storage/screening and an enforcement system is required for effective management of bins. EA to continue this discussion with the rest of WCC	EA
	FM stressed that there was no place for bins in Winchester at all. LH questioned that there was no way currently of managing it- there is no currently no Town Centre manager. CT noted that the town Centre	

manager was essentially BID and that the bins issue was not limited to the Covert- it was a city wide issue.

- 3.06 IT noted that in addition to managing the present situation of the bins that a preemptive measure would be to put planning conditions for new businesses regarding their bin management. EA to note EA
- 3.07 Informal Seating- LH noted that there was a lack of informal seating in Winchester- the seating in the Covert would allow businesses to have their lunch in there
- 3.08 Wall – SWS explained that the wall in addition to being storage and the display system for the flower seller, could also have a design etched on that could act as an educational tool, and way finding device for tourists to use. FM wondered whether businesses could pay for it if they could put their location on a map. SWS to note this option SWS
- 3.09 Street Lighting – SWS made a recommendation to reduce the lighting in the space- Winchester’s lighting strategy across the city is low level- and currently the overly bright nature of the covert alienates it, and actually encourages antisocial behavior.
- 3.10 FJ regarding windows- there would be a long process to convert it back into windows as there is currently a lack of storage in Debenhams and those rooms have been converted into storage rooms (also an issue about cost of opening them up) SWS questioned is there a way it could act as a storage room but also the frontage be used as a more active display? SWS questioned whether there is a first point of engagement with the head office? SWS
- 3.11 Shared Surface: WW expressed concerned about the raised shared surface in regards to three point turns. There is insufficient signage of the no entry sign.
- 3.12 Gregg’s door- IT to find out who owns Greggs building IT
- 4.00 COSTING**
- 4.01 SWS explained that the cost of all phases (without soft costs of fees) would be #240k but of that 100K was for the tower. Phase 1 would include the most visible changes and by Phase 2 most of the work would be complete. Phase 3 would be to extend across the road to the Wessex, and Phase 4 would be the tower.
- 4.02 EA noted that there is currently a range of funding options such as CIL that could be used for certain parts of the project. SWS noted that for the Tower there was heritage lottery funding, and match funding.
- 4.03 FM questioned whether Hampshire Cultural Trust could help fund, EA noted that they were currently raising money for other projects and the Covert would be a low priority for them, and however there were other possibilities.

5.00 PHASING

5.01 IT noted that if Phase 1 was successful in its change, it would be in itself an advert and source of momentum for the following phases.

5.02 LH noted that lighting should be incorporated into phase 1 as it would be fundamental to the change in the covert. SWS explained that it would be possible to integrate the lighting strategy within the elements that were implemented in phase 1. SWS

SWS to incorporate lighting into phase 1.

5.03 Phasing to be reviewed by SWS and resent to members SWS

5.04 EA potential to amalgamate phasing depending on soft costs. The tower phases is a project in its own right and should be left aside for now. EA
 EX to check the existing commitments from CIL fund and figure out how best to play this in relation to the funding.

6.00 FUNDING

6.01 LH noted that figuring out the sources of funding for each component of the proposal was important to the next moves of implementation. SWS noted that the end of the financial year would be a canny time to have ready a phase for implementation and funding.

6.02 SWS to update the costing table to include all soft fees SWS

6.03 EA to advise SWS on planning application fees should they be applicable EA

6.04 EA posed the question to BID, Wessex Hotel and Debenhams whether or not any would be willing to contribute to the project. WW, CT, FJ
 The improvement of the Covert would increase footfall around this area, and offer amenities for local businesses.

All parties to review proposal and respond. SWS
 SWS to send through stage 2 report and boards for discussion.

6.05 WW noted that Accord would have no interest unless it directly impacted / improved their assets. FJ agreed in regards to Debenhams.
 EA questioned whether it would be useful just to have the discussion with the head offices.

7.00 PROGRAMME + TIMELINE

7.01 It was noted that planning permission would need to be sought for the phases. SWS advised that the application should incorporate all phases and then the works staggered as necessary. EA noted that planning permission would take 3 months.

- 7.02 SWS noted that the work undertaken to date follows up to RIBA stage 2. Planning would be stage 3 which would include a more detailed idea of each element.
- 7.03 EA noted that it would be difficult to implement phase 1 by the end of the Financial year- General fund coming through not till April 2017. SWS advised to mindful not to do it too quickly- noted that detail design is 2 months work- and planning permission is 3 months- suggestion that if the funding is in place by April next year, and by April the year after Phase 1 is completed.
- 7.04 LH and IT noted that there was a real need to keep up momentum of the project. It was noted that steering group should be kept for the next phase of the project.
- 7.05 Noted that final agreed design for planning to be reviewed in next town forum in January 2017 and then submitted for planning.
- 7.06 EA to determine what funding is available where and how much is already allocated EA
- 7.07 Next stage of procurement- EA noted there must be a formal discussion in regards to appointing for the next stage of work. EA also noted that someone in Estates would take the lead for the next stage, however possibility for the steering group to remain.
- 8.00 NEXT STEPS**
- 8.01 EA pointed out that there were a few key technical issues with the proposal that required ironing out with the relevant department in WCC and HCC and these should be sorted before moving forward as an agreed design. EA to organise a drop in session with the same members from the last one to review the emerging design. EA
- 8.02 SWS to compile a list of queries that require clarification from the respective officers, in time for the drop in session. (Lighting, highways, street team, PFI agreement, Gregg's door, church commissioners) SWS
- 8.03 EA to chase the Church commissioners regarding lifting the faculty and factor in how long this might take into the timeline. EA
- 8.04 EA stressed the requirement of soft costs to come back to her as soon as possible as these would need to be cleared early November. SWS
- 8.05 SWS to update stage 2 report and include a timeline explaining the present situation and the future objectives. SWS
- 8.06 SWS to discuss in detail with EA the soft costs and phasing before issuing out. SWS, EA